

ing through love of a heartless goddess. But in **these** legends, it would appear, the goddess herself was the cause of the hero's death; so far from venturing into the glooms of Hades for the sake of her youthful bridegroom, it was she who had herself lured her lover to his destruction. This was the light in which Istar was represented at Erech, and this was the interpretation put there **upon** the name of the Accadian month of the Errand of Istar. The fate of the suitors of Istar is glanced at in the sixth **book** of the Epic of Gisdhubar.

1. "For the favour of Gisdhubar the princess Istar lifted the eyes;
  2. '(Look up), Gisdhubar, and be thou my bridegroom !
  3. I am thy vine,<sup>1</sup> thou art its bond ;
  4. be thou my husband and I mill be thy wife.
  5. I mill give thee a chariot of crystal and gold,
  6. whose pole is of gold and its horns are of glass,'
  7. that thou mayst yoke (thereto) each day the mighty coursers.
  8. Enter our house in the gloom of the cedar.
  9. When thou enterest our house
  10. let (the river) Euphrates kiss thy feet.
  11. Let **kings**, lords (and) princes (bow) beneath thee !
  12. The tribute of the mountain and the plain let them bring thee as an offering.
  13. (In the folds?) let thy flocks bring forth twins;
  14. (in the stables) let the mule seek (its) burden;
  15. let thy (horse) in the chariot be strong in galloping;
  16. let (thine ox) in the yoke have no rival.'
  17. (Gisdhubar) opened his mouth and speaks,
  18. (he says thus) to the princess Istar :
  19. '(I will leave) to thyself thy possession,
  20. (in thy realm are) corpses and corruption(?),
  21. . . . disease and famine.
- [The next seven lines are too mutilated to be translated.]
29. The wind and the blast hold open the back-door (of thy palace).
  30. The palace is the destroyer of heroes.

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<sup>1</sup> *#ubi*. Haupt reads *inbi*, "fruit."

<sup>2</sup> *Elmesu*; see W. A. I. iv. IS, 44, and ii. 30, 42.

31. **A** deceitful (?) mouth are its hidden recesses  
 32. **A** destructive (?) portent are its columns.  
 33. **A** girdle of dark cloth are its columns.  
 34. **Of** white stone is the construction (*musab*) of the stone fortress.  
 35. **As** for me, 'tis the mouth of the land of the enemy.  
 36. A devouring flame(?) is its lord.  
 37. Never may **I** be (thy) bridegroom for ever!  
 38. Never may **a** god make thee joyous.  
 39. Go, and let me tell (the story) of thy enslavements  
 40. of those into whose hands thou puttest no ransom.  
 41. To Tammuz the bridegroom (of thy youth) thou **didst look**;  
 42. year after year with weeping didst thou cling to him.  
 43. Alala, the eagle, also didst thou love ;  
 44. thou didst strike him and break his wings ;  
 45. **he** remained in the forest ; he begged for his wings.  
 46. Thou didst love, too, a lion perfect in might ;  
 47. seven by seven didst thou tear out his teeth, seven **by** seven.  
 48. And thou didst love **a** horse glorious in battle ;  
 49. he submitted himself; with spur and whip didst thou cling to  
 him ;  
 50. **seven** leagues didst thou cling to him galloping ;  
 51. in his trouble and **thirst** didst thou cling to him :  
 63. to his mother the goddess 'Silili with tears didst thou approach.  
 53. Thou didst love also the shepherd Tabulu,  
 54. who continually poured out for thee the smoke (of sacrifice).  
 55. Every day **was** he slaughtering for thee the victims;  
 56. thou didst bring him forth and into **a** hyena didst change him ;  
 57. his own sheep-cote **drove** him away  
 58. and his own dogs tore his wounds.  
 59. Moreover, thou didst love Isullanu<sup>1</sup> the gardener of thy father,  
 60. who was ever raising for thee costly trees.  
 61. Every day had he made bright thy dish.  
 62. Thou didst **take** from him (his) eye and didst mock him :  
 63. 'O my Isullanu, come, let us eat thine abundant store,  
 64. and bring **out** thy hand and dismiss all fear of **us**.'  
 65. Isullanu says to thee :  
 66. 'As for me, what dost thou ask of me ?  
 67. O my mother, thou cookest not (and) **I** eat not ;

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<sup>1</sup> In **W. A. I. iii. 68, 23**, Isullanu is called by his Accadian name of **Si-sígšig** or **Si-símšim**, "he who makes green the living things."

68. the food I have eaten are garlands and girdles ;  
 69. the prison of the hurricane is (thy) hidden recess.  
 70. Thou didst listen and (didst impose) punishment ;  
 71. thou didst strike him; to bondage thou didst (assign him);  
 72. and thou madest him sit in the midst of (a tomb?).  
 73. I will not ascend the height ; I will not descend to the (depth);  
 74. and yet thou lovest me that thou (mayest make) me as they are.'  
 75. When Istar (heard) this,  
 76. Istar **mas** enraged and (mounted up) to heaven.  
 77. Moreover Istar went before Anu (her father),  
 78. before Anu she went and she (says) :  
 79. 'O my father, Gisdhubar has kept watch on me;  
 80. Gisdhubar has counted my garlands,  
 81. my garlands and my girdles.'"

Like Potiphar's wife, Istar thus accuses Gisdhubar of doing the exact contrary of what he really had done. The portion of the tablet which contained the conversation between her and Anu is broken, but enough remains to show that she eventually persuaded him to punish the hero. Anu accordingly created a divine bull of monstrous size ; but without much result, as Gisdhubar and his friend Ea-bani succeeded in destroying the animal and dragging its body in triumph through the streets of Erech. With Gisdhubar and the divine bull of Anu, however, we are not at present interested. What concerns us just now is the list given by Gisdhubar of the unhappy victims of Istar's coquetry. Of the first, Tammuz, there is but little said. Even Sin-liqi-unnini, the author of the Epic of Gisdhubar, could find but little in the story of Tammuz which could throw discredit on the goddess. The next mentioned is Alála, "the eagle." Now the eagle is stated to be ((the symbol (*tsalam*) of the noon-tide sun;" and that Alála, whose name is of Accadian origin signifying "the great Spirit," has solar connections, is indicated not only by the fact that his

consort Tillili is the sister of Tammuz in the legend of the Descent of Istar, but also from the compound title *Alála alam*, "Alála of the image." In one of the local cosmogonies of Chaldaea, however, he and his consort took the place of Assoros and Kissarê, the primordial heavens and earth. Like them, he was resolved into Anu by the monotheistic school;<sup>2</sup> and a text associates both him and Tillili with the cosmogonic deities Lakhma and Lakhama, "the gods who are immanent in the heaven and in the earth."<sup>3</sup> Who the lion and the horse were we do not yet know; we hear of "a god of lions" (W.A.I. iii. 66, 34), and one of the Assyrian names of the month Sebat mas "the month of 'Silili" (K 104, *Rev.*). In the shepherd Tabulu, however, we have the double of the shepherd Tammuz himself. The name reminds us of Abel and Tubal-Kain, more especially when we remember that it is but a *tiphel* formation—so common in Assyrian—from the simpler *abalu*. His fate recalls that of the hunter Aktæôn, torn by his own dogs through the anger of

<sup>1</sup> W. A. I. ii. 54, 12.

<sup>2</sup> W. A. I. ii. 54, 11. In W. A. I. iii. 66, 15, we have (AN) *Sam-su* (AN) *alam*; comp. II. 18, 20, 26.

<sup>3</sup> D. T. 122, 17—20. Laban(?)—same, "the brick foundation of heaven" is also mentioned in the same text. Nabonidos, when describing the rebuilding of the temple of the Moon-god at Harran, says that he set about it "by the commission (not "work," as Latrille) of the god Laban(?), the lord of foundations and brick-work" (*libnâti*, W. A. I. v. 64. i. 53), and that on either side of the eastern gate of the building he placed "two Lulihmu gods who sweep away my foes." Eaban is mentioned (W. A. I. iii. 66, 6) among the gods whose images stood in the temple of Anu at Assur, and it is probable that he was of foreign importation. According to Genesis, Harran was the home of Laban. The name would mean "the white one." "The god of the Foundation" (*ûr*) is mentioned in 79. 7-8. 68. This was the horizon of heaven as opposed to the zenith or Nebo.

Artemis, the Asianic representative of the Babylonian Istar. Isullanu, the gardener of Anu, is probably the mythic prototype of the historical Sargon of Accad, whom later legend turned into a gardener beloved by the goddess Istar. As it was upon the famous king of Accad that the old myth was fastened, it is possible that Isullanu had been the representative of Tammuz at Accad before the cult of the god of Eridu had been introduced there from the south.

But who, all this while, was the goddess, whom one legend made the faithful wife enduring even death for her husband's sake, while another regarded her as the most faithless and cruel of coquettes? I have already spoken of her as the goddess of love, and such, indeed, she was to the Babylonian or Assyrian of later days. In the story of her descent into Hades, her residence in the lower world is marked by all cessation of intercourse between male and female in the animal creation, as well as among the gods of heaven. It was this feature of the story which caused it to find its way into the literature of another people, and to survive the days when the clay tablets of Assyria and Babylon could still be read. We find it serving to point a moral in the pages of the Talmud. We are there told how a pious rabbi once prayed that the demon of lust should be bound, and how his petition was granted. But society quickly fell into a state of anarchy. No children were born; no eggs even could be procured for food; and the rabbi was at length fain to confess that his prayer had been a mistaken one, and to ask that the demon should again be free.

But though a moral signification thus came to be read into the old Babylonian myth, it was a signification that

waa originally entirely foreign to it. Prof. Tielc has clearly shown that the legend of Istar's descent into Hades is but a thinly-veiled description of the earth-goddess seeking below for the hidden waters of life, which shall cause the Sun-god and all nature with him to rise again from their sleep of death.<sup>1</sup> The spirits of earth, the gnomes that guard its treasures below, watch over the waters, and not until they are led forth and placed on their golden throne can their precious treasure be secured. It is the earth who loses her adornments, one by one, as she passes slowly downward into the palace-prison of the infernal goddess, and it is the earth who is once more gladdened at spring-time with the returning love of the youthful Sun-god.

Istar, then, must primitively have been the goddess of the earth, and the bride of Tammuz at Eridu must accordingly have been his mother Dav-kina. This alone will explain the persistent element in the myth as it made its way to the Greeks, according to which the mother of Tammuz was also his sister. Istar, Tillili, Dav-kina, were all but different names and forms of the same divinity. We have just seen that Tillili, at all events, was the primordial earth.

What Istar was primitively, however, will not explain what she became in those later ages of Babylonian history to which our monuments belong. Her origin faded more and more into the background; new elements entered into her character; and she absorbed the attributes and functions of numberless local divinities. The Istar of Assur-bani-pal or Nabonidos was the inheritress of cults

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<sup>1</sup> *Actes du sixième Congrès internationale des Orientalistes*, ii. 1, pp. 495 sq.

and beliefs which had grown up in different localities and had gathered round the persons of other deities.

The Istar of the historical period is essentially Semitic. But let me not be misunderstood. What is Semitic in her nature is an after-growth, which cannot be explained unless we assume that it has grown out of non-Semitic elements. The Semitic superstructure presupposes a non-Semitic basis. It is only thus that we can explain both the name of Istar and the striking difference that exists in regard to her character between the Semites of Babylonia and those of the west. It is only where the Semite had come into contact with the Accadian that we find the name and worship of Istar at all. We look in vain for it among the Arabs of central Arabia, among the descendants of those who parted from their Semitic brethren of the north before they were affected by the culture of primæval Babylonia. We find the name of Aththor, it is true, on the southern coast of Arabia; but we find there also the name of the Babylonian Moon-god Sin, and other traces of the influence which Babylonian trade could not fail to exert in comparatively late days. Inland, Istar remained unknown.

All attempts to discover a Semitic etymology for the name have been unavailing. And there is a good reason why they should be so. The name itself bears evidence to its non-Semitic origin. We find it in its earliest form in Babylonia; and here, though it denotes the name of a female goddess, it is unprovided with that grammatical sign of the feminine—the dental suffix—which marks the names of other genuinely Semitic goddesses. Belit, Zarpanit, Anat, Tasmit, all show by their termination their source and meaning; and Istar, without that termi-

nation, in spite of its meaning, shows equally plainly what its source must be. As the name travelled further to the west, away from its old associations with Chaldæa, the grammatical instincts of the Semites could no longer be held in check, and Istar was transformed into the Ashtoreth of the Old Testament and the Phœnician monuments, the Astartê of the Greeks. Even in Babylonia and Assyria, when Istar became the representative of all other female divinities, and the name passed into a common term signifying "a goddess," the Semitic feminine suffix was attached to it. But the suffix was attached to it only when it was thus used, no longer as a proper name, but as one of the words of the Semitic dictionary; whenever it still retained its ancient sense and denoted a specific deity, it retained also its ancient genderless appearance. As a foreign name, it continued to the last a stranger in the province of Semitic grammar.

We can thus understand why it was that the Semites sometimes changed the old Chaldæan goddess into a male divinity. On the Moabite Stone, Mesha declares that he dedicated Nebo of Israel to Istar-Kemosh, "to Istar who is the god Kemosh;" and an astronomical tablet<sup>1</sup> informs us that Dilbat, the planet Venus, which, as we shall see, was the primitive Istar, is "a female at sunset and a male at sunrise," the word employed for male being a curiously artificial coinage, such as "maless" would be in English. In fact, the tablet goes on to add that Venus was not only a male by reason of her identification with the morning star, she was also the rising Sun-god himself, and thus "a male and the offspring (of a male);"

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<sup>1</sup> W.A. I. iii. 53. 30—39.



while at sunset she was the god Adar, and thus “an androgyne and the offspring (of an androgyne).” After this, we are told that “Venus at sunrise is Istar of Accad by name,” while at sunset she is “Istar of Erech by name ;” at sunrise she is “Istar of the stars,” at sunset *bilat ili*, “the mistress of the gods.” The doubt as to whether Istar were male or female was the same as that which was felt by the Semites in regard to other Accadian deities.<sup>1</sup> Where there was no grammatical indication, where the same word might mean “master” or “mistress” according to the context, the zealous but half-educated Semitic neophyte might well be forgiven the mistakes he sometimes made in his adoption and adaptation of the older divinities. It was thus that the ambiguity of the Accadian *nin*, which signified at once “lord” and “lady,” led him at times to transform the god Adar into a goddess; and I have already pointed out in an earlier Lecture how in like manner the god A became the wife of the Sun. But that a similar doubt should hang over the sex of Istar proves more plainly than anything else the non-Semitic origin of her name and character.<sup>2</sup>

When, however, we come to look closely into this character, we shall find here also clear traces of a non-

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<sup>1</sup> In W. A. I. ii. 35, 18, we are told that the god Tiskhu was “Tstnr of Erech;” and yet in ii. 57, 35, Tiskhu appears as the equivalent of Adar as “god of libations.” But it must be remembered that the Semites were doubtful about the sex of Adar. On the other hand, Iskhara, another name of Istar (ii. 49, 14; K 4195, 7), is said to be a male deity whose wife was Almanu or (Al)manâti (Strassmaier, 3901).

<sup>2</sup> That the Phœnicians also knew of a male Istar is perhaps indicated by the Greek myth which made Eurôpa the wife of Asterios, the king of Phœnician Krêtê.

**Semitic** descent. In the first place, Istar is distinguished from the other goddesses of the Semitic world by her independent nature. She is not the mere reflexion of the male divinity, like Anat or Beltis or Zarpanit; in so far as she is Istar, she is placed on an equal footing with the male deities of the pantheon. In this respect she stands in marked contrast to the goddesses of the pure Semitic faith, and to the purely Semitic conception of the divine government of the world. She holds equal rank with the Sun-god Baal; Babylonian mythology, in fact, makes her his sister, and treats her as if she were a god. We may even say that she takes rank before him, at all events in early times, in conformity with the old Accadian custom of setting the woman before the man, but in flagrant violation of the contrary practice of the Semitic race. So far, indeed, from being the double and shadow of the god, Istar is rather the divinity who gives life and substance to her divine lovers. Tammuz himself is but "the bridegroom" of Istar; it was only for the sake of Istar that his name was held in honour. Istar, in short, is an anomaly in the Semitic pantheon; she is there as a goddess who masquerades in the garb of a god.

Away from Accadian influences, in the Phœnician lands of the west, the character, like the name, of the goddess was more closely accommodated to Semitic ideas. Istar had become Ashtoreth, and Ashtoreth had put on the colourless character of the Semitic goddess. Hence it was that, just as Baal became the common designation of the male deity, Ashtoreth was the common designation of the female. By the side of the Baalim stood the Ashtaroth—those goddesses whose sole right to exist was the necessity of providing the male divinity with a con-

sort. Ashêrah, the southern Canaanitish goddess of fertility, alone retained some of the independence of the Babylonian Istar.

In the second place, there is a very important difference between the Istar of Babylonia and the Ashtoreth of Phœnicia. Ashtoreth was the goddess of the moon; Istar was not. It was in the west alone that Astartê was

“Queen of heaven with crescent horns ;  
To whose bright image nightly by the moon  
Sidonian virgins paid their vows and songs.”

It was in the west alone that the shrine was erected to Ashtoreth *Karnaïm*,<sup>1</sup> “Ashtoreth of the double horn;” and Greek legend described the wandering Astartê, under the name of *Eurôpa*, crossing the celestial sea on the bull that Anu had created for her so long before to punish the disdainful Gisdhubar. In Babylonia and Assyria, however, Istar and the moon were separate one from another. The moon was conceived of as a god, not as a goddess, in conformity with pre-Semitic ideas; and the Moon-god Sin was never confounded with the goddess Istar. It must have been the same wherever the worship of Sin extended, whether in Harran in the north or in Yemen and the Sinaitic desert in the south. But the worship never made its way to Canaan. Sin failed to establish himself there, and the moon accordingly remained the pale mirror and double of the mightier Baal. The Semites of Phœnicia were too distant from the cultured kingdoms of the Euphrates to allow their religious instincts to be overridden and transformed. The name and cult of Istar were indeed introduced among them,

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<sup>1</sup> Gen. xiv. 5, where the word is wrongly punctuated “Ashteroth”

out a new interpretation was given to both. Istar sank to the level and took the place of the older goddesses of the Canaanitish faith.

Perhaps you will ask me what is the meaning of the name of Istar? **This**, however, is a question which I cannot answer. The Babylonians of the historical age do not seem to have **known** what was its origin, and it is therefore quite useless for us to speculate on the subject. Its true etymology was buried in the night of antiquity. But its earliest application appears to have been to the evening star. This is the oldest signification that we **can assign** to the word, which by the way, it may be noticed, does not occur in **any of** the Accadian texts that we possess.<sup>1</sup>

The legend of the assault of the seven wicked spirits upon the moon tells us pretty clearly who the goddess Istar was primarily supposed to be. Mul-lil, it is said, "had appointed Sin, Samas and Istar, to rule the vault of heaven," and, "along with Anu, had given them to share the lordship of the hosts of heaven. To the three of them, those gods his children, he had entrusted the night and the day; that they cease not their work he urged them. Then those seven, the wicked gods, darted upon the vault of heaven; before Sin, the god of light, they came in fierce attack; Samas the hero and Rimmon the

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<sup>1</sup> From which we may infer that the name originated in one of the smaller cities of the country. It is possibly a side-form of Iskhara, Is-tar and Is-khara being alike compounds of is. The suffix *-ra* or *-r* is common in Proto-Chaldæan, and the Semitic spelling of the first syllable (with *'ain*), like that of the first syllable of *Anu*, points to its having originally been *as*. Istar appears as *Esther* in the book of Esther, where Mordechai, it may be noted, is a derivative from *Mero-dach*.

warrior turned and fled; Istar set up a glittering throne by the side of Anu the king, and plotted for the sovereignty of heaven."<sup>1</sup> Thus once more the mythologist gives the goddess an unfavourable character, though it is easy to see what the story means. When the moon is eclipsed, the evening star has no longer any rival in the sky; it shines with increased brilliancy, and seems to meditate ruling the night alone, in company only with the heaven itself.

Already, before the days of Sargon of Accad and the compilation of the great Babylonian work on astronomy? it had been discovered that the evening and morning stars were one and the same. Not only, therefore, was Istar the evening star, the companion of the moon; she became also the morning star, the companion and herald of the sun. It was thus that she assumed the attributes and titles of a male deity, since Dun-khud-e, "the hero who issues forth at daybreak," was both a god and the morning star. As the morning star, therefore, Istar was a god and the successor of a god, so that it is not wonderful if the bewildered Semite, who found no visible sign of gender in the name of the divinity he had adopted, should sometimes have regarded Istar as the masculine form of Ashtoreth. Some of the early Accadian titles of Istar belong to her as the star of the morning, though the title of "Lady of Rising,"<sup>2</sup> given her as "the wife

<sup>1</sup> W. A. I. iv. 5, 60—79.

<sup>2</sup> W. A. I. ii. 54, 20. As "Lady of the damn" she was called Bis-bizi, a re-duplicated form, apparently, of *bis* or *pes*, which is rendered by *mamtu* (W. A. I. iv. 69, 33; 21, 66), a synonym of *allallu* (ii. 31, 65) and *rahâbu* (ii. 35, 35). Compare *pes*, "a pig." *Rahâbu* is the Hebrew *rahab*, "the crocodile" as a symbol of Egypt, and denoted in Assyrian "a sea-monster." Hence George Smith seems to have been right in

of Anu" (W. A. I. ii. 54, 15), would apply equally to the evening star.

In making her the wife of the Sky-god, the mythologists were only expressing in another way what the poet of the legend of the seven evil spirits had denoted by saying that Istar set up her throne by the side of Anu. More usually, however, the relation between Istar and Anu was regarded as a genetic one; she was the daughter, rather than the wife, of the Sky.<sup>1</sup> At times, again, she is called the daughter of the Moon-god, the Moon-god being here the larger body which begets the smaller star. It is possible that these different views about her descent are derived from different centres of worship; that which made her the daughter of Sin having its origin in Ur, while that which made her the daughter of Anu emanated from Erech. At any rate, her connection with the Moon-god seems to have been the more popular view in Semitic times.

As a planet, Istar's ordinary name was the Accadian Dilbat, or "Announcer." One of the smaller cities of Babylonia had the same name, and was probably the chief seat of the worship of the goddess under this particular form. It is obvious that the name must have been originally applied not to the evening but to the morning star. It was only as the announcer of day and the herald of the sun that Venus could be the Accadian representative of the Semitic Nebo. The other mes-

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identifying the *bis-bis* or "dragon" Tiamat with Rahab, since *is bis-bis* is interpreted *turbuhtu* (W. A. I. ii. 32, 9), "the locust-swarm of the sea," according to ii. 5, 4.

<sup>1</sup> Both at Erech and Tel-loh her temple was called *E-ha*, "the temple of the Sky."

sengers of the gods were male: and in Semitic times the fact that there had once been a female messenger was forgotten. The name of Dilbat, it is true, remained, but only as the name of a star ; the place of Istar as the herald of the Sun-god was taken, at Babylon at all events, by Nebo.

It is possible that the records of the city of Dilbat, if ever they are recovered, will show us that this was the primal home of the name of Istar itself, and the centre from which it first spread. If so, however, it was little more than the primal home of the goddess's name. The real source and centre of the worship of Istar at the dawn of the historical period, the starting-point from which it was handed on to the Semites and became overlaid with Semitic beliefs and practices, was not Dilbat, but Erech. In the days when Erech had been a leading state, when the cult of the Sky-god had been carried by its people to other parts of the Eastern world, the cult of Istar also had been carried with it. Wherever the worship of Anu had gone, the worship of Istar, the daughter of Anu, went too. But the Istar of Erech was originally known by a different name. She was Nána, "the lady," a title which does not appear to have been replaced by the name of Istar until after the beginning of the Semitic period. At all events the common title of the goddess in the Accadian texts is Nána; the word Istar is never found in them. As Nána,<sup>1</sup> "the lady," she continued to be known at Erech down to the most recent times. It was the famous image of Nana that the Elamite

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<sup>1</sup> As the name is always written in combination with the prefix of divinity, the compound character was called In-Nána, for An-Nána (see above, p. 116).

invader Kudur-nankhundi had carried off 1635 years before the generals of Assur-bani-pal recovered it in the sack of Shushan, and late texts draw a distinction between Nana and Istar. Thus in a tablet of exorcisms, the patient is told to address ('Istar, Nana and Kasbâ,"<sup>1</sup> and an augural tablet is careful to distinguish between Nana and "Istar the queen" (*milkatu*).<sup>2</sup>

It was, in fact, easy to identify a goddess who bore so general a name as that of "the lady" with any other female divinity. At Borsippa, for instance, Nana was made one with an otherwise unknown deity 'Sutil(?), "the goddess who quickens the body." A text copied for Assur-bani-pal from a tablet originally written at Babylon, contains part of a hymn which had to be recited "in the presence of Bel-Merodach when he had seated himself (*ittasbu*) in the house of sacrifice (*akitum*) in the beginning of Nisan." The latter portion reads as follows :

"(O Bel, why) dost thou not take thy seat in Babylon? In E-Sag-gil is set thy dwelling-place. 'His is the . . . ' they have not said to thee, and Zarpanit 'has not cried to thee. O Bel, why dost thou not take thy seat in Borsippa? In E-Zida is set thy dwelling-place. 'O Nebo, I am here,' they have not said to thee; Nana the goddess who quickens the body has not cried to thee. O Bel, why dost thou not take thy seat in Kis? In E-Dubba (the house of libation) is set thy dwelling-place. 'O Zamama,<sup>3</sup> why dost thou not take thy seat?"

<sup>1</sup> K 3464, 18.

<sup>2</sup> K 220, *Obv.* 4, 13. The divine names in this tablet follow in this order: Istar of Babylon, Nana, Kani-surra, the god of Kibib, Nebo, Tasmetu, Gula, 'Sakin of E-Ana, Samas, Sala, Istar the queen, Nergal (Ugur), Rimmon, Zamama, Mul-lil.

<sup>3</sup> Zarnama (in Sumerian Zagaga) was the Sun-god of Kis (W. A. I. ii. 60, 7; 61, 52), and was consequently identified with Adar by the mythologists (W. A. I. ii. 57, 70). On a contract-stone he is symbolized by an eagle, which is said to be "the image of the southern sun



Bahu, the queen of Kis, has not cried to thee. O Ccl, why dost thou not take thy seat in Cutha? In E-'Sulim [SIT-LAM] is set thy dwelling-place. 'O Nergal (Ugur), why dost thou not take thy scat?' Laz and the goddess Mamit have not said unto thee. 'O my pure one,' they have not cried unto thee."<sup>1</sup>

It will be noticed that in this hymn, while Nana has ceased to be the special goddess of Erech and has become the goddess of Borsippa, she is ranked with Bahu of Kis and Laz and Mamit—that terrible "Ban" which even the gods must obey—who presided over Cutha. Laz disappeared almost entirely from the pantheon of later Babylonia, and was remembered only by antiquarians, except perhaps in Cutha itself;<sup>2</sup> but the name of Bahu remained better known. Baliu probably was the Gurra of Eridu, the great mother "deep" which was the home of the seven evil spirits,<sup>3</sup> and represented the waters of the abyss in their original chaotic state before they were reduced to order by the creator Ea.<sup>4</sup> She seems to have been the Bohu of Genesis, the Baau of the Phœnician

of Kis." We gather also from W. A. I. ii. 57, 53, that he was symbolised (like Alála) by the eagle.

<sup>1</sup> *Unnumbered*; a few lines are quoted by Strassmaier, 6049.

<sup>2</sup> Yet in 2 Kings xvii. 30, "the men of Cuth" are said to have "made Nergal" only, from which we may infer that the ordinary population even of Cutha had forgotten the special name of their ancient goddess.

<sup>3</sup> W. A. I. iv. 15, 5.

<sup>4</sup> Zikum and Zigarum or Zikúra are the names of Gurra when regarded as the whole body of chaos out of which the heaven and the earth were formed (W. A. I. ii. 48. 26, 27). Zigarum or Zikúra stands for Zi-Gúra, "the spirit of Gúra." Cp. Gen. i. 2. If the king 01 Telloh whose name reads Ur-Bahu is to be identified with the well-known Chaldæan monarch Ur-Bagas or Ur-Zikum, the identity of Bahu and Zikum would be certain. Bahu is of Semitic origin, but was borrowed by the Accadians at an early period

Sanchuniathon, whose Greek interpreter identifies her with the night and makes her the mother of the first mortal men. The Semitic Bohu, however, was no deity, much less a goddess; the word signified merely "emptiness," and was thus a quite unsuitable rendering of the old Accadian Gurra, "the watery deep." There is little reason for wonder, therefore, that the recollection of what Bahu had primitively been should have faded out of the memories of the Semitic Babylonians. As the gods of the Accadians had become Baalim, so Bahu, like the other goddesses of primæval Chaldæa, was swept into the common vortex of Ashtaroth. She became the wife of the Sun-god of Kis (W. A. I. iii. 68, 63), and, when he was identified with the Sun-god of Nipur, of Adar also (K 133, 21). She thus passed into Gula, "the great goddess," who, though carefully distinguished from both Bahu and Nana in the earlier texts, ended in the Semitic period by becoming confounded with both. She was originally the local goddess of Nisîn,<sup>1</sup> and had the titles of "lady of the evening," "lady of the house of death," "lady of life and death." In one of the prayers prescribed for recitation in the temple of Merodach at Babylon, she is invoked as "the mother who has begotten the black-headed race (of Accadians)." She thus takes the place that is occupied by Istar in the story of the Deluge, who is there made to declare that "I have begotten my people," and is called Rubat, the Assyrian equivalent of the Accadian Gula. In fact, it is pretty clear from the local titles of Gula that she must once have been the evening star; and we can therefore under-

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<sup>1</sup> W. A. I. ii. 67, 31.

stand why it is that on the one hand she is termed “the wife of the southern sun,”<sup>1</sup> and on the other hand is made the consort of Adar by the mythologists. She forms the common meeting-point of the various local deities of Chaldaea who were connected with the Sun-god; Bahu, **Ā**, Sala, all alike are Gula, “the great one ;” and Gula is but the Accadian original of Rubat, the Semitic Istar. In this way we may explain the statement that Gula is “the heaven” (W. A. I. v. **31**, 58), the sky of the evening which was ruled by the evening star.

But it is also quite possible that, as Hommel thinks, one of the elements which went to make up the character of the later Istar was a goddess of the sky who corresponded to the Sky-god of Erech. If so, this might well have been Gula, whose assimilation to Istar would have been assisted by the close relation existing between Anu and Nana. However that may be, the Istar of the Semitic period inherited the attributes of Dav-kina, the goddess of the earth. The bride of Tammuz of Eridu was not the Istar of Erech, not the Istar of the evening star, but a goddess of the earth. At Eridu, the goddess of the earth was Dav-kina, his own mother, and we can thus trace to its primitive home those forms of the myth of Adônîs which made his mother his sister as well. In Cyprus, the Phœnicians called him Gingras, and declared that Kinyras was his father’s name. Kinyras, however, is but a popular perversion of Gingras, slightly changed in pronunciation so as to remind the speaker of the Phœnician *kinnôr*, “the zither,” just as Kenkhrêis, the wife of Kinyras, is again but Gingras in an Hellenised

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<sup>1</sup> W. A. I. i. 70. 4, 5.

form, **Now** the title of Gingras seems to bear the marks of its origin upon its face. It is the old Accadian *Gingiri*, or *Gingira*, which we are told was the Accadian name of Istar.<sup>1</sup> *Gingiri*, however, meant nothing more specific than "goddess." It was the feminine equivalent of the masculine *dingir*, and, like *dingir*, signified "creator." The "great" goddess of southern Babylonia was thus the creator of the world just as much as the god who stood by her side.

The identification of Istar and *Gingira* simplified the process whereby the worship of the goddess spread through Babylonia. Each city had its own *Gingira*, or "creatress;" each city, therefore, gave a welcome to its own **Istar**. When the empire of Sargon had transported the deities of southern Chaldæa to Accad, Istar naturally accompanied her bridegroom Tammuz. Whether the Semitic colouring which the worship of **Istar** received was given to it now **for** the first time at Accad, or whether it had already been received at Erech, we have no means of determining. The fact remains that from henceforth Istar became a Semitic goddess; her cult was almost

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<sup>1</sup> W. A. I. ii. 48, 29. The ideographs of which it is a gloss read Sar-sar, a name of Ea, according to ii. 55, 54. Perhaps therefore we should look to Eridu as the source of the name, where Ea and Davkina would be grouped together as "the gods Sar-sar," corresponding to the An-sar and Ki-sar of another system of cosmogony. However, the words explained in the portion of the text which gives the gloss *Gingira* seem to belong to a document that emanated from the court of Sargon of Accad; see ll. 40, 47, and the astronomical notices. In the early Accadian inscriptions *Gingira* has the more correct form *Gingiri* (written *GINGI-ri*). The mode of writing the name proved very convenient for the Semites, who regarded it as expressing their *Ista-ri* (instead of *Istar* or *Istaru*), as well as for the people of Van in after times, who employed it to denote the name of their own goddess **Sari** (instead of **Saris**). See also above, p. 143.

purely Semitic in character, and the two great centres of her worship were the Semitic cities of Erech and Accad.

Her worship was a reflexion of that worship of nature which underlay the Semitic conception of Baalism. The fierce passions excited by an Eastern sun found their expression in it. Prostitution became a religious duty, whose wages were consecrated to the goddess of love. She was served by eunuchs and by trains of men and boys who dressed like women and gave themselves up to women's pursuits. Istar, in fact, had ceased to be the "pure" goddess of the evening star. The other elements in her hybrid character had come to the front, aided by the Semitic conception of the female side of the divinity. She was now the fruitful goddess of the earth, teeming with fertility, the feminine development of the life-giving Sun-god, the patroness of love. The worshipper who would serve her truly had to share with her her pains and pleasures. Only thus could he live the divine life, and be, as it were, united with the deity. It was on this account that the women wept with Istar each year over the fatal wound of Tammuz; it was on this account that her temples were filled with the victims of sexual passion and religious frenzy, and that her festivals were scenes of consecrated orgies. As the worship of the goddess spread westward, the revolting features connected with it spread at the same time. The prophets of Israel denounce the abominations committed in honour of Ash-toreth and Baal within the sacred walls of Jerusalem itself; the Greek writers stand aghast at the violations of social decency enjoined as religious duties on the adorers of the oriental Aphroditê; and Lucian himself —if Lucian indeed be the author of the treatise—is

shocked at the self-mutilation practised before the altar of the Syrian goddess of Hierapolis. From Syria, the cult, with all its rites, made its way, like that of Attys-Adonis, to the populations beyond the Taurus. At Komana in Kappadokia, the goddess Ma was ministered to by 6000 eunuch-priests, and the Galli of Phrygia rivalled the priests of Baal and Ashtoreth in cutting their arms with knives, in scourging their backs, and in piercing their flesh with darts. The worship of the fierce powers of nature, at once life-giving and death-dealing, which required from the believer a sympathetic participation in the sufferings and pleasures of his deities, produced alternate outbursts of frenzied self-torture and frenzied lust.

There was, however, a gentler side to the worship of Istar. The cult of a goddess who watched over the family bond and whose help was ever assured to the faithful in his trouble, could not but exercise a humanising influence, however much that influence may have been sullied by the excesses of the popular religion. But there were many whose higher and finer natures were affected only by the humanising influence and not by the popular faith. Babylonia does not seem to have produced any class of men like the Israelitish prophets; but it produced cultivated scribes and thinkers, who sought and found beneath the superstitions of their countrymen a purer religion and a more abiding form of faith. Istar was to them a divine "mother," the goddess who had begotten mankind, and who cared for their welfare with a mother's love. It is true that they seem to have preferred addressing her by some other name than that which was polluted by the Galli and their female com-

radea; it was **to** Gula, rather than to Istar **or** Rubat, **that** the priest of Bel was told to pray; and the translators of the penitential psalms turn the Nana (Innana) of the Accadian original into *istaritu*, "the goddess," instead of Istar. But if questioned, they would have said that the goddess to whom their petitions and praises were addressed was indeed Istar, and that Gula and Nana and Milkat were but various names under which the same deity was adored. The people, it is true, may have regarded the goddesses of Babylonia as separate divinities, **even** as the peasant of Spain, or Italy may to-day regard his local Virgins as distinct each one from the other ; the educated Babylonian knew them to be but one—divers forms of the godhead, but no more. In fact, he did not scruple to translate by the common name of Istar the several names under which the chief goddess of Babylonia went in the old Accadian hymns. It is thus that we read in one of these :

"The light of heaven, who blazeth like the fire, art thou,  
 O goddess (*istaritum*), when thou fixest thy dwelling-place in the  
**earth ;**  
 thou who art strong as the earth !  
 Thee, the path of justice approaches thee  
 when thou enterest into the house of man.  
 A hysna, who springs to seize the lamb, art thou !  
 A lion, who stalks in the midst, art thou !  
 By day, O virgin, adorn the heaven !  
 O virgin Istar, adorn the heaven !  
 Thou who art set as the jewelled circlet of moonstone<sup>1</sup> adorn the  
 heaven !

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<sup>1</sup> *Subâ*, from the Accadian *suba*, the Assyrian equivalent of which was (*aban*) *yarakhu* (W. A. I. ii. 40, 59). In the legend of the Descent of Istar (p. 227) the *sutartum* or "jewelled circlet" belongs to Tillili, and is composed of "eye-stones." The *Suba* was the name of a god (ii. 58, 46),

Companion of the Sun-god, adorn the heaven !  
**To** cause enlightenment to prevail<sup>1</sup> am I appointed, alone<sup>2</sup> am I appointed.  
**By** the side of my father the Moon-god<sup>3</sup> to cause enlightenment to prevail am I appointed, alone am I appointed.  
**By** the side of my brother the Sun-god **to** cause enlightenment to prevail am I appointed, alone am I appointed.  
 My father Nannaru has appointed me ; to cause enlightenment to prevail **am I** appointed.  
 In the resplendent heaven to cause enlightenment to prevail am I appointed, alone am I appointed.  
 In the beginning was my glory, **in** the beginning was my glory.  
 In the beginning **was I** a goddess (*istaritum*) who marched on high.  
 Istar<sup>4</sup> the divinity of the evening sky am I.  
 Istar the divinity of the dawn am I.  
 Istar the opener of the bolts of the bright heaven is **my** (**name of**) glory.  
 My glory extinguishes the heaven, it spoils the earth.  
 The extinguisher of the heaven, the spoiler of the earth is my glory.  
 That which glows in the clouds of heaven, whose name is renowned in the world, is my glory.  
 As queen<sup>5</sup> of heaven above and below may my glory be addressed.  
 My glory sweeps<sup>6</sup> away the mountains altogether.

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and of a river which was consecrated to Tammuz (ii. 50, 12). As the god **Suba** is stated to be a form of the Sun-god, like Ilba, he is doubtless to be identified with Tammuz as "god of the Moon-stone."

<sup>1</sup> In the Accadian, "the gift of light."

<sup>2</sup> *Gitmalu*. The word has no connection with *gamālu*, "to finish," and means "sole," "unique" (as here, where the Accadian equivalent signifies "going alone"). The statement in W. A. I. iv. 69, 76, that *gitmalu* is the Accadian *sar*, "big," is derived from the secondary sense of *gitmalu* as "monstrous" or "gigantic."

<sup>3</sup> Mistranslated in the Assyrian, which has wrongly construed the Accadian postpositions.

<sup>4</sup> In the original Accadian, "mistress of the sky."

<sup>5</sup> In the original, "the unique monster" (*usugal*).

<sup>6</sup> The Assyrian translation misrenders : "I sweep away."



Thou art<sup>1</sup> the mighty fortress of the mountains, thou art their mighty bolt, O my glory.'

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May thy heart rest, may thy liver be tranquil.<sup>2</sup>

O lord (Bel) Anu the mighty one, may thy heart be at rest.

O lord (Eel), the mighty mountain Mul-lil, may thy liver be tranquil.

O goddess (*istaritum*), lady of heaven, may thy heart be at rest.

O mistress, lady of heaven, may thy liver be tranquil.

O mistress, lady of E-Ana, may thy heart be at rest.

O mistress, lady of the land of Erech, may thy liver be tranquil.

O mistress, lady of the land of the city of precious stones,<sup>3</sup> may thy heart be at rest.

O mistress, lady of the mountain of mankind,<sup>4</sup> may thy liver be tranquil.

O mistress, lady of the temple of the pasturage of mankind, may thy heart be at rest.

O mistress, lady of Babylon, may thy liver be tranquil.

O mistress, lady of the name of Nana, may thy heart be at rest.

O lady of the temple, lady of spirits, may thy liver be tranquil.

(ΣΟΛΟΡΗΟΝ.)—Tearful supplication of the heart to Istar.

Like its old copy written and published. Palace of Assur-banipal, king of Assyria."

But Istar was not merely the goddess of love. By the side of the amorous goddess there was also a warlike one. The Syrian goddess who migrated westward was a war-

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<sup>1</sup> The Assyrian mistranslates : "I am."

<sup>2</sup> The concluding litany probably belongs to a later period than the rest of the hymn, to which it has been attached, and is of the age when Erech and Babylon were the leading cities of Chaldea.

<sup>3</sup> "The city of Sula." "The river of Sula" is called "the river of Tammuz" or of Suba in W. A. I. ii. 50, 12.

<sup>4</sup> Kharsag-kalama, the name of a temple at Kis (W. A. I. ii. 61, 15), or 'Sabu (v. 12. 49, 50), also called *kapar r'i*, "the village of the shepherd," or *kapar garradi*, "the village of the warrior" Tammuz (ii. 62. 66, 67).

rior **as** well as a bride. Among the Hittites and their disciples in Asia Minor, she was served not only by Galli, but by Amazons—warrior priestesses—as well. The Artemis of Ephesos, her lineal descendant, was separated by a wide gulf from the Aphroditê of Cyprus. Both Artemis and Aphroditê were alike the offspring of the same Babylonian deity, but in making their way to Greece they had become separated and diverse. The goddess of the Hittites and of Asia Minor preserved mainly her fiercer side; the goddess of Phœnician Cyprus her gentler side. Both sides, however, had once been united in the Istar of Chaldæa. The Greek myths which recounted the story of Semiramis recorded the fact. For Semiramis is but Istar in another guise. **As Istar** was called “queen” by the Assyrians, so is Semiramis the queen of Assyria; as Semiramis deserts Menôn for Ninos or Nineveh, so did Istar desert her old haunts for her later temple at Nineveh. The dove into which Semiramis was changed was the bird sacred to Istar. Her passion for her son Ninyas, ((the Ninevite,” whom another version of the myth names Zames or Samas, is an echo of the passion of Istar, the Dav-kina of Eridu, for Tammuz the Sun-god. The warrior-queen of Assyria, in fact, was the great Babylonian goddess in her martial character.

While the gentler-mannered Babylonians preferred to dwell upon the softer side of Istar, the Assyrians, as was natural in the case of a military nation, saw in her mainly the goddess of war and battle. Like Babylonia, with its two centres of her worship at Erech and Accad, Assyria also had its two great sanctuaries of Istar at Nineveh and **Arbela**. That she should have had no famous temple in