

Ninety-nine years after Hammurabi's work, his great-grandson Ammiditana commemorated the excavation of his only canal: Ammiditana's 22<sup>nd</sup> year-name (Ad 22 = 1661 BC) identified the construction of a waterway called the Ammiditana canal (<sup>17</sup>*am-mi-di-ta-na*). The location of this canal is unknown, and its name is absent from the many hundreds of post-Ad 22 texts of northern Babylonian.

However, a new variant of the Ad 22 year name on unpublished YBC 10859 now equates the Ammiditana and H-n-n watercourses.<sup>4)</sup> The fragmentary tablet preserves only a few weathered lines on its obverse, just enough to indicate that it concerned a house (12 gín é.dù.a) owned by an otherwise unknown man named Maququm [*ma-qú-qum*]; nothing beyond this can be read on the tablet—except for the very last lines of the reverse, which give:

rev. [iti ab].<sup>17</sup>è<sup>17</sup> u<sub>4</sub> 15.kam  
 2' [mu *am-mi*]-*di-ta-na* lugal.e  
     [<sup>17</sup>h]a-*am-mu-ra-bi*  
 4' [nu-h]u-uš-ni-šī mu.un.ba.al[.la]

The restoration of Ammiditana's name in line 2' (rather than Samsuditana's name, the other possibility) rests on the fact that Samsuditana had no year names claiming to have built any canals at all. And its identification as a variant of Ad 22 derives from the fact that, among Ammiditana's year-names, only variants of that one use the verbal chain mu.un.ba.al.la. Thus this appears to be a new, third variant of the same year-name (i.e., Ad 22c), identifying the two hydronyms. Notwithstanding, the H-n-n name was plainly preferred long after Hammurabi's time, and even four decades past Ad 22; and indeed, that we have only this one exemplar implies that Ammiditana's work was altogether unimpressive by Hammurabian standards.<sup>5)</sup>

Ammiditana's decision to attach his name to Hammurabi's most famous civic project in the south, however, was otherwise very much in line with his other efforts to develop a "southern strategy" to win back the hearts and minds of south Babylonian citizens. The new variant does not necessarily indicate that Ammiditana re-opened the channel all the way to Eridu (though neither is that excluded); only that he worked in that direction, and specifically in emulation of his royal ancestor. But the allusion is also more than incidental, as it is consistent with a wider programme of Ammiditana's cultic reforms and ideological maneuvers advancing the idea of a Babylonian renaissance in the south, geared specifically towards southern audiences, whether resident in the north, or remaining in the south.<sup>6)</sup>

1) K. Van Lerberghe and G. Voet, however, make the persuasive case that, by the Late OB, the canal was essentially fed by the Tigris River (*A Late Old Babylonian Temple Archive from Dūr-Abiešuh*, CUSAS 8 [Bethesda, MD: CDL Press, 2009] pp. 4-6). RIME 4 3.6.7, the only inscription of Hammurabi's to mention the canal, adds only that he built Dūr-Sîn-muballit-abim-wāliḏiya at its "intake" (ka), and hymnifies Anum and Enlil, suggesting Uruk and Nippur as major nodes along its route.

2) Cf. CUSAS 8 pp. 58-59; van Lerberghe, pers. comm., now agrees with Andrew George that the sign before the FN is kun(.ḥi.a) and not gú.

3) CUSAS 8 38; CUSAS 8 80 further suggests that deep-water boats continued to reach Nippur in these years, attesting to the vitality of the system down to the end of the period; but, strictly speaking, the text is not either dated or clearly datable.

4) I would like to thank the Yale Babylonian Collection for its kind permission to cite this unpublished text.

5) Though it is interesting that the exemplar dates to the tenth month; that is, the variant was not simply made in an early month and quickly discarded.

6) See my analysis of these efforts, forthcoming as "Re-forging 'Sumerian' kingship in the Late Old Babylonian Period," in *Conceptualizing Past, Present and Future*, Melammu Symposia 9, ed. S. Fink and R. Rollinger.

Seth RICHARDSON, <seth1@uchicago.edu>

**95) Contrast through ironic self-citation in *Atra-ḥasīs*** — The Old Babylonian epic of *Atra-ḥasīs* is divided into two parts: the Igigu-myth, describing the creation of humanity, and the Flood-myth, describing the near annihilation of humanity (see MORAN 1987:245). The two parts form each other's mirror image, creation becoming destruction. They were two separate mythical threads and reappear in

different contexts: the Flood-myth appears at the end of the *Gilgameš* epic, while the scene describing the creation of humanity appears at the end of *Enūma Eliš*.

What has not been noted so far, is that the contrast between the two parts of *Atra-ḫasīs* is expressed through ironic citations of earlier lines. In at least three and possibly four cases, a line from the first part is cited in the second, but with the opposite meaning of its first appearance.

The four cases are:

When the gods decide to create humanity, they summon the birth-goddess Bēlet-ili with the following words:

*attī-ma šassūru bāniat awīlāti*, “You are the birth-goddess, creator of humanity!” (I 194)

But when, after the Flood, the gods decide to limit human procreation, they again summon Bēlet-ili, saying:

*[attī-ma ša]ssūru bāniat šīmāti*, “You are the birth-goddess, creator of destinies!” (III vi 47)

LAMBERT (1980:57-8) has interpreted the broken context of this line to mean that Bēlet-ili is being summoned to create natural death. The word *šīmtu*, “destiny”, is often used as a euphemism for death. Thus, the creation of human life and the creation of human death are mirrored in the appeal to Bēlet-ili.

After humanity is created, the text describes how the people begin to multiply, eventually disturbing Enlil with their noise. This noise is described with a metaphor:

*[m]ātum kīma lī’i išappu*, “The land bellowed like a bull.” (II i 3)

Enlil is so disturbed that he decides to wipe out the noisy humans. The Flood he creates to do so is described with the same metaphor:

*[abūb]u kīma lī’i išappu*, “The Flood bellowed like a bull.” (III iii 15)

The noise of humanity multiplying, and the noise of humanity being destroyed, are thus mirrored in the use of the same metaphor (for the importance of noise in *Atra-ḫasīs*, see HEFFRON 2014).

When the humans are created to take over the hard work of the Igigu-gods, Bēlet-ili declares that she has accomplished this task at the prompting of Enki.

*apṭur ulla andurā[ra ašku]n*, “I have untied the neck ring and established freedom!” (I 243)

Her statement is met with enthusiastic gratefulness by the gods, but when the humans later have to be diminished by the plagues of the gods, and Enki keeps helping the humans to escape those plagues, the gods turn from gratefulness to accusation:

*[ta]pṭur ulla andurāra taškun*, “You have untied the neck ring and established freedom!” (II vi 28 = II v 19 = [II v 1’?])

To create the humans and to stop the humans from being killed is thus celebrated and condemned with the very same sentence.

The last example is less clearcut. Humanity is created as a mixture of clay and blood, which Bēlet-ili divides into fourteen lumps. Fourteen birth-goddesses then shape these lumps into seven women and seven men.

*šinašam ukallalā maḥrūša*, “They completed them in pairs before her.” (S iii 12)

Gender in *Atra-ḫasīs* thus appears to be dichotomous, but it is exactly this pairing into genders which leads to procreation, multiplication, noise, the disturbance of Enlil and the destruction of humanity. When the gods create death, they also create a series of other measures to keep down childbirth:

*[a]ppūna šaluštum li[b]ši ina niši*, “In addition, let there be a third category among the people”. (III vii 1)

This line has most often been understood in connection with the following line, which reads, “Let there be women who give birth and women who do not give birth.” However, I would read the two as separate injunctions, with the “third category” as a contrast to the earlier creation of genders. I would argue that *šinašam* and *šaluštum*, “in pairs” and “a third” mirror each other as do the other lines described above.

In a forthcoming article, I discuss the discursive structure of gender in cuneiform cultures, arguing that there were not necessarily three genders (cf. GABBAY 2008), but that gender was arranged according to a three-part structure (HELLE, *forthcoming*). Therefore, it would not be surprising to see the

dichotomous genders created in the beginning of Atra-ḫasīs supplemented by the creation of a third category.

However the last example is interpreted, there is clearly a pattern of ironic self-citation in *Atra-ḫasīs*, where a line is repeated with only minor alterations but with the opposite meaning. However, this form of self-citation is not unique to *Atra-ḫasīs*. For example, it can be found also in the *Gilgameš* epic. MORAN (2001:173-4) described how the phrase *šeššet urri u sebe mušâti*, “six days and seven nights” (I 194 = [X 58, 135, 235] = XI 209) serves as a pivot in the epic: it marks first the transformation from non-human to human, then from human to non-human, and finally from non-human back to human. The same phrase thus carries out opposed movements.

Another example of ironic self-citation in *Gilgameš* is the line *šittīnšu ilum-ma šullultāšu amēlātu*, “two thirds of him is a god but a third of him is human” (I 48 = IX 51). This line appears first in a long praise of Gilgameš, where the emphasis is clearly on his divinity. The fact that he is two thirds divine is highlighted as an example of his exceptional status. But when the line reappears, it is spoken by the scorpion woman to her husband. The two are discussing whether to let Gilgameš enter the tunnel that will lead him to Ut-napišti, and the scorpion man has just stated: *ša illikannâši šīr ilī zumuršu*, “The one who has come to us: His body is the flesh of the gods” (IX 49). Standing against this line, the scorpion woman’s statement that Gilgameš is two thirds god, but one third human, reverses the original emphasis: she highlights the part of his body that is human, and not made of the flesh of the gods.

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Sophus HELLE, <clh887@alumni.ku.dk>, University of Copenhagen

**96) An Alternate Ending to an Akkadian Letter-Prayer to Amurru (AbB 12, no. 99)** — Twenty-five years ago W. H. van Soldt published an interesting letter-prayer from a man named Ardum to the god Amurru.<sup>1)</sup> In this short note, I offer an alternative translation of the prayer’s final sentence, which explains how a bed-ridden man delivered his prayer to the god and granted others the authority to lay the petition before the deity.

Van Soldt gives the Akkadian text as follows:<sup>2)</sup>

Obv. 1 *a-na be-el-ia*<sup>d</sup>mar.«mar».tu  
 2 *ša i-na ma-ḫar*<sup>d</sup>utu *qí-bi-is-sú ša-ma-at*  
 3 *qí-bí-ma*  
 4 *um-ma ar-du-um sag.èr-ka-ma*  
 5 *it-ṭi a-mi-li ta-ab-na-an-ni-ma su-qà-am*  
 6 *tu-še-te-qà-an-ni*  
 7 *ú ša-at-ti-ša* udu siskur.siskur.re *a-la-qé-ku-ma*  
 8 *a-na i-lu-ti-ka ka-bi-it-tim*  
 9 *i-ip-pu-uš*  
 10 *i-na-an-na na-ak-ru ik-šu-da-an-ni-ma*  
 11 *mu-uš-ke-né-ku-ma a-aḫ-ḫu-a*  
 12 *ú-ul i-a-ri-ru-ni*  
 Rev. 13 *šum-ma AN ka*<sup>3)</sup> *ra-bi-tum* ša ra am  
 14 *i-na*<sup>gīs</sup> *ná na-da-a-ku di-ki-an-ni*  
 15 udu siskur.siskur.re *ṭa-aḫ-da-am*