VII. ULUSLARARASI HİTİTOLOJİ KONGRESİ BİLDİRİLERİ
Çorum 25-31 Ağustos 2008

Acts of the VIIth International Congress of Hittitology

I. CİLT

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Ankara 2010
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Yayına Hazırlayan
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MESOPOTAMIAN FORERUNNERS TO THE “BABILILI RITUAL” FROM BOĞAZKÖY?

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More than a decade has passed since I announced my intention to produce an edition of the *babilili* ritual from the Hittite capital (*CTH* 718). While other duties and opportunities have hampered me in fulfilling my promise, I am now on the verge of completing this work. During the years since my initial listing of the textual material in the Güterbock Memorial Volume,1 I have collated the great majority of the fragments and have made a number of additional joins. Meanwhile, other scholars have identified further fragments of this rite.2 The bulk of this material is inscribed in a Boğazköy hand of the empire period (both early and late), but one or two small fragments may be Middle Hittite in date.

As of today, the composition is represented by the four-columned Tablet 1, of whose well-preserved Manuscript A3 (early empire period) I have recovered or reconstructed 218 of an estimated 240 lines. Twenty additional fragments duplicate this section of this text, one of which, Manuscript B4 (late empire), carries the ceremonies beyond the point where Manuscript A ends with a mutilated colophon. The 153 additional lines recovered for Manuscript B bring the total of the ordered material to 371 lines, resulting in one of the longest ritual compositions known from Ḫattuša.5 Tablet 2, for which there are but

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2 See my forthcoming edition for details. The paragraph references below also refer to this edition.
3 *KUB* 39.71 + *KBo* 40.93.
4 *KBo* 39.169 + *KUB* 39.70 ++.
5 I leave aside here the ceremonies of the state cult and the multi-day royal funerary rites (*CTH* 450).
a pair of witnesses, diverges from Tablet 1 after the initial two paragraphs, but clearly belongs to the same ritual. In addition, we have around 25 unplaced fragments, some of which contain ritual acts or incantations not represented in Tablets 1 or 2, suggesting that a substantial portion of the text has yet to be recovered.

Supporting this suspicion is the fact that Tablet 1 commences “on the second day, at [dawn].” A tablet now lost must have gone before, presenting the introduction to the composition, with its statement of purpose, as well as the events of the opening day of the ceremonies. The significant similarities in ritual action and materials shared by CTH 718 with CTH 481 and 482 have led some scholars to see one or both of these latter compositions as part of the babilili text. While all of these works undoubtedly come from the same ritual “workshop,” a direct connection is most unlikely since their concerns are so varied. In particular, CTH 481 details the installation of an ISTAR-avatar in a new temple as part of the expansion of her cult, while CTH 482 presents a reformation in the routine liturgy of a similar divine figure. In contrast, the goal of the babilili ritual is the purification of a member of the royal family from the pollution of sin, an objective sought with the aid of the same type of goddess.

CTH 718 obviously owes its designation among Hittitologists to the frequent occurrence therein of the adverb babilili, “in Akkadian,” which introduces almost all of its incantations, of which about 25 different examples are currently available. This specification of language has still not been found in any other Hittite ritual, although it does appear elsewhere as a designation for a specialist scribe or in reference to the language of communication in letters. While almost all of the preserved incantations in our composition are indeed written in Akkadian, there are also three in Hittite, and one in Hurrian, the latter unfortunately completely lost.

The activity of the second day of the babilili ritual centers around a meal offered to the ISTAR-variety Pirinkir, interspersed with incantations explicating the ceremonies and requesting favors in return. The description begins with a katra-woman going to draw

6 Of course, given the repetitive nature of much of the text, some of the very small fragments I have regarded as duplicates of Tablet 1 might equally well belong instead to Tablet 2.
7 For example, H. M. Kümmel, Review of KUB 39, ZA 59 (1969): 323.
9 DUB.SAR bá-bi-li-li, KBo 3.21 (CTH 313) iv 12’.
“water of purification” (šeḫelliyaš watar) from a spring, performing the requisite rites in the course of this task. This sanctified water is then employed throughout the remaining ceremonies by one or two sankunni-priests and the offerant. Further salient characteristics of this text are the use of a šāḫu-drinking vessel (written ZA.ḪUM) for libations and the frequent burning of the hūeššar-aromatic. We also often encounter Hurroid technical vocabulary like ḫuprušši, “crucible,” and ambašši, “burnt offering.”

Students of Hittite religion will immediately recognize that the ritual program on display here is rooted in the magico-religious tradition of Kizzuwatna, the Hurrian-influenced culture of Cilicia and adjacent northwestern Syria. It is difficult to trace this praxis further back in time or place beyond Kizzuwatna due to the paucity of detailed evidence for ritual performance in cuneiform archives other than that of Boğazköy before the first millennium. Neither the ritual corpus from Emar on the Middle Euphrates nor the handful of ceremonies known from earlier Mari offer significant points of comparison, and the few, rather opaque and laconic, earlier sources from Sumer or Babylonia are of little help.

Turning now to the Akkadian speeches, we may observe that these were composed in a variety of West Peripheral Akkadian, although not in the particular sort customarily employed at Ḫattuša for treaties and diplomatic letters, which is marked by a limited vocabulary and frequent grammatical errors—or should I say levelings? Like that scribal idiolect, the babilili incantations display a general indifference to the inherent voiced or voiceless value of syllabic signs and a tendency to write samekhs with syllabograms containing šin (e.g., MI-I-ŠI for Babylonian mēši). But they do employ the grammatically correct forms of the second-person singular feminine possessive pronoun (-KI) and imperative (e.g., AKLĪ, “eat”) and include a number of recherché lexemes. The exotic character of the Akkadian on offer here is also evident in the difficulty caused for the Hittite copyists by some of the more complicated and less stereotyped incantations, resulting in some garbling and misreading of signs, particularly in Manuscript B.

13 See Miller, Studies; and R. Strauß, Reinigungsrituale aus Kizzuwatna (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2006).
14 For an overview of this extensive body of evidence, see D. Fleming, The Installation of Baal’s High Priestess at Emar (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1992), and Time at Emar (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2000).
18 For references, see the glossary to my forthcoming edition.
Let us now examine the Akkadian incantations with an eye to the question of possible forerunners. Here, as in connection with the ritual program, we are constrained by the problem of available sources. In comparison to the voluminous series of the Neo-Assyrian libraries, relatively few incantations are preserved from third- or second-millennium Mesopotamia, and most of those we do have appear to be one-off productions deriving from the practice of freelance magicians, not standard addresses and orations from the routine duties of the officiants of the state cult like those contained in CTH 718. Magical series like Maqlû and Šurpu are not attested as such before the Neo-Assyrian period.

Group I of the babîlî incantations, which contains those speeches by far most frequently attested, summons the deity to her meal, exhorting her to wash, eat, and drink, and ultimately to be sated (see Table I). Most interesting in these incantations are the epithets addressed to the goddess: Great Queen, Lady of Our Gods and Kings, Lady of the Land(s), Lady of the ayakku-Shrine, and Elamite Goddess. From a Mesopotamian viewpoint, these are all most appropriate titles for an IŠTAR-avatar, as are her family connections with Šîn and his circle mentioned in the most elaborate of these texts. Particularly important is the label “Elamite Goddess,” because Pirinkir, the particular variety of IŠTAR in the babîlî rite, was ultimately derived from the Elamite Pininkir. None of these details concerning the deity and her background could have been contributed by a ritual author schooled only in traditional Hittite religious lore.

While similar invitations to partake of food and drink are indeed to be found in later Mesopotamian rituals such as Tãkultu and in prayers, the use of the verbs mañãru, akãlu, and šatû is obviously conditioned here by the ritual situation and is of little significance for establishing lines of derivation or influence.

I turn now to Group II, in which our goddess is praised (Table II). Here we encounter an additional epithet, namely “Queen of Heaven,” a further reference to father Šîn, and mention of a feature heretofore unique to the Kizzuwatnaean religious system—the


22 See R. Frankena, Tãkultu: De sacrale maaltijd in het assyrische ritueel (Leiden, 1953), passim.

subordinate goddesses who precede and follow IŠTAR. The appearance of the archaic feminine plural nominative pronoun ŠÂTU in the pertinent speech, however, hints that this concept might go back to an earlier Akkadian-speaking community, perhaps resident in a region of Syria subject to Hurrian influence.

The final collection of Akkadian incantations, Group III, presents pleas for the magical cleansing of the offerant (Table III). Two of these are not especially significant, but the longest (III.A.1) provides our only secure parallel to a particular Mesopotamian source. The wish that fish and fowl might carry off a sufferer’s sins appears in a namburbi found at Küyunjik, in a similar Sultantepe text, and in one of the lipšur-litanies (attested at both Küyunjik and Assur). On the basis of several older orthographic features, Erica Reiner postulated that an Old Babylonian tradition lies behind these “litanies.” This is slight, but very suggestive, evidence for the existence already in the early second millennium of a native Akkadian tradition from which the bird and fish incantation of CTH 718 might have derived. It is interesting to note that a similar magical action appears elsewhere in the ritual program, although the language employed in this instance is Hittite throughout:

[Afterwards], the priest [takes] a boat inlaid with silver. A wooden image stands on the boat. The head and eyes [of the wooden image] are plated with silver. On the boat are placed glassware, [aromatics], a knot(ted cord), and a box.

[Then] the priest picks up the boat and carries [it] down to the river. He releases [it] on the river and thereby [speaks] as follows (in Hittite): “As the knot is [not] loosened, so may the evil likewise [not] be let loose! And as (the river) [swallows up] the box, so may it likewise swallow up the evil! May the river carry [it] to the sea!”

In closing, let us look now at the other Hittite-language incantations (Table VI). The better preserved (VI.2) is a typical example of Hittite analogic magic, as was most

27 STT 75:9.
29 1 §§32’-33’.
30 For the sake of completeness, I have also appended the unintelligible (Table IV) and fragmentary incantations (Table V) appearing in CTH 718.
probably also the fragmentary VI.1. As mentioned earlier, the sole Hurrian incantation introduced in this rite breaks off immediately following the statement that the practitioner “speaks in Hurrian.”

To summarize: Many exotic features of language and content demonstrate that the Akkadian incantations in the babili ritual derive from an earlier Mesopotamian source, but in only a single instance are we able to identify a close parallel from the south. Since the Standard Babylonian texts in question here are later in date than our material from Boğazköy, we may observe once again the peculiarly significant position occupied by the archive of the Hittite capital as a witness to the development of the Mesopotamian “canon.”

Table I. Invitation to Meal

I.A. Wash!

I.A.1.  “Wash your hands, My Lady, Great Queen! Let your fingers feed morsels to your lips!”

\textit{MI-I-E-ŠI ŠU.MEŠ/ḪI.A-KI BE-EL-TI\textsubscript{4} MUNUS.LUGAL.GAL}

\begin{align*}
ŠU.SI.MEŠ/ḪI.A-KI/TI\textsubscript{4} BU-(UH)-(HA)-RI-KI ŠA/A-NA/AŠ ŠAP-TI-KI \\
ŠU-UK-KI-IL\textsubscript{5}
\end{align*}


\textit{MI-I-ŠI ŠU.MEŠ-KI BE-EL-TI\textsubscript{4} DINGIR.MEŠ-NI Ü LUGAL.MEŠ-NI}

1: §6*


\textit{MI-I-ŠI ŠU.MEŠ-KI}

1: §40’; F7: §2’(?)

\[31\] F1 iii 10’.

I.B. Eat!

I.B.1. “Eat, O Ištar, My Lady of the Lands! May it be good!”

*IŠTAR BE-EL-TI₄ ŠA KUR.KUR.MEŠ/HILA AK-LI LU-Ú ŤÁ-(A)-AB

1.B: §42’; 1.F: §42’


AK-LI BE-EL-TI₄ DINGIR.MEŠ-NI Ù LUGAL.MEŠ[-NI]

F14: §4’, §8’; F15: §2’

I.B.3. “[Eat], O Lady, Great Queen, [that which] you asked of me! The misdeed, favorably [… …] … [Release] the [evil(?)] sin!”


F12: §2’

I.B.4. “I have given you a neck tendon to eat; I have given him a neck tendon to eat.”


F6: §4’

I.B.5. “May it (a sheep) receive the salt for you, My Lady, Great Queen!”


MUNUS.LUGAL.GAL

1: §23’, §44’

I.B.6. “… O Ištar, [let] Šīn, your father, [eat]! Let Ningal, your mother, <eat> well! Let Šamaš, your twin, eat! Let Ellaprat, your vizier, eat! Let Ea, the King, your creator, eat! Indeed all the gods … O Elamite goddess, let them lift up …”


I.C. Drink!


\( \bar{s}i\-\bar{i}\-\bar{t}i\ be\-\bar{e}l\-\bar{t}i \_4\) Dingir.meš-ni ū Lugal.meš-ni

F6: §2’; F9: §2’

I.C.2. “[ … ] O Moon-god, my father, make drink!”

[ … ] “xxx \( a\-bi\) ša\-qi [ … ] x [ … ] -p\( \bar{u}\)-\( u\)-a\-na Dingir[\( LM \)]

1: §48’

I.D. Uncertain and General

I.D.1. “[Eat/Drink], O Lady of the ayakku-shrine!”

\( \bar{a}k\-li / \bar{s}i\-\bar{i}\-\bar{t}i\ be\-\bar{e}\-\bar{e}\-\bar{t}i\) L\( Ti\)\(_4\) urū-a-yā-a-kī

F16: §2’


\( m\-u\-u\-h\-ri\ be\-\bar{e}\-l\-\bar{t}i\) Dingir.meš-ni ū Lugal.meš-ni


I.D.3. “Allin tuttum[\( man,\ allin(?)]\) tuttumman receive! [ … ] Allin tuttum[\( man\ … \)]

O Vizier Ilabrat [ … ]”

\( a\-a\-l\-i\-n\ ut\-u\-t\-u\-u\-u\-u\-u\-u\-[m\-ma\-an\ a\-al\-li\-in(?)]\) Tu\-ut\-Tu\-u\-um\-ma\-an

\( m\-u\-hu\-ra\)(-) [ … ] A\-a\-l\-i\-n\ Tu\-ut\-Tu\-u\-um\[-ma\-an\ … \]

\( 4I\-la\-a\-b\-ra\-a\-t\ šu\-kal\-li\)(-)[… ]

F17: §5’
I.E. Be sated!


\[ \text{ŠA-BA}'-A ŠA-TÜ-UK-KI ŠAR-RA-AT ÆA-YA-AK-KI [ … ] BE-LI \]

\[ \text{URU KÁ.DINGIR.RA [ŠAR-RA-AT']} \text{ URU NI-NU-WA PA-NE'} [ … ] \]

1Iš-HA-RA ÆZI-x [ … ] ÆDA'-x-ZU [ o ] x x [ … ]

F17: §6’

Table II. Worship and Praise

II.1. “This that you asked of me: O Lady of the Land, you asked of me; O Lady of the Lands, you asked of me; O Queen of Heaven, you asked of me. The receipt of honors you asked of me. The possessions of your(!) father you asked of me, A lamb you asked of me. Before the ayakku-shrine you answered me. You heard (my plea) for your intercession. You …, you entered(?) to me, you … me, … (Even) by day you are powerful!”

\[ \text{AN-NA-A ŠA TE-RE-ŠI-IN-NI BE-EL-AT KUR-TI TE-RE-ŠI-IN-NI BE-EL-AT} \]

\[ \text{KUR.KUR.MEŠ TE-RE-ŠI-IN-NI MUNUS.LUGAL ŠA-ME-E} \]

\[ \text{TE-RE-ŠI-IN-NI A-ḤAZ KU-BĀ-(A)-TI TE-RE-ŠI-IN-NI LI-IT A-BI-ŠA} \]

\[ \text{TE-RE-ŠI-IN-NI Ú-NI-QÁ-MA TE-RE-ŠI-IN-NI AŠ IGI A-YA-AK-KI} \]

\[ \text{TA-PU-LI-IN-NI A-ḤAZ A-BU-UK-KI TA-AŠ-MA-E-IN-NI} \]

\[ \text{TA-Ḥ-MA-AZ-ZA TA-RU-UM-ME-NI TA-NU-NI-MI/ME-IN-NI} \]


\[ \text{ŠA-LI-ṬÁ-A-TI} \]

1: §10’

II.2. “Where are those who go before you? Where [are those who go behind you], the hierodules, the courtesans? [ … ]”


\[ \text{MUNUS.MEŠ SUḪUR.LÁL-KI MUNUS.MEŠ KAR.KID-KI T[I- … ]} \]

F11: §2’
III.3. “… Sin [ … ] all of the Igigi [ … ] … her father.”

\[
\begin{align*}
&\text{ŠI-MA-DÁ-A-LI} \quad \text{.alloc.} \\
&\text{KA-LI-ŠI-NA} \quad \text{alt.} \text{GI-G[ … ]} \\
&\text{ŠI-MA-DÁ-A-LI} \\
&\text{A-BA-A-Š[ … ]} \\
&\text{2: §12’}
\end{align*}
\]

Table III. Request for Purification

III.A. Purify!

III.A.1. “Purify the man! [ … ] Purify his sins! Turn to him in favor [today]! He [is sending] the fish to [the sea] and the bird up to the sky!”

\[
\begin{align*}
&\text{A-MI-LA Ú-UL-LI-IL}_5 \quad [ … ] \text{HI-IȚ-TÁ-TI-ŠU Ú-UL-L[L]-IL}_4 \text{ I-NA UD.KAM} \\
&\text{AN-NI-I GAB-TA ŠU-UK-NA KU}_6 \text{ I-NA A.AB.BA MUŞEN} \\
&\text{I-NA ŠA-ME-E Ú-Š[E-EL]-LI} \\
&\text{2: §5’, §15’}
\end{align*}
\]

III.A.2. “Release [his misdeed] and his offense! [Purify his] sin!”

\[
\begin{align*}
&\text{[R-NA-ŠU’]} \text{ GL}_5 \text{-IL-LA-TI-ŠU PA-A-ȚE-ER I-L[A-LA’] HE-E-ȚI[-ŠU]} \\
&\text{F10: §5’}
\end{align*}
\]

III.B. Release!

III.B.1. “[ … ] O Lady [of the Land(?), release my offense(?)]! O Queen of Heaven, release my sin!”

\[
\begin{align*}
&\text{[ … ] x BE-EL-AT KUR[ ] PU-ŬT-RI MUNUS.LUGAL ŠA-ME-E AR-NI} \\
&\text{PU-ŬT-RI} \\
&\text{1.H: §14’}
\end{align*}
\]
Table IV. Unintelligible


F7: §4’

Table V. Fragmentary

V.1.  “[ ... ] Ištar, Great Queen, [ ... ] …”

[ ... ] x 4šTAR MUNUS.LUGAL.GAL [ ... ]-A’ AR-GA-TI ḪA-DA-A NAM-MA-RA

F4: §4’

V.2.  “[ ... ] beneath [ ... ] the gods [ ... ]”

[ ... Š]U-UP-PAL [ ... ] x DINGIR._mEŠ-ŠU [ ... ]-TE’

1: §48’

V.3.  [ ... KA’]-A-ŠI A-KAP-PA [ ... A’-B]U-YA-A

F17: §2’

V.4.  [ ... ]-UD’ AL-LU-Ŭ

F19: §2’

Table VI. Hittite

VI.1.  “It is exalted [ … ] and over against the ritual patron [it is exalted(?)].”

šar-la-an-za-wa-ra-aš [ ... ] x Ū A-NA EN.SISKUR me-na-ḫḫa-an-da [ ... ]-an-ta [šar-la-an-za]

1: §2*
VI.2. “As this *kangati* [is pure], so may [the deity] likewise be pure! And may (s)he (the deity) be reconciled with and *kangant* [over against] the ritual patron! And as the [sun] is bright, may it shine for the life of Istar and on the ritual patron!”

\[
\text{ki-i-wa kán-ga-tì GIM-an [pár-ku-i DINGIR}^{LUM-ya QA]}-\text{TAM-MA pár-ku-iš e-eš-du}
\]

\[
\]

1: §4*

VI.3. “As the knot is [not] loosened, so may the evil likewise [not] be let loose! And as (the river) [swallows up] the box, so may it likewise swallow up the evil! May the river carry [it] to the sea!”

\[
\]

1: §33’