

CADMO

REVISTA DE HISTÓRIA ANTIGA
JOURNAL FOR ANCIENT HISTORY

27



CENTRO DE HISTÓRIA DA UNIVERSIDADE DE LISBOA
2018



CADMO
REVISTA DE HISTÓRIA ANTIGA
JOURNAL FOR ANCIENT HISTORY

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Editora | Publisher

Centro de História da Universidade de Lisboa | 2018

Concepção Gráfica | Graphic Design

Bruno Fernandes

Periodicidade: Anual

ISSN: 0871-9527

eISSN: 2183-7937

Depósito Legal: 54539/92

Tiragem: 150 exemplares

P.V.P.: €15,00

Cadmo - Revista de História Antiga | Journal for Ancient History

Centro de História da Universidade de Lisboa | Centre for History of the University of Lisbon
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This work is funded by national funds through FCT - Foundation for Science and Technology under project UID/HIS/04311/2013 and UID/HIS/04311/2019.

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“The house of the mother is distinct within yet supportive of the house of the father upon which it depends. In its most basic form, a *bêt'em* represents a social and spatial subunit nested within the larger house of the father” (p. 51). A casa é uma representação suprema dos indivíduos, isto é, a casa como semelhante ao homem e à mulher, o primeiro como elemento diferenciador e exemplar de poder máximo, utopia excelsa, e o segundo como determinante e exemplar constitutivo, impulsor de momentos liminares que no fundo caracterizam a própria História.

Catarina Pinto Fernandes

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ANDREW GEORGE et TAKAYOSHI OSHIMA eds. (2016), *Ancient Mesopotamian Religion and Mythology: Selected Essays*. (Oriental Religions in Antiquity, Egypt, Israel, Ancient Near East 15), Tubingen, Mohr Siebrek, 295 pp. ISBN 978-3-16-153674-8 (€99.00)

This book is an anthology of essays written by Wilfred G. Lambert (1926-2011) throughout his long career in ancient Near East studies. Lambert was an Assyriologist, whose contributions immensely shaped the studies of ancient Mesopotamia. He is best known for decoding and editing the Babylonian flood myth, Atrahasis, and for his remarkable book, *Babylonian Wisdom Literature*. His exceptional role and idiosyncratic approach in interpreting old motifs, which to a modern reader might, to some extent, appear foreign, render him distinct among his peers. The essays in this book are wisely (or, meticulously) selected, ordered and edited by the well-known Assyriologist Andrew R. George and his colleague T. M. Oshima. Together (or Along) with the two introductory essays, the book comprises 23 essays in total which are thematically arranged; that make its reading smoother and progressively engaging, not only for specialized scholars but also for readers of different backgrounds who are interested in exploring the first civilization that gave us—among several other inventions—writing as a means of communication.

Accordingly, in the first section of the book entitled «Introductory Conclusions», the first essay presents an historical overview to the early stages of cultural establishment in Mesopotamia, waves of migration, and inter-city rivalries. These people were called Sumerians, Akkadians, Babylonians, Gutians, Amorites, Assyrians, and Arameans. Subsequently, some light is shed on the moral aspect of ancient Mesopotamians, through an inspection of particular manuscripts, such as exhortation compositions (*Instructions of Šuruppak*), hymns (*A hymn to Šamaš*), legal documents (*Code of Hammurabi*). Apparently, these documents all share one common theme: a defense for justice within society. Furthermore, changes of perception that resulted from this intercultural blend are also dealt with; for instance, the transition of the ideas of the Sumerian conception of misfortune toward the Akkadian belief of divine retribution. This latter view demonstrated gods as creators of the physical world and social architecture, and the sole authorities over benevolent and malignant powers. In the book's second essay, the author illustrates the geography of the land of Mesopotamia, wherein several theological notions arised. A glance at the Mesopotamian anthropogeny, on the other hand, reveals the main purpose of the creation of men. The tradition of city patron deities

who dwelt in temples, their daily life therein and the manner of accommodation provided for them by temple priests is surveyed by the author. In addition, the gods in a pantheon working in concert to govern matters on universe, and the notion of assigning each deity to a sphere that corresponded to his/her functions are likewise addressed.

The second section, "The Gods of Ancient Mesopotamia", offers a genuine perspective to the most relevant details concerning ancient gods in Mesopotamia in six essays, in which its key points can be summarized in the following lines. First of all, Lambert examines evolutionary stages in the Mesopotamian pantheon. An attribution of the amalgam of several deities into a single god to some factors of political changes in the region. This assimilation, the author suggests, was not arbitrary but a prudent attempt to organize what were once more than one thousand gods who shared identical characteristics and genealogy into a single god, and ultimately appoint one deity as superior to the rest of the gods in the pantheon. The most striking element that Lambert conveys is clearly of henotheism. illustrates, nevertheless, is of henotheism; in assigning Marduk as the supreme god who represented all divinities and aspects of the cosmos, Babylonian theologians almost reached the concept of one omnipresent, omnipotent God. With Babylonian inclination toward henotheism, a decline on the number of goddesses in the Mesopotamian is witnessed. Thus, in the next essay Lambert is concerned about the role of females in society and in procreation, and the factors that relegated them to a lower position in the pantheon. The city patrons in the 2nd and 1st millennia BC made several goddesses as subordinates to male deities, like Enlil and his wife Ninlil, Shamash and his wife Aya, Marduk and Zarpanitam, and so on. A major reason behind this decline, according to Lambert (or the author), cannot be attributed to sex discrimination, rather it was the outcome of the disappearance of several towns, in which these goddesses were the principal patrons. The following two essays underline the impact of southern Mesopotamian pantheon on the ones of the far northern regions, namely Hurrian (Anatolia) and Mari (Syria). In reconstructing the pantheon of Mari, Lambert examines some rare scraps and fragments of tablets which were unearthed in that region. Interestingly, a conjecture is drawn to identify the number of deities by looking at the total number of rooms in temples and palaces. The question of which culture, Sumerian or Semitic, had more impact on the religion of Mari is also analyzed. Some of the few speculations made by the author (or, Lambert) can be noted here as instances: the organization and religious system of northern Mesopotamia and Syria were less sophisticated than their southern counterparts, Sumer and Babylon. And, unlike the Sumero-Babylonian system of assigning a particular god to the temple of a city, in northern regions the same gods were worshipped in several towns and cities. Finally, the gods featuring in the pantheon of Mari are equated with those in southern Mesopotamia, like the god Il, who was the counterpart of Sumerian Enki, Dagan = Enlil, Ashtarar = Ishtar... etc. Speaking about northern Mesopotamia, one must not overlook the people of Assyria, whose capital city was Nineveh. Thus, the last two essays examine the aspects of the two most revered deities in that area, namely the god Assur and the goddess Ishtar of Nineveh. Lambert gathers evidence from prayer texts of kings and other inscriptions dedicated to these deities. The conclusions drawn by the author are quite impressive; for instance, we find that the state god Assur was different from his Sumero-Babylonian major god. Unlike Enlil, Assur's ancestry is unknown, and surely he was not a personification of an object or power in the universe. Also, we learn that Ishtar was the patroness of Nineveh, and relatively

distinct from Ishtar of Arbela (modern Erbil).

The third section in the book, “The Mythology of Ancient Mesopotamia”, combines six essays (one in German) that study the cosmogony, anthropogeny, death and rituals in Sumer and Babylon. In treating manuscripts that conceptualize the early stages of creation, Lambert begins by offering a rough estimation and a chronological account of Sumerian, Babylonian and Assyrian literature. Throughout this section, the author presents multiple claims and assumptions; for example, the stages of development of the mindset of mankind, he suggests, had a profound influence in perceiving the creation of the universe, its aspects and functions. Given the agricultural nature of the region, Mesopotamians observed, relied and worshipped the powers that generate a natural phenomenon, of which the phenomenon of creation constitutes a part. For almost 3000 years these theological notions remained unchanged which, according the author, allowed religion to prevail over science. Some of these notions include the genealogy of major gods and the three layers of the universe, each inhabited by a god who governed the affairs on heaven and on earth. In another essay, “The Theology of Death,” Lambert expounds Mesopotamian views of death and afterlife. Thus, the reason behind assigning death on mankind and whether the gods were immune to it are adequately explored. In addition, the organization and mechanisms of the realm in afterlife are illustrated, such as the means for a spirit to transcend to the new realm and the rulers presiding over the spirits of dead people. In the following essay, Lambert offers a philological study of the Sumerian creation myth, Enki and Ninmah and the Babylonian Atrahasis, in order to find out if there are any variations between the Babylonian and Sumerian accounts of creation. This subject is elaborated in the next essay, “Ninurta Mythology in the Babylonian Epic of Creation.” The author selects three myths, namely Enuma Elish, Anzu and Labbu to answer the question of whether Enuma Elish was modelled on the former two myths. Being able to collect concrete evidence, Lambert demonstrates in what respects the Middle Babylonian Enuma Elish relied on what could be regarded as a prototype, the Old-Babylonian, Anzu. At the same time, he shows the likelihood of the three myths in question sharing a common cultural background. The last essay in this section highlights the relation between myths and rituals in ancient Mesopotamia. Lambert categorizes Babylonian manuscripts into “simple” and “sophisticated,” and he states that what can be deemed as simple was written mostly in the second millennium, whereas the “sophisticated” bear first millennium dates. He then proceeds to reveal how these principle myths were incorporated into cultic practices. For example, certain myths were enacted during the New Year festivals, and others, especially battle myths, were recited by an exorcist priest to expel demons from patients.

The fourth section in the book, “The Religion of Ancient Mesopotamia”, is concerned with the factors and figures responsible for revolutionizing the Babylonian religion from purely being a derivation from the Sumerian background to an independent creed headed by one supreme god. Lambert's main objective objective in the first essay is to demonstrate that Marduk was not, as many other scholars argue, made a supreme god during the reign of Hammurabi, but actually in the reign of the king Nebuchadnezzar I (c. 1100 BC). Nevertheless, by uniting several city states in one empire, Hammurabi—the author maintains—paved the way or made this proposition to exalt the status of Marduk. Lambert continues to relate the accounts of Nebuchadnezzar's successful campaign to return the statue of Marduk back from Elam (Persia) to Babylon. This incident is of course essential in the history of the religion of ancient Mesopotamia, for it marked the first

attempt toward monotheism, in which Marduk is ascribed with all the aspects and forces that were previously personified by other gods. While this process of identification was spreading, we realize in the following essay that it did not pass without struggles. For instance, in Nippur, the place where Enlil was regarded as the only superior among other gods, priests were reluctant to accept Marduk as a substitute. And later, quite interestingly, the assassination of the Assyrian kings Tukulti-Ninurta I and Senacherib by their sons was to thwart these kings from replacing Marduk with the Assyrian god, Assur. The next two essays, on the other hand, address the sacrificial rituals and food offering to the patron gods in city temples, priests who were authorized to access these temples, and lastly the qualification of diviners who were involved in practices of exorcism and omen reading. Hence, the reader finds that unlike Hebrew customs of animal sacrifices in which animals were slaughtered and later burned, Babylonians slaughtered animals and cooked them to feed their anthropomorphic statues of gods in temples. Moreover, Lambert's attempt in translating terms that were associated with offerings gives the reader an understanding of the scale of this custom in ancient Mesopotamia. The author goes even further in his investigation as to question what must have been done with this immense amount of food cooked to feed these figurines. Those priests who were entitled to accommodate the gods, and those who were engaged in acts of divination, the author stresses, must have been descended from an elite family. Divination skills were handed down to the next generation by fathers to their sons, and even in rare occasions to their adopted sons. Interestingly, the diviner was required to be physically fit and flawless. The profession was expensive, and it was mostly performed by kings and rich people. Lastly, the final essay in this section, "Devotion: The Language of Religion and Love," tries to detect the relation of the figurative language in early love poems with religion. Even though the Sumerian love poems of Dumuzi and Inanna express a highly romantic bond between the two lovers, Lambert claims, they cannot be separated from religious category, because Inanna was the Sumerian goddess of love. The typical setting and the metaphors employed in these poems may in some cases imply a real love between two living creatures, however in some other instances it is likely to have been addressed to the statue of the goddess.

Section five, "Ancient Mesopotamia and Israel", as the title suggests, is a comparison in three separate essays relating to elements of mythology, destiny and divine intervention, and the flood myth extant in Mesopotamian literature and Old Testament. A chronology of cultural influences that encompasses Mesopotamia, Israel, Greek, Egypt, and India is drawn in order to identify the origin of motifs and elements shared among these people. The author also makes an attempt to find common grounds in myths and rituals of Mesopotamia and Israel. Myths of origin, such as the Babylonian Enuma Elish and the Biblical Genesis, are interpreted as an intellectual endeavor to understand forces of nature. Notably, the author offers a plausible explanation as to why God, in Genesis, began first by creating heaven, and not heaven and earth together. The element of destiny is discussed in great detail in the second essay. The Sumerians, who had multiple gods, the author points out, viewed fates of mankind differently from the people of Israel who worshipped Yahweh. Finally, in the last essay these questions are addressed: The origins of the flood myth, and what factors might have caused it? At what period of time could Genesis have possibly been written? On which Mesopotamian myth the Biblical flood story is modelled? The geographical features and climate of which region are more prone to flooding events? Could Ararat be truly a mountain or a

misconception on the part of the early authors of the Bible for a hill or a name of an ancient town?

Overall, as a researcher I found this book very informative, and as a reader it enriched my understanding of ancient Mesopotamian. At certain places, the reader will come across a few philological treatments of manuscripts and several complex designations of tablets; nevertheless, these occurrences are grouped together in passages so that the reader may feel free to skip them without affecting the subject matter. I definitely recommend this book for anyone who is eager to explore the spectacular culture of ancient Mesopotamia.

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ADAM KRYSZEŃ (2016), *A Historical Geography of the Hittite Heartland*, (Alter Orient Und Altes Testament 437), Münster, Ugarit Verlag, xx + 423 pp. ISBN: 978-3-86835-199-6 (\$172.00 Hardcover)

Quando a língua hitita foi decifrada, em 1915, por Bedřich Hrozný (1876-1952), confirmando-a como uma língua indo-europeia, o problema da geografia da Anatólia do II milénio já não era novo. Diversos monumentos encontrados no arco geográfico que vai desde o norte da Síria, no Leste, até às costas do mar Egeu, a oeste, já haviam sido reconhecidos como vestígios dos Hititas. Assim, a identificação dos centros políticos da Ásia Menor cedo se constituiu como um dos problemas centrais da Hititologia. Archibald H. Sayce (1845-1933), por exemplo, sugeriu que Kargamiš fora a capital dos Hititas, ao passo que a proposta de William M. Ramsay (1851-1939) apontou para Boğazköy. Após o deciframento da língua hitita, as fontes então legíveis potenciaram novas dificuldades, entre as quais se encontrava, não apenas o reconhecimento dos topónimos, mas também a sua exata localização geográfica. Problemas ainda hoje não completamente resolvidos. Numa abordagem mais «filológica» ou, melhor dita, comparativa, alguns estudiosos procuraram apoio nas possíveis formas gregas, romanas e bizantinas dos topónimos da Ásia Menor. Porém, já Bedřich Hrozný, em 1919, alertava para o facto de tais comparações necessitarem de trabalho arqueológico paralelo, sob pena de serem obtidos resultados menos satisfatórios. O ajustamento da metodologia aplicada à geografia da Anatólia do II milénio, centrada no estudo dos itinerários e no agrupamento geográfico de topónimos em função dos registos textuais, viria a desembocar, em 1940, na publicação da obra *Kizzuwatna and the Problem of Hittite Geography*, da autoria de Albrecht Götze (1897-1971), onde este autor conseguiu demonstrar que a região de Kizzuwatna se localizara na costa mediterrânica e parcialmente na Cilícia. Em consequência, pôde realocar-se a região de Arzawa mais para oeste e as regiões da Terra do Rio Hūlaya e de Tarhuntašša no sul da Anatólia. Cerca de vinte anos mais tarde, em 1959, seria publicada a obra que ainda hoje permanece como o único trabalho que analisa as relações geográficas de toda a Anatólia hitita: *The Geography of Hittite Empire*, da autoria de John Garstang (1876-1956) e Oliver R. Gurney (1911-2001). Neste trabalho, foram localizadas as mais importantes regiões da Anatólia hitita, caso de Arzawa, nas costas do Egeu, de Lukka, na região da clássica Lícia, dos Kaška, a norte e nordeste da capital hitita, e de Azzi-Hayaša,