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978-1-107-01076-5 - Greece and Mesopotamia: Dialogues in Literature

Johannes Haubold

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GREECE AND MESOPOTAMIA

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).

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[More information](#)*Note on the transcription of cuneiform texts*

Most Mesopotamian texts discussed in this book are written in the cuneiform script, a combination of syllabic signs and logograms. Conventions of transcription into the Latin alphabet have developed over the past decades 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 pronunciation. At a more general level, it seemed to me that accuracy of citation must not be sacrificed to consistency of presentation in a book concerned with the close reading of texts. With longer passages, 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.

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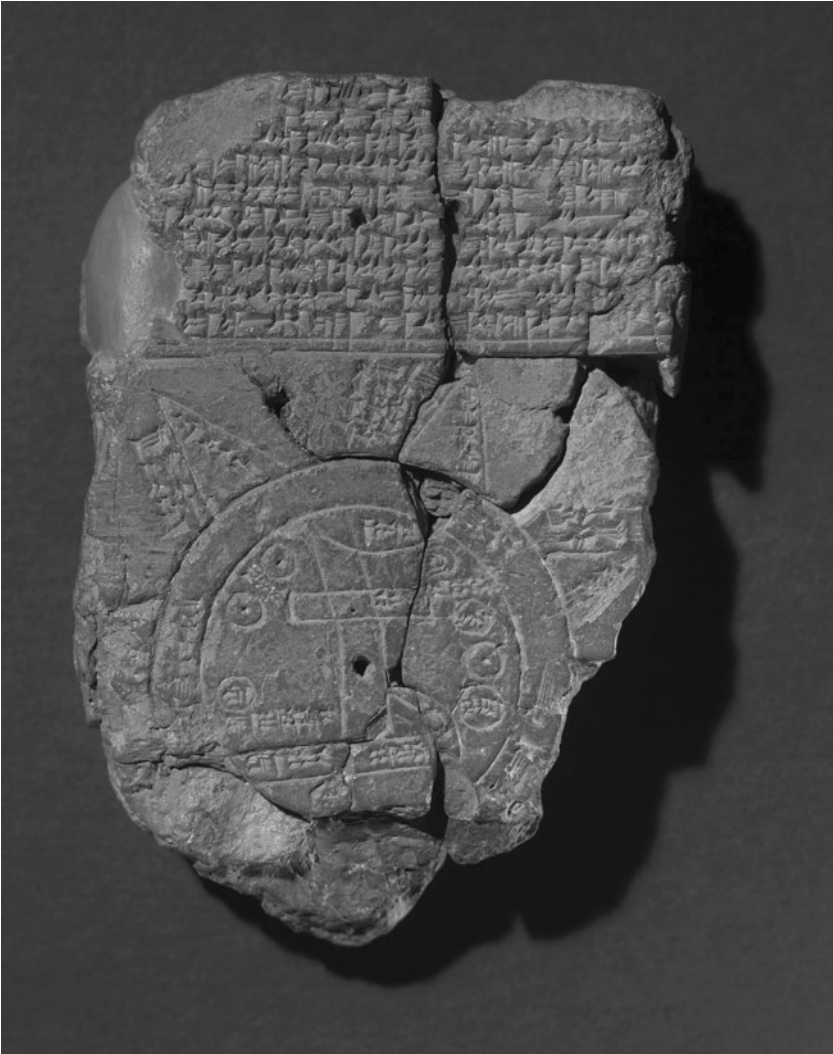


Figure 1 The Babylonian World Map. © The Trustees of the British Museum

Abbreviations

- AD* A. Sachs and H. Hunger, *Astronomical Diaries and Related Texts from Babylon*. Vienna 1988–96.
- Alster* B. Alster, *Proverbs of Ancient Sumer: The World's Earliest Proverb Collections*. Bethesda, MD 1997.
- BNJ* *Brill's New Jacoby*, ed. I. Worthington. Online publication: www.referenceworks.brillonline.com/browse/brill-s-new-jacoby
- Borger* R. Borger, *Beiträge zum Inschriftenwerk Assurbanipals. Die Prismenklassen A, B, C = K, D, E, F, G, H, J und T sowie andere Inschriften. Mit einem Beitrag von Andreas Fuchs*. Wiesbaden 1996.
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- Glassner* J.-J. Glassner, *Mesopotamian Chronicles*, ed. B. R. Foster. Atlanta, GA 2004.

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- L-P E. Lobel and D. Page, *Poetarum Lesbiorum Fragmenta*. Oxford 1955.
- M-W R. Merkelbach and M. L. West, 'Fragmenta selecta', in *Theogonia, Opera et dies, Scutum Hesiodi*, ed. F. Solmsen. 3rd edn. Oxford 1990.
- OGIS W. Dittenberger, *Orientalis Graeci Inscriptiones Selectae. Supplementum Sylloges Inscriptionum Graecarum*. Leipzig 1903.
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<i>SH</i>	H. Lloyd-Jones and P. Parsons, <i>Supplementum Hellenisticum</i> . Berlin and New York 1983.
<i>SVF</i>	H. F. A. von Arnim, <i>Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta</i> . Stuttgart 1903–5.
Talon	P. Talon, <i>The Standard Babylonian Creation Myth Enūma Eliš</i> . State Archives of Assyria Cuneiform Texts 4. Helsinki 2005.
van der Spek and Finkel	R. J. van der Spek and I. Finkel, ‘Mesopotamian chronicles’. Online publication: www.livius.org .
van der Spek and Stol	R. J. van der Spek and M. Stol, ‘The Antiochus Cylinder’. Online publication: www.livius.org .
Wehrli	F. Wehrli, <i>Die Schule des Aristoteles</i> . 2nd edn. Basel 1967–9.
Weissbach	F. H. Weissbach, <i>Die Keilinschriften der Achämeniden</i> . Leipzig 1911.
West	M. L. West, <i>Homeric Hymns, Homeric Apocrypha, Lives of Homer</i> . Cambridge, MA 2003.
Westenholz	J. G. Westenholz, <i>Legends of the Kings of Akkade</i> . Winona Lake, IN 1997.