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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]

Table of Contents

Preface – Acknowledgements

Prologue: Sumerian Beginnings 1- 4

1. Introduction 5-21

1.1 Mesopotamian history 5

- 1.1.1 Archaeological evidence
- 1.1.2 Linguistic evidence
- 1.1.3 Presence of the Sumerians in South Mesopotamia

1.2 Existing theories about the Sumerian Beginnings 9

- 1.2.1 van Dijk: the cosmic and the chthonic motif; *emersio* and *formatio*
 - 1.2.1.1 The cosmic motif
 - 1.2.1.2 The chthonic motif
 - 1.2.1.3 Combination of the cosmic and the chthonic system
 - 1.2.1.4 The expression **u₄-ri-a**
 - 1.2.1.5 Anthropogeny via *emersio* and *formatio*
 - 1.2.1.6 Summary and conclusions of van Dijk
- 1.2.2 Pettinato: anthropogeny
- 1.2.3 Lambert: cosmogony – theogony
- 1.2.4 Other scholars

2. The Sumerian story of the Beginnings: the texts 23-75

2.1 The texts 23

- 2.1.1a IAS 114
- 2.1.1b IAS 136, 113, 203
- 2.1.2 Ukg 15 (AO 4153)
- 2.1.3a Barton cylinder
- 2.1.3b IAS 174
- 2.1.4 NBC 11108
- 2.1.5 Debate between Tree and Reed
- 2.1.6 Debate between Grain and Sheep
- 2.1.7 Gilgameš, Enkidu and the Netherworld
- 2.1.8a Enki and Ninmaḥ
- 2.1.8b Appendix 1: Gods who (have to) work
 - Ninurta's exploits
 - A Hymn to Nibru and Išme-Dagan
 - *atra-ḥasīs*
- 2.1.8c Appendix 2: Another 'creation' of man?
 - Sumerian Flood Story
- 2.1.9 Song of the Hoe
- 2.1.10 KAR 4

2.2 The main points of the texts 62

- 2.2.1 **u₄-ri-a**
- 2.2.2 The cosmos: **an-ki**
- 2.2.3 The gods
- 2.2.4 Man
- 2.2.5 Culture

- 2.3 Preliminary conclusions 66
 - 2.3.1 Cosmogony
 - 2.3.1.1 Cosmogony – Third millennium
 - 2.3.1.2 Cosmogony – Second millennium
 - 2.3.2 Theogony
 - 2.3.2.1 Theogony – Third millennium
 - 2.3.2.2 Theogony – Second millennium
 - 2.3.3 Anthropogeny
 - 2.3.3.1 Anthropogeny – Third millennium
 - 2.3.3.2 Anthropogeny – Second millennium

- 2.4 "Sitz im Leben" of the texts 71

- Excursus: **an x ki**: the cosmic marriage as model or motif for a ritual? 72

3. God lists or Lists of divine names

77-142

- 3.1 God lists in relation to the Sumerian cosmogony and theogony 77

- 3.2 God lists 80
 - 3.2.1 The Fara god lists
 - 3.2.2 The Abū Ṣalābīḥ god list
 - 3.2.3 The Weidner god list
 - 3.2.4 The Isin god list
 - 3.2.5 The Nippur god list
 - 3.2.6 The Mari god list
 - 3.2.7 The list TCL XV 10 (= AO 5376) or: the Genouillac list
 - 3.2.7.1 The Enki-Ninki group
 - 3.2.7.2 An – Enlil
 - 3.2.7.3 Namma
 - 3.2.8 **an** = *anum*
 - 3.2.8.1 The 'ancestors' of An
 - 3.2.8.2 *Bēlet-ilī*
 - 3.2.8.3 Namma
 - 3.2.8.4 The 'ancestors' of Enlil

- 3.3 Cosmogonic and theogonic implications of the god lists 97
 - 3.3.1 Composition of the god lists: analysis of the order of several (groups of) gods
 - 3.3.2 Namma
 - 3.3.3 'Ancestors' of An
 - 3.3.4 Uraš
 - 3.3.5 Enlil and his ancestors
 - 3.3.5.1 Enmešarra

3.3.6	The Enki-Ninki gods	
3.3.6.1	Enki-Ninki	
3.3.6.2	Other goddesses with the name Ninki?	
3.3.6.3	The Enki-Ninki gods – as a group or as an individual god or goddess	
3.3.7	Enki of Eridu	
3.4	Preliminary conclusions	113
3.4.1	Cosmogony	
3.4.2	Theogony	
3.4.2.1	The 'ancestors' of An	
3.4.2.2	The 'ancestors' of Enlil	
3.5	Summary	116
	Excursus 1: Enlil and Ninlil	117
	Excursus 2: Enki	128
	Excursus 3: Enlil <i>versus</i> Enki	138
4.	Cosmogony, theogony and anthropogeny: the development of Sumerian ideas	143-192
4.1	Cosmogony	144
4.1.1	The Early Dynastic period	
4.1.2	The Ur III period	
4.1.3	The Old Babylonian period	
4.2	Theogony	151
4.2.1	The Early Dynastic period	
4.2.1.1	The Enki-Ninki gods	
4.2.1.2	The 'seven' of Enki and Ninki	
4.2.1.3	The 'seven' of Ningal and Ninhursaĝa	
4.2.1.4	Enlil and Ninlil	
4.2.1.5	Enki	
4.2.1.6	An	
4.2.2	The Ur III period	
4.2.2.1	Enki-Ninki and 'the seven'; Enlil; Enki	
4.2.2.2	The Anunna	
4.2.3	The Old Babylonian period, and later	
4.2.3.1	Namma	
4.2.3.2	The 'ancestor' groups	
4.3	Anthropogeny	162
4.3.1	The Early Dynastic period	

- 4.3.2 The Ur III period
- 4.3.3 The Old Babylonian period, and later
- 4.4 Sumerian Beginnings: Conclusion 167
 - 4.4.1 Cosmogony
 - 4.4.2 Theogony
 - 4.4.3 Anthropogeny
- 4.5 Akkadian mythological texts about Beginnings 172
 - 4.5.1 Cosmogony – theogony
 - 4.5.1.1 *enūma eliš*
 - 4.5.2 Anthropogeny
- 4.6 Akkadian Beginnings: Conclusion 179
- 4.7 The Beginnings: Sumerian *vs* Semitic origins 179
 - 4.7.1 Cosmogony – theogony
 - 4.7.2 Anthropogeny
- 4.8 Some final remarks with respect to former theories 185
 - 4.8.1 Absence of a diachronic study
 - 4.8.2 van Dijk
 - 4.8.2.1 The cosmic and the chthonic motif
 - 4.8.2.2 *Emersio vs formatio*
 - 4.8.2.3 *Nomadic vs sedentary ideas*
 - 4.8.3 The concept of 'Time' in Mesopotamian Beginnings
 - 4.8.3.1 Lambert's ideas
 - 4.8.3.2 Time expression in Sumerian texts about 'beginning'
- 4.9 Summary – conclusions 188
- 4.10 Analysis and interpretation of the texts 191

Epilogue: Beginnings and creation myths worldwide compared with the Mesopotamian Beginnings

193-202

- 1. The Ancient Near East 193
 - 1.1 Egypt
 - 1.2 North-West Mesopotamia and Anatolia: Hattian-Hurrian-Hittite mythology
 - 1.3 Ugarit
- 2. Creation myths worldwide 199
 - 2.1 Several distinguishable types of myth
 - 2.2 Mesopotamian cosmogonies

2.3 Mesopotamian anthropogeny

3. General conclusion 202

Appendix Text Editions 203-323

- 1a. IAS 114
- 1b. IAS 136, 113, 203
2. Ukg 15 (AO 4153)
- 3a. Barton cylinder
- 3b. IAS174
4. NBC 11108
5. Debate between Tree and Reed
6. Debate between Grain and Sheep
7. Gilgameš, Enkidu and the Netherworld
- 8a. Enki and Ninmaḥ
- Appendix 1: Gods who (have to) work
 - 8b. Ninurta's exploits
 - 8c. A hymn to Nibru and Išme-Dagan
 - 8d. *atra-ḥasīs*
- Appendix 2: Another 'creation' of man?
 - 8e. Sumerian Flood Story
9. Song of the Hoe
10. KAR 4

Excursus: The animate vs inanimate class of **an** and **ki**

Appendix God Lists 325-333

1. Early Dynastic period
 - 1.1 Fara
 - SF 1
 - SF 23-24
 - 1.2 Abū Ṣalābīḥ
 - IAS 82-89
2. Old Babylonian period
 - 2.1 Isin: IB 1552 + IB 1568 + fragments
 - 2.2 Nippur: SLT 122-124
 - 2.3 Mari
 - 2.4 TCL XV 10 or 'Genouillac list'
3. Middle Babylonian period
an = *anum*

Bibliography 335-371

Samenvatting 373-375

Curriculum vitae 377

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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