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or the occasion of his 75th Birthday

THE DEATH OF UR-NAMMU*

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Introduction

The principal purpose of the imaginative poet who composed this rather complex, intricate tale, was to explain theologically, mythologically, and psychologically, how and why the king Ur-Nammu, the founder of the Third Dynasty of Ur, came to be celebrated, extolled, and glorified in numerous hymns and chants,¹ after his premature tragic death, and not only as a brave, pious, just ruler, but as one who was especially interested in irrigation and drainage projects essential to the fertility and productivity of his land.² As he saw it, it surely must have been some deity who was responsible for promoting Ur-Nammu's posthumous fame and name, and the most likely candidate was Inanna, the goddess of fertility, the tutelary deity of Erech, a city with which Ur-Nammu had an intimate relationship – it may

* For the history of the publication of this composition before 1967, cf. my edition of the text that appeared in *JCS* XXI pp. 104–122, cf. *ibid.* p. 112. That edition became inadequate and outdated, however, when Claus Wilcke published in *RAI* XVIII (1970) the results of his joining together of the numerous fragments in the *Hilprecht Sammlung* of the Friedrich-Schiller University in Jena that belonged to the very same tablet of which the University Museum piece, CBS 4560, was part. This outstanding, invaluable contribution helped to restore most of the missing text of the composition. In addition, I was able to utilize a transliteration of most of the text of the composition, prepared by Miguel Civil for the Sumerian Dictionary, which includes the texts of several small Nippur fragments and a large Susa duplicate, as well as the results of his careful collation of CBS 4560 in the University Museum. The text of the composition presented in this paper is based largely therefore on the contributions of these two scholars. Moreover, Claus Wilcke published a helpful transliteration, translation, and interpretation of lines 198–242 of the text (numbered by him as 197–241). My transliteration, translation, and interpretation of these lines differ to some extent from Wilcke's, for reasons that will be apparent to the Sumerologist (cf. the commentary for details); note especially that the restoration of the beginning of the rather crucial 216–217 lines (Wilcke's 215–216) is based on a Nippur fragment in the University Museum that was not available to Wilcke.

1 For the Ur-Nammu hymns now extant, cf. Miguel Civil's forthcoming CATALOGUE of the Sumerian literary documents.
2 For Ur-Nammu's interest in irrigation and drainage, cf. G. Castellino, *ZA* 52 p. 6, and especially William Hallo, *JCS* 20 p. 138 ff.

even have been his place of birth.³ Moreover, Inanna was the deity that had most to lose from the death of Ur-Nammu, for it deprived her of the "faithful shepherd" who no longer came to her city Erech to invigorate her with his sexual potency, his *hili*.⁴

But, the poet knew quite well that mighty goddess though she was, Inanna could do nothing to save Ur-Nammu's life – the death of the king, according to the theological dogma of his day, must have been ordered by her superiors. An and Enlil, the gods who had originally chosen Ur-Nammu for the kingship of Ur and Sumer, but who now made the hostile decision leading to his tragic death, – a judgment that seemed capricious and unjust, since Ur-Nammu was a ruler who had served the gods faithfully all his life. And while, theologically speaking, she could do nothing to change the unfair verdict, she was well known, mythologically speaking, as a goddess who did not suffer an injury and an injustice without doing something about it. The poet therefore came to the conclusion that it must have been Inanna who blessed Ur-Nammu with immortal fame and name in order to soften the blow to her prestige, and make at least some amends to Ur-Nammu for his premature death.

With theological, mythological, psychological thoughts such as these running through his mind our poet proceeded to apply his imaginative skill and basic poetic tools – repetition and parallelism, image and metaphor – and produced what may not inaptly be described as a minor masterpiece. Beginning with a depiction of the suffering, fear and terror that overtook the people of Sumer and Ur when Ur-Nammu, the "faithful shepherd" was made to leave his destroyed city at the command of An and Enlil who for some unexplained reason had turned hostile to him, while such great deities as Nimmah, Enki, Nanna, Utu, and the king's own divine mother Ninsun, could only stand by helplessly and mournfully, he continues with a portrayal of the unhappy people of Sumer lamenting the resulting barrenness of field and farm, and the desolation of stall and sheepfold (lines 1–30).

He then proceeds to elaborate on the vicissitudes that had overtaken Ur-Nammu and brought about his death. Having been wounded in battle, he lay dying on the battlefield, hands and feet paralyzed, until he was brought back to Ur, where he lay motionless and lifeless in his palace (lines 31–43).

With the death of Ur-Nammu, continues the poet, there was chaos and confusion in the land. Offerings, sacrifices, and gifts were not accepted by the gods. At

³ For Ur-Nammu's intimate relationship with Erech, cf. especially William Hallo, *JCS* 20 p. 135 ff. and Claus Wulke, *RAI XIX* p. 180.

⁴ Cf. especially lines 213–215 of our text.

the special command of Enlil, there were no comforters, and there were even those who came up arrogantly to Ur-Nammu as he lay abandoned on the battlefield and said unfeelingly that the death and mourning of Ur-Nammu was no concern of theirs (lines 44–61).

And so the deceased Ur-Nammu was carried off to *Arzili* while still in his *hili*, accompanied by weeping troops. But the way to the Netherworld was hazardous and desolate: the boat on which he and his followers travelled sank after its oars, its mooring pole, and its rudder had been shattered, and the chariot to which they had presumably been transferred, could not make speed because the road turned and twisted (lines 62–75).

But finally it did arrive in the Netherworld. To gain admission, Ur-Nammu presented gifts to the seven gatekeepers of the Netherworld. His arrival was then announced to all the denizens of the Netherworld by the famous dead kings, and by the oracle-chosen priests, and a great commotion ensued. Whereupon Ur-Nammu slaughters many oxen and sheep and seats all the 'dead' at the banquet – a welcome change from the bitter food and bloody water of the Netherworld (lines 76–83).

Following the banquet, Ur-Nammu, a king "who knows well the regulations of the Netherworld," presents gifts and offerings to all the more important deities of the Netherworld: to Nergal, "the Enlil of the Netherworld," he presents perfect oxen, sheep, and a varied assortment of weapons; to Gilgameš, "the king of the Netherworld," a long spear, a shield, and a battle-axe; to Ereškigal, "the mother of Ninazu," – various vessels and garments; to Dumuzi, "the beloved spouse of Inanna," sheep, kids, and the golden scepter of *en-ship*; to Namtar, "he who decrees the fates," – various gold and carnelian ornaments; to Hušišag, "the wife of Namtar," – a seal and diverse "womanly" ornaments; – to Ningišzida – different types of asses; to Dimpimekug, "who stands at his (Ningišzida's) side," – a lapis lazuli seal and a pectoral of gold and silver; and lastly, to Azimua, his (Ningišzida's) spouse, "the scribe of the Netherworld," – a sage's large-eared headgear, a bronze tablet-stylus, and a lapis lazuli surveying rod (lines 84–131).

After Ur-Nammu had carried out the rules of the Netherworld, the gods of Hades set him on the great dais of the Netherworld, and established a dwelling-place for him. Moreover, at the express command of Ereškigal they turned over to him all soldiers who were destined to be killed in battle and all sinners that were destined to be born. And so Ur-Nammu pronounced the judgment of the Netherworld alongside his beloved brother Gilgameš (lines 132–144).

But although the dead Ur-Nammu was now comfortably settled and even highly honored in the Netherworld, he soon became restless, unhappy, and re-

sentful of his lot. For he could not escape the "wail" of Sumer: the "wail" for his kingly and family activities that his premature death put an end to; for the walls of Ur that he had left unfinished; for his newly built palace that he had no time to enjoy; for his wife and son whom he could no longer fondle and caress; for his young daughters whom he did not raise to maturity (lines 145–154).

Convinced that he had been treated unfairly and unjustly, the dead king utters a bitter diatribe against the gods: he had served them faithfully, brought them great prosperity, yet no god stood by him to comfort him, and nothing came of his pious deeds; he could not go back to Ur; his wife, now a widow, spends her days in tears and laments, and his own strength has ebbed away and come to an end (lines 155–173).

He is especially embittered by his wife's suffering and lamenting: she has been abandoned by her good genii, and by such gods as Ninsun, Nanna, and Enki; she is like a boat adrift in the tempestuous storm; like the beasts of the steppe who drank from a foul well; like a donkey that had fallen into stagnant water; like a dog imprisoned in a cage; she has turned all happy music and song into laments, and pinned against the wall of the music hall all musical instruments; his throne is being sat upon in dusty holes, (and) his bed is being slept upon in the desolate steppe; woe is him, his wife is weeping, his son is lamenting and all his dependents, like keepers, chant "wails" for her (lines 174–194).

Thus ends Ur-Nammu's bitter diatribe against the gods. But if I correctly translate and interpret the following passage, it is not the end of his soliloquy – this continues with Ur-Nammu's depiction of the events that led to his posthumous fame and name as partial redress for his untimely death. As the poet has Ur-Nammu tell it, Inanna was not present when Enlil pronounced judgment against him. Enlil had sent her, perhaps purposely, as a herald to foreign lands in connection with (unspecified) important matters. But when Inanna, having looked about from where she was, (presumably) learned of the cruel decision, she entered defiantly Enlil's Ekur in Nippur, cast a shattering gaze at Enlil, and (perhaps) complained about his unjust decision. But to no avail: the "faithful shepherd had departed from the Eanna and she saw him no longer" (lines 195–202).

Whereupon the goddess shatters heaven and smites earth, destroys stalls and sheepfolds, and proclaims that she will rebuke An, and demands to know who had dared change the (original) word of An and Enlil (that is, the word by which Ur-Nammu had been chosen King of Sumer). For by their not upholding the divine plans of the land, there will be no progeny in "the place of the gods where the sun rises," and her *gipar* (the part of the Eanna where the "Sacred Marriage" took place) will no longer be cared for (and thus the land will be deprived of its

fertility). If only, the goddess continues, plaintively, the "faithful shepherd" would bring her once again his *hili*; if only her "mighty one" would grow at her side like herbs in the steppe; if only like a river-boat he would stay firmly at her side in her calm quay (lines 203–215)!⁵

Here, I assume, ends Ur-Nammu's depiction of Inanna's defiant, courageous activities on his behalf. Now the poet takes over: Since she no longer had any hope of seeing Ur-Nammu alive, the goddess at least "spreads wide his wail," and amidst tears and laments decrees his fate, assuring him that his noble name will be acclaimed in the land. She also brings him the good tidings that Sumer and Akkad have already uttered his praises in his palace, and that the canals he had dug, the large fields he had planted, the marshes he had drained, the widespread grain he had harvested, the fortresses and settlements he had built – all these deeds have been looked upon with wonder by the people who then proceeded to exalt his name. And finally the goddess reassures him that his "evil *udug*" will be driven away by Enlil (lines 216–233).

The poet⁵ finally concludes the composition with a doxology dedicated to Ninsġiszda, one of the important gods of the Netherworld (lines 234–242).

5 Who was the poet, where and when did he live, and on what occasion did he compose this bitter-sweet elegiac tale? As is the case with most of the Sumerian literary works, the tablets on which our composition is inscribed date from the early Post-Sumerian Period, and there is no clear clue to the identity of the original author and the place and time of the composition except that it was certainly after the death of Ur-Nammu. It seems not unreasonable to surmise, however, that it was a court or temple poet who composed it on the occasion of some memorial event in honor of Ur-Nammu, instituted perhaps by his dutiful son Šulgi (cf. my "The Ur-Nammu Law Code: Who was its author?" *Orientalia* 52, pp. 453–456), and that this poet was a graduate of one of the two famous *edubba* of his day, located in Ur and Nippur.

Transliteration

1. -te ukù téš-a mi-ni-ib . . .
2. [bi-]n-sig é-gal im-si-si
3. -a-ba ni-ul₁-la ba-an-te
4. -ra(?)-ka(?) . . . ki-šub-ba-bi ki-en-gi-ra bí-ib-gar
5. dagal-ba uru ba-an-gul ukù-e ní bí-in-te
6. ur^{ki}-ma hul-gál im-šir-DU sipad-zi ba-ra-ab-è
7. sipad-zi-ur^d-hammu ba-ra-ab-è sipad-zi ba-ra-ab-è
8. an-né inim-kù-ga-ni-a mu-un-kúr šà-an-? sù-ga-àm
9. den-ll¹-le nam-tar-ra-ni-a šu-lul [mi]-ni-ib-bal
10. ^dnin-mah-e . . . -lá-a-ba-na a-nir mu-un-gá-gá
11. ^den-ki-[ke₁] ^{gs}g-eridu^{ki}-ga gú-bi ba-an-gi₄
12. ^dnu-dim-[mud] . . . -ma-ka ba-an-ku₄ šà-ka-tab-ba ba-an-ná
13. KA-si(?)-AN . . . ^dhanna si-un-na sag-ki-ni ba-da-ni-in-gíd
14. ^dutu an-na nu-un-è-e u₄-dè i-si-iš im-lá
15. ama dumu-ni-šè hul-ti-la-e
16. ama-lugal-la kù^d-nin-sún-na a šà-mu im-me
17. nam-ur^d-hammu mu-un-tar-ra-šè
18. mu-sipad-zi ba-ra-ab-è-a-šè
19. sila-dagal ki-ešemen-gál-la-ba ír mi-ni-šes^s-šes^g
20. nam-lú-lu₆ i₆-bi íb-ti-la-àm ù-dùg nu-mu-un-ku-ku
21. zi ba-ab-dib-ba-na u₄ mi-ni-ib-zal-e
22. a-eštub-íd-da-dé-a-bi kù-gál-bi ba-si
23. še-gu-nu-a-gàr-re-mú-a-bi zi-kalam-ma ba-sù(!)
24. engar gán-zi-dé-gub-ba(?)-ni mu-na-ab-tur-re
25. ^den-ki-im-du lugal-e-pa₃-re [ur]j^{ki}-ma e-pa₃ ba-da-da-an-kar
26. ù ki bí-in-tag
27. im-ma-an-? ú-nir-gál ba-sù
28. [ed]jⁿ-edin-e ú . . . nu-mu-un-mú ú-a-nir ba-an-mú
29. áb mu-un^d. tur -bi ba-gul
30. amar-áb -bi im-DU
31. sipad-kù-za-[ur^d-hammu] ba-an-ág-e
32. mè-šen-šen-na a -e
33. lugal KA [ki-en]-gi-[ra]
34. ur^d-hammu KA ki-en-[gi-ra]

Translation

1. the people altogether were . . .
2. was smitten, the palace was devastated.
3. in their were panicked,
4. their abandoned places were established in Sumer.
5. the city was destroyed, the people were frightened.
6. Evil came upon Ur, the faithful shepherd was made to leave it.
7. The faithful shepherd Ur-Nammu was made to leave it, the faithful shepherd was made to leave it.
8. An altered his holy word, the heart of(?) An was full of . .
9. Enlil deceitfully changed his fate-decree.
10. Nimmah sets up a lament in her
11. Enki closed (?) the door of Eridu,
12. Nudimmud entered lay down in a fast,
13. Nanna, the furrowed his brow in the heavenly heights,
14. Utu rises not in heaven, he spreads gloom over the day,
15. The mother, wretched because of her son,
16. The mother of the king, the holy Ninsun, cries "Oh my heart,"
17. Because of the fate decreed for Ur-Nammu,
18. Because the faithful shepherd was made to leave it (Ur),
19. She weeps in the entertainment places of the boulevards.
20. The people, their strength having come to an end, cannot sleep well,
21. spends the days in his captivity(?),
22. The early flood – the water that it has poured into the river has been . . by its (the river's) *gugal₁*,
23. Their *gunu*-grain on the fields, the life of the land, has been submerged,
24. the farmer – his planted cultivated field yields little to him,
25. Enkimdu, the king of ditch and dyke, took away ditch and dyke,
26. he made touch the ground,
27. the "trustworthy" plants have been submerged,
28. In the steppes the . . . plants grew not, "wailing" plants grew,
29. Cows stalls their have been destroyed.
30. Calves, their have been
31. The wise shepherd Ur-Nammu
32. In battle and combats
33. The king in Sumer
34. Ur-Nammu in Sumer

35. mas-su . . . ki BÀD . . . i-ná tu-ra-àm
36. šu-ni-dib-ba nu-mu-un-dè-? i-ná tu-ra-àm
37. gir-ni-dib-ba nu-mu-un-da-? i-ná tu-ra-àm
38. za-pa-ág . . . IM . . . [salg-me ba-BU
39. sipad-zi lugal gir-gal-ki-en-gi-ra-ke₄
40. ur-^dnammu-lugal-kalam-ma-ke₄ é-súr-ra ba-an-te
41. ur[^{ki}-m]a im-te ur-^dnammu é-KA-ra im(?)-ma(?)²-ku₄(?)
42. sag-kù-ga é-gal-a-na i-ná
43. ur-^d[nammu] lu-erín-e-ki-ág-gá gú nu-mu-un-da-zi-ge
44. igi-gál-kur-kur-ra i-ná giš-lá-bi im-DU
45. ur-[kalam-ma] KA ba-ba-su(b)-ub ĩur-sag-gim ba-gul
46. tir-ĥa-šur-ur-ra-gim im-ma-sù me-dim-bi ba-kúr
47. ^{giš}taskarin-gim ki-tuš-giri₁-zal-a-na aga mu-ni-in-gar-re-eš
48. ^{giš}2-a-gim é-gal-[a-na ki]-ná-a mu-ni-in-bal-bal-e-ne
49. ki-ná-nitalam-a-ni ba(?)²-te-? bi ul₆-lu-da ba-da-an-dul
50. šeš-a-ni-da dam-a-ni-gim . . . ám-mi-ib-lá
51. u₄-šlâ-dug₄]ga-ni sâ mu-ni-ib-duga a-la-ni ba-ra . . .
52. siskur-níg-düg-ga-ni la-ba-an-tag-ge šur-gig ba-da-an-gíd
53. kadra-a-ni ^da-nun-na-ke₄-ne inim im-ma-an-gi₄-gi₄
54. AN ME . . . la-ba-e-DU u₄-bi la-ba-ni-ib-si
55. inim-^den-lil-lá-duga-ga-še ĩur-zi-zi la-ba-gál
56. ?-?-?-ki-ba-ág-gá-bi igi-gál-bi ba-kúr
57. . . -? lû-nu-ĥun-e-ne i-im-bal-bal-e-ne
58. [ki]-lul-la ur-^dnammu duk-gaz-gim ba-ni-in-ta₄-aš
59. . . . -a-ni IM-u₄-šù-da-gim gal-bi im-šì-DU
60. . . . nu-gá-gá-a nig-ša-ge šur-nu-bu-i im-me
61. [. . . ul-^dnammu me-ll-e-a nam-mu
62. a-ra-ll ki-sag-ki-kalam-ma-še
63. ur-^dnammu-dumu-^dnin-sún-ka ĩi-ll-na ba-da-túm
64. erín lugal-da [ĩ]-re-⁷eš-a ír mu-da-ab-ús-e
65. dilmun^{ki}-gim . . . ki-nu-zu-na ^{giš}ma-bi ba-da-ab-su
66. šu-a-ni . . . e-še ba-da-ab-TAR
67. ^{giš}gísal ^{giš}gi-muš ^{giš}zi-gan gál-la-bi gú-gur₅ ba-ab-duga
68. GÍŠ . . . na KIŠIB ba-da-tab ^{giš}sag-kul-bi ba-TAR

35. The leader . . . lies sick,
36. His hand paralyzed, he can not . . . with it – he lies sick
37. His foot paralyzed, he can not . . . with it – he lies sick,
38. The tumult . . . , the rituals have been . . .
39. The faithful shepherd, the king, the great sword of Sumner,
40. Ur-Nammu, the king of the land, was brought close to(?) the *sur*-house,
41. He was brought close to(?) Ur, was made to enter(?) the *kar*-house
42. The holy head lay in his palace,
43. Ur-Nammu, he who was beloved by soldiers, lifts not the head,
44. The overseer of all the lands is lying, their strife(?) goes on(?),
45. The champion of the land . . . has fallen, he has been laid waste like a mountain.
46. Like a *ħašur*-forest it (the land) has been submerged, its features have been altered,
47. Like a boxwood tree, they have put the axe to the (the king's) joyous dwelling place.
48. Like a . . . tree they keep changing the sleeping place in his palace,
49. The bed of his spouse was . . . its . . . was covered by the Southwind,
50. By the side of his concubines, like by the side of his spouse, . . . was stretched out.
51. His *sattukku*-days arrived . . .
52. His prayers, the sweet, are not accepted, a troubling hand has reached out against them,
53. His gifts are rejected by the Anunna-gods,
54. . . . was not brought, its days were not fulfilled,
55. Because of the word spoken by Enlil, there were no comforters,
56. Their beloved . . . their reason was altered,
57. They who do not soothe keep changing the . . .
58. At the [place] of slaughter where Ur-Nammu had been abandoned like a broken vessel,
59. His . . . came up to him arrogantly like a . . . of distant days,
60. He does not . . . , he utters that which does not please the heart,
61. " . . . Ur Nammu alas! What is that to me?"
62. To Arai, the place that is the *sag-ki* of the land,
63. Ur-Nammu, the son of Ninsun, was brought in his *hili*.
64. The soldiers who accompanied him follow tearfully at the side,
65. Like Dilmun . . . the place unknown to him, the boat was submerged,
66. . . . was split asunder,
67. Its oars, pole (and) rudder, were shattered,
68. . . . was demolished, its lock was split asunder,

69. ^{gš} igi-a-še ba-da-gar saḫar-ŠEŠ-a ba-DU
 70. lugal ba-da-dūr-ru anše ki mu-un-di-ni-ib-túm
 71. ur-[d]^l[nammu] giš-ANŠE-DU-ki (mu-un-di-ni-ib-túm)
 72. kalam-ma-ke₄ ba-da-bal UR-kalam-ma ba-kúr
 73. kaskal-[kur]-ra in-ti-sù-ga-àm
 74. lu[gal-e] ^{gš}gigir ba-da-šù har-ra-an im-ma-da-suh šu nu-um-ma-nigin
 75. [ur-^dnammu-ke₄] ^{gš}gigir ba-da-šù har-ra-an im-ma-da-suh šu nu-um-ma-nigin
 76. i-du₅-[ká-gal]-kur-ra imin-bi ni₅-ba ba-ab-si-mu
 77. lugal-mu-tuku ba-ug₅-ge-eš-a
 78. išib-lu-mah-nin-dingir-ug₅-ga máš-e ba-dib-ba
 79. lugal-gen-na ukù mu-un-zu-uš kur-ra za-pa-ág mu-un-gar
 80. ur-^dnammu-gen-na (ukù mu-un-zu-uš kur-ra za-pa-ág mu-un-gar)
 81. lugal-e gu₄ im-ma-ab-gaz-e udu im-ma-ab-šár-re
 82. ur-^dnammu šubun-gal-gal-la ba-ši-in-dūr-ru-ne-eš
 83. ú-kur-ra-ŠEŠ-àm a-kur-ra-ŠEŠ-na-àm
 84. sipad-zi gârza-kur-ra-ke₄ šà-ga-ni mu-un-zu
 85. lugal-e nindaba-kur-ra-ke₄ giš im-ma-ab-tag-ge
 86. ur-^dnammu nindaba-kur-ra-ke₄ giš im-ma-ab-tag-ge
 87. gu₄-du₇ máš-du₇ udu-ni-ga en-na ab-laḫ₅-a
 88. ^{gš}mitú ^{gš}ban-gal é-mar-ur₅ ^{gš}kak-ban-gir-su₁₁-sukud
 89. ^{kus}lu-úb-gun-a ib-ba-gál-la-ba
 90. dhergal-^{én}-il-kur-ra-ra
 91. sipad-ur-^dnammu-ke₄ é-gal-a-na giš im-ma-ab-tag-ge
 92. giš-^{gíd}-da ^{kus}lu-úb dag(?)-si mè-a tukul(?)-mi-tum-lu₅-an-na
 93. ^{kus}E. ÍB-úr ki-ús-sa á-nam-ur-sag-gá
 94. za-ha-da ni₅-ki-ág-^dereš-ki-gal-la
 95. ^dgilgameš lugal-kur-ra-ke₄
 96. sipad-ur-^dnammu-ke₄ é-gal-la-na giš im-ma-ab-tag-ge
 97. ^lgiš-kéš-da ia ba-ni-in-dé-a bur-šagan-šu-du₇-a
 98. túg-dugud ^{tu₅}suluḫ ^{tu₅}palá-nam-nin-a
 99. ?-SAR-dalla-me-kur-ra
 100. ^dereš-ki-[gal] ama-^dn[im]-a-zu-ra
 101. sipad-ur-^dnammu-ke₄ é-gal-la-na giš im-ma-ab-tag-ge
 102. udu-a-lum udu-suluḫ máš-gal-kur-ra-ke₄

69. was set up alongside, it was brought into the "bitter dust."
 70. The king . . . sits alongside, a donkey was buried there alongside,
 71. Ur-Nammu – a . . . donkey was buried there alongside,
 72. The . . . of the land was changed, the dignity of the land was altered,
 73. The road of the Nether World being a desolate way,
 74. The king – the chariot was held back, the road turned and twisted, he (the king) could not advance,
 75. Ur-Nammu – the chariot was held back, the road turned and twisted, he could not advance.
 76. He gives gifts to the seven [gate]keepers of the Netherworld,
 77. The famous kings who had died,
 78. The *išib*, the *lumah*, the *nindingir* who had been chosen by oracle,
 79. Informed the people of the king's coming, a tumult arose in the Netherworld.
 80. (Informed the people) of Ur-Nammu's coming, (a tumult arose in the Netherworld.)
 81. The king slaughters oxen, multiplies sheep,
 82. Ur-Nammu seated them at a huge banquet, –
 83. The food of the Netherworld is bitter; the water of the Netherworld is blood –
 84. The faithful shepherd – his heart knew the rules of the Netherworld,
 85. The king sacrifices the offerings of the Netherworld,
 86. Ur-Nammu sacrifices the offerings of the Netherworld:
 87. Perfect oxen, perfect sheep, fattened sheep that had been
 88. A mace, a large bow, a quiver, an arrow, a . . . toothed knife,
 89. A varicolored leather-bottle worn at the hip,
 90. To Nergal, the Enlil of the Netherworld,
 91. The shepherd Ur-Nammu sacrifices in his palace.
 92. A long bow, a . . . leather-bottle (fit for) battle, an awesome heavenly mace,
 93. A ground-pressing siege-shield, the might of heroship,
 94. A battle-axe beloved of Ereškigal,
 95. To Gilgameš, the king of the Netherworld,
 96. The shepherd Ur-Nammu sacrifices in his palace.
 97. A *kešda* in which oil has been poured, a *šagan*-cup of perfect make,
 98. A heavy garment, a *suluḫ*-garment, a *pala*-garment of queenship,
 99. A resplendent . . . , the *me* of the Netherworld,
 100. To Ereškigal, the mother of Ninazu,
 101. The shepherd Ur-Nammu sacrifices in her palace.
 102. *alum*-sheep, *suluḫa*-sheep, large kids of the *kur*,

103. gidru-guškin-nam-en-na šu-za-gin-šu-du-_r-a
 104. ^ddumu-zi dam-ki-á-g^e-^dinanna-ra
 105. sipad-ur-^dhammu é-gal-a-na giš im-ma-ab-tag-ge
 106. giš-sa-šu-du-_r-a har-guškin má-gur^s-bi ba(?)-sì(?) -ga
 107. ^{ma}gug-kù ní-g-gaba-dingir-re-e-ne
 108. ^dnam-tar lú-nam-tar-ra-ra
 109. sipad-ur-^dhammu-ke₄ é-gal-a-na giš im-ma-ab-tag-ge
 110. kišib šu-za-gin ní-g-nam-urugal-a-ke₄
 111. ^{giš}kirid-kù^{ma} gug-tag-ga ^{giš}ga-ríg-nam-munus-a
 112. ^duš-bi-šag₅ dam-nam-tar-ra-ra
 113. sipad-ur-^dhammu-ke₄ é-gal-a-na giš im-ma-ab-tag-ge
 114. giš-níg-šu-úr-na-NI(?) guškin-ta-gùn-a
 115. anše-ki anše piri-g
 116. anše-úr-gìn-gìn
 117. sipad mu₆-sùb-uš-e
 118. šul-ur-sag^dnin-giš-zi-da-ra
 119. sipad-ur-^dhammu-ke₄ é-gal-a-na giš im-ma-ab-tag-ge
 120. ^{ma}kišib-za-gin ba-da-ra i-lá-a
 121. tu-di-da-guškin-kù-babbar sag-bi-alim-ma
 122. ^dim-pi-me-kù-ge zag-ga-na gub-bu-dè mu-na-ab-sì-mu
 123. ^{ti}g^sagšu-gešúg-ma^g-lú-zu giš-nu^r-gal
 124. gi-dub-ba zà-bar-ra ní-g-nam-dub-sar-ra-ke₄
 125. éš-gán-za-gin gi-diš-ninda . . .
 126. nitalam-a-ni ^dnin-a-zi-[mù-a]
 127. dub-[sar-ma^g-a]-ra-i-[ra]
 128. [sipad-ur-^dhammu-ke₄ é-gal-a-na giš im-ma-ab-tag-ge]
 129. . . .[. mu]-na-ab-si-mu
 130. . . .-a-bi
 131. . . .[mu]-na-da-ab-si-mu
 132. [lugal-e] . . . kur-ra-ke₄ si bi-in-sá-a-ta
 133. [ur ^dhammu-ke₄] . . . kur-ra-ke₄ si bi-in-sá-a-ta
 134. . . . urugal-la-ke₄-ne
 135. . . .-šù-ke₄-ne
 136. ur-^dhammu bá-ra-gal-kur-ra-ke₄ mu-ni-ib-tuš-ù-ne
 137. kur-ra ki-tuš mu-na-ab-gá-gá-ne
 138. inim-dug_r-ga-^dereš-ki-gal-la-ka-ta
 139. erim^{er}-tukul-e en-na ba-ug_r-ga
 140. lú-nam-tag-ga en-na ba-mud-a
 141. lugal-la šu-ni-šè im-ma-ab-si-mu-ne
 142. ur-^dhammu ki-bi-šè-eš im

103. A gold scepter of *en*-ship, fit for a *zagin*-hand.
 104. To Dumuzi, the beloved spouse of Inanna.
 105. The shepherd Ur-Nammu sacrifices in his palace.
 106. A *gilsa*-ornament of perfect make, a gold ring whose *magur*-boat has been
 107. Holy carnelian-stone, that (which is fit for) the chest of the gods,
 108. To Namtar, him who decrees all the fates.
 109. The shepherd Ur-Nammu sacrifices in his palace.
 110. A seal with a *zagin* hand, that which is essential for the *urugal*,
 111. A silver hair-brooch set with carnelian-stone, a comb of "womanhood,"
 112. To Hušišag, the spouse of Namtar.
 113. The shepherd Ur-Nammu sacrifices in her palace.
 114. A wooden . . . ornamented with gold.
 115. A — donkey, a lion-[like] ass
 116. A donkey with dappled loins
 117. A shepherd, a herdsman
 118. To the warrior, the hero Ningišzida.
 119. The shepherd Ur-Nammu sacrifices in his palace.
 120. A *zagin*-seal hanging on a dagger.
 121. A gold (and) silver pectoral whose head is a bison,
 122. He gives to Dimpimekug who stands at his (Ningišzida's) side.
 123. A headcover (with) the "lofty" ears of a sage, made of alabaster,
 124. A bronze stylus, that which is essential for the scribeship,
 125. A *zagin* surveying rod, a reed of one *ninda*
 126. To his spouse Ninazimua.
 127. The noble scribe of Arai
 128. [The shepherd Ur-Nammu sacrifices in her palace].
 129. He gives to him/her
 130.
 131. He gives to him/her
 132. After the king had directed the . . . of the Netherworld,
 133. After Ur-Nammu had directed the . . . of the Netherworld,
 134. The . . . of the *urugal*,
 135. The . . . of the
 136. Seat Ur-nammu on the great dais of the Netherworld,
 137. Set up a dwelling place for him in the Netherworld.
 138. In accordance with the word spoken by Ereškigal,
 139. The soldier — until he was killed by weapons,
 140. The sinner — until he was born,
 141. They give into the hands of the king.
 142. Ur-Nammu, at that place

143. šeš-ki-ág-gá-ni^d gilgam[éš-da]
 144. e-ne di-kur-ra i-kuš-de ka-aš-kur-ra i-bar-re
 145. u₄-immin u₄-u-àm ba-zal-la-ba
 146. lugal-mu i-si-iš-ki-en-gi-ra-ke₄ sá nam-ga-mu-ni-ib-du_g₄
 147. ur-^dnammu i-si-iš-ki-en-gi-ra-ke₄ sá nam-ga-mu-ni-ib-du_g₄
 148. bád-ur^{ki}-ma nu-mu-un-ti-la-ni
 149. é-gal-gibil na-mu-un-[dù]-a-ni nu-mu-un-^hùl-^hùl-la-ni
 150. sipad-dé-é-a-ni sag li-bi-in-ag-ni
 151. dam-a-ni úr-ra-na la-la nu-mu-un-gi₄-a-ni
 152. dumu-ni du₁₀-ba-na li-bi-in-peš-a-ni
 153. nin₉-tur-tur nu-mu-un-bulúg-bulúg-e-ne hi-li-bi nu-mu-un-[ti]-a-ni
 154. lugal-mu .-ga-ni im-tu-a-ni ir-gig li-še₈še₈
 155. sipad-zi i-lu nig-me-gar ní-te-na mi-i[ni-ib-bé]
 156. mà-e nig-ne-e ba-ag-a-mu
 157. dingir-re-ne-ir mu-ne-gub-bu-nam ki-úr mu-ne-gál
 158. ^da-[nun]-na-ke₄-ne hé-gál-la pa mu-ne-é-a
 159. giš-ná ú-za-gin bá-ra-ga-ba gil-sa mu-ne-gar-ra-mu
 160. dingir ki-má la-ba-e-gub šá-mu la-ba-ni-ib-šed₇
 161. .-me-en nig-izkim-šags₈-ga-mu an-gim mu-NE-sù-ud
 162. [gi₆-u₄]-da-gub-ba sá-a-mà-a-na šu ba-ni-ti
 163. [gi₆-u₄]-da-gub-ba ù-nu-ku-mà-a u₄ im-ma-zal
 164. [i]-ne-eš im-an-ta-šэг-gá-gim
 165. [me-li]-e-a sig₄-ur^{ki}-ma-še šu nu-um-ma-nigin
 166. [á]-še nitalam-mu (nu(?)-)mu-un-su-àm
 167. [ir]-a-nir-níg-gig-ga-a u₄ mi-ni-ib-zal-zal-e
 168. á-kal-la-mu ní-ba-ti-la . . .
 169. ur-sag-me-en šu-nam-tar-ra u₄-diš-a-gig(?) . . .
 170. am-gim . . . nam(?)-šub-ba-mu dug la-ba- . . .
 171. gu₄-mah-gim . . . ŠEŠ(?)-ma ba(?)- . . .
 172. s⁸isim-gim(?) . . .-ga ba- . . .
 173. anše-gim . . .-ga-mu su ba-ra(?)- . . .
 174. nitalam-mu ?-m-uš(?) . . . úr(?)-a(?) in-ku₄-ra-ni(?)
 175. i-lu-a-nir-níg-gig-ga-a u₄ mi-ni-ib-zal-zal-e
 176. ^dutug-šags₈-ga-ni bar-ra ba-da-gub
 177. ^d[amma-š]ags₈-ga-ni sags₈-gá-na li-bi-in-^há-za
 178. [^din]-sún-na-ke₄ á-mah-a-ni sags₈-gá-na li-bi-in-ge-en

143. Alongside his beloved brother Gilgameš,
 144. He pronounces the judgement of the Netherworld, he renders the decisions of the Netherworld.
 145. After seven days, ten days had passed,
 146. The wail of Sumner duly overtook my king,
 147. The wail of Sumner duly overtook Ur-Nammu:
 148. The walls of Ur which he had not finished,
 149. The new palace he had indeed built (but) did not long enjoy,
 150. The shepherd who no longer cared for his house,
 151. His wife whose charms no longer sated his lap,
 152. His child whom he no longer raised on his knee,
 153. The little sisters who are not yet grown big – he had not [brought] their *hiti* [to maturity].
 154. My king – his . . . his family weeps,
 155. The faithful shepherd himself utters a melancholy lament:
 156. “I – this is how I have been treated,
 157. I had indeed served well the gods, had set up the *kiur* for them,
 158. Had brought about *hegal* for the Anunna-gods,
 159. Had richly ornamented their bed on which *zagir*-plants had been spread,
 160. (Yet) no god stood by me, no (god) soothed my heart,
 161. I who am . . . my good omen became distant as heaven,
 162. (I am one) who had served the gods night and day (but) what has been accepted of my efforts.
 163. (I am one) who has served the gods night and day, (yet) the day comes to a sleepless end for me.
 164. Now, as if (held back) by rain coming down from heaven,
 165. Woe! I cannot proceed to the brickwork of Ur.
 166. Lo! my spouse having become a widow,
 167. She spends the days in bitter tears and laments.
 168. My strength having come to a spontaneous end . . .
 169. Me, the hero, the hand of fate in one day . . .
 170. Like a wild ox, I did not . . .
 171. Like a huge ox, I . . .
 172. Like a sprout, I . . .
 173. Like a donkey, I did not . . . my . . .
 174. My spouse . . . to my . . .
 175. She spends the days in bitter wailing and laments.
 176. Her kindly *udug* stood aloof.
 177. Her kindly *lamma* did not support her.
 178. Ninsun did not hold firm her noble hand on her head,

179. ^hanna en-^dāš-īm-babbār šu-lāl nu-un-Rl
 180. ^den-ki-lugal-eridu^{ki}-ga du^r-ra ba-ra-ta-an-é
 181. peš-peš-a-ni im-ma-ni-in-si-ig KA šu nu-mu-di-mi-ib-gi₄
 182. ^šmá-gim im-sūr-ra ba-ra-ab-dirig^š dimgul nu-mu-na-kal
 183. anše-edin-na-gim pú-lul ba-an-túm-mu-da(?) šu-dugud lú mu-un-gar
 184. anše-gim a-gub-ba ba-šub-ba en-nu lú mu-un-dú
 185. ur-gim az-lá-e mu-un-dib me-a lú mu-un-gar
 186. ^dutu di... giš nu-um-mi-in-lá a lú-mu nu-un-si
 187. ti-gi a-da-ab-gi-gíd za-am-za-am-mu a[nir]ra mu-da-an-ku₄
 188. ^šgū-di é-nam-nar-ra-ka zag^é-gar^š-e mi-ni-in-ús
 189. ^šgu-za hi-li-bi nu-mu-ti-la-mu
 190. sahar-pú-sag-gá lú im-mi-in-KU-na
 191. [gis]ná ki-ná TUR-bi nu-mu-un-ti[la-mu]
 192. edin-bar-sú-ga-ka lú im-mi-in-ú-ú-da
 193. me-li-e-a dam-mu ír-ra dumu-mu a-nir-ra
 194. lú-míg-du^r-ga-mà i-lu balag-di-gim he-na-tuku-ús
 195. u₄ HUR-gim im-ma-ab-ag-a-mu
 196. sag-kal^d inanna nin-mè-a di-mà nu-mu-un-ti
 197. ^den-lil-le kur-kur-ra inim-gal-gal-šè kin-gi₄-a bi-in-gi₄
 198. ki-bi-ta igi-mi gar-ra-ni
 199. inanna é-kur-za-gin-šè sun-na-bi mu-un-[šir-ku₄]
 200. sag-ki-huš^d en-lil-lá-ka igi-dúb-dúb-bu...
 201. nin-gal-é-an-na?-ma-ni nam-ma-da-ra-ta...
 202. sipad-zi-é-an-na-ta mu-un-é igi nu-mu-ni-in-[du₈]
 203. nin-mu a-gub-ba-na u^g-gá mu-un-...
 204. inanna u₄-huš dumu-gal^d-zuen-na...-ga
 205. an i-dúb-bé ki i-sig-ge
 206. inanna-ke₄ tūr im-gul-e amaš im-tab-bé
 207. an lugal-dingir-re-e-ne-ke₄ in-šè ga-mu-un-dúb
 208. ^den-lil-le sag mu-da-an-zi-ge inim-bi a-ba mu-un-kúr
 209. an lugal inim-mah-dug^r-ga-ni inim-bi a-ba mu-un-kúr
 210. giš-hur-kalam-ma hé-me-a-gub-ba sag ba-ra-ba-an-ús-sa
 211. ki-utu-é-dingir-re-e-ne-šè nam-dumu-bi nu-gál
 212. gi^r-par-kù éš-é-an-na-mu hur-sag-gim mu-un-...-éš
 213. sipad-mu hi-li-a-ni nu-ús-ma-an-ku₄-ku₄ mà-e ba-ra-ku₄-ku₄-dè-en

179. Nanna, the lord Ašimbabbar, did not stretch out the "honey hand,"
 180. Enki, the King of Eridu, did not bring it out of the "hull,"
 181. He silenced her offspring, he did not avenge the word,
 182. Like a boat set adrift in a tempestuous storm, the mooring pole was of no
 avail,
 183. Like the creatures of the steppe brought to a foul well, a heavy hand was
 placed (on her),
 184. Like a donkey that had fallen into holy water, a watch has been...
 185. Like a dog imprisoned in a cage, (the cry) "where?" has been set up,
 186. Utu has not in the... verdict, has filled (her with the cry) "Oh, my man!"
 187. My *tigi*, *adab*, reed-pipe, (and) *zanzam* she has turned into laments,
 188. The *gudi* she pressed to the side of the wall in the music-house,
 189. My throne whose *hili* has not been fulfilled,
 190. Someone is sitting on it in the dirt of an excavation,
 191. My bed, the sleeping place whose... has not been fulfilled,
 192. Someone is sleeping on it in the... steppe,
 193. Woel: my wife – tears, my son – laments,
 194. The "men of my command" struck up a wail for her like keeners.
 195. The day I had been thus treated,
 196. Inanna, the leader, the queen of battle was not present during my judgment –
 197. Enlil had sent her as a herald to foreign lands about great matters –
 198. Having set her gaze from those places,
 199. Inanna [entered] defiantly the *zagin*-Ekur,
 200. [Cast] a shattering look at Enlil's fierce forehead.
 201. The great queen of the Eanna... her...
 202. The faithful shepherd had departed from the Eanna, she did not [cast] eyes
 on him.
 203. My queen... the people in her...
 204. Inanna, the fierce storm, the great daughter of Sin...
 205. Shatters heaven, smites earth,
 206. Inanna destroys stalls, devastates sheepfolds, (saying):
 207. "I will hurt insults at An, the king of the gods,
 208. Enlil who has raised (my) head alongside of him – who has changed that
 word?"
 209. King An who has spoken the noble word – who has changed that word?
 210. The regulations of the land... not having been supported,
 211. Of the place of the gods where the sun rises – its progeny exists no longer.
 212. They have... my holy *gipar* of the shrine Eanna like a mountain.
 213. Would that my shepherd would keep bringing me (once again) his *hili*,
 (otherwise) I shall not keep entering it,

214. kalage-ga-mu ú-šim-gim edin-na nu-uš-ma-da-mú-àm
215. má-íd-da-gim kar-si-ga-mâ nu-uš-ma-da-gi-na
216. ^dhanna-ke₄ ur-^dhammu i-lu-ni hê-kur-ku-ku
217. ur-^dhammu-ke₄ . . . hê-im-mi-in-kalage
218. . . . ba-ugs-ga-mu
219. . . . a-na . . . an-lâ
220. [ir-diš]-e a-nir-diš-e
221. [^dhanna-ke₄ ur-^dhammu-ra] nam mu-ni-ib-tar-re
222. . . . en mu-mah-zu hê-pâd
223. gidru(?) -zu sig-ta igi-[nim-šê] . . . an-tuk-tuk(?)]
224. é-gal-zu-šê ki-en-gi [ki-uri] . . . pâd-dê-eš
225. íd-ba-al-la-zu . . . -zu
226. a-gâr-gal-gal . . . a-zu
227. giš-gi a-ta im-ta-ab-e₁₁-a-zu
228. šê-dagal-šê-dagal-e . . . -zu(?)
229. an-za-gâr a-[dam] . . . -a-zu
230. nam-lu-lu₆ [u₅-di mu-šî-dug₄-e-eš]
231. ur-^dhammu mu-zu . . . pâd-dê-eš
232. en-^dnu-nam-nir . . . -rib-ba
233. ^dudug-hul-zu . . . [hê-b]i-in-sar-re
234. sipad-ur-^dhammu . . . ba-šî-in-BUR-a-ta
235. ^dhanna en . . . nu-ri-a-bi
236. . . . lugal . . . -ta-an-e₁₁-da
237. . . . amaš-tab-ba
238. . . . -DU(?) PIRIG(?) an-šê tu-da
239. . . . -dug₄ di-si-sâ-ku₅-ku₅
240. . . . en-^dnin-giš-zi-da-zà-mí
241. . . . ír-àm i-lu-àm
242. . . . ír-àm a-nir-àm

214. Would that the mighty one would grow like herbs in the steppe alongside of me,
215. Would that like a river-boat he would stay firmly in my calm quay."
216. Inanna does indeed spread wide the wail of Ur-Nammu,
217. Makes mighty the . . . of Ur-Nammu, (saying)
218. "My . . . who has been killed,
219. . . ."
220. Amidst tears, amidst laments,
221. Inanna decrees the fate of Ur-Nammu:
222. " . . . may your noble name be acclaimed,
223. Your scepter, from below to above . . ."
224. At your palace, Sumner and Akkad have acclaimed
225. The canals that you have dug, the . . . that you have . . .
226. The vast farmlands that you have
227. The canebroke that you have brought up from the water,
228. The wide, wide, grains that you have
229. The fortresses (and) settlements that you have
230. The people [have looked at in wonder],
231. Oh Ur-Nammu, they have acclaimed your name
232. The lord Nunammir
233. Will drive away your evil *udug*"
234. After the shepherd Ur-Nammu had been
235. Nanna, the lord
236. . . . the king
237. . . . who . . . the stalls,
238. . . . born to An,
239. He who . . . , who renders just judgments,
240. . . . Oh Ningišzida-praise!
241. . . . it is tears, it is a wail,
242. . . . it is tears, it is a lament.

Commentary

Lines 1–30. The rendering and interpretation of this passage are fairly well assured, but note the following: The translation of the second half of line 3 (literally perhaps “were filled with uncontrollable fear”) is uncertain. The meaning of line 4 is obscure. The rendering of the second half of lines 8 and 11 is quite uncertain. In line 20, the translation of *li-bi* is uncertain (the Susa text has *lib* for *li-bi*). The rendering of lines 21 and 22 is not quite certain and their meaning is rather obscure. Lines 26–30 are fragmentary, but their general import is quite obvious.

Lines 31–43. This passage is quite fragmentary, but its general import as sketched in the introduction is fairly clear. In lines 40–41, the obscure *é-sir-ra* and *é-KA-ra* seem to be places to which the paralyzed Ur-Nammu was taken – for some unknown reason – before he was brought to lie in state in his palace.

Lines 44–61. In this passage, too, a number of the lines are fragmentary and the translation of not a few of the extant complexes is uncertain; nevertheless the sense of the passage as sketched in the introduction is reasonably assured. In line 44, the rendering of the second half is quite dubious. In line 45, the KA following the first complex seems inexplicable (it is missing in the Susa duplicate). The rendering of lines 46–47 seems reasonably certain (the “they” in line 47 probably refers to Sumner’s (unspecified) enemies). The meaning of line 48 is not clear; this is true also of lines 49–50 that depict the misfortune of the king’s spouse and concubine(s) (*šéš* in line 50 is assumed to be for *šAL šéš=sekretu*). Lines 51–53 concern the rejection by the gods of Ur-Nammu’s gifts, prayers, and offerings; perhaps this is true also of line 54 whose meaning is obscure. The difficult and rather fragmentary lines 55–61 all seem to depict the disloyalty of former friends and followers who have arrogantly turned away from him now that he is dead, but note especially that the rendering of the rather crucial line 61 is quite uncertain.

Lines 62–75. A number of lines in this passage (especially lines 62, 63, 64, 73, 74, 75) are well preserved and their translation and meaning are fairly certain. The simile in line 65 is based on the well-known cliché involving the sinking of the Dilun boats; the meaning of line 66 is obscure; so, too, is the meaning of the first half of lines 68–69. The rendering and meaning of the rather interesting two lines (70–71) relating to the *ansé* are uncertain. The broken initial sign(s) of line 72 may have represented a word or expression meaning “reason”, “good sense”; the rendering of UR by “dignity” assumes that it is to be read *éš-bašiu*.

Lines 76–83. The rendering of this well-preserved passage which provides some idea of life in the Netherworld as rather naively and simplistically conceived by the Sumerian poets, mythographers and theologians is fairly certain. Note

especially the poignancy of the rather bitter statement in line 83, which the poet seems to have introduced for the purpose of underlining the stark contrast between Ur-Nammu’s rich, joyous banquet and the customary dreadful and dreaded food of the Netherworld.

Lines 84–131. The translation and interpretation of this passage are reasonably certain, except for the fragmentary closing lines 128–131, whose contents still remain uncertain and obscure.

Lines 132–144. The translation and interpretation of this well preserved passage are also reasonably certain, except for the fragmentary lines 134–135.

Lines 145–154. The translation and interpretation of this well preserved passage are reasonably assured, except for the difficult, partly fragmentary closing lines (153–154).

Lines 155–173 and 174–194. These two passages that consist of a bitter accusation by a mortal – a dead one to be sure – against what he deems to be an unfair and unjust judgment by the great gods, are theologically and humanistically unique, since as is well known, the Sumerian sages taught that man must tearfully accept and not question the decisions of the gods. Of considerable sociological and human interest is the fact that the second of these passages is devoted almost entirely to the king’s solicitous concern and anxiety about the suffering and agony of his widowed spouse whom he saw in his imagination as abandoned by god, good angel, and man.

The two passages are well preserved and their translation and interpretation reasonably assured, but there are quite a number of difficulties and uncertainties to be noted, thus: In line 155, the precise grammatical relationship between *ilu* and *nig-me-gar* is not clear (“melancholy” for *nig-me-gar* is a doubtful surmise). In line 161, the precise rendering of the verbal form is uncertain. In line 162, the translation of the second half of the line is uncertain. In lines 164–165, the simile involved seems rather inept and ineffective, unless the translation of the two lines is faulty (note, too, that the first word in line 165, *me-li-e-a*, is only partially preserved). In line 166, the reading *nu-mu-un-sir-am* (the tablet is rather difficult to read at this point and the *nu*- is uncertain) and its rendering by “widow” is justified by the context. The rather crucial line 174 is too fragmentary for a reasonable guess at its meaning. The translation and meaning of lines 180–181 are uncertain. In line 185, the translation of the second half of the line is so, too, is the translation of line 186. For the possible identification of *gš-gá-dl* as the lute, cf. Collon and Kilmer, *The British Museum Yearbook* 4 (1980) p. 13 ff. For the rendering of *sahar-pá-sag-gá* in line 190, cf. *AHW sub šápu(m)*. The “men of my command”, in line 194, may perhaps be an expression for “dependents”.

Lines 195–202. This passage begins Ur-Nammu’s depiction of the events in which the goddess Inanna played the leading role, that led to his extraordinary

posthumous fame and name, which helped to console him for the divine injustice done to him. However, as will soon become obvious, the translation and interpretation of this fairly well preserved passage, are far from being assured; and the sketch of its contents in the introduction is to be considered as uncertain and tentative. In line 196, the rendering of the verbal form *nu-nu-un-ti* by "was not present," is a surmise based on the context, which is itself, however, rather uncertain. The interpretation of line 197 is also rather uncertain, although its literal translation is reasonably assured. "From these places" is a rather vague and laconic expression that is difficult to interpret in the context. The translation, meaning, and interpretation of the crucial line 201, are difficult and uncertain. In line 202, the restoration of *-du_g* is a surmise only.

Lines 203–215. Except for the first two rather fragmentary lines, the translation and interpretation of this passage are reasonably assured, and the sketch of its contents in the introduction is quite trustworthy. There are, however, a number of difficulties and uncertainties, thus: The rendering and interpretation of the *-bi* of *nim-bi* in lines 208–209; the translation of *hé-me-a-gub-ba* in line 210; the interpretation of line 211 (note, too, the rather strange looking variant for *-dumu-* in HS1440–1520); the interpretation of line 212 whose verbal form is only partially preserved and whose subject is unmentioned; the rather seemingly forced interpretation of line 213.

Lines 216–233. Despite the fragmentary condition of this passage, the sketch of its contents, as far as they are preserved or can be readily surmised from the preserved parts of the passage (cf. the translation) is fairly trustworthy.

Lines 234–242. Because of the fragmentary condition of this passage, little can be said about its contents except that it is a doxological passage closing the composition; note, however, that it is rather uncertain whether the first three lines are actually part of the doxology; and that the poet's intent in adding the last two lines is not clear.

(It is our great grief to mention here that Prof. Dr. S. N. Kramer passed away on 26th November, 1990. We sincerely express our regret over his death.)

We put down here clearly that the corrections in proof were made under the responsibility of the Editorial Committee of this volume.)

JEAN LECLANT (Paris)

LE "TÉTRAGRAMME" À L'ÉPOQUE D'AMÉNOPHIS III

A.S.A.I. le Prince Milkasa Takahito, qui a toujours apporté une aide si vigilante et bienveillante aux études sémitiques et aux recherches d'égyptologie, je voudrais, en témoignage de respectueux et fidèle attachement, dédicacer cette courte note consacrée à des documents qui n'ont pas encore, me semble-t-il, suffisamment retenu les commentateurs des spécialistes ni gagné l'audience d'un public plus large.

Dans le grand temple jubilaire de Soleb, au fond du lointain Soudan, le Pharaon Aménophis III a fait graver, à la partie inférieure des colonnes de la salle hypostyle, les représentations de "peuples envoutés",¹ ceux d'Asie au Nord de l'axe, ceux d'Afrique au Sud (fig. 1); bras ligotés à l'arrière, leurs bustes forment des sortes d'écussons souvent crénelés, qui renferment les noms de pays ou de peuplades – inventaire d'une géographie de domination magique bien plus que d'annexions territoriales réelles. L'un des écussons² mentionne comme "pays de Shasou" (*β-ššw*) celui de *yhwš(w)*³ (fig. 2),⁴ qui figure entre *T₃-ššw-twrbyr* et *T₃-*

1 J. Leclant, "Les fouilles de Soleb (Nubie soudanaise)", dans *Nachrichten der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen*, Phil.-Hist. Klasse, 1965, Nr. 13, p. 211–216, fig. 8–15. Cf. *Orientalia* 31, 1962, p. 328–32, 1963, p. 203, fig. 25–34; 33, 1964, p. 385, fig. 35–36; *Annuaire du Collège de France* 81, 1980–1981, p. 474–475.

2 Colonne IV N 4 α 2; cf. *Orientalia* 33, 1964, fig. 36; *Nachrichten Göttingen*, 1965, fig. 15 et fig. c (p. 215).

3 La transcription pose problème. Signe par signe, elle donnerait: *y-h-wš-w*. Le signe final est bien un *w* (cf. note suivante); ce pourrait être éventuellement un simple complément du signe de la boucle (Gardiner, *Sign-list* V 4). Mais ce dernier, au lieu de la valeur habituelle *wš*, peut présenter celle de *w* (E. Edel-M. Mayrhofer, dans *Orientalia* 40, 1971, p. 6; W. Helck, *Die Beziehungen Ägyptens zu Vorderasien im 3. und 2. Jhr. v. Chr.*, 2e éd., Wiesbaden 1971, p. 545–546). Devant les divergences de transcription: *yhwš* (S. Herrmann), Yahwo (A. Caquot), *yhw* (E. Edel, *Biblische Notizen* 11, 1980, p. 68), on soulignera que la question méritait d'être encore précisée par les spécialistes de l'"écriture syllabique". Voir aussi tout récemment W. Helck, "Grundsätzliches zur sog. 'Syllabischen Schreibung'", dans *Studien zur altägyptischen Kultur*, 16, 1989, p. 121–143 (en particulier p. 124).

4 La fig. 2 (comme la fig. 3) est la réduction d'un fac-similé. Les signes *y* apparaissent donc exactement comme ils sont sur le document. L'oiseau au bas de l'écusson est très vraisemblablement une "caille" (*Sign-list* G 43) et non pas un pectinoptère (*ibid.*, G 1), en dépit de sa taille relativement grande; corriger en ce sens la remarque de M. C. Astour, dans *Festschrift Einar Edel*, Bamberg, 1979, p. 19, n. 17.