When God is Forgotten …
THE ORTHOGRAPHY OF THE THEOPHORIC ELEMENT *HU(M)BAN* IN ELAMITE AND MESOPOTAMIAN ONOMASTICS [*]

> And how is it that we hear, each of us in his own native language? Parthians and Medes and Elamites and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabians – we hear them telling in our own tongues the mighty works of God.
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> *Acts* 2:8-11

Résumé. — Cet article examine les différentes graphies de l'élément théophore *Hu(m)ban* dans l'onomastique élamite, attesté dans les textes sumériens, akkadiens, élamites et achéménides. En étudiant, principalement à l'aide des données de la linguistique historico-comparative, l'influence des évolutions phonétiques sur les pratiques des scribes, nous cherchons à obtenir une meilleure compréhension du contexte dans lequel ces variations graphiques furent employées.

Abstract. — This article investigates the multiple orthographies of the theophoric element *Hu(m)ban* in Elamite onomastics, attested in the Sumerian, Akkadian, Elamite and Achaemenid text corpus. By studying the impact of phonological evolutions on scribal practice, often based on cross-linguistic evidence, one aims to obtain a better understanding of the context in which these variations on the theophoric element *Hu(m)ban* were used.

1. Introduction: Linguistic variety in the Ancient Near East

The Ancient Near East was a region where numerous people of different ethnic and geographic origins found a place to call their home. Some groups arrived in the Near East through migration, others were forced to settle in certain areas through political relocations. Some of these people founded cities, states and even empires with highly-developed government systems. Other groups kept to their ancestral traditions, having an extended family way of life with various forms of pastoralism adapted to the particular environment in which they lived. This densely populated region where each group of people spoke its own language was a stage for intercultural exchange, ethnic acculturation, and linguistic diversity.

As R. ZADOK notes (1984, p. 45),

> The Elamite onomasticon is documented from the earliest period of the cuneiform tradition, namely the middle of the third millennium, until the Hellenistic period. During over 2000 years it had an intensive contact with most of the other onomastica of Iran and Mesopotamia. […] Most of these names are Akkado-Elamite from approximately 2500-1500, the time of intensive Akkadian influence in Susiana.

Similarly as to the Akkadian onomastic tradition, Elamite names are generally composed of two elements (e.g. *Tallak-kutur*) or – although less frequently – of three elements (e.g. *Huban-hal.taš*) (R. ZADOK [1984], p. 49-59). One-element anthroponyms are rarely attested in Elamite onomastics, unless they were hypocoristics (e.g. *Šutruru*) (cf. E. GORRIS [forthcoming]). Often one of these onomastic elements in compound names, the so-called theophoric element, was the name of an Elamite divinity (e.g. *Tepti-Huban-Inšušinak*). The article will focus more particularly on the theophoric element *Hu(m)ban* in Elamite onomastics. The god Hu(m)ban was one of the principal gods of the Elamite pantheon and consequently a popular element in Elamite name-giving in the Sumerian, Akkadian, Elamite and Achaemenid text corpora.

2. The orthography of the theophoric element *Hu(m)ban*

Since the Old Elamite period, the theophoric element *Hu(m)ban* in Elamite anthroponyms has received a variety of orthographies in the Elamite and Mesopotamian text corpora [1]. According to R. ZADOK (1983, p. 95), *Hu(m)ban* has both a modified (**humba-*, e.g. *Umbaba*) and non-modified hypocoristic root (*humpan, e.g. *Ummanana*). Among these different attestations one can find *hu-um-ba(n), hu-un-ba(n), hum-ba(n), um-ba(n), im-ba(n), am-ba(n), um-ma(n), im-ma(n), hu-ba(n)*, and occasionally

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1. This research is mostly based on the references in the *Elamisches Wörterbuch* (ElW), R. ZADOK's (1984, n. 48) onomasticon and J. TAVERNIER's (2007) *Iranica*.

even personal names in which the theophoric element *Huban* is (partially) omitted.

2.1. Hu-um-ban/ba-an, Hu-un-ba-an *and* Hum-ba [2]

The most common orthography in the Old Elamite period for personal names with this theophoric element is *hu-um-ban/ba-an*. Anthroponyms with such an element are attested in Sumerian, Akkadian, as well as Elamite texts. In all likelihood, the UM sign expressed the nasal variant of the /u/ vowel (cf. J. TAVERNIER [2018], p. 424) in Elamite phonology. Either the orthography for this sound was an Elamite feature copied in Sumerian and Akkadian writings, or this nasalized vowel combination was an Akkadian way of expressing this phoneme, as Old Elamite Susiana was under strong Semitic influence [3].

The orthography *hu-un-ba-an* in the name *Da.Hunban* is attested only once in an Ur III text from Puzriš-Dagan (cf. P. STEINKELLER [1982], p. 262 fn. 97; ElW, p. 267). This individual belonged to a contingent of Elamite soldiers. The writing *Hunban* could be an orthographic mistake for the combination *hu-um-ba-an*, which is the most common orthography for the *humban* element in this Old Elamite period. However, since both the labial /m/ and dental /n/ nasal sonorants were used in Elamite to render the nasalized /u/ phoneme (e.g. *sunki.r > sugi.r* 'king'), the Sumerian scribe with knowledge of Elamite could have expressed the same sound by this orthography.

In the Middle Elamite period, the orthography *hu-um-ban/ba-an* is attested in the royal name *Humbanumena* and in the name of the god *Humban* (§ 3.1).

Although no Neo-Elamite names are attested with the CV-VC combination HU-UM, a few Neo-Assyrian attestations (ElW, p. 715-716), such as *Humban.un.daša*, *Humba.nigaš*, *Humba.ri-eš* and *Humbi-e*, have a *hu-um-ba-an* orthography. Otherwise, the CVC orthography *hum-ba* in personal names, such as *Humba.haldašu*, *Humba.nigaš*, *Humba.ri-eš* and *Humbi-e*, is exclusively attested in Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian sources (ElW, p. 696-698). This can be explained by the fact that the sign HUM does not occur in the Elamite cuneiform script. This sign HUM (R. LABAT [1988], n. 565) is a commonly attested syllabic value in Mesopotamian cuneiform script and is particularly popular among Neo-Assyrian scribes to render the theophoric element *Humban*.

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2. For the reduction of the final *n*, see J. TAVERNIER (2018, p. 424-425) and E. GORRIS (forthcoming).
3. For more information on the Semitic influence on Elamite onomastics, see R. ZADOK (1984, p. 56).

2.2. Um-ba(n)

All *um-ba(n)* attestations date from the first millennium BC and occur in Neo-Assyrian, late Neo-Elamite, and Achaemenid texts (ElW, p. 1225-1226). The anthroponyms *Umba.dara*, *Umba.habua* and *Umba.kidini/u* are all Neo-Assyrian renderings of Elamite personal names attested in the Annals of Assurbanipal (R. BORGER [1996]) and the contemporaneous Bel-ibni Archive (J. DE VAAN [1995]). The Neo-Elamite *um-ba(n)* references, such as *Umba*, *Umbaba*, *Umbazizi*, are all hypocoristic forms (R. ZADOK [1983]) from the Susa Acropole Archive (MDP 9). Perhaps there is also one individual *Um(?)-ban(?).haltaš* from the group of Elamite Nineveh Letters (NIN 25:12) with this form. Both these archives are dated to the same period, i.e. end 7th century BC to the early 6th century BC [4], and deal with political and economic developments in the Susiana region. In the first half of the first millennium BC, the Elamite lowland region of Susiana bordered to several provinces of the Neo-Assyrian Empire and shared the strategic-ally important access to the Persian Gulf with its Mesopotamian neighbours Assyria and Babylonia. The Southern Marshlands at the head of the Persian Gulf were populated with Chaldean tribes and the Elamite-Assyrian border with Aramean groups. During that same period, Susiana also had an influx of a recently immigrated (Indo-)Iranian population. Traces of this ethnic di-versity can be found in Babylonian and Elamite sources, especially in the anthroponyms occurring in these texts. The Elamite Nineveh Letters men-tion for instance individuals with hybrid Elamite-West Semitic names (E. GORRIS [2018], p. 318), while the Acropole texts comprise Elamite ren-derings of Iranian names (e.g. *Umman.dada* as an Elamite rendering of the Iranian *(H)uvan.dāta*; see J. TAVERNIER [2007], p. 213; ID. [2011], p. 240-242).

One can argue that the omission of the *h* in the script reflects the Elamite phonological evolution by which the Old and Middle Elamite /h/ loses its phonemic value and gradually disappears in writing during the first millennium BC (cf. J. TAVERNIER [2011], p. 218, 425, 439; ID. [2018], p. 425). However, the chronology of the *um-ba(n)* names seems to contra-dict this theory. There are no attestations of *um-ba(n)* in the Elamite text corpus before the end of the 7th century BC, meaning that the Elamite UM-BA orthography only came into use around the fall of the Neo-Assyrian Em-pire (612 BC). The fact that the omission of the *h* in the Akkadian dialects predates the Neo-Elamite evolution might be related to the Akkadian pro-

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4. See E. GORRIS (2020, p. 64-71 and 92-96) for a detailed description of the chronology of the Susa Acropole Archive and the Elamite Nineveh Letters.

nunciation. Whereas Elamite possessed the voiceless laryngeal fricative /h/ (cf. J. TAVERNIER [2018], p. 425), Akkadian had a voiceless velar fricative /ḫ/ (GAG § 25), which did not match the Elamite sound (see also H. PAPER [1955], p. 24-25). Being unfamiliar with the voiceless laryngeal fricative /h/, the Akkadian scribes instinctively replaced it by no sound at all [5]. As a result of the script following the actual pronunciation in Akkadian, the /h/ disappeared at a faster pace in Akkadian than in Elamite.

So the processes of omitting the initial /h/ in both Akkadian and Elamite may have been independent from each other. However, taking into account that *mb* spellings were out of fashion in Elamite by the time of the Igihalkid dynasty (1400-1200 BC) at the latest and that *hu-ban* was the most common orthography in the Neo-Elamite period (cf. § 2.6), one can only suggest that, due to the proximity of the Mesopotamian territory, this UM-BA orthography must have been the subject of language exchange around the end of the 7th century BC.

2.3. Im-ba(n)

There are only a few personal names with an *im-ba* variant, such as *im-ba.ambu*, *imba.appi*, *imba.dara'* and *imba.dena*. These names occur in Middle Babylonian, Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian texts (ElW, p. 753). The omission of the *h* follows the pattern described in the previous section (§ 2.2).

The initial vowel *i* is more difficult to explain. Similarly as to the omission of the *h* in the section 2.2, this vowel change cannot be related to the late Elamite vowel shift extensively described by J. TAVERNIER (2007b, p. 278-289) for Neo-Elamite texts. Since the orthography *im-ba* does not occur in indigenous Elamite sources, no linguistic exchange between Akkadian and Elamite could have happened.

R. ZADOK (1967, p. 63) already pointed out that the *i* and *u* vowels before the *m* are interchangeable in Akkadian renderings of the theophoric element *Hu(m)ban*. Perhaps the nasalized /u/ (cf. J. TAVERNIER [2018], p. 424), spelled UM, sounded similar to /im/ to the ears of Akkadian scribes [6]. Since there are several instances of this spelling, a scribal error can be excluded.

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5. One may compare the neglect of the aspiration in the French pronunciation of names and words taken over from English (e.g. *le prince H̱arry*, *un ẖome*).

6. If one might assume rounding of [i] to [u] before the labial [m], IM could be a reverse spelling for UM.

2.4. Am-ba(n)

The *am-ba(n)* orthographic references can mostly be found in texts from the first millennium BC. The majority of these texts belongs to the Persepolis Fortification Archive, which obliges us to take Old Persian influence into account. Indeed, all of the personal names with an *am-ba(n)* element from the Persepolis Fortification Archive can be traced back to an Old Persian root [7]. The AM-BA orthography in personal names such as *am-ba-du*, *am-ba-du-iš*, *am-ba-mi-ya*, *am-ba-na*, *am-ba-ra-ba-ra*, *am-ba-ra-ba-ráš*, *am-ba-ra-bar-ra*, *am-ba-ra-bar-ráš*, *am-ba-ráš*, *am-ba-ri-ya-iš*, *am-bar-za*, *am-ba-u-za* (ElW, p. 49-50) seems to be a Neo-Elamite rendering for Old Persian names starting with the element *ham-* (cf. J. TAVERNIER [2007], p. 193-194; ID. [2011], p. 193-212), meaning 'co-, together, same' [8]; the consecutive *b* is consequently the first consonant of the second onomastic element of the Old Persian compound name. The reason why the Old Persian syllable /ham/ was rendered /am/ in Late Elamite is probably related to the gradual disappearance of the [h] sound from the Elamite phonetic inventory (cf. J. TAVERNIER [2011], p. 220; ID. [2018], p. 425). Since, unlike the *Hu(m)ban* element, these Old Persian names had no centuries-old orthographical tradition in Elamite, they were subject to the most recent Late Elamite writing with the initial *h* missing.

Among the *am-ba* examples, a few personal names such as *Amba.appa/i*, *Amba.habua*, *Amba.ziniza* appear in Akkadian texts dating from the Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian periods. According to W. HINZ and H. KOCH (ElW, p. 49) *Amba.appi* is a short form for *Huban-ahpi* with orthographic variations, such as *Umman-appa/i*, *Umman-abba* and *Imba-appi*. *Amba.habua* is an orthographic variant of *Umba/imba.habua* (ElW, p. 49, 1225). F. VALLAT (1996) already noticed that AM and UM are interchangeable in Elamite and Iranian names, but did not attempt to explain this orthographic flexibility.

R. ZADOK (1976, p. 63) points out that Amba was an early Mesopotamian deity. Amba may equally have been an Elamite god, as he was mentioned in the Naram-Sin treaty after Hu(m)ban (EKI 2). The list of gods in the Naram-Sin treaty indicates that no identification of Amba with Hu(m)ban was possible in the third millennium BC. Based on the existing variations in the Akkadian literature of the first millennium BC, however, one can safely assume that *am-ba* refers to the Elamite god Hu(m)ban. Al-

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7. For a detailed onomastic description of the personal names with an *am-ba* orthography in Old Persian, see J. TAVERNIER (2007, p. 193-194).

8. The element هم *ham* 'too' (cf. also باهم *bā ham* 'together') is still used in modern Farsi in the same context.

ternatively, R. ZADOK (1976, p. 63) suggests that the *am-ba* variant may have been the result of a vowel harmony in Akkadian of the Neo-Babylonian period. However, in cases of first millennium BC vowel harmonies of /a/ and /u/, the /u/ usually gets the upper hand (cf. R. HASSELBACH [2005], p. 123), resulting in an **um-bu* form. Although such a variant is attested in the Susa Acropole texts (e.g. *Umbubu*) as a hypocoristic with reduplicated final syllable (MDP 9, n. 182; see also R. ZADOK [1983], p. 100), this form does not occur in the Mesopotamian text corpus. So the suggestion of R. Zadok may need to be revised. It is possible that the AM orthography should be explained in the same way as the IM in Akkadian (§ 2.3), i.e. as an alternative writing for the nasalized /u/ sound.

As to the *am-ba* element, the references in the Persepolis Fortification Texts are Elamite renderings of Persian names. The few Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian attestations of the theophoric element are orthographic variations of the *um-ba* and *im-ba* elements. So *am-ba* is not attested in indigenous Elamite sources.

2.5. Um-ma(n) / Im-ma(n)

The majority of the anthroponyms containing an *um-ma(n)* element are attested in Neo-Assyrian sources, e.g. *Umman.haldašu*, *Umman.mena(nu)*, *Umma.nikaš*, *Umman.appi*, *Umman.šibar* and *Te.umman* (ElW, p. 1230-1231). In addition, there is a group of late Neo-Elamite and Achaemenid attestations, mostly from the Susa Acropole Archive and the Persepolis Fortification texts, where the Elamite origin is questionable. R. ZADOK (1984, n. 48) for instance places the name *Umman.dada* among the names with a *hu(m)ba* root, while J. TAVERNIER (2007, p. 213) clearly demonstrates that *Umman.dada* is an Elamite rendering of an Iranian name **(H)uvandāta*. The Neo-Babylonian *Imma.ni-e-šu* and the Elamite *Umbe.nu-iš* may be various renderings of the Iranian *Imaniš* (R. HALLOCK [1969], p. 769; contra R. ZADOK [1984], n. 48 and J. TAVERNIER [2011], p. 240).

Although W. HINZ and H. KOCH (ElW, p. 1231) believe that the Elamite *Ummanunu* with its many variant spellings, viz. *Um-ma-na-na* (PFT), *Um-man-na* (MDP 9), *Um-ma-na-u-nu* (PFT), *Um-ma-nu-nu* (EKI 78; MDP 9; MDP 11, n. 301-307; PFT), derives from the Iranian *Imaniš*, R. HALLOCK (1969, p. 93, p. 769) and R. ZADOK (1984, n. 48) analyse this anthroponym as a hypocoristic form of *Hu(m)ban*, probably with an Elamite diminutive suffix *-unu*. This suggestion might be confirmed if one considers the Neo-Assyrian renderings *im-ma-nu*, *im-ma-nu-u*, *im-man-nu-u* to be variations on the Elamite name *Ummanunu*. These orthographies are all attested in

Neo-Assyrian texts from the late 8th century BC, which excludes Old Persian influence.

  As mentioned in the *im-ba* section (§ 2.3), both the UM and IM signs seem to render the nasalized /u/. The assimilation of the *mb* to a geminate *mm* is, however, more challenging to explain. From the abovementioned attestations, one can conclude that *um-ma(n) / im-ma(n)* was written at least a century before the orthography was introduced in the Elamite Susiana corpus. The fact that this assimilation is manifested in Neo-Assyrian sources around the 8th century BC, exactly when the *hu-ban* orthography (without *m*) is the norm in Elam, is at least striking. Although far better solutions may be proposed in the future, one may look for this orthographic change in the phonetic evolution of the Neo-Assyrian dialect. In the history of Assyrian grammar (GAG § 27c), the labial cluster *-bm-* assimilates to *-mm-*. However, in the case of *humban* the consonants appear in the reverse order, which seems to suggest that *-mb-* likewise assimilated to *-mm-* in Neo-Assyrian [9].

  Another possible explanation is the variety in script. In first millennium BC Akkadian script, the signs MA (R. LABAT [1988], n. 342) and BA (R. LABAT [1988], n. 5) are drawn very similar, so scribal confusion or erroneous reading by modern scholars cannot be excluded. As the table below indicates, the Elamite cuneiform script had evolved independently from the Mesopotamian cuneiform script.
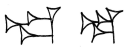
	Mesopotamian/Akkadian		Elamite	
	Neo-Assyrian	Neo-Babylonian	Neo-Elamite	Achaemenid
BA				
MA				

Table 1. First millennium BC orthographies of the signs BA and MA in Akkadian and Elamite texts

  9. This is a quite natural process for which parallels can be found in the history of many languages.

As a result of these scribal evolutions, the late Elamite sign MA (M.-J. STEVE [1992], n. 342) did not resemble its Mesopotamian variants at all. Instead, the Late Elamite MA sign looks like the Mesopotamian KU sign (R. LABAT [1988], n. 536). The Late Elamite BA sign on the other hand can be easily confused with the Mesopotamian MA sign. So if Mesopotamian scribes would have read a Neo-Elamite or Achaemenid Elamite inscription, they could have mistakenly identified the Late Elamite BA sign as a MA sign. Since it is highly likely that Mesopotamian scribes came into contact with these Elamite cuneiform signs due to the numerous Neo-Assyrian campaigns in the Elamite border region and in Susiana, the *um-ma* orthography could have been erroneously transmitted by Mesopotamian scribes into Mesopotamian texts.

However, by the end of the 7th century BC the *um-ma* orthography must have travelled with the *um-ba* variant (§ 2.2) again in the opposite direction to the Elamite-Mesopotamian border region in order to make a (re-)entry in the late Neo-Elamite Susiana corpus.

2.6. Hu-ban

A few anthroponyms, such as *Huba.mirsini* and *Hubani.hani-eš*/*Huba.ni-eš* (ElW, p. 677-678) and *Kuk.Huban* (ElW, p. 563), date from the Ur III/Old-Elamite period. The name of the 13th-century BC king *Hu(m)banumena* has a variant with the *hu-ban* element (see § 3.1). Also *Kutir-Huban*, the name of the son of the Middle Elamite king Šilhak-Inšušinak, is written with this orthography, but these texts originate from the Elamite highland region (see § 3.2).

However, the largest group by far of *hu(m)ban* attestations is the one with the *hu-ban* orthography. According to F. VALLAT (1998, p. 335-336), *Huban* becomes a popular element in both royal and non-royal compound names in the Neo-Elamite period, and appears as a theophoric element in half of the royal names and in many other names as well. In Neo-Elamite this theophoric element is rather consistently written *hu-ban* in royal inscriptions. The vanishing of the medial *-m-* can be explained by an evolution or simplification of Elamite orthography in the later periods. A similar evolution can be witnessed in the theophoric element **tempti*, which is written either *te-em-ti* or *te-ep-ti* [10]. It seems that the orthographic combination

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10. These may be two different attempts to express a nasal vowel.

m-b/p [11] has always been difficult to express, resulting in the long run in the omission of the *m* [12].

2.7. *Omission of the theophoric element*

In my paper on Elamite names in Neo-Babylonian sources (E. GORRIS [forthcoming]), I already indicated that there is an overwhelming amount of Elamite hypocoristics in Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian sources [13]. Since the names of the Elamite deities were not similar to those figuring in the Babylonian theophoric onomasticon, the theophoric part was not perceived as highly relevant to the Babylonian scribes. When Elamite personal names were transcribed into first millennium BC Assyrian or Babylonian, the theophoric element was either omitted or Akkadianized.

The fact that all the names with an omitted *Hu(m)ban* element can be dated to later periods may suggest that late Neo-Elamite onomastics was influenced by the Akkadian tradition. *Menana*, the short form for *Huban.menanu*, appears in letters from the Neo-Assyrian king Assurbanipal (S. PARPOLA [2018], n. 43 and 58) and in the Babylonian Chronicle (ABC 1 iii: 15-16), but also in the Susa Acropole texts (MDP 9, n. 104 and 119). The Neo-Babylonian rendering *Aldašu* (ElW, p. 46; R. ZADOK [1976], p. 63) and Achaemenid *Haldaš* (PF 362) are abbreviated forms for the Elamite name *Huban-haltaš*. Then, the Neo-Assyrian rendering *am-ba-ba* (R. ZADOK [1983], p. 99; ElW, p. 49) and the Neo-Elamite *am-pi-pi* (MDP 9, n. 137) are hypocoristic forms of *Huban-amba*. Although the examples mentioned in this section are probably not the only existing instances, retracing an omitted element can solely be done when a compound variant of such a name is attested in the Elamite onomastic corpus. The few examples in this section do indicate a growing flexibility in the orthography of the Late Elamite onomasticon under the influence of their Semitic and Indo-Iranian neighbours.

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11. Scholars studying the Elamite language have argued that there is no phonological opposition between voiced and voiceless consonants, i.e. no difference between a /p/ and /b/ phoneme in Elamite (see M. STOLPER [2004], p. 70, for further references).

12. This recalls the regular or occasional omission of preconsonantal nasals in many ancient scripts (e.g., preconsonantal nasals were neither written in the Mycenaean Linear B script nor in the Old Persian cuneiform script).

13. About 33 % of the Elamite names occurring in Akkadian texts from the first millennium BC are reduplicated hypocoristics. Adding the other groups of hypocoristics (for a full overview of Elamite hypocoristics, see R. ZADOK [1983]) to that number, one probably arrives at around 50 % of all Elamite names in Akkadian texts.

3. The peculiar case of the royal name *Hu(m)banumena*

3.1. *The orthography of the royal name* Hu(m)banumena

The earliest attestation of a royal name with the theophoric element *Hu(m)ban* dates from the Igihalkid dynasty (1400-1200 BC), where two kings, Hu(m)banumena (IRS 21; EKI 4B&C) and Untaš-Napiriša (IRS 22-25, 28-30), mention the name *Hu(m)banumena*. The king Hu(m)banumena uses the *hu-um-ban* orthography on a brick inscription found at the Susa Acropole (EKI 4A), while the titulary on the bricks of the sanctuary in Liyan (Bandar Bušehr) exhibits a *hu-ban* writing (EKI 4B&C). Also the Untaš-Napiriša inscriptions use two different orthographies for Untaš-Napiriša's patronym: *Humban-numena* (IRS 22, 25, 28, 30) and *Huban-(n)umena* (IRS 23-25, 28, 29, 31). All the Untaš-Napiriša inscriptions with a *Hu(m)ban* element were written on bricks used for building activities in either Susa or Chogha Zanbil. As to the Chogha Zanbil bricks, it seems that those with a *hu-um-ban* orthography were employed for nearly all temple and gate constructions, with the exception of the main ziggurat dedicated to Inšušinak (MDP 41)[14]. Numerous inscriptions of Untaš-napiriša thus exhibit the spelling with -*m*-.

During the Šutrukid dynasty (1200-1100 BC), inscriptions of king Šutruk-Nahhunte I (IRS 34; EKI 19), Kutir-Nahhunte II (IRS 37; EKI 31), and Šilhak-Inšušinak I (IRS 39; EKI 48, 57-59) contain references to anthroponyms with the *Hu(m)ban* element. With the exception of the dedicatory text of Šilhak-Inšušinak I found at the Inšušinak sanctuary on the Susa Acropole (EKI 48) containing the form *Humban-umena*, all royal inscriptions of the three Šutrukid kings mentioning the name *Huban-numena* (IRS 34, 37, 39; EKI 19, 31, 57-59) originated from the Kiririša temple of Bandar Bušehr (ancient Liyan)[15].

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14. MDP 41, n. 10-20, 23, 25-28, 31, 32, 38, 40, 44, 46, 53, 56, 58. These inscriptions come from the temples of Pinigir, ᵈIM & Šala, Šimut & Belet-ali, Napratip, Hišmitik & Ruhuratir, all situated between the first and second enclosure of the city Dur-Untaš-Napiriša (Chogha Zanbil). Also the series of inscriptions with a *hu-um-ban* orthography are connected with the building of the temples of Nuški, Kiririša, Sunkir.riša, Nahhunte, Napiriša & Inšušinak, Huban and the construction of "la grande porte" between the second enclosure and the city wall that included the palace area. As far as I can determine from M.-J. STEVE's publication (MDP 41), the only inscriptions with a *hu-um-ban* orthography within the first enclosure (the ziggurat area) were engraved on bull statues.

15. F. KÖNIG (EKI 19) restored the *Huban* element in this inscription, while F. MALBRAN-LABAT (IRS 34) does not indicate such a restoration. They do, however, refer to the same five bricks. F. König argues that they were found in Bandar Bušehr, while F. Malbran-Labat ascribed their provenance to the Susa temple of Kiririša. F. VALLAT (1997) corrects F. Malbran-Labat in stating that all Kiririša bricks came from Liyan.

Several texts on an alabaster horn (EKI 71), a foundation tablet (IRS 57; EKI 72), and three building bricks (EKI 73) from the reign of Šutruk-Nahhunte II (717-699 BC) name Hubanimena (patronym) as the father of this Neo-Elamite king. On the Neo-Elamite foundation tablet, king Šutruk-Nahhunte II describes his patrilineal ancestry more extensively. Not only goes his father by the name Hubanimena, Šutruk-Nahhunte II also traces his ancestral lineage back to the last kings of the Middle Elamite Šutrukid dynasty, among whom Hubanumena (written *hu-ban.im-me-na* [16]). The Šutruk-Nahhunte II texts hereby indicate that the *hu-ban* orthography received the upper hand in Elamite script during the Neo-Elamite period, an evolution that was already underway during the Middle Elamite period as seen in the majority of the Šutrukid inscriptions.

In fact, the *hu-ban* writing was probably already the most common orthography during the late Middle Elamite period. This can be supported by a royal individual Kutir-Huban who is mentioned many times as the son of Šilhak-Inšušinak I (IRS 47, 48, 50; EKI 34, 40, 41, 45-47, 54, 59), the brother of Hutelutuš-Inšušinak in the Anšan text (ElW, p. 548; M. LAMBERT [1972], p. 64), and in the Tall-i Malyan Archive (M. STOLPER [1984], n. 102). With an additional name *Huban.miriš* (M. STOLPER [1984], n. 18, 43, 67, 68, 90) in this latter archive, one can be sure that by the late Middle Elamite period the *hu-ban* orthography had become the rule.

3.2. *Historical context for the royal name* Hu(m)banumena

At first glance, the *hu(m)ban* orthographies seem to be randomly chosen. Yet, when taking a look at the historical background and the geographical distribution of the inscriptions, one gains a better understanding of the symbolic value of these orthographies.

Based on the description of the occurrences of *Hu(m)ban* in the previous section (§ 3.1), one can formulate three general remarks:

1) All *hu-um-ban* references occur on inscribed bricks used for building activities in Susiana, i.e. the lowland region that interacted with Mesopotamia. The inscribed bricks with the *hu-ban* element of the Middle Elamite kings Hu(m)banumena (EKI 4B&C), Šutruk-Nahhunte I, Kutir-Nahhunte II, and Šilhak-Inšušinak I were found at the Kiririša sanctuary at Liyan. This harbour town along the Persian Gulf coast was located far more south than Susiana and was connected to the highland network. The texts from the Elamite highland capital Anšan (Fars) seem to confirm that Elamite scribes

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16. The vowel change *u > i* in *Hu(m)ban.umena > Huban.immena* is a later phonological development, on which see J. TAVERNIER (2007b, p. 278-285) and ID. (2018, p. 424-425).

had more orthographic flexibility when having only indirect contact with Mesopotamia. Since the Akkadian scribal tradition kept using the Old Elamite variant *hu-um-ban* until the first millennium BC (§ 2.1), the Susiana scribes must have been more hesitant towards scribal innovations on royal inscriptions.

2) The *hu-um-ban* orthography, as present in the royal inscriptions of the Igihalkid kings Humbanumena and especially Untaš-Napiriša, is traditionally recorded in Old Elamite onomastics. Either the Igihalkid dynasty followed the Old Elamite orthography with the eye on tradition and continuity in their official inscriptions, or the Susiana region kept using the traditional Old Elamite writing under the influence of their Babylonian neighbours, with whom the Igihalkid dynasty had an inter-dynastic marriage policy. The Berlin letter states that several Elamite kings of the Igihalkid dynasty were married to Babylonian princesses of the Kassite dynasty [17]. Humbanumena (written: *hu-um-ba-an-im-me-ni*) was married to the daughter of Kurigalzu I (c. 1375 BC), while his son Untaš-Napiriša was wedded to the daughter of Burna-Buriaš II (1354-1328 BC). Based on the content of the Humbanumena inscription (EKI 40/IRS 59), D. POTTS (2014, p. 211-212) assumes that Humbanumena I's accession to the Elamite throne had not been a smooth one, since he states that the god Napiriša singled him out as king due to the "continuity of his mother" (IRS 21:3). Thanks to this inter-dynastic marriage policy, Humbanumena may have received Babylonian assistance for claiming the Elamite throne (cf. D. POTTS [2014], p. 211-212), and perhaps he therefore married a daughter of Kurigalzu I in return. This Kassite princess gave Humbanumena an heir to the Elamite throne, Untaš-Napiriša. These generations of inter-dynastic marriages between Elamite kings and Babylonian princesses must have influenced the language used at the Elamite court.

3) After the Igihalkid dynasty, the *hu-um-ban* orthography is not attested anymore in Elamite texts, with the exception of one dedicatory text of the Šutrukid king Šilhak-Inšušinak I at the Inšušinak sanctuary on the Susa Acropole (IRS 39; EKI 48). As for this most recent attestation of *hu-um-ban* in the royal Elamite corpus, there is a well-defined historical link to the great Elamite rulers of the Igihalkid dynasty. Šilhak-Inšušinak had undertaken major restoration activities on the Acropole temple complexes at Susa. In his

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17. For a detailed analysis of the Berlin letter, see S. PAULUS (2014, p. 429-449).

dedicatory inscription, Šilhak-Inšušinak mentions the rulers of the Igihalkid dynasty who preceded him in (re-)construction works on the Inšušinak temple (cf. D. POTTS [2004], p. 205) among whom Untaš-Napiriša, son of Humbanumena. The *hu-um-ban* orthography is identical to attestations found in the royal inscriptions of the Igihalkid kings Humbanumena and Untaš-Napiriša on the Acropole hill and in broader Susiana. The brick of Humbanumena also derived from the Susian Acropole, while the Untaš-Napiriša bricks were used as building materials at both the Acropole as well as the Chogha Zanbil sanctuary. Since bricks of Humbanumena and Untaš-Napiriša were inserted in the same Inšušinak temple, the scribes of Šilhak-Inšušinak had an unmistakable reference to the historical orthography.

Whether this orthographic conundrum resulted from the presence of bilingual scribes (Mesopotamian vs. Elamite orthography) from perhaps different workshops, as could have been the case for the Chogha Zanbil group (cf. fn. 14), or from a Babylonian-Kassite influence at the Elamite court in Susa and by extension the entire Susian region, or whether it reflects merely a transitional period in which the notation of the nasalized vowel gradually disappears from the Elamite script is uncertain. It is, however, a fact that the Elamite kings of the Šutrukid dynasty, Šutruk-Nahhunte I, Kutir-Nahhunte II and Šilhak-Inšušinak I, used systematically the *hu-ban* orthography – a trend that continued into the Neo-Elamite writings.

4. Conclusion

Whereas the majority of the *hu-um-ba(n)* attestations comes from the Old Elamite period, the *hu-ban* orthography is the most common variant in Neo-Elamite texts. The Middle Elamite period seems to be a transition phase. Based on the royal name *Hu(m)banumena*, one can argue that this transition was completed in the Elamite highlands before it reached the Susiana lowlands. On the one hand, this could be related to the proximity of Mesopotamia, where the *hu(m)ban* names continued to follow the orthography of the Old Elamite period. On the other hand, Susa has always been the capital of the Elamite kingdom and with that status a tradition in royal monumental script was firmly established. Regardless of a person's social position, traditional name-giving created a sense of continuity and often authority.

Except for the *hu-ban* orthography, the Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian attestations of this theophoric element embrace all varieties of the *Hu(m)ban* writing. Since *Hu(m)ban* was an Elamite deity unknown to the Mesopotamian pantheon, no specific traditions were connected to the

word. The variants *im-ba* and *im-ma* occur in Mesopotamian texts, especially those from the first millennium BC. As to the *am-ba* element, the instances in the Persepolis Fortification Tablets are Elamite renderings of Persian names. The few Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian attestations of the theophoric *am-ba* element are orthographic variants of the *im-ba* element. So *im-ba, im-ma* and *am-ba* are not attested in indigenous Elamite sources. The variety of orthographies in Mesopotamian texts may be explained either by Akkadian scribes wishing to express sounds that were absent in the Akkadian phonetic system, and/or possibly by a miscomprehension of the Elamite orthographic/scribal tradition.

Late Elamite and Achaemenid Elamite writings give a more colourful representation of the *Hu(m)ban* orthography. The majority of the Neo-Elamite individuals with *um-ba* and *um-ma* names make their appearance in the Susa Acropole Archive, the Elamite Nineveh Letters, and the Persepolis Fortification texts. With the exception of the omission of the initial *h*, there is no ground to evolve from the Neo-Elamite *hu-ban* orthography to the *um-ba* and *um-ma* orthography in the Elamite language. This can only be explained by the cultural and political setting of the Susiana region in the late 7th century BC. The intercultural exchange, the ethnic and linguistic diversity of that region created the perfect climate for these orthographic transfers, which gave way to a plurality of new orthographic shapes on both sides of the Elamite-Mesopotamian border.

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