

## II. ASTRONOMICAL AND COSMOLOGICAL KNOWLEDGE IN MYTHOLOGY AND RELIGION

### MESOPOTAMIAN INFLUENCES ON PERSIAN SKY-WATCHING AND CALENDARS. PART II. ISHTAR AND ANAHITA

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#### Abstract

There are a small number of similarities between Ishtar and Anahit, the Persian and Babylonian Venus-goddesses. These similarities may result from cultural diffusion between Persia and Mesopotamia, which was mainly eastwards. We present a comparison of the attributes belonging to both Ishtar and Anahita. This is mainly based on the Mesopotamian sources, since the Persian ones are very meagre. The relationships and influences between the two goddesses are visible in the symbolism of the planet Venus and the constellation Leo, and are associated with autumnal equinox festivals.

Keywords: Mesopotamia, Persia, Ishtar, Anahita, the planet Venus.

This paper is the second report on our research concerning Mesopotamian influences on the Persian calendar and sky-watching. In the first paper, our attention was focused on the Sun-gods Shamash and Mithra. It was presented at the conference “Time and Astronomy in Past Cultures”, which took place in the spring of 2005 at Toruń (Jakubiak and Sołtysiak 2006). We intend to split the whole project into three parts, each devoted to one of the pairs of deities belonging to the triads attested both in Mesopotamian and Persian religions, namely Shamash and Mithra, Ishtar and Anahita, and Ahuramazda and Sin. Thus in this report we turn our attention to the second pair of deities: the goddesses of the planet Venus, Ishtar and Anahita.

#### Inanna/ Ishtar and Anahita. Symbolism, iconography and attributes

Inanna/Ishtar was the most important female deity in ancient Mesopotamia. Her name is documented first in the archaic tablets found in Uruk/Warka, which date back to ca. 3200 BCE. At that time she was already connected with the planet Venus and therefore called <sup>d</sup>INANA-UD/húd (Inanna of the evening) and <sup>d</sup>INANA-sig (Inanna of the morning). The name <sup>d</sup>INANA-KUR (Inanna of the Netherworld) is also at-

tested, though less frequently (Szarzyńska 1997, p.116, 177). The three names seem to reflect the three phases of Venus visibility. During the third millennium BCE Inanna was frequently mentioned as the chief goddess in local pantheon of Uruk and as an important deity in other local traditions of southern Mesopotamia. The Semitic inhabitants of Mesopotamia – first Akkadians, then Amorites and others – identified her with Ishtar, their most worshipped female deity.

An important innovation in the history of Inanna/Ishtar occurred during the reign of Sargon the Great, the founder of the Akkadian empire, who promoted the goddess as the protective deity of his kingdom. She was equally important to the Sumerians and Semites and thus was conceived to be a symbol of unity. Sargon's daughter Enheduanna composed two hymns to Inanna, which were expressions of her veneration for the goddess (Sjöberg 1975). Inanna from Uruk remained a very important goddess figure during the third dynasty of Ur and the first dynasty of Isin (ca. 2100–1800 BCE). The kings of these dynasties legitimized their rule by taking part in the ritual performance of a sacred marriage with the goddess. Afterwards, they were recognized as protective gods of the land, and were therefore identified with Dumuzi/Amaushumgalanna, the god of plant vegetation and Inanna's consort in the Urukite tradition (Kramer 1970).

#### II

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In the late second and first millennia BCE, Ishtar remained the most important female deity and her dual character as the goddess of love and of war was accentuated. In fact, many local female deities were identified as Ishtar and shared her general attributes. However, even when this occurred, these female deities were sometimes distinguished from each other and always kept a local flavor. The most important among them were Ishtar from Niniveh and Ishtar from Arbil, both worshiped by Assyrian kings. At that time Ishtar was strongly connected with the god of the Sun (Shamash) and of the Moon (Sin), and this triad was frequently represented both in religious texts and in representative art, using the symbols of a star, a Sun-disc and a crescent.

After the Late Uruk period, when the first readable documents were produced, Inanna/Ishtar continued to be associated with the planet Venus. This association remained constant throughout the three-thousand-year history of the cult of this goddess. In Sumerian texts she was sometimes called Ninsianna (“heaven’s radiant queen”) and her name appeared both in the purely astronomical tablets of Ammisaduqa and in a description of the sacred marriage ritual (Jacobsen 1987, p.124; Heimpel 1982, p.10–11). In post-Sumerian texts even her name was etymologized, as Ninana(k) “the queen of heaven” (Jacobsen 1970, p.27); and many other epithets also pointed to her astral character, e.g. the prayer LKA 70 i 28–29 where she was called “the celestial light that penetrates the heavens and the earth” (Seux 1976, p.435). As the goddess of Venus, Ishtar was symbolized by a six- or eight-pointed star.

In this respect, it is likely that the famous myth about Inanna/Ishtar descending to the Netherworld (Sladek 1974) was based on an observation of Venus’ internal conjunction (Sołtysiak 2002). The goddess entered the land of the dead in the west, but declared that her aim was to travel to the east. The seven elements of her divine aura – which she was forced to leave behind, one after the other, in each of the seven gates of the Netherworld – may have been associated with the gradual disappearance of the planet into the glow of the Sun. The story itself was probably composed at the turn of the third millennium, but even then it expressed some older motifs and was re-written as late as the Neo-Assyrian period.

The dualism of Inanna/Ishtar, obviously related to the two easily observed phases of Venus’ visibility, was strongly emphasized both in early and late Mesopotamian texts. There are many explicit mentions of Inanna as the goddess of dusk and dawn, e.g. in her *ershemma*-hymn (Cohen 1981, p.134). In later periods Ishtar was frequently recognized to be an androgynous deity.

In an astronomical text from Ashurbanipal’s library (K 5990) the morning star was called (the male) Ishtar of Akkad while the evening star was called (the female) Ishtar of Uruk (Heimpel 1982, p.14); the opposite attribution can also be found (Reiner 1995, p.6; Koch-Westenholz 1995, p.125). This gender dualism was sometimes related to the duality of Ishtar’s ascription as the goddess of both love and war (Reiner 1985a, p.30). There is mention of a bearded Ishtar from Babylon in a Neo-Assyrian hymn dedicated to Nanaya, and a passage about Ishtar from Niniveh, also with a beard, in a prayer of Ashurbanipal (Heimpel 1982, p.15). Ishtar’s androgynous character is also expressed in a Babylonian hymn to the queen of Nippur (Lambert 1982, p.200).

In some local traditions the duality of Inanna/Ishtar is expressed by a twin female deity. For example, in early Uruk Inanna and Ninsun were a couple (Cohen 1993, p.215); later, Ishtar was connected with Nanaya. During the third dynasty of Ur, there is a description of a feast of the twin goddesses Annunitum and Ul-mashitum celebrated in the capital city; the twin goddesses were very likely the two aspects of Inanna. An interesting document explaining Ishtar’s dualism is the Akkadian hymn to Agushaya, in which Ishtar as the goddess of war makes trouble for the people and Ea decides to create Saltu – the mirror reflection of Ishtar. Unfortunately the tablet containing the text is broken. Nevertheless, the last passage suggests that the goddess was not happy with this creation and promised to stay calm for whole year except on the day of the feast of Agushaya. On this day, people would dance and celebrate in the streets (Foster 1977, p.84).

All these particulars clearly show the important role Ishtar played in the Mesopotamian pantheon as well as in popular beliefs. Unfortunately, we do not have at our disposal equally good sources concerning the role of Anahita in Persian religion.

As is well known, Anahita had long been present in the Iranian pantheon, probably since its origin sometime in the Bronze Age. Persians paid homage to the goddess Anahita whose cult continued to be practiced without interruption up until the time of the Muslim conquest. The Arab conquest of the Sasanian Empire put an end to the ancient period of the Zoroastrian religion and there are indications that references to Anahita also disappeared almost completely from Persian belief at this point. Our study is focused mainly on the Achaemenid period, but later time periods should not be forgotten since they serve to reveal further developments in Zoroastrian religion. During the Achaemenid dynasty, Mesopotamian influences on Persian religion seem generally to have been strongest, particularly when the

broader relationships between the two lands are taken into consideration.

The name of Anahita can be associated with the Avestian adjective *anahita* which is usually connected with *Harahwati Aredwi Sura yazata*. It is clear that *yazata* had a strong relationship to flowing water and fertility. The adjective *anahita* can be translated from the Avestian language as "immaculate". This indicates that Anahita, as a goddess who was immaculate and pure, had been a very powerful symbol in Persian religion. Moreover, she was identified with the planet Venus, which provides a strong argument that she was linked to the Mesopotamian goddess Ishtar.

Anahita is probably one of the most mysterious deities in the Persian pantheon. She was present in the oldest forms of Iranian religion. Moreover, it is also interesting that no *Yasht* was dedicated to her, particularly because this suggests that since the oldest periods she had been worshiped among the ordinary people, and that her symbolism and position in Iranian religion was so strong that no further elaboration was needed.<sup>1</sup> This argument is even more persuasive if one takes into account the fact that in the absence of textual sources the dominant position of Anahita remained unchanged throughout nearly the whole of antiquity and flourished most intensely during the Sasanian period. In *Yasht* 5 of the Avesta, one does find some sentences that were dedicated to Anahita. Here the goddess is described as a person driven on a chariot, a wild river, a wind, a cloud, and snow. The dualistic symbolism of the goddess is clearly highlighted in these poetic elements, for she is portrayed as warlike while at the same time being associated with concepts of fertility. On the other hand, these pluvial aspects were rather marginal since the main attributes of Anahita were rivers, ecologically crucial elements in Iranian religious belief among rural communities (Boyce 1967; Boyce 1988, p. 89).

Anahita's position probably changed during the late Achaemenid period (late fifth and fourth centuries B.C.). It appears that this process occurred during the reign of Artaxerxes II (404-358 B.C.), who introduced two deities, Mithra and Anahita, into the official religion in addition to the main god Ahuramazda. This reform was probably carried out on Persian territory and under strong Mesopotamian influence (Jakubiak, Sołtysiak 2006). In this respect, it is important to note that the construction of the temples in Iran had been going on since the time of Artaxerxes II. As was discussed briefly in during the Toruń conference, the same situation can be identified concerning the two other

Iranian deities from the main triad, Shamash and Mithra (Jakubiak and Sołtysiak 2006). According to the testimony of Beressos the Babylonian, who lived in the third century B.C., similar temples dedicated to the Persian triad were erected in nearly every city.

Nevertheless, in Persian art from the Achaemenid period certain motifs can be found that could be associated with the attributes typical of Anahita. Such motifs can be recognized most readily in the glyptic material. According to Shepherd, who analyzed the iconography of Anahita, several seals depicting females are likely to be representations of this goddess (Shepherd 1980). Of course, there are very few such representations compared to the Sasanian period, a situation that could be explained by the fact that Anahita was venerated particularly by members of the Sasanian dynasty.

In the Achaemenid period, iconography that can be associated with depictions of Anahita can be found on cylinder seals. The attributes depicted – a lotus flower, a bird and a diadem – are typical for Anahita (Shepherd 1980, p.56). The tiara which also could be recognized as a *corona muralis* is one of the other elements often linked to the attributes of Ishtar. Together with a *corona muralis*, birds were also typical elements associated with Ishtar (Shepherd 1980). It seems highly likely that the introduction of Anahita into the official state religion by Artaxerxes II was strongly tied to propaganda campaigns and to the prevailing royal ideology. Generally speaking, everything that was Persian in origin was viewed as the quintessence of Persian pride. Such a preeminent role could be assigned to Anahita, who, according to the ideology of the time, was just as important as one of the most popular goddesses from Mesopotamia: Ishtar.

The similarity of Anahita to Ishtar may well have been the starting point for her association with the planet Venus. According to Herodotus (I. 131), the cult of Anahita was widespread in the Persian Empire and her cult was referred to by the name of the celestial goddess Aphrodite/Anahitis. The Avestan word *anahitish* means "immaculate" which was a concept connected with Venus. Nor was it accidental that both deities had similar attributes, since the convergence provided an opportunity to establish the position of Anahita firmly on both Mesopotamian and Persian territory.

Moreover, the iconography of Anahita is very closely related to the constellation Leo. This is confirmed by the representations found on cylinder seals as well as the symbol of the lion (Boardmann 2003, p.195). It is commonly accepted in Mesopotamian research that such representations of lions have astral aspects connected with the constellation Leo. Consequently, if depictions almost identical to the Mesopotamian repre-

<sup>1</sup> "Yashts" is the Persian name for the hymns that formed important parts of the Avesta, the holy book of the Zoroastrians.

sentation of Anahita can be found on the cylinder seals, it would support the above thesis.

Apart from this, we have no data that clearly demonstrate diffusion or changes in the nature of Anahita's cult during Parthian rule. We do not even have evidence concerning her celestial association or position in the pantheon. We can only speculate that the religious doctrine did not change. What is significant, according to the sources, is that the cult of Anahita was very popular not only in the Parthian Empire, but also among many peoples and nations in other parts of the Middle East. Anahita was particularly worshiped in Armenia, where her cult survived until the population's conversion to Christianity (Boyce 1983, p.1007). One similarity is significant: all the statues of Anahita were located in temples, no matter in which part of the Middle East the temples themselves were constructed.

A particularly interesting fact, true not only in the region of Mesopotamia, is that the association between Anahita and Ishtar survived. Some aspects of Nanai also can be observed in Anahita's character (Boyce 1988, p.123; Chaumont 1983, p.1008-1009). In other words, we can assume that the cult of Nanai was absorbed by that of Anahita. This supposition is fundamental because the main characteristic of Nanai was her violent and warlike character (Boyce 1988, p.123). If this is right, it means that during the period in question warlike elements in the cult were much more important for the Arsacid dynasty. It is possible that during their conflict with Rome the Parthians needed such warlike deities to give divine support during difficult times. In such conditions, paradoxically, Anahita's cult could have developed and been consolidated in Persia. If so, then Anahita's increased importance, which started during the Achaemenid period, continued during Parthian times and reached its peak in the Sasanian period.

### Some astronomical aspects of Ishtar and Anahita

Many minor feasts dedicated to Inanna and Ishtar are attested in various local traditions, but the most important and persistent of them was the feast that took place during the sixth month of the standard Mesopotamian calendar, called Ululu ("the cry") in Akkadian and Kin-Inanna ("the oracle of Inanna") in Sumerian (Sallaberger 1993, p.128-129). This feast was organized at one of most important junctures in the solar year, close to the autumnal equinox. Despite the fact that in the Mesopotamian lunar calendar the relation between fixed calendar feasts and the position of the Sun was always fluid, the proximity to the autumnal equinox may

have been important. The relationship between Inanna and the sixth month is attested back in ca. 2100 BCE, and it is possible that even earlier, in Gudea's calendar (ca. 2150 BCE), the name of the sixth month Ur ("the lion/dog") was already connected with the goddess, whose animal attribute was the lion. Unfortunately, no information about any feast during this month has been preserved (Cohen 1993, p.74).

During the second millennium, the sixth month was continuously linked with Ishtar and the so-called "Nippur Compendium" simply associates Ululu with the goddess (Cohen 1993, p.324). In one of the mythological texts composed early in the second millennium, Dumuzi, Inanna's husband sentenced by her to death, was called Ululu (Jacobsen 1978, p.51), which suggests that the Akkadian name of the month was related to the story about Ishtar's journey to the Netherworld and her return. The name of the sixth month in the local calendar from Sippar may also reflect this story, since Tirum is probably associated with Akkadian *taru*, "to come back" (Cohen 1993, p.278). In the more-or-less contemporary calendar used in Mari, the sixth month was called DINGIR.IGI.KUR, which may be interpreted as the name of the deified Netherworld and again associated with Inanna's journey.

According to the menology of Astrolabe B, the month Ululu is the "work of Ishtar of Elam, the goddesses are purified in the sacred river" (Cohen 1993, p.322). It is possible that this ritual took place in the middle of the month, between the 11th and the 14th days (Cohen 1993, p.104-105). Also in the Neo-Assyrian calendar of feasts K 3753, during the month of Ululu "the lady of gods purifies her body in the divine river". In the decadent tradition of Uruk the purifying rites of Anu and Ishtar, as well as the ceremony of their sacred marriage, took place in the month of Ululu (McEwan 1981, p.177).

In the later Assyrian calendar, the minor feast of Ishtar took also place in the fourth month and was related to the *taklimtu* ritual when Dumuzi/Tammuz was called back from the Netherworld together with the dead who received their offerings. Such a feast may also be attested in the calendar from Mari (Cohen 1993, p.289), where the major feast of Ishtar took place during the ninth month (Cohen 1993, p.293). In third-millennium Uruk the feast *elunum* of Inanna was organized during the second month (Cohen 1993, p.211). More mysterious is the passage in Astrolabe B which relates that the tenth month Tebetu was "the month of Ishtar's brilliance". Perhaps an explanation can be found in one of Ashurbanipal's inscriptions, where we read that "Tebetu [is] the month of visibility of the Bow Star, the feast of the worshipped Queen, the daughter of Enlil"

(Cohen 1993, p.336). The Bow Star (identified as Canis Major) and the bow in general were widely recognized attributes of Ishtar, so it is possible that in later traditions the calendrical feast of Ishtar was also associated with her constellation.

Another astral attribute of Ishtar was the constellation of Annunitum (part of modern Pisces). During at least the second and first millennia BCE the lion was the chief symbolic animal of Ishtar, and this provides another reason why the constellation of Leo sometimes appears, especially in late astrological tradition, as the attribute of Ishtar, who was also connected with the planet Venus.

Ishtar was represented most frequently as an armed woman standing on a lion, sometimes with wings or surrounded by stars. In addition, it is possible that representations of naked women standing facing forwards ought to be identified as Inanna/Ishtar. In a few cases the goddess was associated with mountains, as in the Sumerian epic "Enmerkar and the Lord of Aratta" where Inanna is presented as "heaven's great queen riding on high in a ruddy robe, enthroned on the mountain summits" (Jacobsen 1987, p.295).

At this point we will take a closer look at Anahita and her status as well as the significant role and astronomical manifestations of her cult. Since our knowledge about Persian religious belief and its astronomical connotations is very scanty, it is impossible to determine for certain how many religious aspects came to be deeply rooted in Persian astronomical lore. Among the data at our disposal we do not have clear evidence that could be helpful in our investigations of those aspects directly linked to Persian religious beliefs, since the textual sources have not survived. However, there can be no doubt that Persian religion, like any religious system, could not have existed without a calendar and calendrical festivals, and consequently without using astronomical lore.

Although we have no information regarding the astronomical aspects of the cult of Anahita within Persian territory, sources from the area strongly influenced by Persia can be very helpful and serve to clarify this interesting topic.

Some celestial aspects of the Anahita cult can supposedly be found outside Persian territory. In Commagene, for instance, there was a cult of Ormuzd, Mithra and Anahita (Boyce 1986, p. 843, 7 vol., Dio Chrysostom XXXVI 38-60; Strabo XV. 3. 13-17). As is well known, the religion of the Commagenian dynasty contained many aspects of Hellenistic, Persian, and local traditions mixed together, which brought a new syncretism to the local religion of the region. In

this respect, the religion dating from the reign of Antioch I of Commagene is quite well documented by his gigantic "mausoleum" at Nemrud Dag (Wagner 2000; Waldmann 1991). The worship of Anahita in Commagene could have been borrowed from Persian tradition, but Mesopotamian tradition very probably played an important role too, and in all likelihood Anahita was strictly associated with the astral aspects of the planet Venus.

As we have already mentioned, other details of Anahita's cult are found in Armenia. In this country strongly influenced by Persia, not only were statues of the goddess worshiped; we can also recognize some celestial contexts of the cult. It is peculiar that only in Armenia did people organize special ceremonies and festivals dedicated to Anahita. These festivals developed over time. During the early Christian period, the Assumption of the Virgin Mary was celebrated on a day formerly called Great Mithraghan. This fell on the 21<sup>st</sup> day of the month Mihr (Boyce 1986, p.802-805). The month Mihr can be identified back to the Achaemenid period as the seventh month in the Mesopotamian calendar – what became August/September. Hence, the 21<sup>st</sup> day of Mithraghan was celebrated on September 19/20th. In other words, the feast was organized near the autumnal equinox. That day was probably important in the Persian religious calendar because Anahita was worshiped as a goddess of victory, an assumption that derives from the character of the early Christian ceremony organized in Armenia. Moreover, the day and the character of the ceremonies dedicated to Anahita in her capacity as a celestial and victorious deity were not chosen accidentally. According to Persian tradition, on that day the Persian hero Feridun had defeated Hahak, a terrible evil monster, in what can be understood as a mythological reflection of combat between good and evil spirits, a tradition that is very well known in Persian religion.

Another feast that can also be associated with the cult of some of Anahita's aspects is the ceremony dedicated to Tishtria, the *yazata* of rivers. The feast was called Tirigam and took place during the springtime. However, the only other information we have at our disposal is that the feast was associated with Sirius. Nothing in the ancient sources helps us to determine the day on which the ceremonies took place. There is no doubt, however, that the *yazata* of water was viewed as emanating from Anahita (Boyce 1969, p.31; Boyce 1979, p.100-101). This does at least allow us to conclude that ceremonies dedicated to this important goddess and her cult were not only carried out in the early autumn but also, in special circumstances, during the springtime.

## Conclusions

The existence of these links between the main deities of Persia and Mesopotamia is not surprising. Mesopotamian religion, with its very old traditions, must surely have had very strong influences on Persian religion and associated beliefs. The confluence of ideas is particularly clear during Artaxerxes II's reign, when a fascination with Mesopotamian customs was observed as bringing about a very profound process of change in Persian religion. Under Mesopotamian influences, Mithra and Anahita appeared alongside Ahura Mazda to form the main triad of deities in the Persian pantheon. It seems reasonable to draw a parallel with Shamash, Ishtar and Sin. Certain astral aspects associated with the planet Venus – which is linked to with Ishtar and Anahita – are also very interesting. Furthermore, two other aspects are typical for those two goddesses. The first is an association with the constellation of Leo and other aspects commonly intertwined with Leo symbolism. The second involves the autumnal equinox. A strong argument that the autumnal equinox was very important in the liturgy of both deities can be constructed from that fact that the most important festivals dedicated to Ishtar and Anahita took place at the same time. Also worthy of attention are the warlike aspects of both deities as well as their mutual associations with fertility and their common representation as virgins and attractive women. However, only Anahita was worshiped as the abstract personification of pure water or everlasting fire.

In conclusion, in the case of Anahita and Ishtar, unlike comparative studies focused on Mithra and Shamash, it is simply impossible to find many parallels and similarities holding between the two goddesses. Only two convergent elements can be associated with Anahita and Ishtar. One is the festival dedicated to these two goddesses, which took place in September, near to the autumnal equinox. The other comprises some iconographical elements associated with the representation of lions, understood as attributes of the goddesses. Consequently the conclusion must be rather pessimistic. We have relatively good Mesopotamian sources at our disposal but relatively limited ones from the Persian side. As a result, comparative studies on Ishtar and Anahita continue to be very difficult. Yet the two similarities that are presented above seem to be relatively important and show how carefully such comparative studies must be conducted. The difficulty of reconstructing reciprocal influences between these two ancient religious systems must also be emphasized. Even if the relationships and associations documented here did exist in ancient Mesopotamia and Persia, the nature of our sources still requires us to derive our con-

clusions primarily through inference by constructing patterns of converging evidence. Hence, we have little direct evidence which could support the hypothesis on more scientific grounds.

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## MESOPOTAMIJOS ĮTAKOS PERSŲ DANGAUS STEBĖJIMAMS IR KALENDORIAMS.

### II DALIS.

### IŠTAR IR ANAHITA

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#### Santrauka

Straipsnis nagrinėja panašumus tarp Babilonijos ir Persijos religinių sistemų. Šie panašumai aptariami nagrinėjant dvi abiem religinėms sistemoms svarbias deives. Deivės Anahita ir Ištara pasirodo čia ne tik religiniame lygmenyje, bet taip pat yra siejamos su dangumi ir astrologija. Jos abi čia atstovauja Veneros planetą. Šie panašumai gali būti rezultatas tų įtakų, kurios sklido

iš Vakarų į Rytus – iš Mesopotamijos į Persiją. Lyginamuosius tyrimus apie jų atributiką, simbolius ir jų padėtį panteone paremia abiejų labai turtingų Mesopotamijos (Asirijos ir Babilonijos) šaltinių analizė ir negausūs šaltiniai iš Persijos, kurie išliko iki mūsų dienų. Negalima nepaminėti keleto naujų Anahitos kulto aspektų, atsiradusių dėl Mesopotamijos įtakos, valdant Artakserksui II. Savo valdymo laikotarpiu šis karalius iš pagrindų reformavo Irane buvusį tikėjimą, į oficialią religinę sistemą įtraukdamas dvi naujas deives. Viena iš jų buvo Anahita, kuri pasirodė kartu su Mitra ir tapo aukščiausiojo dievo Ahuramazdo partnere iranietiško panteone.

Šis straipsnis yra tęsinys anksčiau atliktų Mesopotamijos ir Persijos dievų triados (Sinus, Šamašas, Ištar /Ahuramazdas, Mitra ir Anahita) tyrimų. Pirmoji dievybių pora – Mitra ir Šamašas – buvo nagrinėjama 2005 m. Torūnėje vykusioje konferencijoje „Laikas ir astronomija praecities kultūrose“ (Jakubiak and Soltysiak 2006).

Vertė Algirdas Girininkas

## II

II. ASTRO-  
NOMICAL AND  
COSMOLOGICAL  
KNOWLEDGE  
IN MYTHOLOGY  
AND RELIGION