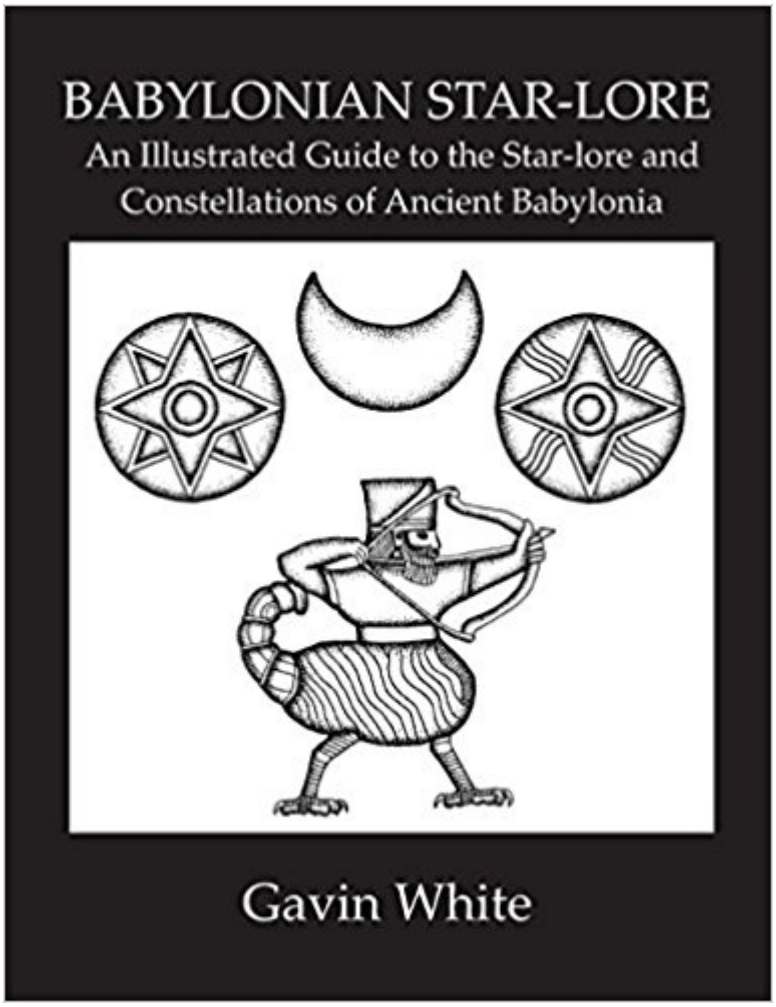
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Babylonian Star-Lore. An Illustrated Guide To The Star-Lore And Constellations Of Ancient Babylonia



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Synopsis

Today our most obvious link to the ancient cultures of Babylonia is through the twelve constellations that make up the zodiac. The zodiac is, however, but a part of a much larger system of star-lore that could reveal so much about ancient man and his beliefs. Knowledge of this lore could provide many profound insights into how early civilisations viewed the gods, the nature of the universe and the destiny of mankind. This book is the first of its kind, specifically written for the layman, to explore the constellations and star-lore of ancient Babylonia. It presents the idea that the constellation figures as a whole amount to a 'pictorial calendar' that integrates various seasonal festivals - concerned with the mythic life-cycle of the sun, the farming and herding year, the institution of kingship and various rites directed towards the dead - into an elegant system that ultimately represents an archaic image of time itself. The introductory sections provide all the essential background information on how ancient Near Eastern cultures viewed the heavens. It starts with a survey of the writing system and then moves on to consider the nature of ominous signs and celestial divination. The final sections introduce the reader to the archaic view of the cosmos and an overview of the whole star-map. The main body of the book is composed of an A-Z Gazetteer, which explores the names, appearances and associated lore of each star and constellation in greater detail. A set of appendices furnishes additional information on the planetary and geographic associations of the stars, the calendar and the seasonal cycle of Mesopotamia. Beyond the familiar figures of the zodiac, the Babylonian constellations have laid in almost total obscurity for the last two thousand years. Here for the first time the complete star-map is reconstructed and many of its secrets revealed, so that now the whole system of celestial symbolism can be restored to something approaching its former glory.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The previous reviewer apparently obtained a copy of an earlier edition of this book which didn't have references and a full bibliography, although the author later made these available on his web site. The 2014 edition of this book has 36 pages of reference notes and a full bibliography. Perhaps because this book deals with a very old culture, the pages seem filled with magic. The author has hand drawn line illustrations on every page which adds to the sense of ancient knowledge revealed. There is no other book available like this one, which is crammed full of fascinating information, yet very readable. For anyone interested in the star-lore of ancient Babylon, this is the book to own and lovingly study. For those who purchased the earlier 2008 edition of the book, it's a good idea to keep that edition while buying the 2014 revision. There are some differences between the two editions.

Deals heavily into revealing what scholars know currently of the astronomy of the Babylonians based on remaining documents from King Ashurbanipals library such as MUL. APIN. Among other sources. Gavin White tried to reconstruct their image of the cosmos which attempts to reveal the locations of the Babylonian constellations and stars that they named.

I love this book! It gives you a rapid access into ancient material using a fascinating illustrative style.

I would give it 10 stars if I could!

Not a scholarly work.

I came across this book by mere coincidence. It is in one word an excellent book by an informed author. Although the book lacks bibliography or list of references it is beyond expectation: As soon as we check any scientific or linguistic data it shows how trustworthy the book is. It is in fact a scholarly book written for layman by apparently a very creative author.The book can be recommended to any student of ancient history or astronomy which needs some clues to guide him/her through the labyrinth of an ancient culture which founded our current civilization.Those who are interested in astrology would be also surprised to know that for example the Zodiac signs goes

back to centuries before Greeks ... along with mythologies.One would discover for example that Leo is a Greek translation of Sumerian Ur-mah (> Akkadian UrgulÃƒÆ'Ã Â»= Babylonian UrGu-la 'great carnivore') depicted as a lion. the author even gives the cuneiform of the name. So what else a scholarly written book could add to such a section beside a long list of references? Of course a hair-splitting reader might complain why the Sumerian word is written as Ur-mah without indicating that here /h/ represents a velar spirant = voiceless velar fricative, similar to the sound of "ch" in Loch Nest. Therefore s/he may recommend that the word is better written as urmaÃƒÂ¡Ã Â¸Ã Â« or urmaH. or urmax .... But does it really make any difference-- either for a scholar (who already knows the real phonetic value of the word) or for a layman (who does nor care about such trivialities) as long as the book is so informative and creatively written--? I do not think so .... It is after all an attractive introduction to a very complicated subject matter ... By the way if you cannot look inside the book have a look at the previous edition ...

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