

Ancient philology in the New Year ritual – Since J. Bottéro's article on the fifty names of Marduk, Assyriologists again have become aware of the sacred « philology » of the Babylonians ; the latest contribution, by Steve Tinney, appeared in NABU 1989 as no. 3. Here, I will draw the reader's attention to some examples in one section of the New Year ritual of Babylon, written down in the Seleucid period. The passages can be found in Fr. Thureau-Dangin, *Rituels accadiens* (1921) 138 f., copy on p. 153 ; compare the latest translation by W. Farber in *TUAT* II/2 (1987) 218 f.

Line 307 TUR+DIŠ = GENNA « Saturn », with the epithet *kakkab kit-tú u mi-šar*. GENNA is associated with Sumerian *gi.na* and, for that reason, with Akkadian *kittu* (and its companion *mišāru*).

Line 309 KAK.SI.SÁ « Sirius », with the epithet *ma-di-di mê tam-tim*, « measuring the water of the sea ». Does the scribe play with *kak*, « peg » for measuring, and *si.sá* « make straight »?

Line 311 NE.NE.GAR with the epithet *šá ina ramānišu banû*. The Akkadian is based on Sumerian *ní.ní.gar*, as W.G. Lambert has seen in *AfO* 17 (1954-56) 320, on line 6.

Line 312 NU.MUŠ.DA with the epithet *muš-tab-ru-u zunni* « which makes rain last long ». This is a positive statement based on the negatively formulated Sumerian *nu.mùš.túm* « not ceasing » (Akkadian *la mupparkû*)

Line 313 GABA GÍR.TAB « Breast of Scorpio », with the epithet *ka-bi-is irat tam-tim*. GABA is taken up by *irat*, of course, and *kabāsu* may be based on Sumerian *gír.gub*.

Line 327 ÛZ « Lyra », with the epithet *ba-rat šamê* « watching over the sky ». When reading UD₅ instead of ÛZ (see R. Borger, *ABZ* Ergänzungsheft p. 422), one can discover *u₆.di barû* « to look » as the ancient philologist's explanation.

Line 328 HĒ.GÁL.A with epithet *kakkab nu-uḫ-šú* is self-evident.

Line 329 BAL.TĚŠ.A with epithet *kakkab bal-tú*. Sumerian *téš* is Akkadian *baštu*.

Line 331 A.EDEN with epithet *ba-nát ri-ḫu-tú*, « creating offspring »¹. The reading of A.EDEN is *Erua* ; EDEN = *ru₆*. The scribe explained A (or E)

as *riḫūtu* « offspring » and associated *ru* with *rú* = *dù*, Akkadian *banû* « to create ». The goddess Erua is *Šarpanītum*, a name that was etymologised in a similar way (*bānat zēri*), see *CAD* § 112*b*.

¹The rare syllabic value I = *nát*, also attested in line 259, was inspired by I = *na'id*, well known from writings of the name of king Nabonidus.

M. Stol (10-07-89)
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