Presentation of the *Dossier*

The royalty in the ancient Eastern world: Textual and image narratives

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The idea of organizing a dossier on Eastern Antiquity has haunted us for some years. As scholars of Eastern history and archeology, it is our duty to provoke debate and reflection on the ancient Near East in its various temporalities and regions. Thus emerged the thematic proposal on royalty in the ancient oriental world.

Our proposition focuses on the study of a narrative-history evidenced by royalty images, created both from texts and from iconographic records or from material culture. Reflecting on the construction of the imaginary relating it to issues of royal power and of the analysis of various narratives about the protagonists of this history was the guiding principle for the nine articles published here.

The contributions are dedicated to different cultures, such as Mesopotamian, Levantine, Phoenician and Greek, revealing the results of recent research carried out by Brazilian researchers, thus reaffirming the consolidation of this field of studies in the country.

It is, therefore, with the certainty of contributing a serious and documented reflection on history, politics and art in the ancient eastern world, that we present this dossier.

The dossier opens with the contribution of Maria Cristina Nicolau Kormikiari, entitled “Phoenician royalty: a *primus inter pares* king,” which discusses the status of monarchy, through the analysis of material and written sources from the three largest Phoenician cities – Byblos, Tyre and Sidon.

Thiago Galbiatti Vespa and Milton Luiz Torres, with the article “The ‘Wreath of Ariadne’ in the *Revelation to John*” seek to identify in Greek mytho-

logical literature the source for the elaboration of the female character with regal symbolism in a Christian apocalyptic book.

Josué Berlesi's contribution, entitled "State Monarchy? An analysis of the impacts of the 'United Monarchy' myth on the historiography of Israel and Judah," aims to debate the emergence of the state period in ancient Israel, when this would have been structured as a single kingdom and the construction of narratives around it.

With the article "Accents of power: visual recombination and the foundations of the Judahite royal imaginary," Silas Klein Cardoso seeks monarchic concepts in the visual culture of the "Benjamin Plateau" to demonstrate the uses and reinterpretations of imperial royal icons in the Kingdom of Judah, identified at the origin of the imagery and profile of its kings.

Bruno Alves Barros's article, "The development of textual and image narratives in Assyria," proposes a study on the evolution and development of historical narratives in the Assyrian empire, based on imagery and textual evidence from the Middle and Neo-Assyrian periods.

With "The making of the public image of the Mesopotamian kings: the divinity behind the power," Luiz Alexandre Solano Rossi offers us a reflection on the idea of power and its intimate relationship with the deities in the Assyrian empire.

Leandro Penna Ranieri's contribution, entitled "Memory and ceremony at the Assyrian royal palaces (First Millennium BCE): a study of a room of the Southwest Palace of Nineveh," analyzes the rich iconography of room 36 that depicts Sennacherib's conquest of the city of Lakiš, focusing on the discussion about the notion of memory ceremony.

With "Images of the destruction of the city of Lachish by the Assyrian king Sennacherib: essay on pictorial bas-reliefs as historical agents," João Batista Ribeiro Santos presents a contribution on the set of reliefs in room 36 of the southwest palace of Nineveh, using the criterion methodological the production of presence, where the reliefs are seen as historical agents and as a factor of political information.

Finally, this dossier ends with the work of Katia Maria Paim Pozzer, "Assyrian images: between narrative and art," where she analyzes the relief of the Banquet of Ashurbanipal and Aššur-šarrat in the palace garden in Nineveh, from the perspective of the history of art and the theoretical-methodological foundations of iconology.

Today, more than ever, we live in Brazil in an unprecedented political crisis, where the use and abuse of words and images are made with the intention of blurring reality and composing a discourse of power separated from

the majority of the population. The purpose of this dossier that we present here invites us to know a little more about the history of the constitution and representation of royalty in the ancient eastern world and, thus, to propose a broader critical reflection on the idea of power in the present time.