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THE TOWER OF BABEL

Is there a secular reference to it?

Some have suggested that such a reference does exist in the Sumerian epic entitled "Enmerkar and the Lord of Aratta." There, in a speech of Enmerkar, an incantation is pronounced that has a mythical introduction. Kramer's translation is as follows:

Once upon a time there was no snake, there was no scorpion,

There was no hyena, there was no lion,

There was no wild dog, no wolf,

There was no fear, no terror,

Man had no rival.

In those days, the lands of Subur (and) Hamazi,

Harmony-tongued (?) Sumer, the great land of the decrees of princeship,

Uri, the land having all that is appropriate (?),

The land Martu, resting in security,

The whole universe, the people in unison (?)

To Enlil in one tongue [spoke].

...

(Then) Enki, the lord of abundance (whose) commands are trustworthy,

The lord of wisdom, who understands the land,

The leader of the gods,

Endowed with wisdom, the lord of Eridu

Changed the speech in their mouths, [brought (?)] contention into it,

Into the speech of man that (until then) had been one

(1968: 109, 111).

It is of interest that Enki, the god of Eridu, is related to this myth, which may well represent the memory of an actual event from the late fourth millennium BC.

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