

RESEÑA

“Jornadas Transculturais do Antigo Próximo-Oriente.” António José Gonçalves de Freitas & Adriano Milho Cordeiro (eds.). (2025). Edições Húmus. Braga, Portugal

RESEÑADO POR

ÁLVARO SALAZAR VALENZUELA¹

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-9925-2360>

DIEGO PÉREZ HERNÁNDEZ²

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1326-6089>

1. Introduction

Jornadas Transculturais do Antigo Próximo-Oriente published in 2025 by Edições Húmus and edited by António José Gonçalves de Freitas and Adriano Milho Cordeiro are the conference proceedings of the II Transcultural Days of the Ancient Near East held in 2023, between May 22 and June 7. This event was organized by researchers



Este trabajo está sujeto a una licencia de Reconocimiento 4.0 Internacional Creative Commons (CC BY 4.0).

1. Assistant Professor, English-Spanish Translation Program. Universidad Católica de Temuco, Chile. Department of Languages. Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities. Email: alvaro.salazar@uct.cl.

2. Assistant Professor in the Spanish Language and Communication Pedagogy Program. Universidad Católica de Temuco, Chile. Department of Didactics and Practice. Faculty of Education. Email: diego.perez.hernandez@uct.cl.

dedicated to the study of languages and cultures of the Ancient Near East, a concept understood as "the area encompassed by Mesopotamia, the Levant, Anatolia, Egypt and Mycenaean and Archaic Greece" (Freitas & Cordeiro, 2025, p. 9). One interesting aspect here is how in the Preface of the publication it is expressed that "(f)or various reasons, some authors were unable to submit their articles" (p. 9), and that is why the book contains and introduces a few but important research, especially for the Ancient World and Translation Studies' perspective.

2. Overview

The book opens with "Homer's Universe: Tracking the gods in the 'Iliad'" by Naoko Yamagata, which contrasts the divine names that appear in Mycenaean texts with the ones written by Homer in the Iliad. Here, the author takes the description of Achilles' shield as a representation of the Homeric universe, exploring it by following the movements and influences of the gods. In this way, she observes that Hades' domain in the Iliad is as important as Zeus' or Poseidon's domains, which can be something new to think about. To analyse that, Yamagata observes the gods related to the heaven, the earth, the seashore, the sea, and the underworld. In the case of Zeus, for example, different names appear as an "Indo-European sky god" (Yamagata, 2025, p. 22), related to actions he does in Heaven but not on the ground. The case of Hades is different, since Yamagata expresses that because of the various deaths of warriors, "Homer is constantly reminding us of the presence of the Underworld" (p. 24). Different names for Hades also exist, which are related to the darkness and the destination. The importance of this chapter lies not only in how the shield is depicted, but in the different denominations for the same god and the way that those names and places are classified. This is important to consider translational terminology from a divine perspective. With all that, Yamagata is clear to announce that the universe depicted in the shield is not the complete map of Homer's universe, since Hades is hidden, but Homer's universe is effectively there. Through contrasts, the author observes how Mycenaean gods "are treated like the dead, or the gods more suitably associated with the earth and underworld, than those dwelling in the sky" (p. 33), which is interesting as an interchange of denominations.

The second chapter, "Between vassals and Brothers: the submission of the Levant and the diplomacy of the Great Powers in the Amarna Letters," written by Cláudia Barros, is a study about the Amarna cuneiform letters related to the international relationships between Egypt and the Great Kings of the Near East, in which the kings treated each other with the term 'brothers.' From our point of view, this text can be of profound usage for history of translation students and scholars, since Barros explains how the letters are part of a system of dominance implemented for political relationships to facilitate cohesion among all the great states. This is because of the dialogue

“among ambassadors, messengers, translators, and interpreters” (2025, p. 39). Those letters were not written in Egyptian, but in the language of communication for that period, i.e., the Akkadian, thanks to scribal training and interchange. To understand the importance of the letters, Barros provides an explanation about the political context, the diplomatic relations, and the socio-historical background of the period, and she identifies different formulas used in letters with references to letters about marriage, gifts, and types of cooperation. By referring to authors such as Bryce (2021) and Martins (2013; 2015), Barros summarises that the most powerful kings use the term ‘brother’ for diplomatic use, showing potential horizontal relationships. By the use of this term, the Pharaoh cordially expresses himself, even though he sees himself as a superior sovereign. He is denominated by some rulers as “king of battle,” “my father,” “my lord,” or “the son of the Sun,” etc. On the contrary, in the letters written by the Pharaoh (or the Pharaoh’s scribe) to the vassals, the expression “your lord” was used. This can be useful to understand how terminological variations worked in the Ancient World, which is again of relevance for the history of Translation studies and can be useful to comprehend also—as Barros explains—the diplomacy as key, especially through the use of language, in the quest for a peaceful reign and controlling some political and geographical territories.

The next article—written in Portuguese—by Adriano M. Cordeiro is another text of translational importance, because like the previous text, it shows the relevance of communication among kingdoms. It is called “Diplomacy in the letters of Puduḫepa, queen of the Hittites,” in which Cordeiro shows Puduḫepa trying to maintain the “balance of power” during the 13th and 12th centuries BC. Here, Puduḫepa’s missives, as Cordeiro explains,

present us with the energy of a singular sovereign, show us her concerns for her family, her constant desire for peace between the Hittite, Egyptian and Babylonian empires, show us crucibles of life so identical to those of other times and also to the ups and downs of our contemporary times (2025, p. 78).

In that sense, he explains communication has always been essential for human beings; the only difference is how it is transmitted. In this way, Cordeiro indicates the epistolary practice was for official messages, contract records, communication exchange, and, of course, the letters related to the gods, where we can find writings with metaphysical distances where human beings are separated from deities, the living from the dead, and also a letter from a god to a prophet (Hoffner Jr., 2009). Cordeiro presents a contextualisation: Puduḫepa was Bentepsharri’s daughter, chief priest of Shaushka city; a city identified with the Mesopotamian Ishtar (its protective deity). She was trained to be a priestess of this goddess, and then she married the Hittite general Hattušili, who later ascended the throne, and Puduḫepa became queen. As-

sisted by her, Hattušili could obtain a period of peace. Puduḫepa, then, could work in the organization of religious texts, many of them related to the syncretism of original Anatolian divinities, which we can employ to understand the historical status of a queen in charge of written texts and, in that sense, the library of the kingdom. This can also be connected to Barros and Yamagata's texts above in terms of the deity's terminology and how critical writing, translation, and communication were in that period. Apart from this, Cordeiro exemplifies Puduḫepa's value in a letter to Rameses II of Egypt in which she treats him as a 'brother', in the same way Barros exemplifies in her text. That is why the conclusions of Cordeiro show a strong woman with an expanded and important role in political relations. Finally, this paper is written, at the same time, as an interesting Puduḫepa's biography.

The last text is called "Photogrammetry as a tool for digital heritage surveying" by António de Freitas and Juan Arias, in which they show how a 3D scanning technique is useful for the analysis of archaeological artefacts—an innovative approach for this discipline and the growth of digital humanities because of the increasing necessity of digital and AI analysis. This text is different from the previous ones, since it is not connected to Translation studies (terminology or communication)—an interesting line that follows the rest of the book. Otherwise, it is still of great importance in the sense that it gives a technological approach on how the Ancient World can go on with in terms of new research. The authors digitalized a ceramic idol that represents the goddess Inanna by using smartphones, showing key advantages for archaeology through the use of technologies for quantitative analysis and analytical formats; efficient modeling; the creation of virtual worlds; and fast transmission of representations and findings.

Freitas and Arias show the Structure from Motion (SfM) that is useful to acquire high-resolution datasets to have a three-dimensional representation, even with devices such as a smartphone for obtaining high-quality images. The sculpture these authors analyses is a ceramic with some marks on the sides, which are the evidence of a production product made from a mold, representing a female idol, which is part of the "Sumerian Renaissance or the Ur III dynasty" (Freitas & Arias, 2025, p. 121). Using smartphone technology and some written references, the authors identify this goddess is Inanna. In the article, we can see pictures of the idol "loaded into a photogrammetry software for processing" (p. 125); a process that is generated to create a three-dimensional representation, something which is a "must see." The authors finish this study concluding the importance of this method of analysis that can substitute traditional ones.

3. Conclusions

Finally, we can say that *Jornadas Transculturais do Antigo Próximo-Oriente* [Trans-cultural Days of the Ancient Near East] is a book with discussions of high level, and—in a clear way—an important effort from those who intend to safeguard the humanities, since, as we said in the beginning, it is a book with only four papers. In that sense, the editors bring us a possibility to read, but also imagine the Ancient Near East visions from their own world, through authors and lecturers that take us to a space, where learners and scholars are invited to the past of humanities—reflecting perhaps unconsciously on Translation studies’ history and the importance of writing, translation and terminology in that period—as well as the future of humanities—through the usage of technological elements for a better observation of art, ceramic, and representations’ artefacts—.

Conflicto de interés

Los autores declaran no tener conflicto de interés. Al ser una reseña, ambos autores llevaron a cabo la escritura, revisión y edición del documento, según la *Contributor Roles Taxonomy*.

References

- Barros, C. (2025). Between vassals and Brothers: the submission of the Levant and the diplomacy of the great powers in the Amarna letters. In A. Freitas & A. Cordeiro (eds.), *Jornadas Transculturais do Antigo Próximo-Oriente* (pp. 37-76). Edições Húmus.
- Cordeiro, A. (2025). Cartas de Puduḫepa, rainha dos Hititas [Letters from Puduḫepa, queen of the Hittites]. In A. Freitas & A. Cordeiro (eds.), *Jornadas Transculturais do Antigo Próximo-Oriente* (pp. 77-115). Edições Húmus.
- Freitas, A., & Arias, J. (2025). Smartphone technology for archaeological digital documentation: A case study of a ceramic idol from the Ancient Near East. In A. Freitas & A. Cordeiro (eds.), *Jornadas Transculturais do Antigo Próximo-Oriente* (pp. 117-131). Edições Húmus.
- Freitas, A., & Cordeiro, A. (2025). *Jornadas Transculturais do Antigo Próximo-Oriente*. Edições Húmus.
- Hoffner Jr., H. (2009). *Writing from the ancient world. Letters from the Hittite Kingdom*. Society of Biblical Literature.
- Yamagata, N. (2025). Homer’s universe: heaven, earth and the underworld. In A. Freitas & A. Cordeiro (eds.), *Jornadas transculturais do Antigo Próximo-Oriente* (pp. 11-35). Edições Húmus.

CUHSO

Fundada en 1984, la revista CUHSO es una de las publicaciones periódicas más antiguas en ciencias sociales y humanidades del sur de Chile. Con una periodicidad semestral, recibe todo el año trabajos inéditos de las distintas disciplinas de las ciencias sociales y las humanidades especializadas en el estudio y comprensión de la diversidad sociocultural, especialmente de las sociedades latinoamericanas y sus tensiones producto de la herencia colonial, la modernidad y la globalización. En este sentido, la revista valora tanto el rigor como la pluralidad teórica, epistemológica y metodológica de los trabajos.

EDITOR

Matthias Gloël

COORDINADOR EDITORIAL

Víctor Navarrete Acuña

CORRECTOR DE ESTILO Y DISEÑADOR

Ediciones Silsag

TRADUCTOR, CORRECTOR LENGUA INGLESA

Mabel Zapata

SITIO WEB

cuhso.uct.cl

E-MAIL

cuhso@uct.cl

LICENCIA DE ESTE ARTÍCULO

Trabajo sujeto a una licencia de Reconocimiento 4.0 Internacional Creative Commons (CC BY 4.0)