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Anatolian Studies, Vol. 10. (1960), pp. 105-131.

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THE SULTANTEPE TABLETS

(continued)

VII. THE MYTH OF NERGAL AND ERESHKIGAL

By O. R. GURNEY

THE MYTH OF Nergal and Ereshkigal has long been known to Assyriologists from a Middle Babylonian tablet found among the diplomatic archives of Tell El Amarna.¹ The tablet had apparently been imported into Egypt, perhaps from Syria, together with a similar one inscribed with the myth of Adapa, as a school-text for the training of scribes. It was only in 1951 that fragments of a late Assyrian version of the tale were unearthed at Sultantepe. In 1953, after the numerous fragments had been baked and joined, the text was identified by the present writer and a preliminary account of it was given by him in a lecture delivered early in 1955.² The cuneiform text was published in 1957³ and a full edition was promised for this journal. The present article is intended to fulfil that promise. The Sultantepe tablet remains the sole authority for the late Assyrian version of the tale, not a single fragment having come to light from any other source.

The tablet is one of the largest in the collection. It has three columns on each face and, when complete, must have contained some 440 lines; but unfortunately it is very badly damaged. About 100 lines are completely lost and of the remainder—in itself a fairly good proportion of the whole—only sixteen lines are preserved intact and these are spread throughout the poem. The problem for the editor is thus mainly one of restoration; but in this he is much assisted by the nature of the Akkadian epic style, with its fondness for repetition. Many broken lines can be restored with complete certainty from parallel passages in the poem and one badly mutilated section can be recognized as an extract from the well-known poem “The Descent of Ishtar to the Nether World”.⁴ Beyond this, restoration is more or less conjectural, but the possibilities are limited by the necessity to produce a coherent narrative. Assyriologists must judge whether in the present edition the proper limits have been overstepped. The Middle Babylonian version can be used for this purpose only in a general way. The outline and main incidents of the tale are clearly the same in the two versions and, where one of these incidents is missing in the Assyrian text, we can be reasonably sure that it should be inserted in one of the lacunae; but wherever an incident is preserved in both versions, the actual wording is usually different.

¹ Translations may be found in A. Heidel, *The Gilgamesh Epic and Old Testament Parallels* (2nd ed.) 129 ff., and *ANET*. 103 ff.

² Published in *Proceedings of the British Academy* XLI, 21 ff.

³ Gurney and Finkelstein, *The Sultantepe Tablets* I, No. 28.

⁴ Modern translations by A. Heidel, *op. cit.* 121 ff., and *ANET*. 106 ff. (with bibliography).

The tale appears to be preceded by a hymnal introduction, similar to those attached to other works of Babylonian literature, and in this case presumably addressed to Ereshkigal, though the name is missing. For this section we are dependent on a detached fragment, which has been assigned to this tablet on account of the general similarity of the writing and especially on account of the column division, for there is no other tablet in the collection having the columns divided by only two lines set wide apart in this way. The fragment contains only the extreme ends of fourteen lines and in these there is no obvious reference to the subject-matter of the poem. Some doubt must therefore remain whether the fragment has been correctly assigned.

The beginning of the story has to be supplied from the Amarna version. The gods of heaven are preparing a feast and wish to invite their sister Ereshkigal, the queen of the Underworld ; but the immutable laws of the universe have confined the *dei superi* and the *dei inferi* in their respective realms and neither can visit the other. Only messengers can pass between and accordingly Anu sends a message to Ereshkigal suggesting that she should dispatch her messenger to heaven to collect her portion and take it down to her. At this point the Assyrian narrative sets in and only the briefest summary is necessary here. Ereshkigal's messenger, Namtar, duly ascends "the stairway of heaven", but on his entry into the heavenly palace he takes offence at the behaviour of one of the gods, Nergal, and complains to his queen. Nergal is ordered by Ea to go down to the Underworld, presumably to apologize, and after receiving from Ea careful instructions about the dangers of accepting hospitality there, he duly sets out. On arrival at the palace of Ereshkigal he attempts to carry out his instructions, but eventually succumbs to her charms and sleeps with her for an epic period of seven days and nights. Then, fearing the gods' displeasure, he asks to be released and returns to heaven, apparently posing as the bearer of a message from Ereshkigal. Ereshkigal laments his departure and sends up Namtar to beg the gods to allow Nergal to return permanently to the Underworld as her husband. The gods, however, anticipating such a development, devise a scheme for deceiving the messenger : Nergal is transformed, apparently by a magic spell, into a deformed creature and Namtar fails to recognize him. He goes back to his queen with his mission unaccomplished but is promptly told to return at once and seize the disguised god by force. This, we must suppose, he does (there is a lacuna here) and there follows a short dialogue in which Namtar instructs Nergal in the steps he must now take for re-entering the Nether World. Anyone seeking admittance there as a permanent resident has to submit to being relieved of an article of apparel or equipment by the porter at each of the seven gates. Nergal must therefore carry with him certain objects (details are not preserved), presumably in order that the porters may be satisfied without depriving him of his essential needs. This plan is carried out. Nergal re-enters Hades, goes straight up to Ereshkigal, seizes her by her hair and pulls her from her throne (this detail has been supplied in a broken line from the Amarna version). The pair then sleep together for a further

period and the poem ends with a message from Anu (?) giving permission for Nergal to remain permanently in the Underworld and, we may presume (the end is lost), to reign there henceforward as king.

The essential outlines of this story are already present in the Amarna version, but whereas the latter presents a bald, concise narrative of hardly more than a hundred lines, the Assyrian version is a literary composition enlivened by much incidental conversation and containing passages borrowed from other works ; moreover, the whole of Nergal's first journey to the Underworld and his return to heaven are found only in the later text. Yet we cannot be sure that these additions are of late origin. Most Assyrian manuscripts of such poems are in the direct line of descent from Old Babylonian originals, and the Amarna tablet may well represent an abbreviated local version, like that of the Gilgamesh Epic found at Boğazköy.

Only a few of the incidents in this tale still remain obscure. We do not understand the purpose of Ea's first instructions to Nergal (col. ii, 21-35), involving the felling of trees and the carving of three objects. We do not know why Nergal, on arrival in Hades, first resists temptation (col. iii, 54-63) but then succumbs (col. iv, 1-8). We do not know what happened in heaven to motivate Nergal's return (col. iv, 15-16). We do not understand Ereshkigal's preparations for his second reception and the allusion to "two daughters" and "Enmeshar" (col. iv, 33-49). We may hope that light may yet be thrown on these minor matters by the discovery of new parallels.

In the printing of the text and translation the usual conventions have been followed. In the translation, italics are used for all words which are uncertain, either because the meaning of the text is not understood or because the text itself is illegible or broken. In the transliteration, uncertain readings are printed in roman type, including the many restorations which are purely conjectural ; roman type has, however, not been used for restorations which are virtually certain (some subjectivity of judgment is inevitable here). Since publication of the hand-copy the tablet has been collated several times and wherever a reading has been obtained which differs from the copy, this fact is indicated by an exclamation mark.

My thanks are due to Professor W. G. Lambert for many valuable suggestions which are now incorporated in this edition. His ideas have been particularly helpful in the interpretation of col. i, 1-14, col. ii, 9-11, 26-35, and col. vi, 21-8.

TRANSLITERATION

Col. 1

- 1'. [. šar-rat nišē]^{meš} ʾlud-lul⁷
 2'. [.]-mi Diš⁵ s[a-a]n-tak
 3'. [. šar-rat nišē^{meš}]-e [lu]d-lul
 4'. [.-m]i s[a-an-t]ak
 5'. [.]x e x⁶
 6'. [. gi]-mil dum-qi
 7'. [. i]-na dištarāti^{meš} ka-li-šin
 8'. [. re]-me-ni-it⁷
 9'. [.] mi-e-ši
 10'. [. an]-nu-ú-na
 11'. [.]^{meš}-ú
 12'. . . .]-tu 13'. . . .]-BE 14'. . . .]-u

If the preceding lines are rightly interpreted as the beginning of the text, some sixteen lines are missing before the main tablet is reached. Nine of these can be restored with some certainty from lines 31'–37' below.

- [^dA-num pa-a-šú īpuš-ma iqabbi ana ^dKà-kà a-mat izakkar]
 [^dKà-kà a-na eršet lā tāri lu-uš-pur-ka]⁸
 [ana ^dEreš-ki-gal ki-a-am ta-qab-bi]
 [um-ma at-ti-ma ul šá e-li-i]
 [ina šatti-ki ul te-li-i ana maḥ-ri-ni]
 [u ni-nu-ma ul šá a-ra-di]
 [ina arḥi-i-ni ul nu-ur-rad ana maḥ-ri-ki]
 [^{lú}mār-šip-ri-ki lil-li-kám-ma]
 [gišpaššura li-ip-ṭur qiš-ta-a-ki lim-ḥur]
 15'. [mim-mu-ú a-nam-din-áš-šú lu-šal-li-ma-kum . .] ʾka-a-ši⁷
 16'. [ú-rid ^dKà-kà ár-kat sim-me-lat]⁹ šá-ma-mi
 17'. [bāba šá ^dEreš-ki-gal ina ka-š]á-di-šu

-
- 18'. [^{lú}atú] p[i-ta-an-n]i¹⁰ bāba
 19'. [^dKà-kà e-ru-u]m-ma lik-r[u-bak-ka] bābu
 20'. [išten^{en} bāb]a ú-še-ri-b[a ila ^dK]à-kà
 21'. [šanú^u] bābu ú-še-ri-b[a ila] ^dKà-kà
-

⁵ Possibly a scribal error, since there is no known example of *ana santak*. The tablet appears to have the sign *ab*, preceded by a sign ending with a “hook”; but analogies suggest that lines 2 and 4, as well as lines 1 and 3, should end in an identical way. See commentary.

⁶ This sign, on collation, appears to have two verticals.

⁷ This sign is not written in the peculiar manner which characterises the main tablet (e.g. iv, 56').

⁸ cf. vi, 45'.

⁹ cf. v, 42' and vi, 18'.

¹⁰ cf. Descent of Ishtar i, 27.

TRANSLATION

- 1'. *I will praise* [. *the queen of mankin*]*d.*
 2'. [.] *continually.*
 3'. *I will praise* [. *the queen of mankin*]*d.*
 4'. [.] . . *continually.*
 5'. [.]
 6'. [.] a favour.
 7'. [. the . . .] *among* all the goddesses.
 8'. [.] *thou art merciful.*
 9'. [.] *forgive.*
 10'. [.] *our sins.*
 11'-14'. (Traces only.)

About seven lines missing. The story opens with the gods in heaven preparing a banquet. They wish to invite Ereshkigal, the queen of the Underworld.

- [Anu opened his mouth to speak and said to Kaka :]
 [" Kaka, *I will send you to the Land of No Return.*
to Ereshkigal you shall speak as follows :
 [' You are not able to come up ;]
 [during your year you do not come up to visit us ;]
 [and we are unable to go down ;]
 [during our month we do not go down to visit you.]
 [Let your messenger come hither,]
 [let him remove the dish from the table (and) receive your portion ;]
 15'. [whatever I give him let him hand over . . .] to you.' "
 16'. [Kaka descended the long stairway] of heaven.
 17'. [On] his arrival [at the gate of Ereshkigal,]
-
- 18'. [" Porter !] O[pen] the gate [for m]e ! " (he said).
 19'. [" *Enter, Kaka,*] and may the gate [*bless you.*] "
 20'. [Through the first gate] he admitted [the god] Kaka,
 21'. [through the second] gate he admitted [the god] Kaka,

- 22'. [šalša]^{šá} bāba ú-še-ri-ba [ila] ^dKà-kà
 23'. rebū^u bābu ú-še-ri-b[a] ila ^dKà-kà
 24'. hanša^{šá} bāba ú-še-r[i-ba] ila ^dKà-kà
 25'. šešša^{šá} bāba ú-š[e-ri-b]a ila ^dKà-kà
 26'. sebū^u bābu ú-š[e-ri-b]a ila ^dKà-kà
 27'. i-ru-um-ma ana p[al]-ki-i ki-šal-li-šá
 28'. ik-mi-si i[š-ši-iq] qa-q-a-ru maḥ-ri-šá
 29'. i-šîr i-za-z[i-ma]] i-zak-kar-šá¹¹
 30'. ^dA-num abū-[ki i]š-^rpur-ra-an-ni^r [ia-a-ši]
 31'. um-ma at-t[i-m]a ul šá e-li-[i]
 32'. ina šatti(MU. AN. NA?)-[k]i ul te-li-i ana maḥ-ri-ni
 33'. u ni-nu-ma ul šá a-ra-di
 34'. ina arḥi-^ri^r-ni ul nu-ur-rad ana maḥ-ri-ki
 35'. ^rlū^rmār-šîp-ri-ki lil-li-kám-ma
 36'. ^{giš}paššûra li-ip-tur qiš-ta-a-ka lim-ḥur
 37'. mim-mu-ú a-nam-dîn-áš-šú lu-šal-li-ma-^rkúm x x ka-ši^r
-
- 38'. ^dEreš-ki-gal pa-a-šú i-pu-uš-ma iqabbi ana ^dK[à-kà] a-mat izakkar
 39'. ^{lū}mār-šîp-ri šá ^dA-nim abî-ni šá tal-li-k[a-n]a-a-ši
 40'. lu-ú šul-mu ana ^dA-nim ^dEn-lîl u ^dÉ-a ilāni^{meš} rabûti^{meš}
 41'. lu-ú šul-mu ana ^dNammu u ^dNa-áš ili elli(KÙ. GA)
 42'. lu-ú šul-mu ana mu-ti be-lit šá-ma-mi
 43'. lu-ú šul-mu ana ^dNin-[urta dan-dan-nu] ina mātî
 44'. ^dKà-kà p[a-a-šú] i-pu-uš-ma iqabbi ana ^dEreš-ki-gal a-mat izakkar^{ár}
 45'. šul-mu ana ^dA-nim ^dEn-lîl u ^dÉ-a ilāni^{meš} rabûti^{meš}
 46'. šul-mu ana ^d[Namm]u u ^dNa-áš <ili> elli(KÙ. GA)
 47'. šul-m[u ana mu-ti b]e-lit šá-ma-mi
 48'. šul-[mu ana] ^dNi[n-urt]a ^rdan-dan-nu^r ina mātî
 49'. [^dK]à-kà *pā-šú ipuš^{uš}-[ma]¹² iqabbi ana ^dEreš-ki-gal a-[mat] izakkar^{ár}
 50'. [x x]x a-na ka-a-ši lu-ú šá-lim-tum
-
- 51'. [^dEreš-ki-ga]l *pā-šú ipuš¹³-ma iqabbi ana ^dNam-tar sukkallî-šú a-mat izakkar^{ár}
 52'. ^rdNam^r[-tar sukkall]i lu-uš-pur-k[a ana] ^ršamê^e šá ^dA-nim abî-ni¹⁴
 53'. ^dNam-tar e-^rli-i ár-kat^r [sim-me-lat šá-ma-mi]¹⁵
 54'. ^{giš}paššûra pu-tur [qiš-ti mu-ḥur]
 55'. mim-mu-ú Anu ^ri-na-an^r-[di-nak-kum tu-šal-la-man-ni ia-a-ši]
 56'. ^d[Nam-tar]

About sixteen lines missing to end of column.

¹¹ Probably nothing missing : cf. En. El. III, 70.

¹² Text : DÙ-šú u[š] !

¹³ Text : DÙ-šú KA-šú !

¹⁴ cf. iv, 24'.

¹⁵ cf. v, 42'.

- 22'. [through the third] gate he admitted [the god] Kaka,
 23'. through the fourth gate he admitted the god Kaka,
 24'. through the fifth gate he admitted the god Kaka,
 25'. through the sixth gate he admitted the god Kaka,
 26'. through the seventh gate he admitted the god Kaka.
 27'. He entered her spacious courtyard.
 28'. He knelt (and) k[issed] the ground before her,
 29'. (then) he straightened up, took his stand [and] said to her :
 30'. "Anu, your father, sent me, saying :
 31'. 'You are one not able to come up ;
 32'. during your year you do not come up to visit us ;
 33'. and we are unable to go down ;
 34'. during our month we do not go down to visit you.
 35'. Let your messenger come hither,
 36'. let him remove the dish from the table (and) receive your portion ;
 37'. whatever I give him let him hand over . . . to you.' "
-

- 38'. Ereshkigal opened her mouth to speak and said to Kaka :
 39'. "O Messenger of Anu our father who have come to us,
 40'. Is it well with Anu, Enlil and Ea, the great gods ?
 41'. Is it well with Nammu and Nash,¹⁶ the pure god ?
 42'. Is it well with the husband of the Lady of Heaven ?
 43'. Is it well with Nin[-urta, *the mightiest*] in the land ? "
 44'. Kaka opened his mouth to speak and said to Ereshkigal :
 45'. "It is well with Anu, Enlil and Ea, the great gods ;
 46'. it is well with [Nammu] and Nash,¹⁶ the pure (god),
 47'. it is well [with the husband of] the lady of heaven ;
 48'. it is well with Nin-[-urta], *the mightiest* in the land."
 49'. Kaka opened his mouth to speak and said to Ereshkigal :
 50'. "[.] I hope it is well with you."
-

- 51'. Ereshkigal opened her mouth to speak and said to Namtar, her
 minister :
 52'. "*Namtar, my [minister], I will send you [to] the heaven of Anu, our father.*
 53'. *Namtar, ascend the long [stairway of heaven],*
 54'. *remove the dish from the table, [receive my portion,]*
 55'. *whatever Anu [gives you, hand over to me.] "*
 56'. [Namtar]

About twenty-six lines missing. Namtar goes up to heaven and as he enters the assembly of the gods, they kneel before him. Nergal alone fails to do so and thus causes offence. He is ordered to follow Namtar down to the Underworld and apologize.

¹⁶ Possibly a debased form of the name Nanshe.

Col. II

About ten lines missing.

- [^dÉ-a *pā-šú ipuš-ma iqabbi ana* ^dNergal *a-mat izakkar*]¹⁷
 1'. [.] x [.]
 2'. [e-nu-ma i]k!-šu-du i[na]
 3'. [x x x]x ú-ru-uh x¹⁸ [x x x]
 4'. [ilānimeš ina pāni]-šú iš-te-niš k[an-su]¹⁹
 5'. [ilānimeš rabûti^{me}š be-el ši-ma-a-[ti]
 6'. [u šu-u] ú-kal-la par-ši ú-kal-la par-ši [ilānimeš]
 7'. [ilāni]^{me}š a-ši-bu-ut qí-rib ^dIr[-kal-la]
 8'. [in]a pa-ni-šú am-me-ni la ta-k[am-mis]
 9'. [x]x inē^{II}.^{me}š-ia aš-ša-nap-rak-kám-ma
 10'. [te-e]r-ra-a-ta a-na la mu-di-e-ma
 11'. Either [x x]x-ta²⁰ qaq-qa-{ru}-ram-ma i-na! ri- x[x]x
 or [x x]x-ta²⁰ qaq-qa-{ru}-ram-ma i-na!-tal e[-na-k]a²¹
 12'-17'. (Traces only.)
 [^dNergal *pa-a-šú ipuš-ma iqabbi ana* ^dÉ-a *a-mat izakkar*]
 18'. [. lu-]ut-bi
 19'. [.]x taq-bi
 20'. [x x]-ši ma la an/ti ana šinī-šú iš-šip-šú²²
 21'. [^dÉ-a an-ni-tú ina še-me-šú zik-ra it-ta-mi ana libbi-šú
 22'. [lu-uš-t]e-pi-iš ma ʾx⁷ qa ra a ga²³ ʾti⁷ šá-pa-a-r[a]²⁴
-
- 23'. ^dÉ-a *pa-a-šú i-pu-uš-ma iqabbi ana* ^dNergal *a-mat izakkar*^{ar}
 24'. *mār ḥar-ra-ni te-ri-šú tal-lak na-aš-p[ār-ta]-ka* GÍR(?) ŠUR(?) qātē^{II}-ka
- 25'. *e-rid a-na* giškišti [] ʾšá giš⁷mēsi
 26'. *i-kis* gišmēsa giš⁷ḥa⁷-š[ur-ra u] gišsu-pa-a-lu
 27'. *ḥu-uš-šib* gišx [x giš x x u giš]si-ib-bir-ri
 28'. [*ú-rid a-na* giškišti] ʾšá gišmēsi!⁷
 29'. [*ik-kis* gišmēsa gišḥa-šur-ra u giš]u-pa-a-lu!
 30'. ʾú!-ḥa!⁷-a[š!-šib gišx x gišx x u] gišsi-ib-bir-ra
 31'. ʾú-šal-lam⁷ ma x [.]-nim u ^dNin-giš-zi-da
-
- 32'. *mi-iḥ-rat* na⁴uq[ní x x]x-šú ú-taq-qí
 33'. *mi-iḥ-rat* ḥu[rāši] x [x x x -šú] ú-taq-qí
 34'. *mi-iḥ-rat* na⁴uqní [gišsi-ib-bir-ra-šú] ú-taq-qí
 35'. *ep-še-ti* ʾx -la²⁵-ti⁷ gišk[ussû x x]al-la š[á x]
-
- 36'. *u šá-a-šú is-si-ma i-šak-ka-an-áš-šú te-e-ma*
 37'. *mār ḥar-ra-ni* [te]-ri-šú x [x] x [x]
 38'. *mim-mu-ú tērēti*(UR₅. Úš)^{me}š ʾú⁷[-. . . .] ʾa ina lib šat⁷[. . . .]

¹⁷ That the speaker is Ea is indicated by ll. 21' ff. ¹⁸ Traces like BE (collated).¹⁹ cf. iii, 26'.²⁰ Before *ta*, traces of a broken vertical only.²¹ Reading suggested by W. G. Lambert ; cf. CT. XV, 39, ii, 5 (myth of Zū).²² Or *eš-šep-šú*.²³ Possibly ZI (i.e. *napišti*⁴⁴?).²⁴ Possibly so, according to collation. At the beginning of the line there is a little more space than appears in the copy.²⁵ According to collation, not *ta*, possibly *gur*.

Col. II

- [Ea opened his mouth to speak and said to Nergal :]
- 1'. ["] . [.]
- 2'. [When] he arrived at [.]
- 3'. [.] a road of [.]
- 4'. [the gods], all together, [knelt before] him,
- 5'. [(even) the great gods], the lord(s) of destinies ;
- 6'. [for he] carried the authority, the authority of [the gods],
- 7'. [the god]s who dwell in Irkalla.
- 8'. Why do you not [kneel] before him?
- 9'. I keep *rolling* my eyes at you.²⁶
- 10'. (But) you [turn yourself] into an ignorant person.²⁷
- 11'. Either You [.] the ground with"
or You [.] ; your [eyes] stare at the ground."
- 12'-17'. (Traces only.)
- [Nergal opened his mouth to speak and said to Ea :]
- 18'. ["] I will arise
- 19'. [.] you said
- 20'. [.] he/I will twine it double."
- 21'. When Ea heard this, he said to himself :
- 22'. "[I will] bring it about that send/govern"
-
- 23'. Ea opened his mouth to speak and said to Nergal :
- 24'. " Traveller, do you want to go on your errand *with a sword in your hand* ?
- 25'. Go down to the forest . . .²⁸ of *mēsu*-trees,
- 26'. cut down a *mēsu*-tree, a *ḥašurru*-tree(?) [and] a *supālu*-tree,
- 27'. *carve a , [a and] a staff.*"
- 28'. [He went down to the forest . . .] of *mēsu*-trees,
- 29'. [cut down a *mēsu*-tree, a *ḥašurru*-tree(?) and] a *supālu*-tree,
- 30'. *carved a [. , a and] a staff,*
- 31'. *to hand over . . [. to . . .] . . and Ningishzida.*
-
- 32'. He painted his [.] so that it was like lapis lazuli ;
- 33'. He painted [his] so that it was like gold ;
- 34'. he painted [his staff] so that it was like lapis lazuli.
- 35'. works a *throne*
-
- 36'. And he (Ea) called out to give him instructions :
- 37'. " Traveller, do you want to ?
- 38'. Whatever instructions I [*offer you,*] *lay them to heart.*
-

²⁶ Perhaps as a signal, equivalent to winking.²⁷ i.e. you pretend not to notice.²⁸ Probably nothing missing.

- 39'. *ul-tú ul-la-nu-um-ma* ^{giš}kussá *na-šu⁷-nik-ka*
 40'. *e ta-mir-ma e tu-šib ina muḫ-ḫi*
 41'. ^{lú}nuḫatimmu *akli^{bá} na-ši-[ka e ta-m]ir-ma akli^{HI. <A>}-šu ul ⁷e-kul⁷*
 42'. ^{lú}tābiḫu *šīra na-ši-[ka e ta-mi]r-ma šīr-šu ul ⁷KI. MIN⁷*
 43'. ^{lú}sīrāšú *šīkarī^{meš} na-ši-ka e ta-mir-ma šīkarī^{meš} ul⁷ [iš⁷]-ti*
 44'. *me-si-it šēpē^{II} na-ši-ka e ta-mir-ma [šēpē]^{II}-ka e tam-si*
 45'. *šī⁷-i a-na nar-ma-ki i-ru-um-ma²⁹*
 46'. *[lu]-ub-bu-ši [x]-⁷mu-šú⁷ il-la-bi-iš*
 47'. *x⁷ i³⁰ zu-mur⁷-šá uš-ta-bar-rak-ka*
 48'. *at-ta [šá zi]-kar u sin-niš⁷ e ta-x⁷ [x x]x -ka³¹*

49'. ^dNergal⁷ [.]

About twelve lines missing.

From near the end of col. II the lines can be restored from the parallel passage in the "Descent of Ishtar" (*CT. XVI, 45, 4 ff.*) :—

[^dNergal a-na eršet lā tārī pa-ni-šu iš-kun]
 [a-na bīt ek-le-ti šu-bat ^dIr-kal-la]
 [a-na bīti ša e-ri-bu-šu la a-šu-u]

Col. III

1. *[a-na ḫar-ra-ni ša a-lak-ta]-šá la ta-a-a-rat*
2. *[a-na bīti ša a-ši-bu-šu z]u-mu-u nu-ra*
3. *[a-šar epru bu-bu-us-s]i-na akal^{bá}[-ši-n]a ṭi-it-ṭi*
4. *[lab-šu-ma kīma iṣ-ṣ]u-ru šu-bat a-kaḫ-pu*
5. *[nu-u-ra ul im-ma-ru ina] e-ṭu-ti ⁷áš-ba⁷*
6. *[.]x ⁷du-ma-ma⁷*
7. *[. i-dam-mu-mu] ki-ma [su]-um-me*
8. *[.]x li a*
9. *[^{lú}atú pā-šu iṭuš-ma iqabbi] ana ^dNergal a-mat iza[kkar^{ár}]*
10. *[aš-šum mār ḫar-ra-ni man-za-az] bābi ṭe-me ⁷lu-tir³²*
11. *[e-ru-um-ma ^{lú}atú ana ^dEreš-ki-ga]l a-mat i[zakkar^{ár}]*
12. *[be-el-ti mār ḫar-ra-ni iš-te-e]n il-li-[ka-na-a-ši]*
13. *[. ú-ad-da]-šú man-[nu]³³*
14. *[.]x ši x[*

A few lines missing.

- [^dEreš-ki-gal pā-šu iṭuš-ma iqabbi ana ^dNam-tar a-mat izakkar]
 [.]
 15'. *[.]x šá ni [.]*

²⁹ cf. iv, 5'.

³⁰ Possibly *tur*.

³¹ Perhaps *e ta-á[š-ši ēn]ē^{II}-ka*, but this would not agree with the corresponding line iii, 62'.

³² cf. l. 19'.

³³ cf. l. 17' and Gilg. xii, 15 (*ú-a-ad-[du-ka]*).

- 39'. As soon as they bring a throne for you,
 40'. do not (rashly) go and sit on it.
 41'. If the cook brings [you] bread, [do not] go and *eat* his bread.
 42'. If the butcher brings [you] meat, [do not] go and *eat* his meat.
 43'. If the brewer brings you beer, do not go and *drink* the beer.
 44'. If some one brings you water for your feet, do not go and wash your feet.
 45'. If she (Ereshkigal) goes to the bath,
 46'. to put on her . . . garment,
 47'. and *exposes her body* to you,
 48'. for your part, do not *lift your eyes* [towards her] in the manner of man and woman."

49'. *Nergal* [.]

About twelve lines missing.

[Nergal set his face towards the Land of No Return,
 [to the house of darkness, the dwelling of Irkalla,
 [to the house from which none comes out who has entered it,]

Col. III

1. [to the road from which] there is no way back,
2. [to the house in which the dwellers] are bereft of light,
3. [where dust is] their [sustenance] and clay their food,
4. [where they are clad like] birds in garments of wings,
5. [where they see no light] and dwell in darkness,
6. [*where they and are full of*] *groaning*,
7. [. they moan] like doves.
8. [.].
9. [The porter opened his mouth to speak] and said to Nergal :
10. " Let me take back a report [*about a traveller standing at*] the gate."
11. [The porter *entered and*] spoke [to Ereshkigal] :
12. [" *My lady, a certain traveller*] has come [to us.]
13. [.] Who [*will identify*] him ? "
14. [.].[.]

A few lines missing.

- [*Ereshkigal opened her mouth to speak and said to Namtar :*
 ["]
 15'. [.].[.]

- 16'. [.]-ú *šu-bur-šu* ³⁴
 17'. [. lu-] *ud-du-šu-ú-ma*
 18'. [. lu-mur-š] *u ina ka-mi-i bābi*
 19'. [te-me] ṛa x x ṛ *lu-tir ana be-lí-ia*
 20'. ^d*Nam-tar il-lik-ma* [ina s]i-li ^{giš}*dalti ip-pa-la-šu* ^d*Ēr-ra*
 21'. šá ^d*Nam-tar* [kī]ma ni-ṛkis ṛ ^{giš}*bīni 'ir-qu pa-nu-uš* ³⁵
 22'. *kīma šab-ti ku-[ni-n]i iṣ-[l]i-ma šap-ta-šu*
 23'. ^d*Nam-tar il-lik-ma ana be-[el-ti-š]ú a-mat izakkar^{ár}*
 24'. *be-el-ti ul-t[ú ul-la-nu-um-ma ana] abī-ki taš-pu-ri-ni-ma*
 25'. *ana ki-sal-li* [^d*A-nim ina*] *e-re-bi-i[a]* ³⁶
 26'. *kan-su áš-r[u ilāni^{meš} kalīšunu]* ³⁶
 27'. *kan-su* [. ilāni^{meš} šá māti] ³⁶

Five lines missing.

-
- 33'. ^d[Ereš-ki-gal pā-šu ipuš-ma iqabbi]
 34'. *ana* ^d[Nam-tar sukkallī-šu a-mat izakkar^{ár}]
 35'. ^d[Nam-tar]
 36'. x[.]
 37'. *ul su!-[.]*
 38'. *u a-na-ku* [.]
 39'. *akal^{hā}* ^d*A-n[un-na-ki li-kul mē^{meš}* ^d*A-nun-na-ki liš-ti]* ³⁷
-
- 40'. *a-ṛlik^ṛ-ma ilu an!-n[u-u šu-rib ana maḥ-ri-ia]*
 41'. [I]-en bāba šá ^d*N[e-du₈ ú-še-ri-ba* ^d*Nergal]* ³⁸
 42'. [II-a bāb]a šá ^d*K[i-šár* KI. MIN]
 43'. [III-šá bāba šá ^d*En-da-šurim-ma* KI. MIN]
 44'. [IV-a bāba šá ^d*En-[uru-ul-la* KI. MIN]
 45'. [V-šá bāba] šá ^d*En-ṛdu₁₃-[kù-ga* KI. MIN]
 46'. [VI-šá] bāba šá ^d*En-du₁₃-[šuba* KI. MIN]
 47'. [VII]-a bāba šá ^d*En-nu-g[i₄-gi₄* KI. MIN]
 48'. *i-ru-um-ma ana pal-ki-i [ki-sal-li-šá]*
 49'. *ik-mi-is iṣ-šiq qaq-qa-r[a maḥ-ri-šá]*
 50'. ^d*A-num abū-ki uš-ṛx^ṛ-an-[ni* ³⁹ . . .]
 51'. *ti-šab^{šá-ab} ina* ^{giš}*kussīⁱ* [.]
 52'. *dī-ni dī-ni x x* [. šá *ilāni rabūti*] ⁴⁰
 53'. *ilāni^{meš} rabūti^{meš} a-ši-[bu-ut qí-rib* ^d*Ir-kal-la]*
 54'. *ul-tú ul-la-nu-u[m-ma* ^{giš}*kussá na-šu-niš-šu]* ⁴¹
 55'. *e ta-mir-ma u[l ú-šib ina muḥ-ḥi]* ⁴²
 56'. ^{lu}*nuḥatimmu aklī^{hā} na-šu-niš-[šu e ta-mir]-ṛma aklī^{hā} ul e-kul^ṛ* ⁴²
 57'. [^{lu}*ṭāb*]iḥu šīra na-[šu-niš-šu e] *ta-mir-ma šīr-šu* KI. MIN

³⁴ Less probably *šu-pur-šu* "his claw (nail)". ³⁵ cf. "Descent of Ishtar", obv. 29-30.

³⁶ cf. v, 31'-33'.

³⁷ cf. iv, 45'.

³⁸ For the names of the seven porters of the Underworld see K. Tallqvist, *Götterepitheta* 136, s.v. *nidugallu*, and *KAR.* 230, 13. For restoration cf. i, 20' ff.

³⁹ Not *iṣ-pur-an-ni* (collated); cf. v, 17' and 45'.

⁴⁰ cf. v, 7.

⁴¹ cf. ii, 39 ff.

⁴² The whole of the right-hand fragment here has been copied one line too high.

- 16'. [.] seize him ! ”
 17'. [“ I will] identify him,⁴³
 18'. [. let me look at] him at the outer gate,
 19'. (and) I will bring back [a report] to my lord.”⁴⁴
 20'. Namtar went and espied Erra⁴⁵ [in the] shadow⁴⁶ of the door.
 21'. Namtar's face turned pale like a cut-down tamarisk,
 22'. his lips turned black like a bruised *kuninu*-reed.
 23'. Namtar went and spoke to his [lady] :
 24'. “ My lady, *after* you sent me [to] your father,
 25'. on my entering the courtyard [of Anu],
 26'. [all the gods] were kneeling humbly [.]
 27'. [the gods of the land] were kneeling [.]

Five lines missing.

-
- 33'. [*Ereshkigal* opened her mouth to speak,]
 34'. [and said] to [*Namtar* her minister :]
 35'. [“ *Namtar*,]
 36'. [.]
 37'. not. [.]
 38'. and I [.]
 39'. Bread of the An[unnaki let him eat, water of the Anunnaki let him
 drink.]
 40'. Go and [admit] this god [to our presence.”]
 41'. Through the first gate, that of N[edu, he admitted Nergal,]
 42'. through [the second gate], that of K[ishar, he admitted Nergal,]
 43'. through [the third gate, that of En-da-shurimma, he admitted Nergal,]
 44'. through [the fourth gate, that of] En-[uru-ulla, he admitted Nergal]
 45'. through [the fifth gate], that of En-du-[kuga, he admitted Nergal,]
 46'. through [the sixth] gate, that of En-du-[šuba, he admitted Nergal,]
 47'. through [the seventh] gate, that of En-nu-gigi, [he admitted Nergal.]
 48'. He (Nergal) entered into [her] wide [courtyard],
 49'. knelt and kissed the ground [before her,] (saying) :
 50'. “ Anu, your father, sent me [.] ”
 51'. “ Sit down on a throne [.] ”⁴⁷
 52'. execute the judgments . . . [. of the great gods,]
 53'. the great gods who dwell [in Irkalla.] ”
 54'. As soon as [they brought a throne for him,]
 55'. *he did not* go and [sit on it.]
 56'. The cooks brought bread [for him ; *he did not* go] and eat the bread.
 57'. The butcher br[ought] meat [for him ; *he did not*] go and eat his meat.

⁴³ If *šu-bur-šú* in l. 16 is correctly interpreted, the change of speaker (here clearly Namtar) is not indicated.

⁴⁴ Apparently a scribal error for “ my lady ”.

⁴⁵ Another name for Nergal.

⁴⁶ Or : [at the] side of.

⁴⁷ This is more likely to be a reply by Ereshkigal than part of the message from Anu, since Ea has instructed Nergal to avoid sitting on a throne.

- 58'. [^{lú}sīrāšú šikara n]a-[šú-niš-š]u e ta-mir-ma šikar-šú ul [iš]-ti
 59'. [me-si-it šēpē^{II} na-šu]-^rniš-šú^r e ta-mir-ma šē[pē^{II}-šú ul im-s]i
 60'. [šī-i a-na bīt nar-m]a-ki i[-ru-um-ma]
 61'. [lu-bu-ši x -mu-š]ú il-ta-ab-bi-iš
 62'. [x x zu-mur-šá] uš-ta-bar-ra-ma
 63'. [šú-ú šá zi-kar u si]n-niš x[x x]x līb-bi-šú

About ten lines missing.

Col. IV

- 1'. ^d[.]
 2'. a- x[.]
 3'. ^dA-n[un-na-ki]

 4'. ^dNergal an-n[i-tú ina še-me-šú]
 5'. šī-i! ana bīt n[ar-ma-ki i-ru-um-ma]
 6'. lu-bu-ši x-[mu-šú il-ta-ab-bi-iš]
 7'. x x [zu-mur-šá uš-ta-bar-ra-ma]
 8'. šú-ú šá z[i-kar u sin-niš lib-bi-šú]
 9'. in-na-ad!-ru-ma [aḥḥī^{meš} ki-lal-la-an]⁴⁸
 10'. a-na ^{giš}ma-a-a-li šī[t-mu-riš i-ter-bu-ma]
 11'. I-en ūma II-a ūma^{ma} šal-lu-u[-ma šar-rat ^dEreš-ki-gal u ^dEr-ra]⁴⁹
 12'. [III-šá] ūma^{ma} IV-a ūma^{ma} [KI. MIN]
 13'. [V-šá ūma^{ma}] VI-šá ūma^{ma} [KI. MIN]
 14'. [VII-a] ūma^{ma} [i-na ka-ša-di-i]
 15'. ^dNergal ina lā ^rbaši-i^r [.]
 16'. ar-ki-šú it-^rba-la^r x x[.]
 17'. muš-^rri-in^r-ni-ma a-ḥa-[ti]
 18'. [e t]u-uš-tar-i-bi ^ri-lu^r⁵⁰ [.]
 19'. lul-lik-ma ana eršet lā tāri [lu-tur]
 20'. ^ršá!^r-a-šá ^riš-li-ma šīD^r [.]

 21'. [^dNergal i-š]e-ra i[l-lik]
 22'. [ana x x x]x ^{lú}at[ī a-mat izakkar]
 23'. [^dEreš-ki-gal be]-lit-ka [iš-pur-an-ni]
 24'. um-m[a ana šamêe] šá ^dA-n[im abī-ni lu-uš-pur-ka]⁵¹
 25'. la-am-taš-^ršir^r šip-ru x[.]
 26'. e-la-a ^dNergal [ár-kat sim-me-lat šá-ma-mi]⁵²
 27'. ana bāb ^dA-nim ^dEn-[lil u ^dÉ-a ina ka-šá-di]
 28'. ^dA-num ^dEn-lil u ^d[É-a i-mu-ru-šú-ma]
 29'. ^rmār⁵³ ^dIš-tar^r [e-la-a-na-a-ši]

⁴⁸ cf. vi, 35. Alternatively aḥa-meš ki-lal-la-an.

⁴⁹ cf. vi, 37.

⁵⁰ Or perhaps I. DIB (= askuppātu).

⁵¹ cf. i, 52'.

⁵² cf. v, 42' ff.

⁵³ The copy shows a head of a vertical which is in fact only a crack ; hardly room for DUMU.SAL.

- 58'. [The brewer brought beer for him ;] *he did not* go and drink his beer.
 59'. [They brou]ght him [water for his feet] ; *he did not* go and [wash his] feet.
 60'. [She (Ereshkigal) entered the bath-r]oom,
 61'. [and] put on [her garment,]
 62'. She *exposed* [her *body*]
 63'. [but he *did not lift*] his heart [to her in the manner of man and] woman.

About ten lines missing.

Col. IV

- 1'. [.]
 2'. [.]
 3'. *The An[unna]ki*]
-
- 4'. Nergal, [on hearing] this, [.]
 5'. She (then) [entered] the [bath]-room,
 6'. [put on her garment,
 7'. [*exposed* her *body*]
 8'. and he [*lifted his heart to her*] in the manner of [man and woman].
 9'. [The brother and sister] embraced,⁵⁴
 10'. pas[sionately they entered] into the bedchamber,
 11'. one day, a second day, they lay, [*the queen Ereshkigal and Erra*,]
 12'. [a third] day, a fourth day [they lay, *the queen Ereshkigal and Erra*,]
 13'. [a fifth day,] a sixth day, [they lay, *the queen Ereshkigal and Erra*,]
 14'. [but when the seventh] day [arrived,]
 15'. since Nergal *was missing*, [.]
 16'. behind him [.] *carried off* [.]
 17'. " Let me go, [*my*] *sister*, [.]
 18'. [*do not*] cause alarm . . . [.]
 19'. I will go and [*will then come back*] to the Land of No Return."
 20'. For her part, [*her*] *turned black* [.]
-
- 21'. [*Nergal straigh]tway w[ent*]
 22'. [to]. the porter [*he said* :]
 23'. [“ Ereshkigal,] your mistress, [*sent me, saying* :]
 24'. [‘ *I will send you to the heaven*] of Anu, [*our father*.’]
 25'. *Let me be released ! A message* [.]”]
 26'. Nergal ascended [the long stairway of heaven,]
 27'. [on his arrival] at the gate of Anu, Enlil [and Ea,]
 28'. Anu, Enlil and [Ea saw him (and said)] :
 29'. “ *The son of Ishtar [has come up to us.]*

⁵⁴ Or : [the pair] embraced [each other].

- 30'. $\text{ṛiṣ-te}^{\text{ṛ}}\text{-}^{\text{ṛ}}\text{i!-}[\text{šú}]\text{-ma}^{55}$ x[.]
 31'. $\text{ḏĒ-a}^{\text{ḏ}}\text{ṛAB-šú}^{\text{ṛ}}\text{mē}^{\text{meš}}\text{k}[\text{up-pi li-is-luḥ-šu-ma qu-bu-ḥu}]^{56}$
 32'. $\text{ṛṣu-un-dur pu}^{\text{ṛ}}\text{-}[\text{us-sul} \dots \text{li-šib pu-ḥur kàl ilāni}^{\text{meš}}]^{57}$

- 33'. ḏEreš-ki-gal [.]
 34'. $\text{ṛana bīt nar-ma-ki}^{\text{ṛ}}$ [. i-ru-um-ma]
 35'. $\text{ṛx}^{58}\text{ana}^{\text{ṛ}}\text{ḡiṣza/ḥa-}[\dots]$
 36'. zumur!-šú x[.]
 37'. $\text{i-li-}[\dots]$
 38'. il-si [.]
 39'. $\text{ḡiṣkus}[\text{sú i-ši-ma} \dots]$

- 39a'. $\text{mē}^{\text{meš}}[\text{x x su-lu-uh bīta}]^{59}$
 40'. $\text{mē}^{\text{meš}}[\text{x x s[u-lu-uh]}^{\text{ṛ}}\text{bīta}^{\text{ṛ}}]$
 41'. $\text{m}[\text{ē}^{\text{meš}}\text{x}]^{\text{ṛ}}\text{-li su-l[u-uh]}^{\text{ṛ}}\text{bīta}$
 42'. $[\text{x x t}]\text{i II mārāt}^{\text{meš}}\text{ḏ}[\text{x}]^{\text{ṛ}}\text{x ME}^{\text{ṛ}}^{60}\text{u ḏEn-me-šār}$
 43'. $[\text{mē}^{\text{meš}}\text{x}]\text{-pi-ti s[u-l]u-uh-šú-nu-ti}$
 44'. $[\text{x x}]^{61}\text{ḏA-nim}^{\text{ṛ}}\text{abī-ni}^{\text{ṛ}}\text{šá il-li-ka-na-a-ši}^{62}$
 45'. $[\text{aklī}^{\text{ḡa}}\text{-ni l}]^{\text{ṛ}}\text{i!-ku[l! mē]}^{\text{meš}}\text{-ni liš-ti}$

- 46'. $[\text{ḏNam-tar pa-a-šú}]^{\text{ṛ}}\text{i-pu-uš-ma i-qab-bi}$
 47'. $[\text{a-na ḏEreš-ki-gal be}]^{\text{ṛ}}\text{-el-ti-šú a-mat izakkar}^{\text{ḏr}}$
 48'. $[\text{x x ḏA-nim ab}]^{\text{ṛ}}\text{i-ni šá il-li-ka-na-ši}$
 49'. $[\text{x x x x x -n}]^{\text{ṛ}}\text{a-šú e-tu-li}$

A few lines missing.

- 50'. $[\text{x x x x x}]^{\text{ṛ}}\text{šá x}^{\text{ṛ}}[\text{x x x x x}]^{\text{ṛ}}\text{x}$
 51'. $[\text{x x x x}]^{\text{ṛ}}\text{x x -tu}[\text{x x}]^{\text{ṛ}}\text{zu}^{\text{ṛ}}\text{-nu-un}$
 52'. $\text{ṛeli du-úr ap}^{\text{ṛ}}\text{-pi-šá il-la-[ka]}^{\text{ṛ}}\text{di-ma-šá}$
 53'. $\text{ḏĒr-ra ḥa-me-ru la-li-e-a}$
 54'. $\text{ul áš-ba-a la-la-šú it-}^{\text{ta}}\text{tal-}^{\text{*}}\text{kan-ni}^{63}$
 55'. $\text{ḏĒr-ra ḥa-me-ru la-}^{\text{*}}\text{li-e-a}^{64}$
 56'. $\text{ul áš-ba-a la-la-šú it-}^{\text{ta}}\text{tal-}^{\text{*}}\text{kan-ni}^{63}$
 57'. $\text{ḏNam-tar pa-a-šú iḫuš(KA!)-ma}^{\text{ṛ}}\text{iqabbi}^{\text{ṛ}}\text{ana ḏEreš-ki-gal a-mat izakkar}^{\text{ḏr}}$
 58'. $[\text{x x}]\text{x šu x x}[\text{x x}]\text{x ila šá-a-šá lu ṣab-tak-ma}$
 59'. $[\text{x x x x x x x}]^{\text{ṛ}}\text{liš-š}]^{\text{ṛ}}\text{i-qa-ak-ki ka-a-ši}$

⁵⁵ According to collation, the third sign is clearly so, and there seems to be no alternative to this reading.

⁵⁶ cf. v, 40'.

⁵⁷ cf. v, 38' and 41'.

⁵⁸ Probably *nī* or *za* rather than *a* (collated).

⁵⁹ The fragment 51/134 + 161A has again been copied one line too high. The line numbering of the copy has been followed.

⁶⁰ *Lamaštu*(DIM. ME) ?

⁶¹ Perhaps [SUKKAL] or [mār šip-ri].

⁶² cf. 48' and v, 53'.

⁶³ Or *it-ta-tal-^{*}kan-ni*. Text : *it-ta-RI-i-ni* ; emendation suggested by Lambert.

⁶⁴ Text : *la-e-li-a*.

- 30'. [.] *will seek* [him]
 31'. [*Let*] Ea, his *father*, [*sprinkle him with*] spring water, [*let him sit, bald,*]
 32'. cross-eyed (and) lame, [. in the assembly of all the gods.] ”
-

- 33'. Ereshkigal [.]
 34'. to the bath-room [. *she went,*]
 35'.[.]
 36'. her body [.]
 37'.[.]
 38'. She called out [.]
 39'. [*“ Bring*] a chair [.]
-

- 39a'. [*Sprinkle the house with*] water [of]
 40'. S[prinkle] the house with water [of]
 41'. Spr[inkle] the house with water of [.]
 42'. [.] the two daughters of and Enmeshar,⁶⁵
 43'. sprinkle them [with water] of
 44'. [As for the *messenger*] of Anu, our father, who came to us,
 45'. let him eat [our bread], let him drink our [water].”
-

- 46'. [*Namtar*] opened [his mouth] to speak,
 47'. and said [to Ereshkigal,] his lady :
 48'. [*“ As for the messenger of Anu,*] our father, who came to us,
 49'. [.]. . . . to lie.

A few lines missing.

- 50'. [.]. . .[.]
 51'. [.].[.].
 52'. Her tears ran down her cheeks.
 53'. “ O Erra, my voluptuous spouse !
 54'. I was not sated with his charms ; he has *deserted* me.
 55'. O Erra, my voluptuous spouse !
 56'. I was not sated with his charms ; he has *deserted* me.”
 57'. Namtar opened his mouth to speak and said to Ereshkigal :
 58'. “ Let me seize that god !
 59'. [. let him] kiss you.”

⁶⁵ i.e. (presumably) Enmesharra, the Underworld deity.

Col. V

- [^dEreš-ki-gal pa-a-šú īpuš-ma iqabbi]
 [ana ^dNam-tar sukkalli-šá a-mat izakkar^{dr}]
 [a-lik ^dNam-tar]
 1'. [a-na bāb] ^r^dA-nim ^dEn-líl u ^dĒ-a pānī-ka šu-ku-un^r
 2'. [um-m]a u[l]-tú ši-ih-ra-ku-ma mārta-ku⁶⁶
 3'. ul i-di mi-lu-lu šá ardāti^{meš}
 4'. ul i-[di] d[a-k]a-ka šá ši-ih-ra-a-ti
 5'. [ilu šá-a-šú šá] taš-[pu]-ra-na-*šú⁶⁷-ma ur-ta-ḥa-ni-ma li-ta-til itti-iá
 6'. i[la šá-a-šú šu] p-pu-ra-na-šú-ma lu ḥa-me-ri li-bit itti-iá
 7'. mu-^rsuk-ka-ku^r-ma ul e-^rbek^r-ma ul a-da-ni di-ni šá ilāni^{meš} rabūti^{meš}
 8'. ilāni^{meš} rabūti^{meš} a-ši-bu-ut qí-rib ^dIr-kal-la
 9'. šum-ma ila š[á-a-šú la ta]l-tap-ra-šú
 10'. ki-[i par-ši ^dIr-kal-l]a u eršetim^{tim} ra-bi-tú⁶⁸
 11'. ú-^{el}šel^{el}-ma mītūti^{meš} ikkalu^{meš} bal-ṭu-ti
 12'. el bal-ṭu-ti u-šam-ad mītūti^{meš}
 13'. e-la-a ^dNam-tar ^rár!-kat!^r ^{si}sim-me-lat šá-ma-[mi]
 14'. ana bāb ^dA-nim ^dEn-líl u ^dĒ-a ina ka-šá-di
 15'. [^dA-n]um ^dEn-líl u ^dĒ-a e-mu-ru-šú-ma
 16'. [mi-n]a-a tal-lak ^dNam-tar
 17'. [māra]t-ku-nu iš-pur-an-ni
 18'. um-ma ul-tú ši-ih-ra-ku-ma mārta-ku
 19'. ul i-di mi-lu-lu šá ardāti^{meš}
 20'. ul i-di da-ka-ka šá ši-ih-ra-a-ti
 21'. ilu šá-a-šú šá taš-pu-ra-na-^ršú^r-ma ur-ta-ḥ[a-ni-ma l]i-ta-til [itti-ia]
 22'. ila šá-a-šú šup-pu-ra-na-š[ú-m]a lu ḥa-me-r[i] l[i-bit itti-ia]
 23'. mu-^rsuk^r-ka-^rku^r-ma ul ^re^r-[bek] ul a-da-ni di-n[i šá ilāni^{meš} rabūti^{meš}]
 24'. ilāni^{meš} rabūti^{meš} a-š[i-bu-ut] qí-rib ^dIr-kal-[la]
 25'. šum-ma ila šá-a-[šú la] tal-tap-ra-[na]-šú⁶⁹
 26'. ú-^{el}šel^{el}-ma [mītūti]^{meš} [ikkalu] bal-ṭu-ti
 27'. el bal-ṭu-ti [ú-šam]-ad mītūti^{meš}
 28'. ^dĒ-a *pā-šú īpuš⁷⁰-[ma iqabbi a-na ^dNam-tar] a-mat izakkar^{dr}
 29'. ^dNa[m-tar] ana ki-[sal-li ^dA-nim e-ru-ub-ma]⁷¹
 30'. [.]

⁶⁶ Text : DUMU.SAL.MEŠ-ku.⁶⁷ Text : niš.⁶⁸ cf. vi, 6.⁶⁹ cf. line 6 above ; this scribe does not leave a space before the last sign of a word at the end of a line.⁷⁰ Text : DÜ-šú KA.⁷¹ cf. 47'.

Col. V

- [Ereshkigal opened her mouth to speak]
 [and said to Namtar her minister :
 [" Go, Namtar]
- 1'. *set your face* [towards the gate of] Anu, Enlil and Ea,
 2'. [and say :] " Since I was a young girl,
 3'. I never knew the play of maidens,
 4'. I never knew the romping of children.
 5'. [That god, whom] you sent here, has had intercourse with me, let him
 lie with me.
 6'. Dispatch [that god] to me, that he may be my husband, that he may
 spend the night with me.
 7'. I am sexually defiled, *I am not pure*, I cannot execute the judgments of
 the great gods,
 8'. the great gods who dwell in Irkalla.
 9'. If you do not send that god,
 10'. according to the [*ordinances of Irkalla*] and the great Underworld,
 11'. I will send up the dead to eat the living,
 12'. I will make the dead more numerous than the living.' "
- 13'. Namtar ascended the long stairway of heaven.
 14'. On his arrival at the gate of Anu, Enlil and Ea,
 15'. Anu, Enlil and Ea saw him and (said) :
 16'. " What have you come for, Namtar ? "
 17'. " Your [daughter] sent me " (said he),
 18'. " saying : ' Since I was a young girl,
 19'. I never knew the play of maidens,
 20'. I never knew the romping of children.
 21'. That god, whom you sent here, has had intercourse with me, let him
 lie with me.
 22'. Dispatch that god to me, that he may be my husband, that he [may
 spend the night with me.]
 23'. I am sexually defiled, *I am not pure*, I cannot execute the judgments
 [of the great gods],
 24'. the great gods who dwell in the midst of Irkalla.
 25'. If you do not send that god,
 26'. I will send up [the dead to eat] the living,
 27'. I will make the dead more numerous than the living.' "
- 28'. Ea opened his mouth [to speak] and said [to Namtar] :
 29'. " Namtar, [enter] the courtyard [of Anu],
 30'. [.] "

- 31'. $\text{ṛana}^{\text{ṛ}} [\text{ki-sal-li } ^{\text{d}}\text{A-ni}]^{\text{m}} \text{ṛina e-re-bi-šú}^{\text{ṛ72}}$
 32'. $\text{kan-}[\text{su } ^{\text{d}}\text{áš-ru} \dots \dots \text{ilāni}^{\text{me}}]^{\text{s}} \text{kali-šunu}^{\text{72}}$
 33'. $\text{k}[\text{an-su} \dots \dots \text{ilāni}]^{\text{me}} \text{šá māti}$
 34'. $\text{I-e}[\text{n i-ši-ram-ma ul}] \text{e-mur ila šá-a-šú}^{\text{73}}$
 35'. $[\text{II-a II}] \text{I-šá } ^{\text{ṛ}}\text{i-ši-ram!}^{\text{ṛ}}\text{-ma ul e-mur ila šá-a-šú}$
 36'. $^{\text{d}}\text{N}[\text{am-t}]^{\text{ar}} \text{il-lik-ma ana be-el-ti-šú a-mat izakkar}^{\text{4r}}$
 37'. $\text{be-el-ti} [\text{a-na šamê}^{\text{e}} \text{šá}] ^{\text{d}}\text{A-nim abī-ki šá taš-pu-ri-ni}^{\text{74}}$
 38'. $\text{be-el-ti} [\text{ilu I-en qu}] \text{-bu-ḫu ṣu-un-dur pu-us-sul x [x] a-šib pu-ḫur kàl}$
 $\text{ilāni}^{\text{me}}\text{-ma}$
 39'. $\text{a-lik ila šá-a-šú ṣab-ta-šum-ma l[i-q]a-a i[a-a-š]i$
 40'. $^{\text{d}}\text{Ē-a AB-šú mē}^{\text{me}} \text{kup-pi } ^{\text{ṛ}}\text{su}^{\text{75}} \text{-}[\text{luḫ-šu}] \text{-ma}$
 41'. $\text{qu-bu-ḫu ṣu-un-dur pu-us-sul x [x a-šib] pu-ḫur kàl i[lāni}^{\text{me}}]$

 42'. $\text{i-la-a } ^{\text{d}}\text{Nam-tar ár-kat } ^{\text{si}}\text{sim-me-lat šá-ma-[mi]}$
 43'. $\text{ana bāb } ^{\text{d}}\text{A-nim } ^{\text{d}}\text{En-lil u } ^{\text{d}}\text{Ē-a ina ka-[šá-di]}$
 44'. $^{\text{d}}\text{A-num } ^{\text{d}}\text{En-lil u } ^{\text{d}}\text{Ē-a e-mu-ru-}^{\text{*}}\text{šú}^{\text{76}} \text{-[ma]}$
 45'. $\text{mi-na-a tal-lak } ^{\text{d}}\text{Nam-tar mārat-ku-nu iš-pur-an-[ni]}$
 46'. $\text{um-ma ila šá-a-šú ṣab-ta-šum-ma li-qa-a ia-š[i]}$
 47'. $^{\text{d}}\text{Nam-tar ana ki-sal-li } ^{\text{d}}\text{A-nim e-ru-u[b-ma]}$
 48'. $\text{t[ar-g]i-ge-ti-ka bu-}^{\text{'}}\text{i-šu-ma l[i-qa-a-šu]}$
 49'. $[\text{it-t}]i \text{I-en i-ši-ram-ma ul! e!-mur!}^{\text{77}} [\text{ila šá-a-šú}]$
 50'. $[\text{II-a II}] \text{I-šá i-ši-ram-ma} \quad [\text{KI. MIN}]$

 51'. $[\text{IV-a V-šá}] \text{i-ši-ram-ma} \quad [\text{KI. MIN}]$
 52'. $[\text{ṽ x}] ^{\text{*}}\text{pā-šú iḫ}^{\text{78}}\text{-ma iqabbi ana } ^{\text{d}}\text{Ē-a x[. . .]}$
 53'. $[\text{x } ^{\text{d}}\text{Na}]^{\text{m}}\text{-tar mār šip-ru šá il-li-k[a-na-ši]}^{\text{79}}$
 54'. $[\text{mē}^{\text{me}}\text{-ni li-i}] \text{š-}^{\text{ṛ}}\text{ti li-ir-muk lip-pa}^{\text{ṛ}} \text{-[šiš zu-mur-šú]}$

About six lines missing to end of column.

Col. VI

1. $\text{ṛa-a}^{\text{ṛ}} \text{iḫ-mu-uš } ^{\text{ṛ}}\text{uk}^{\text{ṛ}} \text{-[.]}$
 2. $^{\text{d}}\text{Ēr-ra a-šá-al-la-ka} [\dots] \text{elī-šú} [\dots]$
 3. $\text{a-}^{\text{ṛ}}\text{dāk}^{\text{ṛ}}\text{-ka a-}^{\text{ṛ}}\text{na-}^{\text{ṛ}} \text{x[.]}$
 4. $^{\text{d}}\text{Nam-tar } ^{\text{ṛ}}\text{šipir}^{\text{ṛ}}\text{-ka ana x x [.]}$
 5. $^{\text{d}}\text{Er-ra x [x] x x ti [.]}$
 6. $\text{par-ši šá } ^{\text{ṛ}}\text{eršetim}^{\text{ti}} \text{rabitu}^{\text{ti}} \text{kali}^{\text{ṛ}}\text{-šú-nu } ^{\text{ṛ}}\text{lu- x x}^{\text{ṛ}} [\text{x}]$

⁷² cf. iii, 25'–27'. Traces at end of l. 31 not as copied; head of vertical only visible.

⁷³ cf. 49'.

⁷⁴ cf. i, 52, iv, 24.

⁷⁵ Error for is? Or read su-[ul-luḫ-šu]-ma (II. 1, stative)?

⁷⁶ Text: su .

⁷⁷ These signs were copied from an old photograph, as the tablet has broken away here.

⁷⁸ Text: DÜ-šú KA .

⁷⁹ cf. iv, 44 and 48.

- 31'. On his entering the [courtyard of Anu],
 32'. all [the god]s knelt [humbly]
 33'. [The god]s of the land k[nelt]
 34'. [He went straight up to] one, [but he did not] see that god.
 35'. He went straight up to [a second, a third,] but he did not see that god.
 36'. Namtar went and said to his lady :
 37'. " My lady, you who sent me [to the heaven of] Anu your father,
 38'. my lady, [*there is a god*] bald, cross-eyed, lame . . . sitting in the
 assembly of all the gods."
 39'. " Go ! " (said she) " seize that god and bring him to me !
 40'. Ea, his *father*, has *sp*[rinkled him with] spring water,
 41'. the bald, cross-eyed, lame one . . . who was sitting in the assembly of
 all the gods."
 42'. Namtar ascended the long stairway of heaven.
 43'. On his arrival at the gate of Anu, Enlil and Ea,
 44'. Anu, Enlil and Ea saw him and (said) :
 45'. " What have you come for, Namtar ? " " Your daughter sent me
 46'. saying : ' Seize that god and bring him to me.' "
 47'. " Namtar, enter into the courtyard of Anu !
 48'. Seek from him your *injuries* ; take [him]."
 49'. He went straight up to one, but he did not see [that god.]
 50'. He went straight up to [a second, a] third, [but he did not see that
 god.]
 51'. He went straight up to [a fourth, a fifth, but he did not see that god.]
 52'. [. . .] opened his mouth to speak [and said] to Ea . . .
 53'. [" . . Na]mtar, the messenger who has come [to us],
 54'. *let him drink* [*our water*], let him wash (and) anoint [*his body*]."

About six lines missing. Namtar somehow finds Nergal, tells him he is taking him down to the Underworld, and warns him that the porters at the seven gates will each remove from him something that he wears or carries. Nergal replies :—

Col. VI

1. " May he not strip off [.]."
2. " Erra, I will make you go [.] upon him [.],
3. I *will kill* you . . . [.]."
4. " Namtar, your *errand* . . . [.]."
5. " Erra,[.]
6. all the ordinances of the great Underworld I *will* [*disclose to you*].

7. *ul-tú* ʿan⁷-ni-i ina a-la-k[i-ka]
 8. †áš um ki na ^{g18}kussâ lu-ú n[a-šá-ta]
 9. ʿx x x⁷ lu-ú n[a-šá-ta]
 10. [.] lu-ú n[a-šá-t]a
 11. [.] lu-ú [na-š]á-ta
 12. [.] lu-ú [na]-šá-ta
 13. [.] l[u-ú n]a-šá-ta
 14. [.]x ʿUNU⁷meš
 15. [.] ka [x] i x x GAB-ka
 16. [dÈr-ra a-mat dNam-tar] ʿiš-ta-kan⁸⁰ ana libbi-šú
 17. [x x x š]er-ret-su i[p-šu]-uš-ma ^{g18}qašta-šú [i]t-lul
 18. [ú-rid dNe]rgal ʿár-kat⁷ s¹sim-me-[lat šá-m]a-m[i]⁸¹
 19. ʿbāba⁷ šá dEreš-[ki-gal] ina k[a-šá-d]i
 20. ¹⁰atū pi-t[a-an-ni] ʿbāba⁷
 21. ¹⁰atū šá bābi [^{g18}kussâ-šú ina] bābi i-lul-šu-ma
 22. ana TI-[e-šú] ul i-din
 23. II-ú šá b[ābi] ʿx x⁷-šú KI. MIN
 24. ʿIII-šā⁷ [šá bābi x x]-šú KI. MIN
 25. ʿIV⁷-[u šá bābi x x]-šú KI. MIN
 26. ʿV⁷-[šú šá bābi x x]-šú KI. MIN
 27. [VI-šú šá bābi x x]-šú KI. MIN
 28. [VII-u šá bābi x x]-šú KI. MIN
 29. i-r[u-u]m-ma ana pal-ki-i ki-sal-li-i-šá
 30. i⁷-ʿi-ir⁷-ši-ma i-ši-ih
 31. iš-bat-si-ma i-na up-ri-i-ši⁸²
 32. ul-tú tmu[h-ḥi ^{g18}kussî] ʿi⁷-UD-x[x x]x -ʿši⁷
 33. iš-ba-si-ma [i-na ab]-ʿbu-ut-ti-šá⁷⁸³
 34. ʿma-la⁷ ra-ʿi[-mu-t]i-šú šá ʿlib!⁷-[bi]-šú!
 35. [i]n-na-⁷{an}-ad-ʿru-ma⁷ aḥḥi^{meš} ki-lal-l[a-a]n⁸⁴
 36. ʿana ma-a-a-li šit⁷-mu-riš i-ter-b[u]
 37. ʿI-en⁷ ūma^{ma} II-a ūma^{ma} ʿšal-lu-ma šar⁷-ʿarat ʿdEreš⁷-[ki-gal u dÈ]r-ra
 38. III-šá ūma^{ma} KI. MIN
 39. *IV-a ūma^{ma85} KI. MIN
 40. ʿV-šá ūma⁷[^{ma}] KI. MIN
 41. [VI-šá ūma^{ma}] KI. MIN
 42. [VII-u ūmu^{mu} ina] ka-šá-di-i
-
43. [dA-num pā-šú iḫuš-m]a iqabbi
 44. [a-na dKà-kà sukkalli-šu] a-mat izakkar^{ar}
 45. [dKà-kà ana eršet lā tāri l]u-uš-pur-ka
 46-7. [ana bīt dEreš-ki-ga]l a-ši-bat qí-rib dIr-kal-la

⁸⁰ Possibly so, according to collation.⁸¹ Very doubtful.⁸² Error for -šá.⁸³ On collation, the traces of the last sign appeared like šá.⁸⁴ cf. Gilg. VI, 156. Alternatively aḥa-meš ki-lal-la-an.⁸⁵ Text : V-šá. Emendation suggested by W. G. Lambert. See commentary.

7. On [your] departure from here
 8. a throne ; carry it with you.
 9. [.] carry it with you.
 10. [.] carry it with you.
 11. [.] carry it with you.
 12. [.] carry it with you.
 13. [.] carry it with you.
 14. [.] . . dwellings.
 15. [.] your breast.”
 16. [*Erra*] laid to his heart [*the words of Namtar*],
 17. [. . .] oiled his strap and slung his bow.
 18. *Nergal* [descended] the long stairway [of heav]en.
 19. On his arrival at the gate of Ereshkigal,
 20. “ Porter, open the gate [for me] ! ” (he said).
 21. The porter of the gate hung up [his throne at] the gate and
 22. did not allow (him) to take [it].
 22. The second (porter) of the gate did the same to his [. . . .]
 23. The third (porter) [of the gate] did the same to his [. . . .]
 24. The fourth (porter) [of the gate] did the same to his [. . . .]
 25. The fifth (porter) [of the gate] did the same to his [. . . .]
 26. [The sixth (porter) of the gate] did the same to his [. . . .]
 27. [The seventh (porter) of the gate] did the same to his [. . . .]
 29. He entered her spacious courtyard,
 30. went up to her and laughed.
 31. He seized her by her coiffure,
 32. and pulled her from off [her throne.]
 33. He seized her [by] her tresses,
 34. for the love that was in his heart.
 35. The brother and sister embraced,⁸⁶
 36. passionately they entered the bed.
 37. One day, a second day, they lay, the queen [*Ereshkigal and Er*]ra ;
 38. a third day they lay, the queen *Ereshkigal and Erra*,
 39. a fourth day they lay, the queen *Ereshkigal and Erra*,
 40. a fifth [day] they lay, the queen *Ereshkigal and Erra*,
 41. [a sixth day] they lay, the queen *Ereshkigal and Erra*.
 42. [When the seventh day] arrived,
 43. [*Anu* opened his mouth] to speak
 44. [and] said [to *Kaka*, his minister] :
 45. [“ *Kaka*,] I will send you [to the *Land of No Return*,]
 46-7. [to the house of Ereshkigal] who dwells in Irkalla,

⁸⁶ Or : the pair embraced each other.

48. [um-ma ilu šá-a-šú] šá áš- {šú} -pu-rak-ki
 49. [li-šib it-ti-ki a-na ūmē]^{me} da-ru-u-tú
 50. [.] e-la-a-ti
 51. [. ša]p-la-a-ti
 52.]i-ma 53.]x

Room for about twelve lines to end of tablet, but this may have included a colophon.

NOTES

- I 1'. There is no external evidence, such as curvature, that this is the first line of the text; but the remains of the first four lines look very much like the beginning of a hymnal introduction, such as those to the Myth of Zû (*RA.* LI, 107), *Ludlul bēl nēmeqi* (*Orientalia* 28, 362), and perhaps the Epic of Gilgamesh (*ZA.* XLII, 93, n. 1).
- I 10'. *an-nu-ú-na*, for *an-nu-ú-ni* "our sins", would be a dialect form of a type which is common in the Sultantepe texts; see e.g. *Afo.* XVII, 354, n. 1, and Lambert in *RA.* LIII, 125.
- I 19'. For the restoration suggested, cf. Schollmeyer, *Šamaš*, no. 7, 6 (= *OECT.* VI, 11): *da-la-at ša-me-e lik-ru-ba-a-kum*, and Descent of Ishtar 40: *ir-bi be-el-ti GÜ.DU₈.A.KI li-riš-ki*.
- I 32', 34'. *ina šatti-ki, ina arhi-ni*. This looks like an allusion to the religious calendar, but its significance is not apparent.
- I 33'. *ni-nu-ma ul šá a-ra-di*. The Amarna tablet has here *ni-i-nu ú-lu nu-[u]r-ra-da-ak-ki*, in which *ú-lu* is now seen to be a mistake for *ul*. The idea that the *dei superi* were allowed to visit Ereshkigal regularly (Oppenheim in *Orientalia* 19, 148) is therefore based on a misapprehension.
- I 41'. I am indebted to Rev. W. L. Moran, of the Pontifical Biblical Institute, for drawing my attention to the juxtaposition of Nammu and Nanshe in *Šurpu* viii, 19, and for suggesting that ^a*Na-áš* may therefore be a phonetic writing for Nanshe. Another reference for this pair of deities is *BE.* I, 83 rev. 14-15 (Lambert).
- I 40'-50'. An elaboration of the common epistolary formula, on which see Landsberger in *MAOG.* IV, 300.
- II 4'. *kan-su*. In the Amarna version Nergal fails to stand up (30: *i-la ša i-na pa-ni-ka la it-bu-u*), but the traces in ll. 4 and 8 cannot be restored as parts of *tebû* and the gods unquestionably kneel in iii, 26. Does this indicate a change in social customs between the two periods?
- II 6'. On *paršu* as "authority" see B. Landsberger in *AKF.* II, 66.
- II 9'. *aš-ša-naš-rak-kam-ma*. The translation of *šapāru* as "roll" the eyes is conventional; the exact motion indicated is uncertain, see *AS.* IV, 79. In *Ludlul* I, 81, also it is evidently equivalent to "winking" and this may in fact be its true meaning.
- II 10'. [*te-e*]r-ra-a-ta for *tirāta* would be an instance of vowel length indicated by a doubled consonant, to be added to those cited by Lambert in *RA.* LIII, 125.
- II 11'. The last word could be restored as *ri-^re^r-[ši-k]a* "your head".
- II 22'. For *šapāru* "to govern", cf. Lambert, *Babylonian Wisdom Literature* (forthcoming) 155, IM 53946 obv. 5; if this reading is correct, Ea's plan may be to bring about the installation of Nergal as king of the Underworld. But the lines that follow suggest rather that he wishes to make sure that Nergal is able to return from the Underworld, i.e. to save his life (*zi-ti*?). Despite repeated collation, I have not succeeded in deciphering this line.

48. [to say : ' *That god*] whom I sent to you,
 49. [*shall dwell with you* for] eternity.
 50. [.....] the upper world,
 51. [.....] the lower world.
 52-3. (Traces only.)

Probably less than twelve lines missing to end of poem.

- II 25' ff. cf. Gilgamesh X, 41 ff. In the present passage ll. 32'-34' seem to show that three objects are fashioned. These must be enumerated in ll. 27' and 30' and this in turn requires a reference to three trees in ll. 26' and 29'. Otherwise the object of the verb *ḥaṣābu* in 27' and 30' would naturally be read as another tree, the verb being known only in the sense "to cut or break off (branches)" (*CAD.*). Perhaps the D theme of this verb, which is otherwise unattested, meant "to pare off shavings (intensively)", i.e. "to carve" (Lambert).
- II 31'. The mutilation of this line renders the purpose of the operation obscure. Ningishzida appears in mythology as the gatekeeper of heaven, together with Tammuz (myth of Adapa, *ANET.* 101), but the name of Tammuz cannot be read here and the natural reading [^dA]-*nim* seems out of place.
- II 32'-34'. *ú-taq-qí*, from *eqú* "to daub, paint"; cf. *te-qí-i-šu* "paint it", parallel to *zu-úh-ḥi-in* "adorn", *MSL.* IV, 114, 16, quoted in *CAD.* "E", 252 (which otherwise has only medical passages). A derivation from (*w*)*aqú* "to pay attention" makes no sense.
- II 39' ff. The general sense of this passage is clear, but the text seems to be corrupt. The repeated *e ta-mir* must be from (*w*)*áru* "to go", as in *Šurpu* ii, 77, *im-i-ru*, for which Miss Reiner suggests the meaning "he went ahead", and *STT.* I, 16, i, 26, *i'-mi-ri* (var. *ir-ru*); possibly to be taken as an auxiliary verb, like Hittite *uwa-* and *pā-* (Friedrich, *Heth. Elementarbuch* I, § 315).⁸⁷ ll. 40 and 44 are then straightforward. The difficulty lies in the fact that in ll. 41' and 43' the negative before the last verb is clearly *ul*, not *e*, and the verb in l. 41' is third person. This can only be explained as contamination with the parallel passage iii, 54 ff., where the indicative with *ul* is in place and where there is in fact a similar difficulty (v. ad loc.), though it is hard to see how this could occur.
- II 46'. *lu-ub-bu-ši* [x]-*mu-šu*: hardly *lubuši mušu* "night garments", for no such garments were worn in the ancient world.
- II 47'. *uš-ta-bar-rak-ka* should be from *šutabrú* "to endure, continue"; see von Soden, *Akkadisches Handwörterbuch*, Lieferung 2, 123, s.v. *berú(m)* II. No such form from *barú* "to see" is attested, yet this seems to be the sense required by the context, unless the passage has been misunderstood.
- III 7'. *su-um-me* for *summati*: cf. *Ludlul* I, 107, and note, *AS.* IV, 80.
- III 13'. For the reading *ú-a-ad-[du-ka]* in Gilg. XII, 15, see Kramer, *JAOS.* LXIV, 21, n. 105, and *ANET.* 97, n. 238.
- III 54' ff. Here we have, as we should expect, the pronoun *-šu* in *na-šu-niš-šu* (where the corresponding passage has *na-ši-ka*) and indicatives with *ul* (*ul e-kul*, *ul [iš]-ti*), but the vetitive *e ta-mir* can only be explained here by contamination.

⁸⁷ A similar use of this verb is found in the Counsels of Wisdom: *ina puḥri e ta'-ir ú-zu-uz-za* "do not (rashly) go and stand in the assembly" (Lambert, op. cit., p. 100, l. 31), though here the infinitive is used instead of a second vetitive.

- IV 9'. For *aḥḥū* used of brothers and sisters together, see Driver and Miles, *Babylonian Laws*, I, p. 340.
- IV 16'. *ar-ki-šu* : cf. *ar-ki* ^a*Iš-tar*, Descent of Ishtar obv. 76, in a similar context.
- IV 17'. *muš-ri-in-ni* : on such shortened forms see Lambert in *RA*, LIII, 126.
- IV 18'. Reading 1.DIB (*askuppātu*), Lambert would compare Gilg. II, ii, 50, which he has found on collation to read ^a*sip*[-*pu*] *ir-ū-bu* (see *ZA*, LIII, 223).
- IV 31'-32'. Whether or not the verb in 31 is correctly restored, the two halves of this couplet must stand in the relation of cause and effect. Namtar in v, 38, sees only the observable effect; Ereshkigal, with her greater wisdom, understands the cause also (v, 40-41). By means of the spring water Ea presumably casts a magic spell on Nergal, in order to make him unrecognisable.
- qu-bu-ḥu* : see *CAD*, s.v. *gubbuḥu* ("G", 117-18) and references there cited. The authors of *CAD*. have distinguished two words; but in the present context of physical defects—and therefore in the parallel passage (*gu-bu-uḥ*) of the Amarna version—the adjective, for which the meaning "bald" is practically certain, is clearly in place. In the only other passage cited for the second word (*Afo*, XI, Pl. II, rev. 10) the reading is in doubt.
- sundur* is a defect referring to the eyes or the mouth (Labat, *TDP*, 142, 3, with note 249); perhaps literally "twisted sideways", hence cross-eyed.
- pussul* : according to the *šumma izbu* commentary, 415-16, *pasālu* = *kuppulu* "lame"; cf. Holma, *Personnamen der Form quttulu* 35.
- IV 39a ff. Evidently a similar spell is cast by Ereshkigal in order to detain Nergal on his return to the Underworld.
- IV 42'. There are seven children of Enmesharra, of whom four are female (Thureau-Dangin in *RA*, XVI, 150 ff., and J. Lewy in *Hebrew Union College Annual* XVII, 26), but the allusion here to two daughters is obscure, as is the identity of the first deity mentioned. There are two daughters of Anu, who draw water, mentioned in an incantation against eye-sickness (Thompson, *AMT*, 10, 1, iii, 19 = *JNES*, XIV, 16, and XVII, 57); but these mythological projections of the two eyes (separated by a wall!) would be out of place here, in an Underworld context. Their function is very different from that of the well-known *mārat Anim*—Lamaštu—whose ideogram is suggested above as a possible reading of the first divine name in the line. But if this reading is correct (there is not room for ^a*A-nim* ^a*Dī* M.ME), what is the relation of Lamaštu to ^a*En-me-ḥi*? The latter (however read) can hardly be another daughter of Anu. The context suggests that these deities are the parents of the two girls; but there is no evidence that Lamaštu was married to Enmesharra.
- IV 54', 56'. In favour of the reading *it-ta-tal-kan-ni* are the late Assyrian forms *i-ta-ta-ku-ū-ni* and *i-ta-ta-ka*, which appear to be from *alāku* I. 2 (Saggs in *Iraq* XXI, 171, note on line 7').
- V 3'. *mi-lu-lu* : on the meaning and etymology of this word see now B. Landsberger in *WZKM*, LVI, 1960 (*Festschrift Duda*), 119-120, note 30.
- V 5', 6'. *taš-[pu]-ra-na-niš-ma*, *šup-pu-ra-na-šu-ma*; it is assumed that the ventive + *šu* is intended (as in iii, 54' ff., *na-šu-niš-šu*) rather than the 1 pl. suffix *-naši* (as in iv, 48', *il-li-ka-na-ši*); *-na* for *-ni* in the ventive would be a further example of the fondness of the Sultantepe scribes for the vowel *a* (cf. note on i, 10' above).
- V 7'. *musukku*, fem. *musukkatu*, denotes a person under a sexual taboo; see Jacobsen in *JNES*, V (1946), 133, and in *Intellectual Adventure of Ancient Man* (1946), 153. It is a loan-word from Sum. *usug* (on which see Falkenstein, *Grammatik der Sprache Gudeas* I, 34) and appears also in the form *ū-suk-ku* (*CT*, XIX, 26, 17, rendered by Meissner, *BAW*, II, 9, "hierodule"), in a context showing that the masc. form can be used also of females.

Otherwise the fem. form is used in late texts (*KAR.* 300, rev. 6, *CT.* XXIII, 3, 10, Thompson, *AMT.* 10, 1, iii, 2-3). Enlil is *mu-su-uk-kum* (formerly read *mu-su-ug-qu*) after committing rape (see Jacobsen, loc. cit., and previously *PSBA.* 1911, 87, *JRAS.* 1919, 191, and *RA.* XIX, 72) and the present context is somewhat similar. Elsewhere the *musukkatu* is usually held to be a menstruating woman. The milk of a ^{sa}ú-zug occurs frequently in medical texts (Thompson, *AMT.* 8, 1, 22; 12, 3, 5; 13, 2, 9; 13, 6, 13; 57, 10, 5), presumably in this sense.

ul e-^rbek^r. This reading, interpreted as a somewhat barbarous spelling of *ebbēk(u)* "I am pure", is adopted with all reserve, as giving the best sense. *e-piq* could only be stative ("is solid"); a verb *pāqu* (Holma, *Personennamen der Form* quttulu, 81-2) "to be tight, narrow" seems highly questionable; *e-siq* would mean "I have drawn".

V 33'. [*ilāni*]^{meš} *ša māti*: cf. *ilāni*^{meš} *mātāte*^{meš}, *KAR.* 324, 3 (Lambert, *Babylonian Wisdom Literature* 162).

V 48'. ^rtar-gi^r-ge-ti-ka. The reading is uncertain; but there is a *targigu* "offender, opponent", and *targigtum*, pl. *targigēti* "offence" would be a recognised formation from the same root.

V 54'. cf. Aššurnāširpal's inscription, *Iraq* XIV, 35, 152.

VI 2. *a-ša-al-la-ka*, for *ušallakka*: this type of error is also characteristic of the Sultantepe tablets; cf. *AS.* VI, 162, note on *i-maš-šir* (142), also *i-šar-di-šu*, *STT.* 3, obv. 59.

a-dak-ka: cf. Ereshkigal's words in the Amarna version (l. 27): *lu-ú-du-uk-šu* "I will kill him". Nergal as a permanent resident of the Underworld becomes a "dead god": cf. *dingiruggé*, *En. el.* IV, 120, and *ilāni mītūti*, ibid. VI, 154 (with notes by Oppenheim, *Orientalia* XVI, 229, and Heidel, *The Babylonian Genesis* 41, n. 89).

Is it a coincidence that in the final paragraph of the "Dialogue of Pessimism" (Langdon, *Babylonian Wisdom*, 80) the words *a-dak-ka* and *ú-šal-lak-ka* occur in the same line?

VI 8. A word meaning "I will give you" is apparently required; one might consider *áš-*ruk*, but the fem. suffix *-ki-na* is inexplicable. It seems that six (seven?) objects are given to Erra only to be taken from him by the porters of the seven gates.

VI 17. For the verb *talālu* see von Soden in *Orientalia* XXII (1953), 260 ff.

VI 22-28. The omission of *atú* is curious; *ša bābi* "the one of the gate" appears to be used as a quasi-substantive.

VI 30. *i^r-i-ir-ši*: cf. K. 3505, 14 (Ebeling, *Handerhebung* 94), *a-a-u ilu . . . i-ir-ru ka-a-ša* "What god . . . goes against you?"

VI 31. On *upru*, a hair-style, see Falkenstein, *LKTU.* 6, n. 2, and Lambert in *Journal of Semitic Studies*, IV, 14.

VI 32. This line must somehow correspond to ll. 78-9 of the Amarna version: *ú-qí-id-di-da-aš-ši-im-ma iš-tu ku-us-si-i a-na ga-a-ag-ga-ri*.

VI 37-42. If we restore two days in every line, as in 37, the unlikely total of eleven days is reached. The epic style requires a series of either seven (*passim*) or twelve (e.g. Gilgamesh III, vi, 7-12, IX, iv, 47-v, 46, X, iv, 1-7).