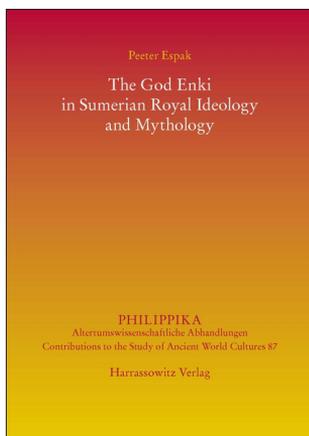


BOOK REVIEWS

ENKI AND THE SUMERIAN KINGSHIP



Peeter Espak. *The God Enki in Sumerian Royal Ideology and Mythology*. Philippika – Altertumswissenschaftliche Abhandlungen / Contributions to the Study of Ancient World Cultures 87. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 2015. 235 pp.

Dr. Peeter Espak's monograph *The God Enki in Sumerian Royal Ideology and Mythology* belongs to the field of Ancient Near Eastern studies. This monograph is a very important and profound analysis of the role and importance of the ancient Sumerian and Akkadian god Enki (Ea) in the Sumero-Akkadian religion and its royal ideology. Peeter Espak's latest study concerning Enki (2015) is based on his doctoral thesis *The God Enki in Sumerian Royal Ideology and Mythology*, which was successfully defended at the Faculty of Theology, University of Tartu,

on the 14th of December 2010 (Espak 2010). This doctoral thesis continued the research that he had already started in his master's studies (Espak 2006).

The time frame of Peeter Espak's research covers several historical periods from the Early Dynastic III period (Sumer) until the end of the Old Babylonian era, and partially also some later periods (e.g. Middle Babylonian, Neo-Assyrian). The author scrupulously analyses all significant written sources (royal inscriptions, myths, epics, royal hymns) from the Ancient Near Eastern region in the Sumerian and Akkadian languages from the period ca. 2500 to 1500 BCE (Sumerian and Akkadian royal inceptions from Ur-Nanše until Ammi-saduqa) and also other types of texts dating from the 3rd millennium BCE until later periods – the end of the 2nd millennium and also from the 1st millennium BCE (e.g. *Enuma Eliš* and *Genesis*). So, besides the royal inscriptions from Mesopotamia, Espak also analyses mythological and epic texts from the Ancient Near East. He has paid particular attention to Enki (Ea) in Sumero-Akkadian mythology such as Sumerian and Akkadian creation myths (e.g. *Enki and Ninmah*, *Atra-hasis*, *Enuma eliš*, etc.) and also considers parallels with *Genesis* from the Old Testament.

Espak's research deals with numerous hypotheses and some complicated questions concerning the cult of Enki (Ea), his role and position in Mesopotamian royal ideology, pantheon, rituals, and mythology, which are either dedicated to Enki (Ea) or in which Enki (Ea) is at least mentioned. Many of Espak's ideas, hypotheses and suggestions are, in my opinion, well-argued and interesting and I agree with almost all of them. For example, I agree with the following opinion proposed by Espak (2015: 205):

There is no basis for suggestions that Enki or Enlil had to be foreign deities imported to Mesopotamia. In the first preserved texts, they both are definitely Sumerian gods. There is no scope for proving or suggesting that they had to be

pre-Sumerian or Semitic gods. It seems possible to analyse both concepts in parallel with the development of the overall Sumerian society and culture.

Nevertheless, it should be mentioned here that Espak's study concerning Enki (Ea) in Sumero-Akkadian Royal Ideology and Mythology is not the first among such in-depth works in Ancient Near Eastern studies, leaving aside articles concerning the question of the very important god Enki. It is at least the third monograph dedicated to this subject. The first profound study concerning Enki (Ea) was published by Margaret W. Green more than forty years ago (Green 1975). Eight years later this study was followed by Assyriologist Hannes D. Galter, who published his dissertation on Ea/Enki in the Akkadian tradition in 1983 (Galter 1983).

Obviously, the quantity of articles or other studies that in some way are dedicated to or connected with questions about the god Enki (Ea) are quite remarkable; it is essential, however, to bear in mind that these papers only deal with certain aspects connected to the cult of Enki (Ea), and his role in religion and mythology (Steible 1967; Farber-Flügge 1973; Galter 1999 [1995]; Emelianov 2004; Dietrich 2007). Prior to the publishing of Espak's research in 2015, representing a new, authentic, and solid approach concerning this Sumerian deity, discussion of Enki's role and position in Mesopotamian religion and royal ideology was conspicuous by its absence in specialised Assyriological literature.

So, the current book consists of the following nine chapters: Early Dynastic Period; The Dynasty of Akkad; The Second Dynasty of Lagaš; Ur III Period; The Dynasty of Isin; The Dynasty of Larsa; The First Dynasty of Babylon; Enki (Ea) in the Mythology of Creation; Enki and the Archaic Sumerian Religion: The Question of Rivalry between the Theologies of Enki and Enlil.

This study is concluded by a General Conclusion, Bibliography, and Index of Royal Inscriptions and Mythological Texts.

The first seven chapters form one large section (pp. 7–138) with a clear logical and chronological structure. These chapters (from the Early Dynastic period until the First Dynasty of Babylon) give a detailed view concerning the development of the history of the cult of Enki (Ea) during the Late Early Dynastic period (ED III), the Sargonic epoch, the period of Gutian domination, the Neo-Sumerian epoch, and the Isin-Larsa and Old Babylonian periods.

The 8th chapter of Espak's monograph (pp. 139–188), "Enki (Ea) in the Mythology of Creation", deals with the role of the god Enki (Ea) in Sumerian and Akkadian mythology. First of all, of course, regarding the cosmogonies, the author scrupulously analyses all existing myths and texts within the mythological background in which Enki (Ea) was either mentioned or which were dedicated to this very significant Ancient Mesopotamian god.

The present work really shines in its final comparative chapter (chapter 9, pp. 189–207): "Enki and the Archaic Sumerian Religion: the Question of Rivalry between the Theologies of Enki and Enlil". It is notable that the question of the so-called contest between the two most important Sumerian theological systems – the system of Enlil with its main residence in Nippur and the system of Enki (whose main centre was Eridu) – was not so deeply considered or analysed in the earliest Ancient Near Eastern studies. So what is especially notable here is the fact that, in Peeter Espak's opinion, this rivalry between Enki and Enlil (Eridu and Nippur) might not even have existed at all.

But here I will also present some critical remarks on this great study. Although Espak's monograph is a very good and profound analysis, some small but still quite important things are missing; for example, the book contains no indices of rulers, deities, geographical places or other important names and terms. The other critical remark is related to the title of Peeter Espak's monograph: *The God Enki in Sumerian Royal Ideology and Mythology*. I think this title is not ideal and would look better if it also contained the word 'Akkadian', for example, *The God Enki in Sumerian and Akkadian Royal Ideology and Mythology* or, at least, perhaps *The God Enki in Sumero-Akkadian Royal Ideology and Mythology*. Peeter Espak's study concentrates not only on Sumerian periods using Sumerian material; he analyses material from Akkadian, Isin-Larsa, and Old Babylonian periods as well, also dealing with evidence from the Akkadian language (e.g. *Atrahasis*, *Enuma Eliš*, etc.).

In summary, I think it was necessary and very useful to carry out such a new study dedicated to the cult of Enki (Ea) in Ancient Mesopotamia. As a final comment I would add that I believe Peeter Espak has been very successful in analysing Enki's cult in Ancient Mesopotamia, a cult which strongly influenced the formation of the religious and ideological worldview of the people of the Ancient Near Eastern cultural space.

Vladimir Sazonov

Senior Research Fellow in Ancient Near Eastern Studies
The Centre for Oriental Studies, University of Tartu

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INDIGENOUS GROUPS AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE ARCTIC



Valery Tishkov (ed.). *Rossiiskaia Arktika: korennyye narody i promyshlennoe osvoenie*. Moscow & Saint Petersburg: Nestor-Istoria, 2016. 272 pp. In Russian.

Over the last years, the interaction between indigenous groups of population and mining companies has increasingly become the focus of attention on the part of anthropologists. The processes currently taking place in the Russian Arctic and the adjacent territories, which have been considered in a number of important works in the past decade and a half (see, e.g., some recent works: Stammer & Wilson 2006; Sirina & Iarlykapov & Funk 2008; Behrends et al. 2011; Novikova & Funk 2012; Wiget & Balalaeva 2014; Novikova 2014; Golovnev et al. 2014; Funk 2015; and others), are no exception either.

The book titled *Rossiiskaia Arktika: korennyye narody i promyshlennoe osvoenie* (Russian Arctic: Indigenous Peoples and Industrial Development)¹ is written by a group of ethnologists from the RAS Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology (Natalia Novikova, Elena Pivneva, and Valery Tishkov), Tula State Pedagogical University (Elena Martynova), N.A. Shilo North-Eastern Scientific Research Institute of the RAS Far East Branch (Oksana Kolomiets), and one independent researcher (Aleksandra Terekhina). The authors set themselves a threefold task: to study the interaction between indigenous ('korennyye') peoples of the Russian North and industrial companies in the context of law, and to "look into current economic and socio-cultural aboriginal practices" as well as to identify risks which industrial development entails, and "suggest ways of mitigating those" (p. 4). And here a rather specific