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At the beginning... Cosmogony, theogony and anthropogeny in Sumerian texts of the third and second millennium BCE

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of the third and second millennium BCE



Jan J.W. Lisman

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At the beginning...

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Front cover: tablet AO 04153, published by G.Cros, publiées avec le concours de Léon Heuzey et François Thureau-Dangin, *Nouvelles Fouilles de Tello*. Paris: Leroux, 1910; 180.

voor *Ine*

‘Wijsheid is dat je zelf de nuances zoekt.
Wijsheid is dat je je meningen toetst.
En ook dat je gematigd optreedt,
omdat je weet dat je ernaast kunt zitten.’

[A. Tollefsen, *Trouw*, 13 juli 2012]

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Preface - Acknowledgements

The first step is the hardest, but well begun is half done. What was that first step? During my stay for one year in Heidelberg I was looking for an interesting subject for my undergraduate thesis. That subject simply fell into my lap on the occasion of a 'Blockseminar in Oberflockenbach: "Der Ursprung der Welt in griechischer und altorientalischer Sicht"', presided over by Prof. J. Halfwassen and Prof. S. Maul. My contribution to this seminar concerned the cosmogony in Sumerian texts.

By courtesy of Prof. W. van Soldt I obtained the permission to expand this topic into 'Sumerian Beginnings: cosmogony, theogony and anthropogeny in Sumerian texts', for the writing of my PhD thesis as 'buitenpromovendus'. During all these past years he has encouraged me to continue my research.

This study is built on the work of various scholars, including: Kramer, Jacobsen, van Dijk, Lambert and Pettinato. It is my wish that my study will contribute to and will be the subject of further discussion on these topics.

When I was given the opportunity to study Assyriology with a specialization in the Sumerian language and culture, I experienced the stimulating support of all my teachers, some of whom I would like to mention by name. Mr Theo Krispijn in Leiden and later Prof. S. Maul and Prof. H. Waetzoldt in Heidelberg, each of them with an accent on different aspects, initiated me into the knowledge of the Sumerian language and showed me the beauty of the Sumerian culture, which has greatly appealed to me since my youth. I owe much gratitude to them. In the final phase of this PhD study, Dr D. Katz was very helpful and inspiring, especially in showing me how to interpret Sumerian mythological texts.

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