This book proposes a new approach to the study of ancient Greek and Mesopotamian literature. Ranging from Homer and the *Epic of Gilgamesh* to Herodotus and the Babylonian-Greek author Berossos, it paints a picture of two literary cultures that, over the course of time, became profoundly entwined. Along the way, the book addresses many questions of crucial importance to the student of the ancient world: how did the literature of Greece relate to that of its eastern neighbours? What did ancient readers from different cultures think it meant to be human? Who invented the writing of universal history as we know it? How did the Greeks come to divide the world into Greeks and 'barbarians', and what happened when they came to live alongside those 'barbarians' after the conquests of Alexander the Great? In addressing these questions, the book draws on cutting-edge research in comparative literature, postcolonial studies and archive theory.

**Johannes Haubold** is Professor of Greek at Durham University. He is the author of numerous publications on Greek literature in its historical and cultural contexts, including *Homer's People* (Cambridge, 2000); *Homer: The Resonance of Epic* (2005, with B. Graziosi) and *Homer: Iliad VI* (Cambridge, 2010, with B. Graziosi). He has edited *Plato and Hesiod* (2010, with G. Boys-Stones) and is currently editing the first ever collected volume on the Babylonian-Greek priest and historian Berossos, entitled *The World of Berossos* (with G. Lanfranchi, R. Rollinger and J. Steele).
This lecture series was established by public subscription, to honour the memory of William Bedell Stanford, Regius Professor of Greek in Trinity College, Dublin, from 1940 to 1980, and Chancellor of the University of Dublin from 1982 to 1984.
GREECE AND MESOPOTAMIA

Dialogues in Literature

JOHANNES HAUBOLD
In memory of Donald Murray
(11.6.1983–10.7.2011)
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Most Mesopotamian texts discussed in this book are written in the cunei-
form script, a combination of syllabic signs and logograms. Conventions
of transcription into the Latin alphabet have developed over the past deca-
des and are still, to some extent, in flux. While it may be desirable in
principle to present all cuneiform texts in a standard format, there are
formidable obstacles to achieving consistency in practice: old editions
(e.g. Langdon, Weissbach) cannot be converted into current systems of
transcription without fresh collation, and the alternative of presenting all
cuneiform texts in normalized form founders on the uncertainties of late
spelling and pronounciation. At a more general level, it seemed to me
that accuracy of citation must not be sacrificed to consistency of presenta-
tion in a book concerned with the close reading of texts. With longer pas-
sages, I have therefore opted to retain the style of transcription employed
by the editor whose text I quote. Individual words or phrases have been
normalized.

Note on the transcription of cuneiform texts
Figure 1: The Babylonian World Map. © The Trustees of the British Museum
Abbreviations


List of abbreviations


## List of abbreviations

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