--------- ABSTRACT ---------

YAHWEH THE CREATOR
THE ROLE AND FUNCTION OF CREATION MOTIF IN ISAIAH 40:12-31 IN THE LIGHT OF ENŪMA ELIŠ

Deutero-Isaiah (DI – esp. chaps 40-48)[1] deals with various domains of Yahweh metaphorically; among which plausibly the creative activity of Yahweh occupies a remarkable position. A striking variety of creation language has been attributed to Yahweh in relation to creation of the cosmos, creation of humankind, creation of the people of Israel and so on. Isaiah 40:12-31 is one such passage, where the prophet through his rhetoric disputative presentation, demands faith in Yahweh on the basis of His creative activity. The rhetorical questions indirectly affirm the sovereignty of Yahweh over the creation, nations, and so-called human-made gods and the people of Israel. Keeping in mind the Babylonian origin of Isaiah 40-48 the researcher attempts to critically inquire – what actually prompted the author of Isaiah 40:12-31 to underscore the uniqueness and incomparability of Yahweh through creation language? Specifically, during the Neo-Babylonian period – *Marduk* was elevated to the status of supreme god of the Mesopotamian pantheon; the creation epic *Enūma eliš* canonized *Marduk's* supremacy over the other gods and this was ritually re-emphasized through the recitation of the epic during the *Akītu* annual New Year festival. Hence, the researcher hypothetically questions – whether it became a requisite for the author(s), who were aware of these political and religious contextual realities to emphasize Yahweh as the unique creator and incomparable God unlike *Marduk*? Therefore, this paper attempts to exegete in-depth – Isa 40:12-31 in the light of the *Enūma eliš* which emphasizes Yahweh as the unique creator.

[1] The researcher is of the opinion that Isaiah 40-48 originated in the Babylonian exilic context, and the selected exegetical passage (i.e. Isa 40:12-31) for this presentation is part of the researcher's doctoral dissertation.