« The Uruk List of Kings and Sages and late Mesopotamian Scholarship ». JANER, 8:2, 2008, p. 137-169.

Vito Messina
Since its publication in 1962, the so-called Uruk List of Kings and Sages, where connections were established between human scholars and antediluvian sages, rose many questions regarding the specific purpose of the text itself and the context within it was written, namely that of Hellenistic Uruk. A context much more complicated than usually believed by Hellenocentric historians, where the figures of Antiochus I stood out among the other Seleucid rulers for his personal involvement in the support of Babylonian traditions and played an important role in the relations with local elites, attesting, at least in the early decades of the Seleucid rule, the propitious attitude to local customs of the new rulers of Asia, that were of Macedonian as well of Iranian origin.

This article points to the formulation of this list as a systematic and explicit formulation of an old association – as evidenced already in early 1st Millennium materials – and not only as a new invention from old material, emphasizing two questions in particular: why is the most explicit scholarly genealogy written in the Seleucid period?; and who is the last named person in the text?

In the Author opinion, the list is an attempt by local scholars to gain support for themselves and their novel cultic agenda.
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Thèmes : 3.2.3. Séleucides, Parthes et Sassanides

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