

## **“Inanna’s Descent to the Netherworld”:**

### **A centennial survey of scholarship, artifacts, and translations**



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HIST408Q: Death and Burial Rituals in the Ancient World

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The following history seminar paper was submitted to Dr. Matthew J. Suriano as part of a course on *Death and Burial Rituals in the Ancient World* (HIST 408Q) on May 22, 2019, to satisfy the requirements for a Bachelor of Arts diploma in History—with a concentration in religious studies—from the University of Maryland, College Park (College Park, MD).

## Abstract

An ancient Sumerian proverb may be read as “good fortune [is embedded in] organisation and wisdom.”<sup>1</sup> The present centennial survey is solely about organizing the last one hundred years of scholarship for a Sumerian afterlife myth named “Inanna’s Descent to the Netherworld.” The initial discovery of artifacts with snippets of the myth can be dated to as early as 1889. English translations of the myth emerged around 1920 and were followed by numerous archaeological expeditions and subsequent translation efforts. Such efforts, by many scholars and institutions, resulted in an authoritative 2001 version of the myth published by the University of Oxford via the Electronic Text Corpus of Sumerian Literature (ETCSL). The 2001 version, titled “Inana’s descent to the nether world” is 412 lines long and utilizes over fifty cuneiform artifacts (sources). The impact of this work has been mainstream and interdisciplinary interest in Inanna, the myth, and her role in antiquity. However, the technical nature of studying ancient Sumer may alienate a broader audience. The survey contained herein attempts to organize and explain the key people, concepts, events, and institutions involved with the discovery of “Inanna’s Descent.” Non-technical readers can expect to learn how and why we arrived at the likely complete translation we have today. Light background information and a chronology of scholarly work are followed by a brief discussion on promising areas of further research. The appendix contains a comprehensive catalog of referenced artifact data.

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1. Jeremy A. Black and Graham E. Cunningham, “Proverbs: Collection 1,” The Electronic Text Corpus of Sumerian Literature (ETCSL), *University of Oxford (1998-2003)*, last modified June 13, 2002, <http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/proverbs/t.6.1.01.html>. [Segment A, No. 25]

For Huey



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## Introduction

Since the initial clay tablet fragments were first translated in 1914, the Sumerian “Inanna’s Descent to the Netherworld” (hereafter referred to as ID) myth has captured the attention and imagination of scholars, students, and the general public.<sup>2</sup> While the more recent Assyrian account of “The Descent of Ishtar” is dated to ca. 1100 BCE, scholars have agreed that the Sumerian version is older.<sup>3</sup> ID is almost one thousand years older based on current date estimates of related artifacts—that is, it is loosely dated as belonging to the Old Babylonian period (ca. 1900 – 1600 BCE).<sup>4</sup> It is difficult to know the exact time period and origin of the myth because of how the related artifacts were discovered and processed by scholars, governments, and curators over its four thousand-plus year history. The most authoritative version of ID was published in 2001 by the contributors to the Electronic Text Corpus of Sumerian Literature (hereafter referred to as the ETCSL version), a collaborative project by the University of Oxford and other institutions.<sup>5</sup> While many prominent scholars have published other translations, the present survey will use the ETCSL version as its focus. As we will see, the ETCSL version relied on efforts from dozens of scholars and almost fifty separate artifacts in order to compile the total 412 lines of translated text it has today.<sup>6</sup>

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2. Various scholars spell the Sumerian deity’s name as “Inana” or “Inanna.” The ETCSL version uses the “Inana” form. For consistency, the present survey will solely utilize the “Inanna” form as well as the joined “netherworld” form instead of “nether world.”

3. William R. Sladek Jr., "Inanna's Descent to the Netherworld," Ann Arbor: University Microfilms, 1974, i.

4. “CDLI Literary Q000343 (Inanna’s Descent) Composite,” Cuneiform Digital Library Initiative (CDLI), *University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA)*, accessed May 18, 2019, [https://cdli.ucla.edu/search/search\\_results.php?CompositeNumber=Q000343](https://cdli.ucla.edu/search/search_results.php?CompositeNumber=Q000343). [All known artifacts with text related to this composition of ID are dated to the Old Babylonian period (ca. 1900 – 1600 BCE)]

5. Jeremy A. Black and Graham E. Cunningham, *Inana's descent to the nether world: translation*, ETCSL (University of Oxford), last modified July 9, 2001. <http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/section1/tr141.htm>.

6. Ibid. [The list of artifacts is at the bottom of the page]

ID can be briefly summarized as follows. Inanna, the Sumerian deity, sets her mind on going to the netherworld and abandons various cities that are represented by other deities. She takes with her the seven divine powers (the “me”), as represented by articles of clothing, jewelry, makeup, and objects. Her travel companion, Nincubura, accompanies her during the journey. Inanna gives precise instructions to her companion to plead on her behalf if she does not return within three days. Upon reaching the netherworld, she informs the gatekeeper—Neti—that she has come to observe the funeral rites for her sister’s husband, Gugulana. Neti proceeds to ask Ereshkigal, who is Inanna’s sister (and the ruler of the netherworld), whether Inanna can come in. Ereshkigal instructs Neti to allow Inanna to enter and Inanna proceeds through seven gates. At each gate, one item she brought (including her clothing) is removed until she is naked. Upon reaching the throne, she is seemingly killed, and her corpse is hung on a metal hook. After three days, Nincubura follows the instructions provided and travels to various temples to plead for Inanna’s life. In agreeing to help Inanna, the god Enki devises a plan to bring her back to life and is successful. As Inanna ascends back up from the netherworld, she is accompanied by two demon-like figures that insist on bringing a different person back in her place. Inanna discovers her husband, Dumuzi, and offers him in her place, ending the poem.

### *Modern Relevance*

The plot summary of ID may provide us with one of the earliest recorded descriptions of the afterlife. While the difficulty of proper dating methods cannot be stressed enough, scholars can generally attribute time periods based on the Sumerian language that was used and the location of the cities that were referenced. Whatever the exact origin date of ID was, scholars recognize that ancient Sumer was one of the earliest civilizations on our planet. Their initial writing system, called cuneiform, was thus a means toward some of the world’s first pieces of literature. We can reasonably deduce that writing in the Sumerian language constitutes some of

the earliest literary works of mankind—the gravity of this statement needs no further explanation as to its importance for historians studying death in the ancient world.

Inanna, ID, and mythology have attracted interest from other disciplines as well as mainstream culture. Within psychology, feminist theory interpretations have been made of ID and used in clinical counseling settings for therapy.<sup>7</sup> For many years, sociologists have used ancient history as a window to peer through to see why and how society is the way it is today. A modest number of general Sumerian references are made in the Judeo-Christian Bible,<sup>8</sup> with scholars like Joseph Reider and others speculating that Ishtar was a consistent mention in the Hebrew texts.<sup>9</sup> The growing field of psychohistory is also anxiously awaiting newly translated literary texts in order to assess the mentality of authors, listeners, and characters, particularly as they relate to power relations between men and women in antiquity.<sup>10</sup> While the present survey cannot pass judgment or offer analysis on the validity of these interpretations or uses, it is clear that there is interdisciplinary interest in the Sumerian deity named Inanna, later known as Ishtar.

Mythology, and particularly ID, have also made their way into mainstream culture, sometimes without any reference to formal scholarship whatever. For example, Inanna and her myth are readily utilized in the context of modern cultural issues like gender identity and women's rights. Evidence of this is present in undergraduate scholarship<sup>11</sup> as well as more public

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7. Florence Vandendorpe, "When Myth Shows What the Mind Does Not Reach," *Storytelling, Self, Society* 7, no. 2 (August - May 2011): 91.

8. Morris Jastrow Jr., "Sumerian Myths of Beginnings," *The American Journal of Semitic Languages and Literatures* 33, no. 2 (1917): 91-144. [The Sumerian city of Uruk is mentioned as Erech in Genesis 10:10 KJV]

9. Joseph Reider, "A New Ishtar Epithet in the Bible," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 8, no. 2 (1949): 104.

10. Psychohistory is the psychological study of historical people, places, events, and literature. It is not to be understood as a historical sub-field within Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic school of thought.

11. Kimberly Torres, "Resurrecting Inanna: Lament, Gender, Transgression" (Undergraduate honors thesis, University of Central Florida, 2012), 31-48.

friendly news websites, among others.<sup>12</sup> Within the sphere of cinema, too, we time and time again see the subtle influence of ancient mythology—that is, behind the veil of special effects, fun music, and action-filled plots are the literary remains of cultures that have been long forgotten. As of the writing of this paragraph, the most popular movie in America is *Avengers: Endgame*, featuring an archvillain named Thanos who kills half the universe.<sup>13</sup> Thanos, an oddly similar name to *Thanatos* (Θάνατος), the Greek deity associated with death and dying, is another example of modern cinema perhaps leaning on mythology.<sup>14</sup> The entirety of the current paragraph intentionally digressed from authoritative scholarly references (with admittedly cherry-picked *straw man* examples without peer review) to illustrate a broader cultural trend that is most apparent. There is no question about the interdisciplinary interest and modern sociocultural importance of mythology like ID—especially for the general public.

#### *Addressing the Needs of a Broader Audience*

A major problem the present survey will hopefully address is the steep learning curve the public and other scholars face when trying to investigate scholarship related to ID. In considering the intimidating list of cuneiform artifacts (sources, sometimes called witnesses) used for ID in the ETCSL version, we can only imagine how a less trained scholar or reader may feel. Upon inspecting the fifty listed artifacts,<sup>15</sup> one is immediately arrested by the sheer complexity of the

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12. Jessilyn Lancaster, “Gender Identity Issues Trace Back to Pagan Goddess Described in the Bible,” *Charisma News*, last modified July 26, 2017, <https://www.charismanews.com/opinion/66500-gender-identity-issues-trace-back-to-pagan-goddess-described-in-the-bible>.

13. “Weekend Box Office April 26-28, 2019,” *Box Office Mojo*, last modified May 21, 2019, <https://www.boxofficemojo.com/weekend/chart/?view=&yr=2019&wknd=17&p=.htm>.

14. Hesiod, *Theogony; Works and Days*; Shield, trans. Apostolos N. Athanassakis (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983), 42. [Thanatos is said to be born of Nyx and simply called the son of night and brother of sleep in lines 211 and 756]

15. As of May 5, 2019, the ETCSL page listed forty-seven utilized artifacts—however, careful reconciliation and a tabular reconstruction of line numbers showed that an additional 3-5 artifacts were likely used. These additional artifacts will be included in the present survey.

acronyms, publication annotation schemes, outdated resources, and jargon (like *sigla*).<sup>16</sup> To make sense of a single artifact, say CBS 9800, for example, one must possess at least basic proprietary technical knowledge in archaeology, linguistics, Sumerian studies, cuneiform studies, and several other fields. Just locating and assigning artifacts to translations and using the tools and websites available are daunting—headache envelops the reader like a garment. Even with having the necessary technical skills, readers are likely unprepared for the further complexities related to prior scholarship, dissociated cultural timelines, and other inherent obscurities present within any domain of ancient studies.

The primary purpose of this survey is to belatedly pay tribute to a century of scholarship on ID by organizing the accomplishments for a broader audience. Most of the scholars who contributed many years of their lives to ID are no longer with us. The present work will attempt to organize their contributions systematically and chronologically for a reader who is wholly unfamiliar with the material but wishes to engage more rigorously. My humble contribution is, therefore, solely as a compiler of such efforts—that is, I have excluded my own interpretations and analysis as much as possible. The following pages will hopefully provide an accurate and truthful survey of all major individuals, artifacts, resources, citations, and milestones in the last one hundred years of scholarship for ID.

### *Scope and Contents*

The main text of the present survey is primarily intended to be a basic field guide for individuals and researchers without proprietary training in the fields traditionally required for in-depth scholarship. The background broadly explains the historical context of Sumer, Inanna, cuneiform, and the process of artifact publication. The scholarship chronology covers the main

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16. Sigla (plural of siglum) is when a letter like “A” is used to denote a complete work. Scholars will often times include a full page of abbreviations to quickly reference the works or artifacts they reference.

contributions by individuals and institutions for ID from 1889 to the present day. The future of ID and conclusion speculate on interesting areas of future research. The appendices provide what will hopefully be useful artifact, translation, and publication information for the entire 412 lines of ID. The visualizations and artifact catalog data tables in the appendices may be particularly useful to seasoned researchers with formal training.

### **Background**

ID represents an immensely important literary composition pertaining to a significant deity in one of the world's oldest civilizations—Sumer. Sumer was an ancient civilization located in the southern region of modern-day Iraq, situated between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. The Zagros Mountains are located to the north of the settlement area. This region is in the Middle East and referred to as the fertile crescent, or Mesopotamia.<sup>17</sup> Evidence suggests that long-term settlement and farming were practiced in Mesopotamia by circa 4500 BCE.<sup>18</sup> By ca. 1900 BCE, the Sumerian people were likely diffused into northern Akkadian influence due to prolonged regional conflict.<sup>19</sup> The time period from 4500 BCE to 1900 BCE is commonly known as the Chalcolithic period, or Copper Age, and was followed by the Bronze Age. The duration of the Sumerian empire has also been labeled as the Uruk period, and some notable city settlements included Uruk, Ur, Eridu, Nippur, Lagash, and Kish.<sup>20</sup>

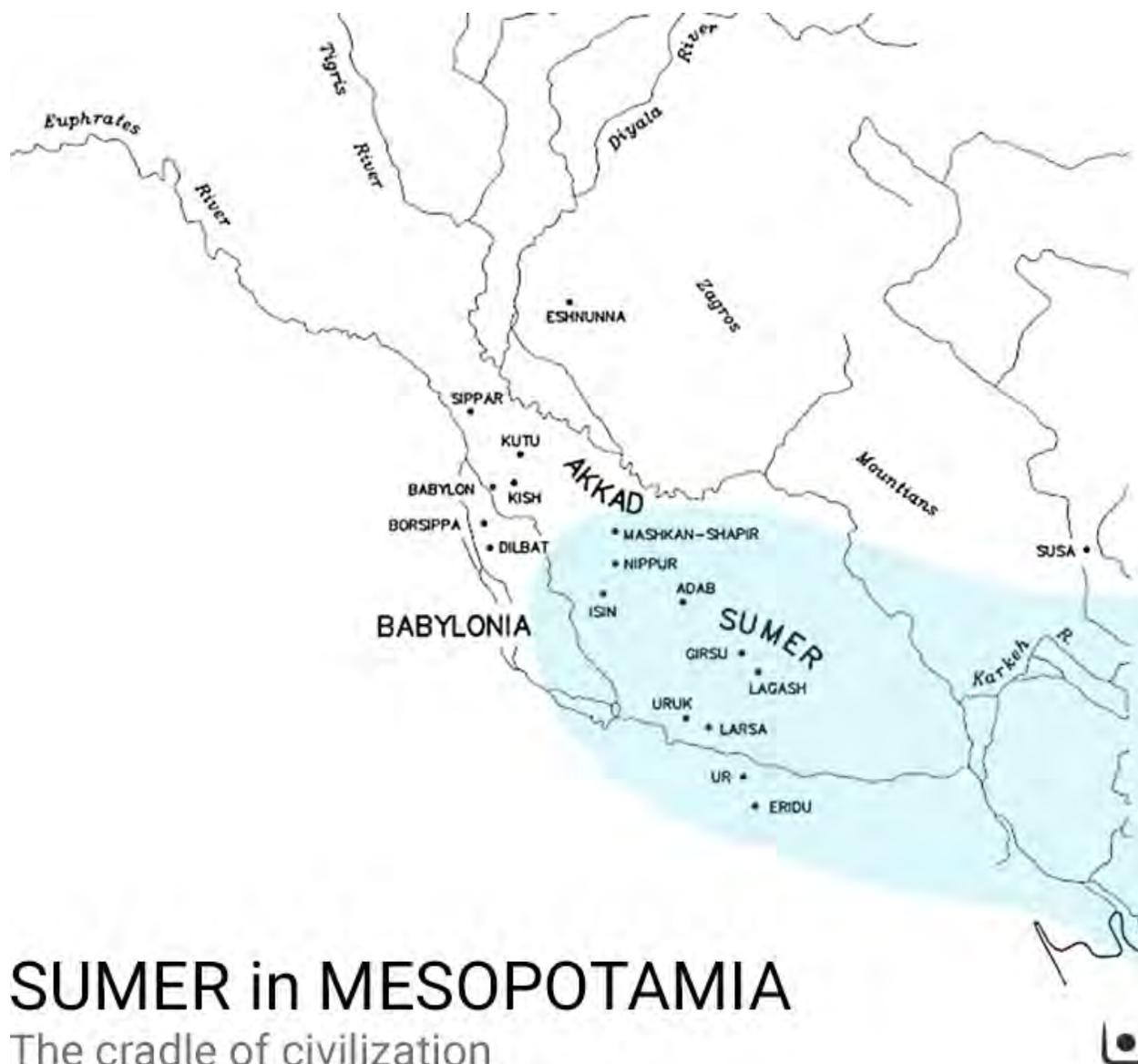
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17. James Henry Breasted, *Ancient Times: A History of the Early World* (Boston: Ginn and Company, 1916), 100-1.

18. Charles Keith Maisels, *The Near East: Archaeology in the "Cradle of Civilization"* (New York: Routledge, 1993), 140.

19. Samuel Noah Kramer, *In the World of Sumer: An Autobiography* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1988), 97-140.

20. Jean-Jacques Glassner and Donald M. Herron, *The Invention of Cuneiform: Writing in Sumer* (Baltimore: JHU Press, 2003), 31-2.



# SUMER in MESOPOTAMIA

## The cradle of civilization

Figure 1.1. SUMER in MESOPOTAMIA. Digital Illustration by OMNIKA Foundation. “Inanna’s Descent Myth & Summary,” *OMNIKA: Digital Library of Mythology* (OMNIKA Foundation), May 3, 2019, <https://omnika.conscious.ai/myths/inanna-descent>.

Finally, it is worth noting that the name Mesopotamia originates from the Greek word *Μεσοποταμία*, which means “land between rivers.” It was in this region that civilization as we know it came to be—likely as a consequent of the world’s first cities.

### *Inanna*

Inanna had a special place in Sumerian history and was perhaps considered the most beloved deity of her time.<sup>21</sup> Cities such as ancient Nippur and Ur all had temples erected and dedicated to Inanna, along with artwork in the forms of vases, masks, and cylinder seals.<sup>22</sup>



Figure 1.2. *Cylinder seal VA 243*. Museum artifact published by Anton Moortgat, “West Asian Cylinder Seals,” *Vorderasiatische Rollsiegel* (1940): 101. [The figure to the far left may depict Inanna]

While scholars do not always agree with one another when it comes to identifying deities, certain symbolic indicators do give helpful clues. For example, Inanna was often associated with the symbol of an eight-pointed star.<sup>23</sup> The ambiguity of precise symbolic identification must be stressed because both Sumerian and Akkadian cultures featured Inanna prominently.

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21. Samuel Noah Kramer and Diane Wolkstein, *Inanna: Queen of Heaven and Earth: Her Stories and Hymns from Sumer* (New York: Harper & Row, 1983), xiii.

22. Stuart L. Harris, “Decipherment of Sumerian Cylinder Seal VA-243,” *Academia*, last modified July 2018, [https://www.academia.edu/37152695/Decipherment\\_of\\_Sumerian\\_cylinder\\_seal\\_VA-243](https://www.academia.edu/37152695/Decipherment_of_Sumerian_cylinder_seal_VA-243).

23. Jeremy Black and Anthony Green, *Gods, Demons, and Symbols of Ancient Mesopotamia: An Illustrated Dictionary* (London: British Museum Press, 1992), 169. [This symbol also represented Ishtar]

Like the seal, the *Mask of Warka*, pictured below, featuring the *Lady of Uruk*, may be Inanna.



Figure 1.3. *Mask of Warka* (3200–3000 BCE). Alabaster carving of the *Lady of Uruk*. Photograph by Osama S. M. Amin, uploaded May 10, 2019. Wikimedia Commons (Baghdad: National Museum of Iraq). [Pictured on title page]

The *Mask of Warka* is an alabaster carving that seemingly features a female head with thin lips, broad and connected eyebrows, a chipped nose, as well as a pair of fierce, wide eyes. Even if it was not carved after Inanna's likeness, it is still regal and divine in both posture and tone.



Warka Vase

Figure 1.4. *Warka Vase*. Lost Treasures from Iraq, Iraq Museum Database, last modified April 14, 2008, <http://oi-archive.uchicago.edu/OI/IRAQ/dbfiles/objects/14.htm>.

Another related artifact at the Iraq Museum is the *Warka Vase*. The vase seems to picture lines of naked men giving offerings to what appears to be Inanna (in the middle at the top). The double staffs at her side have been cited as indicators of this deity.<sup>24</sup> Scholars have attempted to decipher Inanna's family tree with respect to other Sumerian deities without consistent agreement. Samuel

24. Stuart Harris, *Cylinder*.

N. Kramer depicted Inanna as the Queen of Heaven and Earth, birthed by the moon god Nanna and moon goddess Ningal, and laterally related to the sky god An and water goddess Nammu.<sup>25</sup>

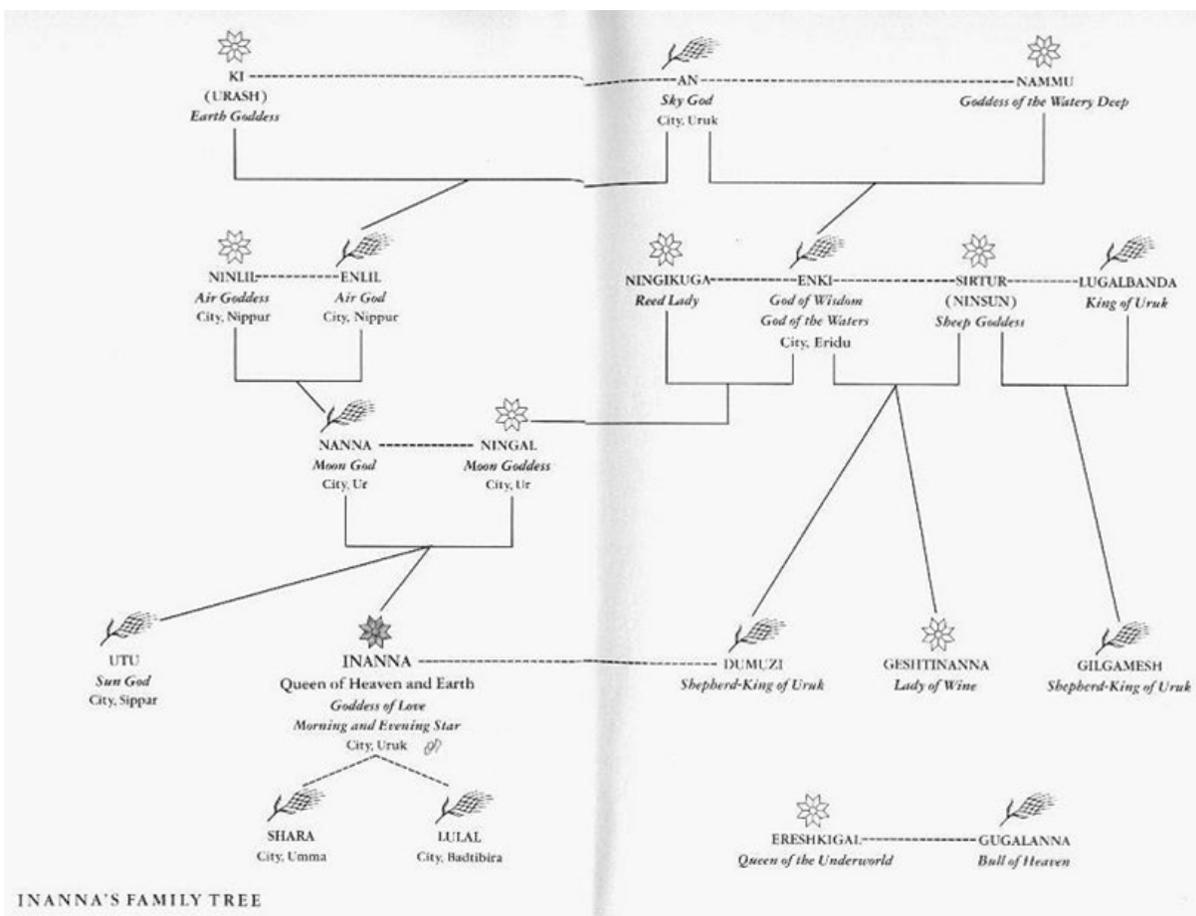


Figure 1.5. Inanna's Family Tree. Artwork by Elizabeth Williams-Forte. Samuel N. Kramer and Diane Wolkstein, *Inanna: Queen of Heaven: Hymns from Sumer* (New York: Harper & Row, 1983): x-xi.

As shown in Kramer's 1983 publication, the family tree is both extended and symbolically represented by animals, cities, and celestial bodies. The exact nature of these relationships differs by the time period, composite myth, parent culture, and scholar doing the interpretation.

### *Cuneiform*

Whatever the exact fourth-millennium origin date of cuneiform was, scholars recognize that ancient Sumer was one of the earliest civilizations on our planet with a surviving writing

25. Kramer and Wolkstein, *Inanna*, x-xi.

system. The Sumerian language may be considered a linguistic isolate—that is, there is no known parent language from which it is derived.<sup>26</sup> Cuneiform, literally meaning wedge-shaped, is a form of writing traditionally inscribed on soft clay tablets with a reed stylus.<sup>27</sup> The little wedge-shaped marks represent symbols and can be combined into coherent sentences read from left to right. Unlike wood or papyrus that can deteriorate, once the clay tablet cools off, the inscription can last for thousands of years. It is widely believed that cuneiform came from more primitive pictures representing symbols, which were then turned sideways and simplified to basic lines.

	STAR	HEAD OF A MAN	EAR OF WHEAT	MAN	KING (with his crown)	CIRCLE, SUN	RAIN	HOUSE	DRINKING POT	REED	FISH
LINE CHARACTER.											
OLD BABYLONIAN.											
ASSYRIAN.											
NEW BABYLONIAN.											

Figure 1.6. Table illustrating the simplification of cuneiform signs. Illustration by Ernest A. Budge and Sir Leonard W. King, *A Guide to the Babylonian and Assyrian Antiquities* (London: British Museum Trustees, 1922), 22.

A few minor but important details about cuneiform and language are worth mentioning.

First, cuneiform is a form of script, not a language. It is more appropriately labeled as an

26. Ibid., 115.

27. Geoffrey Sampson, *Writing Systems: A Linguistic Introduction* (Redwood City: Stanford University Press, 1985), 77.

alphabet. Second, it is important to distinguish between Sumerian, Akkadian, Assyrian, and other related languages. While these civilizations were in close physical and cultural proximity (overlapping and diffusing eventually) to one another, the languages were *not* one and the same.<sup>28</sup> Third, writing systems, alphabets, and display forms are also different from language, grammar, and usage. While the Akkadian language may have used the cuneiform script, its language was different from Sumerian.<sup>29</sup> Finally, while cuneiform script usage may date back to as early as 9,000 BCE, most artifacts before the fourth-millennium BCE represent systems of accounting or record keeping.<sup>30</sup> Almost 95 percent of all Sumerian cuneiform artifacts fall into this former category, and all known literary works like ID are likely less than six thousand years old.<sup>31</sup> While much more can be said about the differences between script, language, and the cultures of the ancient Near East, existing scholarship has covered these topics extensively.

#### *Clay to Composition*

The publication of a coherent and readable English translation like the ETCSL version is not a linear path with a small number of scholars doing the work start-to-finish. Institutions like museums, universities, and governments must secure funding from their stakeholders for archaeological expeditions into geographical areas of interest. Except for tasteless exceptions like war and plunder, these institutions must acquire permits and negotiate arrangements with local governments (and sometimes local peoples) to secure permission for digging in the ground. Having met these requirements, institutions then send their able and qualified associates into the *field* to coordinate the work of archaeology. Discovered artifacts may be documented at that

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28. Andrew George, "Babylonian and Assyrian: A History of Akkadian," in *Languages of Iraq, Ancient and Modern*, ed. J.N. Postgate (London: British School of Archaeology in Iraq, 2007): 37-8.

29. Akkadian was a Semitic language while Sumerian was not, among other differences.

30. Kramer and Wolkstein, *Inanna*, 116-124.

31. *Ibid.*

time, or they may be boxed and shipped to the institution that secured ownership rights during prior negotiations.

Once relocated, the long process of restoring and publishing artifact findings takes place. Restoration is oftentimes required because the artifacts may be fragmented, weathered, or otherwise destroyed. Cataloging usually takes place in some form or another, hence why we will read artifact names like CBS 9800 and YBC 4621. The cataloging systems differ by institution and will likely have little to no association with the contents of the artifact.<sup>32</sup> Initial publication may take place whereby photos or sketches of the symbols are made available to other scholars or the general public. As is common with cuneiform script-based languages like Sumerian, the symbols need to be transliterated before they can be translated. Transliteration is “the method of mapping from one system of writing to another based on phonetic [pronunciation] similarity.”<sup>33</sup>

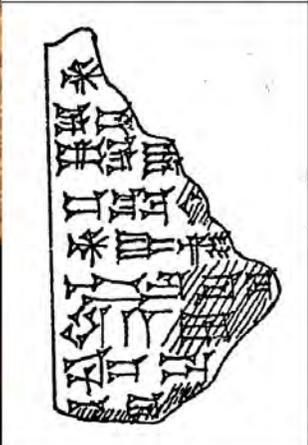
Photograph	Sketch (autograph)	Transliteration	Translation
		an-gal-ta	Set your mind
		<p><b>Collation</b> is matching the line numbers .</p> <p><b>Commentary</b> includes the author’s notes.</p>	

Figure 1.7. Artifact terminology table. Illustration composite by Boban Dedović; Artifact photo by CDLI (see artifact N 953); Artifact sketch by William R. Sladek, “Inanna’s Descent,” 288, Figure VIII. [The translation depicted is only for illustration purposes]

32. For example, artifacts that begin with “BM” signify British Museum while others like “Ni” may signify that they were discovered in Nippur. YBC means Yale Babylonian Collection and CBS means Collection of the Babylonian Section. None of the artifacts related to ID have names related to the myth.

33. Google, “Transliteration,” Google Input Tools, accessed May 3, 2019, <https://www.google.com/inputtools/services/features/transliteration.html>.

Translation is mapping the meaning of text in one language into another with as much accuracy as possible. An artifact or source related to a specific composition may also be called a *witness*. Collation means mapping the transliteration lines to a corresponding line in the translation. It must be mentioned that there are many other complexities and challenges associated with the process and limitations of collating translations. When we read that a scholar published artifact findings, we must, therefore, understand that this may mean photographs, sketches (also known as *autographs* and sometimes published as *plates*), transliterations, translations, or a combination of several types.

Because of the fragmented nature of artifacts and partial publications, it may take several scholars many years before a complete rendering of a story or myth is possible. Some artifacts, like YBC 4621, provide some ninety lines of text for ID while others merely provide insight into how many lines long a missing gap is.<sup>34</sup> In the case of ID, almost fifty years passed between the initial discovery of five artifacts to the publication of over half of the full translation (250 lines). Some scholars conducted the archeology, others published photographs and sketches, while others did restoration work to enable translators. Once enough artifacts are associated with a given contextual theme, they may be organized into a composition. A composition is another name for a coherent translation of a story that seems to be fit for standing alone. Any critical mistake or oversight during a single step of this laborious process may set back the accuracy of a composition for decades. Consequently, the speculative and difficult nature of the publication process must be highlighted so that we can see a complete translation of ID with the appreciation it deserves. As uninformed readers, we cannot easily appreciate the years scholars spent *getting*

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34. For example, if artifact A is broken off and has an unknown number of missing lines, artifact B may be broken in another place while providing the line count of the broken portion of A.

*their hands dirty* with digging, cleaning, and restoring clay objects so that other scholars half a world away could attempt to decipher what they mean.

### Scholarship Chronology

The chronology of scholarship for ID is most easily understood as a timeline from 1889 until the present day. During this period, five scholars and five major institutions primarily contributed their efforts toward publishing findings on some fifty artifacts and 412 lines of translated text. While many scholars contributed to the decipherment of ID, Edward Chiera, Samuel Noah Kramer, Cyril John Gadd, Bendt Alster, and William R. Sladek may be candidates for what we can call *the big five*.<sup>35</sup>

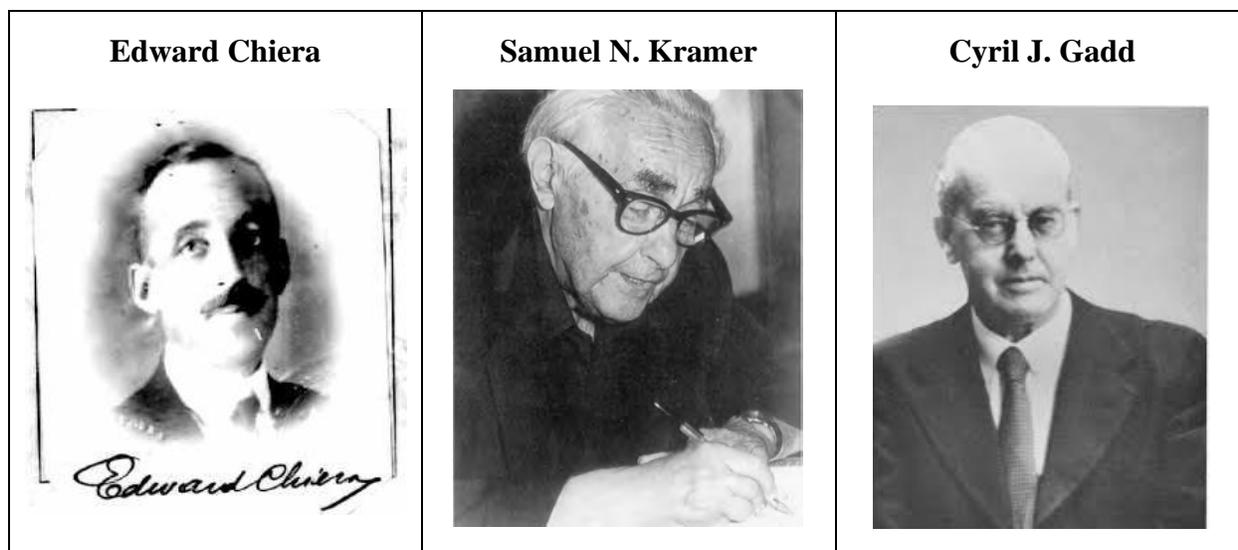


Figure 1.8. Three of the ‘*big five*’ of ID. Illustration composite by Boban Dedović; Photograph of Edward Chiera’s 1924 passport application by unknown author, uploaded May 31, 2011, accessed May 1, 2019, Wikimedia Commons, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Edwardchiera1924.jpg>; Photograph of Samuel N. Kramer. Thorkild Jacobsen, “Samuel Noah Kramer (1897-1990),” *Archiv für Orientforschung* 36./37, no. Bd (1989/1990): 198. Photograph of Cyril J. Gadd by unknown author. D. J. Wiseman, “Obituary: Cyril John Gadd,” *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London* 33, no. 3 (1970): 595. [Photographs of Sladek and Alster could not be located]

35. The methodology for determining *the big five* was based on a quantitative scorecard of artifact discoveries, related publications for new materials, line count of translation contributions, and general field work in excavation sites and associated artifact-owning institutions. Thorkild Jacobsen, Jeremy Black, and Stephen Langdon are honorable mentions in what was a painfully close scorecard.

The five major institutions that secured funding and sponsored coordination for such efforts related to ID include the University of Pennsylvania, the University of Chicago, the British Museum, Oxford University, and the University of California at Los Angeles.<sup>36</sup> Together, these individuals and institutions were involved with the discovery, publication, and decipherment of most of the artifacts and roughly 370 lines of ID.

*Discovery and Initial Publication (1889-1919)*

The first known artifacts containing ID were discovered in Nippur, modern-day central Iraq, between 1889 and 1900. The University of Pennsylvania (hereafter Penn or Penn Museum) and the Istanbul Museum of the Ancient Orient<sup>37</sup> (hereafter Ottoman Museum) jointly conducted four archaeological expeditions in what was then part of the receding Turkish empire.<sup>38</sup> The two parties agreed that Penn would fund the expedition in exchange for ownership of half of the recovered artifacts.<sup>39</sup> This arrangement resulted in thousands of artifacts being boxed and transported a world apart—effectively separating the scholarship efforts between Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, and Istanbul, Turkey.<sup>40</sup> The artifacts were not cleaned, restored, documented, compiled, translated, and published at the time of discovery; instead, many scholars spent the next fifty years collaborating and independently publishing their findings.

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36. A similar methodology was used for institutional notoriety with a stronger weighted emphasis on artifact ownership. The notable exception here is the Istanbul Archaeology Museum (formerly known as the Istanbul Museum of the Ancient Orient or the Ottoman Museum) in Istanbul, Turkey, as other institutions ultimately published the findings of artifacts held there.

37. The term *orient* or *oriental* with the Ottoman Museum or Oriental Institute (University of Chicago) should not be confused with dated references to China or cultures in the Asian Pacific.

38. Kramer and Wolkstein, *Inanna*, 127.

39. *Ibid.*

40. *Ibid.*

In 1914, Stephen Herbert Langdon (1876-1937),<sup>41</sup> an American born British Assyriologist, published the first two fragments containing snippets of the myth.<sup>42</sup> In the same year, Arno Poebel published three other fragments from Penn's museum.<sup>43</sup> With the initial five pieces published, in 1916, Langdon published the first translation of ID and named it the "Sumerian original of the Descent of Ishtar."<sup>44</sup> Up until 1916, many scholars were familiar with the Assyrian myth known as "The Descent of Ishtar." This version was shorter, and in many contextual ways, very different from ID.<sup>45</sup> With the first publication of ID, scholars recognized that Inanna was a Sumerian deity, and the Assyrian version was adapted from the former. At this point, ID was comprised of less than thirty lines of text, and its meaning was obscure.

#### *More Artifacts and Assignments (1920-1934)*

Major breakthroughs in artifact publication and composition assignment came when Edward Chiera (1885-1933)<sup>46</sup> emerged into the fold. Throughout his career, Chiera was an incredibly important figure in the history of ID. Mainly, he was involved with almost every major museum and academic institution that owned tablets containing ID: Penn, Chicago, and the Ottoman Museum. Chiera was also known for creating extremely detailed and precise sketches of the artifacts he came into contact with. In 1923, Chiera spent a year in Istanbul

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41. R. Campbell Thompson, "Professor Stephen Herbert Langdon," *The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* no. 4 (October 1937): 719-26.

42. Stephen Langdon. *The Babylonian Expedition of The University of Pennsylvania: Series A: Cuneiform Texts*, Vol. XXXI, *Historical and Religious Texts from the Temple Library of Nippur* (Leipzig: August Pries, 1914), pl. 33. [See plate 33 for artifacts Ni 2279 and Ni 368]

43. Arno Poebel, *The University of Pennsylvania: The University Museum Publications of the Babylonian Section*, Vol. 5, *Historical and Grammatical Texts* (Philadelphia: The University Museum, 1914), Plate XIV, No. 23, <https://archive.org/details/historicalandgr00sectgoog/page/n6>.

44. Sladek, "Inanna's Descent," 1. [See bibliography reference to "PSBA 38 55ff."]

45. *Ibid.*, 2.

46. Ephraim A. Speiser, "In Memoriam: Edward Chiera, Raymond P. Dougherty," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 53, no. 3 (September 1933): 308. <https://docslide.net/documents/in-memoriam-edward-chiera-raymond-p-dougherty.html>.

sketching various tablets from the Nippur excavations and published his findings in 1924.<sup>47</sup> After his return to Penn in the same year, he spent several years restoring and documenting some three hundred artifacts. Most critically, he discovered that the previously unpublished Penn tablet, named CBS 9800, was joined with (part of another fragment) the Ottoman Museum's Ni 368 tablet.



Figure 2.1. Artifact CBS 9800. Photograph, "Archival view of P345344." Cuneiform Digital Library Initiative (CDLI), *University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA)*, accessed May 1, 2019, [https://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival\\_view.php?ObjectID=P345344](https://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P345344). [Obverse side]

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47. Edward Chiera, *Sumerian Religious Texts* (Upland: Crozer Theological Seminary), 1924.

Together, these two tablets produced almost 250 out of the 412 lines of text we have today.

Chiera continued contributing toward locating various fragments and was preparing to publish his findings until his untimely death in 1927.<sup>48</sup> His findings were posthumously published in 1934 by Samuel N. Kramer,<sup>49</sup> a prominent Sumerian scholar we will cover extensively in this survey.

Before proceeding, it is important for the reader to understand basic terminology related to cuneiform tablet artifacts. When obverse and reverse are mentioned, this refers to the front and the back. A side may occasionally have content on it, but this is rare among artifacts related to ID. Consequently, a single tablet may have upwards of four photographs of it. A plus sign “+” or the word *join* notates that the tablets are fragments that were originally one piece. In the case of CBS 9800 and Ni 368, we may see them notated as “CBS 9800 + Ni 368.” “1 Ni 0368” or “1<sup>st</sup> Ni 0368” means that it is the first edition (copy) of that fragment and subsequent copies were baked to replicate its contents. Finally, the word column (abbreviated as Col. I for example) means an intended physical separation of line blocks. Scholars vary in their practices of documenting line numbers, columns, and other markers, but it is unlikely to see a composition name listed (e.g., you likely will not see “Inanna’s Descent” listed on the artifact photographs or sketches).

Before Chiera passed away, he provided one more instrumental contribution to the myth’s composition: the association with an unpublished tablet named YBC 4621 (now YPM BC 018686)<sup>50</sup> from Yale’s Peabody Museum.<sup>51</sup> This tablet provided ninety-one lines of text and

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48. Kramer and Wolkstein, *Inanna*, 130.

49. Edward Chiera, *Sumerian Epics and Myths* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press), 1934. [Posthumous reprint]

50. Tablet YBC 04621 was later re-cataloged by the Yale Peabody Museum as YPM BC 018686 but will be referred to in this survey by its original name. Please see the appendix for more details and references for all artifacts.

51. Edward Chiera, *Sumerian Texts of Varied Contents* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press), 1954. [Posthumous reprint]

was preserved in excellent condition. The picture below shows how both complete and stunning this unusually well-preserved artifact is.



Figure 2.2. Artifact YPM BC 018686 (formerly YBC 4621). Photograph of "YPM BC 018686: Tablet. Inanna's Descent. Old Babylonian. Clay.," Yale Peabody Museum of Natural History, *Yale University*, accessed May 2, 2019, <https://collections.peabody.yale.edu/search/Record/YPM-BC-018686>. [The obverse, reverse, left, and right sides of the tablet are shown]

It is important to highlight that the provenance—or historical origin—of an artifact is an important component of its contribution toward a composition. For the Nippur excavation tablets, geographic provenance was less of a concern because the artifacts were discovered and documented during the same expedition. However, Yale's YBC 4621 tablet deserves mention

because it has no known or documented provenance.<sup>52</sup> This means that scholars have almost no idea where it came from, the time period it is from, and who created it. Like many historical artifacts, it was likely acquired and purchased through an informal antiques dealer.<sup>53</sup> The origin of the YBC 4621 tablet is doubly important because it provides text that comes at critical plot points of ID.

More expeditions were conducted in Iraq from 1922-1933 between Penn and the British Museum, leading to further artifact discoveries containing snippets of ID. These Ur excavations recovered many new artifacts and were directed by Sir Charles Leonard Woolley (1880-1960),<sup>54</sup> a British archaeologist.<sup>55</sup> The expeditions were also accompanied by British historian Cyril J. Gadd (1893-1969),<sup>56</sup> the main person who copied the artifact contents so they could be published as texts for other scholars to translate and interpret.<sup>57</sup> Other institutions were also conducting expeditions during this time period. From 1929-1937, the University of Chicago's Oriental Institute conducted several excavations in neighboring regions of Nippur. These excavations, alongside the ones at Ur, dug up most of the remaining artifacts required for a full translation of all 412 lines of ID. A notable field Assyriologist for Chicago's Oriental Institute was Thorkild

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52. Samuel Noah Kramer, "'Inanna's Descent to the Nether World' Continued and Revised," *Journal of Cuneiform Studies* 4, no. 4 (1950): 199.

53. Kramer and Wolkstein, *Inanna*, 131.

54. "Sir Leonard Woolley (Biographical details)," *British Museum*, last modified December 6, 2018, [https://www.britishmuseum.org/research/search\\_the\\_collection\\_database/term\\_details.aspx?bioId=92773](https://www.britishmuseum.org/research/search_the_collection_database/term_details.aspx?bioId=92773).

55. Sir Leonard Woolley, *Excavations at Ur: A Record of Twelve Year's Work* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2006).

56. D. J. Wiseman, "Obituary: Cyril John Gadd," *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London* 33, no. 3 (1970): 592.

57. Cyril J. Gadd, "A Bibliography of C. J. Gadd." *Iraq* 31, no. 2 (Autumn, 1969): 184-188. [Gadd published numerous works (with Kramer) based on artifacts and materials recovered from the Ur excavations]

Peter Rudolph Jacobsen (1904-1993),<sup>58</sup> a newcomer who would later lead the Oriental Institute and publish critical translations and commentary of ID.

The 1920s were also important years for the composition and blueprint toward full decipherment of ID. Chiera compiled and published sketches and notes on tablet fragments that contained almost 275 lines of the total composition. Additionally, he left valuable clues and details for the next generation of Sumerian scholars interested in ID. Separate excavations in Iraq by leading institutions like the British Museum (jointly with Penn) and the University of Chicago collected thousands of artifacts containing snippets of ID. While many of these artifacts would not be published as translations until as late as 1966, they were nonetheless in the hands of other scholars.<sup>59</sup> In summary, by 1933, some thirty-five fragments utilized in the current ETCSL translation of ID were at least discovered and awaiting translation.

#### *Kramer's First Wave (1935-1951)*

From 1935-1951, Samuel Noah Kramer (1897-1990)<sup>60</sup> published a majority of the scholarship on ID, including some thirty books and dozens of journal articles. His first comprehensive publication containing a translation of ID was in 1937 and included 250 out of 412 usable lines,<sup>61</sup> roughly two-thirds of the myth.<sup>62</sup> This translation primarily took advantage of

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58. J.A. Brinkman, "In Memoriam: Thorkild Peter Rudolph Jacobsen," *The Oriental Institute*, 1992-3, 6-7, [https://oi.uchicago.edu/sites/oi.uchicago.edu/files/uploads/shared/docs/ar/91-00/92-93/92-93\\_Memoriam\\_Jacobsen.pdf](https://oi.uchicago.edu/sites/oi.uchicago.edu/files/uploads/shared/docs/ar/91-00/92-93/92-93_Memoriam_Jacobsen.pdf).

59. Cyril J. Gadd and Samuel N. Kramer, *Ur excavations texts. / VI.2, Literary and religious texts. First part* (London: Publications of the British Museum and of the University Museum of Pennsylvania, 1963).

60. John N. Wilford, "Samuel Noah Kramer, 93, Dies; Was Leading Authority on Sumer," *New York Times*, accessed May 22, 2019, <https://www.nytimes.com/1990/11/27/obituaries/samuel-noah-kramer-93-dies-was-leading-authority-on-sumer.html>.

61. The word 'usable' is invoked here because in Kramer's 1951 translation there were 276 available lines, of which twenty-six were not textually translated. These lines were usually marked with a notable gap represented by [...], [xxx], or (?) after a word or two.

62. Samuel N. Kramer, "Inanna's Descent to the Nether World. The Sumerian Version of Is[h]tar's Descent," *Revue d'Assyriologie et d'Archéologie Orientale* 34, no. 3 (1937): 93-134.

the CBS 9800 tablet that was previously identified by Chiera and Langdon, but not translated.<sup>63</sup> Kramer evidently took a keen interest in ID because he “travelled to Istanbul in 1937, and with the aid of a Guggenheim fellowship, devoted some twenty months to the copying of one hundred and seventy tablets and fragments in the Nippur collection of the [Ottoman] Museum of the Ancient Orient.”<sup>64</sup> Like Chiera, Kramer explored the *other half* of the original Nippur expeditions of the 1890s. These efforts paid off because Kramer spent the next fifteen years publishing new versions of ID at a furious pace. In 1939, Kramer published a subsequent translation with the addition of tablets Ni 4200 and Ni 2762.<sup>65</sup> These tablet additions resulted in a highly authoritative 1942 translation of ID that contained roughly 270 out of 412 usable lines. With each version Kramer published, key lines were refined, and new artifact additions were integrated into the whole. Indeed, it’s also likely that Kramer’s translation skills improved throughout the process.

Further improvement, refinement, and translated material contributed to a strong version of ID by Kramer in 1951. The early 1940s was a relatively tepid period for ID scholarship because of World War II.<sup>66</sup> After 1944, several translations emerged from various scholars that were based on Kramer’s original 1937 framework. For instance, German Assyriologist Adam Falkenstein (1906-1966)<sup>67</sup> published a translation of ID in 1944. He was followed by a fellow

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63. Ibid., 95. [In footnote three, Kramer noted that he elected not to copy the text and only included photographs because the tablet was in very poor shape]

64. Samuel N. Kramer, “A Preliminary Survey of the Oldest Literature in the World,” *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 85 no. 3 (February 1942): 294. [Kramer made subsequent trips to Istanbul for the same purpose, leading to several artifact publications (see ISET 2)]

65. Samuel N. Kramer, “Additional Material to ‘Inanna’s Descent to the Nether World.’” *Revue d’Assyriologie et d’Archéologie Orientale* 36, no. 2 (1939): 68-80.

66. Many scholars who were interested in ID were Assyriologists of German heritage (like Falkenstein). While nationalism and political differences may have played a role in discontinuing international cooperation with other scholars, wartime pressures surely slowed down joint scholarship efforts.

67. “Zum Tode von Adam Falkenstein (17.9.1906—15.10.1966),” *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie und Vorderasiatische Archäologie* 59, no. 1, (November 2009): 1, <https://doi.org/10.1515/zava.1969.59.1.1>.

German, Friar Maurus Witzel (1882-1967),<sup>68</sup> who published another translation in 1945.<sup>69</sup> At this point, almost one-third of the lines were still missing from the currently known 412.

Scholars were aware of the previously mentioned Yale YBC 4621 tablet, but its 90 lines of text were yet to be translated. These efforts culminated in Kramer's 1951 publication of ID, which included the Yale tablet. As later scholars have noted,<sup>70</sup> Kramer's 1951 publication proved to be the most authoritative (known as *textus receptus*) version of its time.<sup>71</sup> In total, Kramer published almost fifteen different updated translations of ID from 1937 to 1951, making him the most decorated contributor during this time period.

At this juncture, it is important to note that Kramer's translations during this time period reflected revision-based activity toward the work of previous scholars. Throughout these fourteen years, Kramer seemingly corrected mistakes that Chiera<sup>72</sup> and other scholars<sup>73</sup> had made.<sup>74</sup> Special mention of scholarly correction is important because it may represent schism between pseudo schools of thought that each representative scholar may have embodied in their interpretation of the artifacts and their contents. Revision of previous scholars' work may also represent the field's collective maturity and progress in artifact restoration methodologies.

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68. Ottokar Bonmann, *P. Maurus Witzel, O.F.M. (1882-1968) in Piam Memoriam* (Typis Montis Mariani, 1968).

69. Sladek, "Inanna's Descent," 3-4.

70. *Ibid.*, 5.

71. Samuel Noah Kramer, "'Inanna's Descent to the Nether World' Continued and Revised. Second Part: Revised Edition of 'Inanna's Descent to the Nether World,'" *Journal of Cuneiform Studies* 5, no. 1 (1951): 1-17.

72. Sladek, "Inanna's Descent," 3.

73. Kramer, *Inanna's Descent* [1937], 93. [Kramer did not mince words—in his initial 1937 publication of ID, Kramer cited previous translation attempts as "largely erroneous"]

74. Kramer and Wolkstein, *Inanna*, 129. [In Kramer's 1983 publication with Wolkstein he insisted that Langdon was an "...enthusiastic, energetic, but rather careless scholar..." Kramer's tone and choice of vocabulary in 1983 was in sharp contrast to his more subtle, and highly apologetic, demeanor toward Langdon in writings during the 1940s and 1950s. Indeed, Kramer's voyage to Istanbul was said to be largely inspired by his mission of correcting Langdon's miscopies of tablets in the Nippur collection at the Ottoman Museum.]

Revisions, therefore, do not necessarily represent disagreement. Nonetheless, Kramer's authoritative 1951 version of ID included the use of fifteen sources (nineteen artifact fragments) and a total line count of 344 out of 412.

*New Artifacts and Commentary (1952-1973)*

The 1950s and early 1960s provided much-needed commentary, interpretation, and analysis on Kramer's 1951 version of ID. During this time period, several key passages were improved upon, especially the last one hundred lines (which had artifacts that would not be translated for another fifteen years). Witzel published a commentary on Kramer's work in 1952 that focused on the role of Inanna's husband and his fate—the ending.<sup>75</sup> Falkenstein also provided important commentary on Kramer's work: "In the same year [1952] Falkenstein read a paper at the third Re[n]contre Assyriologique Internationale in which he discussed ID."<sup>76</sup> A new, albeit small, fragment named BM 17427 was also added in 1959 by H. H. Figulla as a result of his publication of the tablets discovered in Ur some thirty years earlier.<sup>77</sup> Significantly more authorship related to ID occurred in the 1950s by the likes of Jacobsen and Ferris J. Stephens (1893-1969),<sup>78</sup> Kramer and Inez Bernhardt in 1962, and Benno Landsberger in 1960. Through 1963, these aforementioned scholars refined key passages of ID so that they made sense from a peer-reviewed perspective. There is no doubt that deciphering ID was a team effort. Almost

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75. Witzel, Maurus. "Ishtar (Inanna) gegen Tammuz?" 1952, 435ff. [Full reference available in Sladek, "Inanna's Descent," bibliography]

76. Sladek, "Inanna's Descent," 5.

77. H. H. Figulla, *Cuneiform Texts from Babylonian Tablets* (London: Trustees of the British Museum, 1959).

78. Richard S. Ellis, "Ferris J. Stephens, 1893-1969," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 90, no. 3 (July—September 1970): 423.

every reputable translation of ID—whether print, digital journal, or blog—cites artifact or translation publications from the scholars previously mentioned, primarily *the big five*.<sup>79</sup>

1963 was an important year for compiling the whole story with the addition of newly translated artifacts from the Ur excavations done by Woolley in the 1920s and 1930s. In 1963, Kramer and Gadd published translations of several artifacts collectively grouped as belonging to the *Ur Excavation Texts* [volume 6, number 1] (UET VI) series: UET VI 8, 9, and 10.<sup>80</sup>

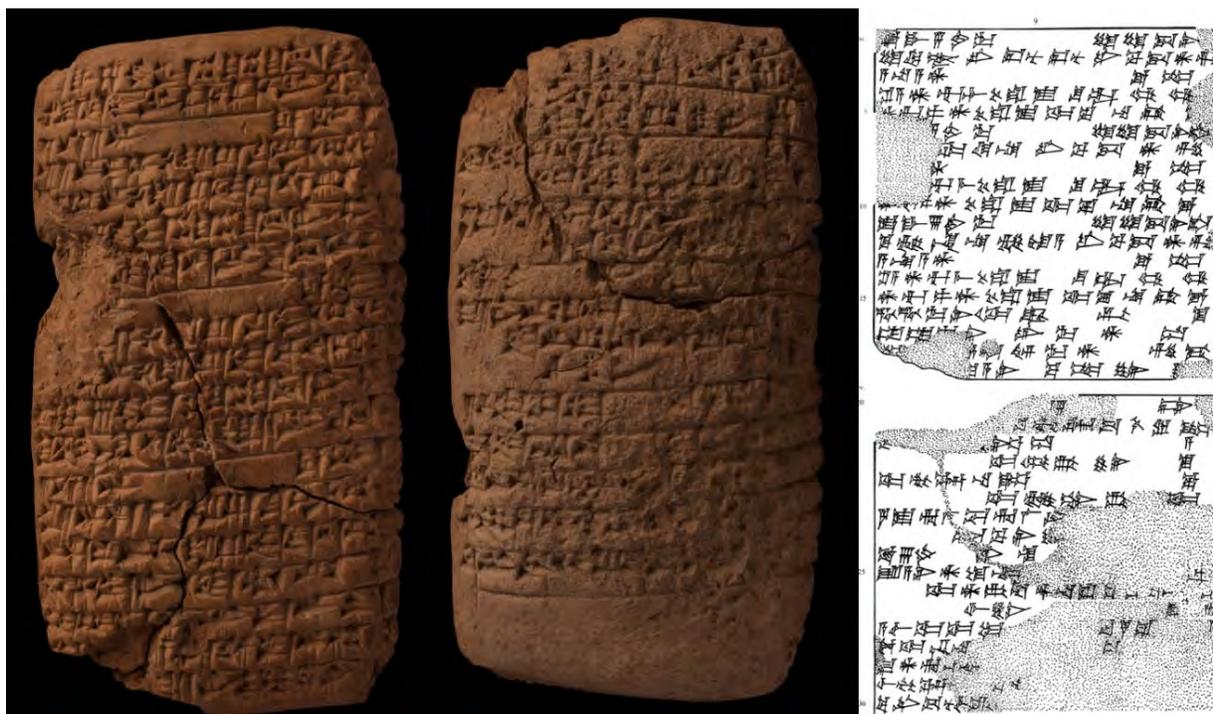


Figure 2.3. Artifact UET VI 9 (6/1 9). Photograph and sketch of "Archival view of P346094," Cuneiform Digital Library Initiative (CDLI), *University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA)*, accessed May 1, 2019, [https://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival\\_view.php?ObjectID=P346094](https://cdli.ucla.edu/search/archival_view.php?ObjectID=P346094). [Obverse and reverse tablet orientations]

The importance of these three unusually wide tablet artifacts cannot be understated as they provided over 160 lines of translated text during key plot points. More importantly, the contents

79. Sladek, "Inanna's Descent," 5. [Full credit to author for recounting the contributions of each scholar]

80. Cyril J. Gadd and Samuel N. Kramer, *Ur Excavations Texts VI.1: Literary and Religious Texts* (London: British Museum Publications, 1963), [http://www.ur-online.org/media\\_item/20/](http://www.ur-online.org/media_item/20/).

included clues about a new ending that other scholars had debated for roughly twenty years.<sup>81</sup> The main concern was what happened to Inanna's husband, Dumuzi, at the end of the story.<sup>82</sup> These new findings prompted Kramer to publish several new artifact translations as well as a critical 1966 update to his previous version of ID.<sup>83</sup> The remainder of the 1960s and early 1970s saw Kramer publish many minor updates in what we can call his second wave. The new UET series artifacts would later result in seventy new translated lines of ID, moving the total *usable* line count to roughly 360 (still fifty-two lines short of the ETCSL version).

Concurrently, Jacobsen and others began assimilating unique interpretations into their translations of ID, differing significantly from Kramer's canonical texts. While Kramer and other scholars were publishing translations in the mid to late 1950s, Jacobsen was conducting further excavation work in central and southern Iraq (formerly Ur of Sumer)<sup>84</sup> with Robert McCormick Adams Jr. (1926-2018).<sup>85</sup> Notably, Jacobsen and Adams were documenting canals and the impact of irrigation flooding on ancient Sumerian peoples.<sup>86</sup> These unique hands-on experiences in modern-day Iraq may have impacted Jacobsen's perspectives of Sumer and ID. By the 1960s, it was clear that Jacobsen and Kramer had different interpretations, despite co-authoring a paper

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81. Sladek, "Inanna's Descent," 6.

82. The major scholarly disagreement—one that still exists today—was whether Dumuzi died at the end and stayed dead, or whether he represented the dying-and-rising god which was archetypal of the Egyptian Osiris myth.

83. Cyril J. Gadd and Samuel N. Kramer, *Ur Excavations Texts VI.2: Literary and Religious Texts* (London: British Museum Publications, 1966), [http://www.ur-online.org/media\\_item/18/](http://www.ur-online.org/media_item/18/).

84. Thorkild Jacobsen and Robert M. Adams. "Salt and Silt in Ancient Mesopotamian Agriculture." *Science* 128, no. 3334 (November 1958): 1251-258.

85. Ryan P. Smith, "Smithsonian Leader Who Helped Launch the American Indian Museum Dies at 91," *Smithsonian*, last modified January 29, 2018, <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smithsonian-institution/former-smithsonian-leader-robert-mccormick-adams-dies-91-180967977/>.

86. Thorkild Jacobsen, "The Waters of Ur," *Iraq* 22, no. 1-2 (Spring-Autumn 1960): 174-185, <https://doi.org/10.2307/4199683>.

as early as 1953.<sup>87</sup> For instance, Jacobsen notably began replacing the word netherworld with Hades—a known Greek term for the underworld.<sup>88</sup> Additional scholarship and artifact assignment took place in the 1960s via Bendt Alster (covered more prominently later), Falkenstein,<sup>89</sup> and several new individuals like Muazzez Çig<sup>90</sup> and Miguel Civil.<sup>91</sup> Kramer contributed toward the identification of artifacts mentioned by these scholars as well. By now, we can clearly see the amount of complex coordination required for these scholars to work together—all in an age without the internet, no less. By 1972, Kramer’s authoritative version of ID included twenty-nine artifacts (fourteen new ones from the previous 1951 period) and increased the total coherent line count from 250 to roughly 360. The main problem that remained was the crucial missing gap of lines at the end of the poem (lines 380-412).

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87. Thorkild Jacobsen and Samuel N. Kramer, "The Myth of Inanna and Bilulu," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 12, no. 3 (July 1953): 160-88. [Kramer and Jacobsen seemed to regard each other well, often citing one another in publications and with Jacobsen even authoring one of Kramer’s obituaries]

88. Bendt Alster and Thorkild Jacobsen, "Ningishzida’s Boat-ride to Hades," in *Wisdom, Gods and Literature: Studies in Assyriology in Honour of W. G. Lambert*, eds. Andrew R. George and I. L. Finkel (University Park: Eisenbrauns, 2000), 315-44. [Jacobsen co-authored a translation of another underworld myth with Bendt Alster where the term Hades was used in addition to his final 1987 translation of ID, which exclusively used Hades as the preferred name for the netherworld]

89. Werner Caskel and Erwin Graf, ed., *Festschrift, Werner Caskel* (Leiden: Brill Publishers, 1968), 96.

90. Muazzez Çig and Hatice Kizilyay, *Istanbul Arkeoloji Müzelerinde Bulunan Sumer Edebî Tablet ve Parçaları (Sumerian Literary Tablets and Fragments in the Archaeological Museum of Istanbul) – I 183* (1969): pl. 125. [The name of the artifact is Ni 09776. This journal is commonly abbreviated as ISET I in many other sources. Çig is a noteworthy scholar because she was one of the few women who published extensively in the male-dominated field of Assyriology and Sumerian studies (during her time period). In 2005, she published *Vatadaslik Tepkilerim (My Citizenship Reactions)*, which referenced the Sumerian origins of the headscarf, or turban; that is, Çig maintained that Sumerian prostitutes wore turbans in ancient times as part of religious rites (most translations of ID suggest that Inanna wore a turban during her descent to the netherworld). The assertion seemingly landed Çig in legal trouble with the Turkish authorities on the basis of insulting Islam and the tradition of the Hijab. In 2006, when Çig was ninety-two years old, the Turkish news website hurriyet.com.tr reported that the scholar was acquitted on charges of inciting hate and dissent. Çig was born in 1914 and is reported to be alive as of this writing.]

91. Miguel Civil, "Supplement to the Introduction to ISET I," *Orientalia*, NOVA SERIES, 41, no. 1 (1972): 83-90.

*The First Semi-Complete Translation (1974-1996)*

Between 1974 and 1996, several prominent ID scholars passed away, and new individuals built upon their work to compile a semi-complete translation. The first and most notable of these new scholars was William R. Sladek Jr. (1938-1993),<sup>92</sup> who in 1974 published a 300-page PhD dissertation (in philosophy) at the Johns Hopkins University. He appropriately titled his dissertation “Inanna's Descent to the Netherworld.”<sup>93</sup> Sladek deserves special recognition in the chronology of ID for three reasons. First, his addition of almost ten critical artifact translations resulted in the most complete version of ID of his time. Sladek’s artifact translation contributions represent almost 10 percent of all the artifacts in the ETCSL version of ID; moreover, his dissertation still receives generous citations among other ID scholars. Second, Sladek’s work was (and still is) well-regarded by cuneiformists and ID scholars alike—indeed, even Kramer formally approved of Sladek’s work.<sup>94</sup> Finally, the present survey would not have been possible without Sladek’s robust documentation. Sladek’s dissertation included sketches, translations, and transliterations of almost all remaining lines of ID with the use of seven previously untranslated artifacts: N 2523, CBS 12757, 3N-T 211, 3N-T 499, N 983, 3N-T 400, and N 2986. His published version of ID contained 386 usable lines that clarified the obscure meanings Kramer and other scholars wrestled with for the past fifty years. Finally, Sladek’s version introduced the line count of 412, the authoritative total still in use today in the ETCSL version.

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92. “[Obituary for] Dr. William R. Sladek Jr. Professor of Ancient History [sic],” *York Daily Record [Pennsylvania]*, November 6, 1993; Arnold Blumberg, ed., *Great Leaders, Great Tyrants?: Contemporary Views of World Rulers who Made History* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Publishing Group, 1995), xiii. [An acknowledgment passage by Arnold Blumberg, who seems to have been Dr. Sladek’s past student, indicates that Dr. Sladek’s death was untimely, and that he was a professor of ancient history for the University of Maryland, Baltimore County.]

93. Sladek, “Inanna’s Descent.”

94. Kramer and Wolkstein, *Inanna*, 134. [Kramer gave Sladek a special mention in this work and consistently cited his work in subsequent publications until his own passing in 1990]

Figure I: N 2523

obverse



reverse



Figure II: CBS 12757

obverse

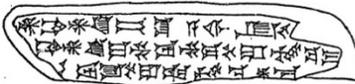


Figure III: 3N-T 211

reverse

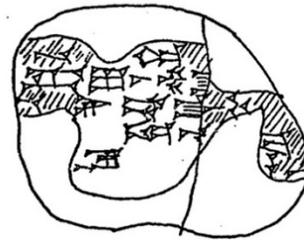


Figure III: 3N-T 211

obverse



Figure IV: 3N-T 499

reverse



Figure IV: 3N-T 499

obverse

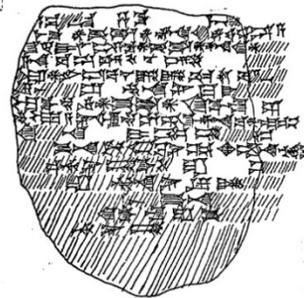


Figure V: N 983

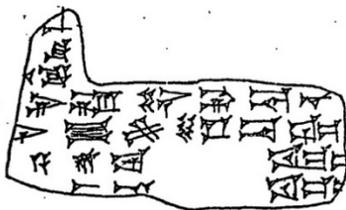


Figure VI: 3N-T 400

reverse



Figure VI: 3N-T 400

obverse



Figure VIII: N 953

obverse



Figure IX: N 2986

obverse



Figure 2.4. Sladek's published artifacts. Illustrations published by William R. Sladek, [Figure[s] I – IX], "Inanna's Descent to the Netherworld" (Ann Arbor: University Microfilms, 1974): 280-9. [While better photos of these artifacts exist, Sladek's originals are included to highlight the labor required in his efforts. The images have been cropped and grouped together to save space, but are otherwise unmodified.]

The remainder of the 1970s and 1980s featured further translations by Kramer and Jacobsen, as well as new artifact publications by Bendt Alster (1946-2012),<sup>95</sup> a Danish scholar. While Kramer actively published more translations leading up to his passing in 1990, a most notable version of ID was included in a 1983 book he co-authored with Diane Wolkstein, a cultural folklorist.<sup>96</sup> In *Inanna: Queen of Heaven and Earth: Her Stories and Hymns from Sumer*, Kramer and Wolkstein provided a public-friendly and easy-to-read version of ID, as well as a summary of scholarship in the entire field.<sup>97</sup> This version, like Jacobsen's a few years later, was written in *verse* form, meaning that the lines were short and grouped in poetic stanzas.<sup>98</sup> Jacobsen also published his final version of ID in 1987 before passing away in 1993.<sup>99</sup> It was thus the end of an era with the passing of Kramer, Sladek, and Jacobsen before 1995.

Alster spearheaded the resolution efforts of the ambiguous ending of ID by publishing partial translations of ID in 1983<sup>100</sup> and 1996<sup>101</sup>—effectively filling in the remaining gap of lines 380-412 in the ETCSL version of ID. In these final publications, Alster reinterpreted the ending of ID using artifact UET 6/1 10<sup>102</sup> and CBS 6894 by indicating that Inanna ultimately repented

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95. Cuneiform Digital Library Initiative (CDLI), "Alster, Bendt," CDLI:wiki, last modified April 18, 2016, [http://cdli.ox.ac.uk/wiki/doku.php?id=alster\\_bendt](http://cdli.ox.ac.uk/wiki/doku.php?id=alster_bendt). [Obituary for Dr. Alster]

96. Kramer and Wolkstein, *Inanna*, xv.

97. Ibid.

98. Translations of ID in block paragraph form are considered to be in *prose* form, meaning it resembles how we speak and write in modern times (this is generally called normal language).

99. Thorkild Jacobsen, *The Harps that Once...: Sumerian Poetry in Translation* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987), 205-32.

100. Bendt Alster, "The Mythology of Mourning," *Acta Sumerologica* 5 (1985): 1-16. [This publication includes translation, commentary, and artifact references for lines 230-60 of ID]

101. Bendt Alster, "Inanna Repenting. The Conclusion of Inanna's Descent," *Acta Sumerologica* 18 (1996), 1-18. [This publication includes translation, commentary, and artifact references for lines 350-412 of ID]

102. Aaron Shaffer and Marie-Christine Ludwig, *Ur Excavations Texts V6.3: Literary and Religious Texts* (London: British Museum Publications, 2006). [While Shaffer, Kramer, and Gadd contributed to *Ur Excavation Texts* originally published in 1963 and 1966, Alster attributed artifact identification of UET 6/1 10 to Shaffer while he was working at the British Museum]

for giving her husband up to the demons.<sup>103</sup> It is worthy to note that Alster's 1996 translation relied heavily (in some cases solely) on CBS 6894, a fragment not listed as a cuneiform source in the ETCSL version of ID.<sup>104</sup> Ironically, this excluded fragment was the only artifact that contained usable text for lines 380-412. In a final reversal, Alster concluded his translation by arguing that the divine couple of Inanna and Dumuzi came to an agreement whereby they would split time between the heavens and the netherworld—reversing Sladek's interpretation of Dumuzi not being a dying-and-rising god.<sup>105</sup> With Alster's contribution, the stage was set for the 1997 release of our 412-line (forty-eight artifact) translation of ID by the ETCSL.<sup>106</sup>

Having chronologically reviewed the painstaking effort and coordination required over the last one hundred years of scholarship, we can now—with full appreciation—see the fruit of these labors in vivid color. As the table on the following page shows, the decipherment of ID required stitching together the textual contributions of many artifacts, thousands of miles apart. Each fragment that was added helped improve the translation of existing passages or provided fresh material for gaps, such as the last thirty lines. With the initial 1997 publication of the ETCSL version of ID, a century of hard work and collaboration came to fruition.

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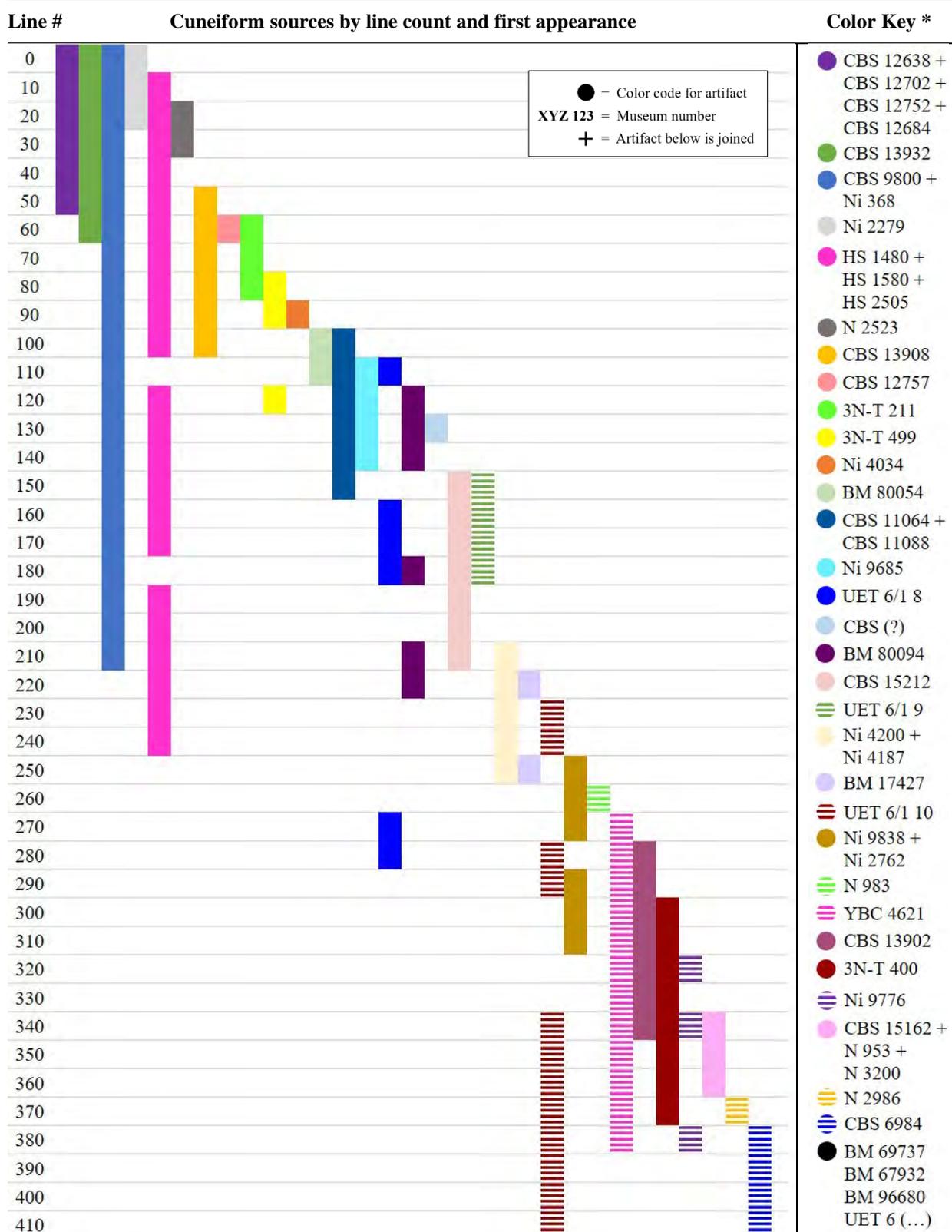
103. Alster, *Inanna Repenting*, 15.

104. The ETCSL website does not list the artifact but cites Alster's 1996 translation of its contents. Lines 380-412 are used almost verbatim. The CDLI composition for ID (*Q000343*) lists the artifact and indicates it contains thirty-six lines, but only twenty-six lines contain text used in the composite.

105. *Ibid.* [It should also be noted that another artifact, UET VI 11, not included in the present survey, was listed as being an alternate ending to ID. Jacobsen and Kramer both consulted UET VI 11, as well as other liturgic texts related to the topical nature of demons and Dumuzi, for their attempts to reconstruct the ending of ID.]

106. The ETCSL version contains 412 lines but seven are listed as fragmentary, meaning still obscure. The main passages that suffer from obscurity are lines 380-385 and the last fifteen lines.

**Table 1.1. Artifact waterfall view of “Inanna’s descent to the nether world,” ETCSL (2001)**



*Note:* See exact line numbers, column numbers, tablet orientation, and more details in Appendix B.

\* BM 69737, BM 67932, BM 96680, and three UET 6 fragments did not seem to provide text with line numbers.

*The Digital Age (1997-2006)*

The internet enabled prestigious institutions like Penn, Oxford, and UCLA to expand the availability of Sumerian literature to the entire world (for free, no less). These institutions took advantage of digital publishing to offer free cuneiform resources for a wider audience. Penn integrated the digital facet of its offerings in 2004 with the launch of the Electronic Pennsylvania Sumerian Dictionary (hereafter ePSD).<sup>107</sup> The ePSD project was initially started in 1974 by Åke Sjöberg, the same person who mentored Sladek during his influential dissertation publication.<sup>108</sup> The digital index offers translated texts as well as a robust online dictionary. Unfortunately, however, the homepage indicates it has not been updated since 2006, perhaps due to funding issues.<sup>109</sup>

In 1997, Oxford University began work on the Electronic Text Corpus of Sumerian Literature (ETCSL) under the guidance of Jeremy Allen Black (1951-2004),<sup>110</sup> the main coordinator for the project. The project sought to publish a Sumerian dictionary and literature index, but unfortunately lost its funding in 2006, stagnating its progress.<sup>111</sup> Despite this setback, the utility of ETCSL as a digital resource is still important. In 2000, the University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA) launched the Cuneiform Digital Library Initiative (hereafter CDLI) as a means of distributing scholarly research on cuneiform to a wider, non-local audience.<sup>112</sup>

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107. "About the PSD," Pennsylvania Sumerian Dictionary, *University of Pennsylvania*, accessed May 18, 2019, <http://psd.museum.upenn.edu/project.html>.

108. Sjöberg studied under Falkenstein, ran the Penn Museum, and published many articles related to cuneiform studies. He contributed to the identification and translation of many artifacts.

109. "About the PSD," 2019. [The last update is dated as "June 26, 2006"]

110. Andrew R. George, "Obituary: Jeremy Allen Black" *Iraq* (Journal of the British School of Archaeology) 66 (2004): vii–ix.

111. "General Information," Electronic Text Corpus of Sumerian Literature (ETCSL), *University of Oxford*, last modified April 4, 2007, <http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/edition2/general.php>.

112. "About CDLI," Cuneiform Digital Library Initiative (CDLI), *University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA)*, accessed May 18, 2019, <https://cdli.ucla.edu/?q=about>.

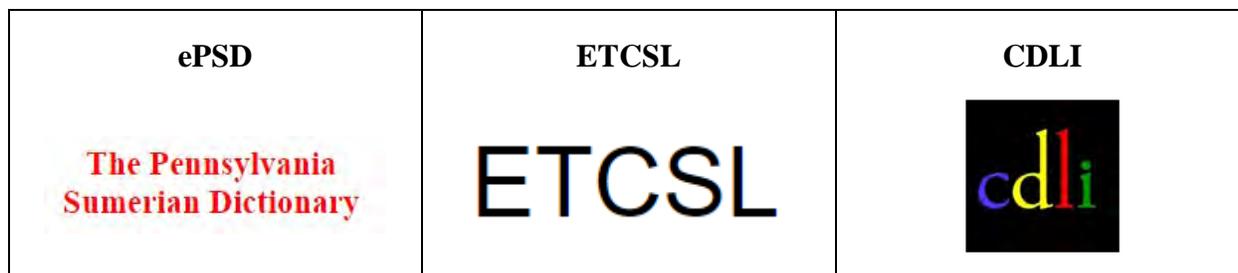


Figure 2.5. Digital libraries with Sumerian literature. Illustration composite by Boban Dedović. [See Appendix B for URLs and reference numbers of digital resources related to ID]

The CDLI hopes to make available all 500,000 artifacts it estimates exist in the form of cataloged records, translations, transliterations, high-resolution photos, line art (sketches), and composition materials.<sup>113</sup> Indeed, almost every artifact we reviewed in this survey is contained within composition number Q000343, which includes all fifty related source materials for ID, as well as new ones.<sup>114</sup> Any scholar that is serious about ID will undoubtedly take advantage of the ePSD, ETCSL, and the CDLI.

#### *Current Scholarship (2007-2019)*

The loss of institutional funding for key online resources and passing of notable experts like Black in 2004 and Alster in 2012 has, perhaps, left a gap in current scholarship for ID. As of this writing, all of *the big five* scholars originally mentioned have passed away. Also, most of the institutions that shared their research seem to be troubled by a lack of funding for Sumerian literature and cuneiform related projects. Additionally, the digital age and its transformation of the publishing industry has seen many notable journals go defunct. Mainly, most of the journals that the scholars of ID published their findings in seem to be out of print or acquired by other parties. In abstaining from pessimism, we can say there is good news regarding the CDLI. As of May 17, 2019, CDLI's About and Staff pages seem to be regularly updated under the leadership

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113. Ibid.

114. CDLI, *Q000343*.

of their principal investigator, Robert K. Englund.<sup>115</sup> The CDLI is actively publishing user-submitted journal articles, notes, and extensive preprints of future volumes of work—all online and available for the general public.<sup>116</sup> Indeed, the most recently listed publications were dated April 16, 2019, and attributed to Jeremiah Peterson at the CDLI.<sup>117</sup> These publications are unpacking more UET series artifacts, first published in the 1960s, with more commentary and revised translations.

By looking at the most recent composite version of ID on the CDLI's website, we can, perhaps, peer into what progress is being made. In reviewing composite number Q000343 (the CDLI's translation of ID), the score page lists a total of seventy-eight artifact fragments.<sup>118</sup> Many of these fragments seem to be part of the UET (*Ur Excavation Texts*) collection of artifacts, housed in the British Museum, and published by Aaron Shaffer in his 2006 catalog of the same name.<sup>119</sup> These artifacts were probably documented or seen by Gadd and Kramer in 1963-6 and seem to provide robust textual contributions toward ID.<sup>120</sup> The translation of some of these UET artifacts is being done by the CDLI, as previously cited by Jeremiah Peterson's preprint record. Passage translation improvements are being released, albeit in small parts. Some artifacts, like the 3N-T ones from Sladek's dissertation, have been re-cataloged under the IM prefix (The IM prefix is the museum record number from the National Museum of Iraq) . The remaining three

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115. Dr. Englund mentored Dr. Suriano—the recipient of the present survey—while he was a candidate for earning his PhD at UCLA.

116. Cuneiform Digital Library Initiative (CDLI), “Cuneiform Digital Library Preprints,” *University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA)*, accessed May 10, 2019, <https://cdli.ucla.edu/?q=cuneiform-digital-library-preprints>.

117. Jeremiah Peterson, “The Literary Sumerian of Old Babylonian Ur: UET 6/1-3 in Transliteration and Translation with Select Commentary,” Cuneiform Digital Library Initiative (CDLI), *University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA)*, last modified April 16, 2019, [https://cdli.ucla.edu/pubs/cdlp/cdlp0017\\_20190416.pdf](https://cdli.ucla.edu/pubs/cdlp/cdlp0017_20190416.pdf).

118. CDLI, *Q000343*.

119. Aaron Shaffer and Marie-Christine Ludwig, *Ur Excavations Texts V6.3: Literary and Religious Texts* (London: British Museum Publications, 2006).

120. The CDLI composite lists many British Museum artifacts without a museum catalog number.

artifacts listed on CDLI's artifact source section list MS 3281 and MS 3282 as forthcoming publications by Konrad Volk, a German Assyriologist.<sup>121</sup> It is, therefore, likely that we can expect continued artifact translation publications and translation revisions to ID—hopefully, with the promise of a more robust and agreed-upon ending.

Other prominent scholars, as well as institutions, are actively contributing to better understanding ID. Since 1995, Dina Katz has published various journal articles and books that try to reconstruct Inanna's place in the pantheon of Sumerian literature and deities.<sup>122</sup> Other universities, like Cornell, are actively building their own digital libraries that resemble the ETCSL and CDLI (Cornell's efforts are in collaboration with the CDLI).<sup>123</sup> The University of Leiden in the Netherlands seems to be providing a population of interested scholars who are willing to migrate to the United States to join such research efforts. Numerous independent scholars are also doing graduate work on the matter. A recent search for scholarship related to ID on *academia.edu* yielded hundreds of search results within the last year.<sup>124</sup> As Kramer did so in 1937, German scholars like Nikita Artemov are also challenging previous scholars' interpretations of ID. For example, in 2012, Artemov contributed to a print volume whereby he asserted that the Sumerian concept of the netherworld represented geography indicative of the material Earth; that is, he argued that the netherworld represented a real location on a map, not an underground or metaphorical one.<sup>125</sup> Sladek and others have maintained that the netherworld

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121. CDLI, *Q000343*. [See bottom of page]

122. Dina Katz, ZA 85 (1995) 221-233, "Later Treatment in Images of the Netherworld," CDL Press 2003, Appendix 1 and *passim*.

123. Cuneiform Library at Cornell University, "Cuneiform Library: Introduction," *Cornell University*, accessed May 14, 2019, <http://cuneiform.library.cornell.edu/about-0>.

124. Academia.edu is a website that lets researchers and scholars share their work online with others. Researchgate.com is an online resource with similar functionality.

125. Nikita Artemov and Catherine Mittermayer, ed., "The Elusive Beyond: Some Notes on the Netherworld Geography in Sumerian Tradition" in *Altorientalische Studien zu Ehren von Pascal Attinger: mu-ni u\_1tn4 ul-li\_1tn2-a-aš ġa\_1tn2-ġa\_1tn2-de\_1tn3 [sic]*, Vol. Orbis Biblicus Et Orientalis, no. 256 (Fribourg

was an underground location. There are surely other ID scholars positing ideas that challenge the work of previous ones, and the present survey, unfortunately, cannot address them all.

Ultimately, while the major individuals that led initial scholarship on ID have passed, their work seems to be continuing in the form of fresh ideas, new individuals, and online tools accessible to a broader audience and readership.

### **The Future of ID (2020 and Beyond)**

Having covered the broad strokes of past scholarship on ID, let us briefly consider what the future may hold. While I wish I could present the reader with clear visibility into the future research direction of this fascinating myth, I do not have 20/20 vision. Puns aside, many disciplines require that authors reserve a section at the conclusion of the article for research limitations and promising areas of future inquiry. In affirming my limited experience in cuneiform script and Sumerian translation, I can only offer a brief list of areas that seem to be promising for future scholars who are properly trained. I must disclose to the reader that the items mentioned hereafter are entirely speculative and pure conjecture—that is, research efforts in these areas may not yield meaningful progress for ID or our understanding of Sumer. Additionally, previous works unknown to me or simultaneously published scholarship may have covered these areas already. Finally, I would like to make it crystal clear that in sharing my perspective on promising areas of research, I harbor no intention or attitude of disrespect toward the many scholars who contributed to the contents of the present survey. These scholars are

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[Germany]: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht): 1-2. [Artemov was not the first scholar to make such inferences. In 1982, Giorgio Buccellati made a case that ID is about a ritual-based relocation of a statue, citing maps he drew. In 1985, Andrew R. George made a similar case, highlighting the text's clear emphasis on Inanna's accessories and their material worth. The materials referenced were reconciled with mines located in proximity to mountain ranges that had mass quantities of such precious materials in ancient times. See the bibliography for details on these works.]

indeed giants, and worthy of a familiar phrase by Isaac Newton; if I am, by incredibly good fortune, seeing anything interesting, it is because I am standing on their shoulders.

In carefully reviewing and documenting fifty ID artifacts and some fifty translations, there are three outstanding *pink elephants*. For instance, a savvy historian will likely immediately recognize the problem associated with grouping fifty artifacts with extremely dubious (or nonexistent) provenance documentation into the same time period. Indeed, the CDLI, British Museum, Yale Museum, and Penn Museum all date the artifacts as belonging to the Old Babylonian period (ca. 1900 - 1600 BCE). The general cultural period seems to have been adopted from the earliest publications by Langdon. This dating estimate was factually mentioned in most publications as a single sentence and never challenged, to my knowledge. There does not seem to be any scholarship or analysis related to dating methodology or difference of opinion whatever. Thus, it seems promising to take advantage of newer and more robust dating methods in order to reassess the core assumption of the cultural period.

The second matter that may deserve future scholarship is the curious discrepancy between depictions and associations between Inanna and Ishtar. Objectively speaking, ID is a more recently discovered piece of Sumerian literature and was differentiated from the Assyrian “The Descent of Ishtar” (hereafter AI) in the last 120 years, according to previous references by Sladek. Indeed, scholarship related to the chronologically latter composition seems to be overlapping extensively with the former. The present survey intentionally withheld from mentioning AI more extensively because of the significant objective differences between the two compositions. For example, ID consists of 412 lines while AI is roughly a fourth of the line count. Several previous scholars have agreed that Sumerian Inanna was contextually different. In commenting that Inanna seemed more subdued than her Assyrian counterpart, Kramer’s

folklorist, Diane Wolkstein, likely did not nearly go far enough.<sup>126</sup> Inanna and Ishtar are often referenced as one and the same (sometimes a single deity named Inanna/Ishtar) when *perhaps* they should not be. It may therefore be beneficial to more carefully review the contextual differences in mentality, linguistic differences, cultural diffusion, and context that one thousand years of oral transmission can bring to a piece of mythology.

The third matter that may deserve future attention is the question of modality and audience analysis. It is reasonable to presume that the scholars who prepared the numerous translations sat and read the composition of ID many times over. While careful readings of source materials are important, interesting questions related to content consumption arise. If ID was meant to be read, who could have read it between 2,500 BCE and 1,800 BCE? Indeed, literacy rates present an immediate modality problem. As a starting point, global literacy rates in 1820 CE were estimated to be only 12 percent.<sup>127</sup> The lone strongly accepted study of literacy rates in ancient times was seemingly done by William Harris in 1989. Harris found that in Roman times (ca. 100 BCE), the literacy rate was roughly between 5 and 10 percent, for males in certain provinces.<sup>128</sup> If we backtrack even further to ca. 2000 BCE—just roughly one thousand years after the cuneiform writing system was likely invented—we can broadly speculate that there was no mass literacy or readership.<sup>129</sup> The modality then could not have been formal

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126. Kramer and Wolkstein, *Inanna*, xvi.

127. Max Roser and Esteban Ortiz-Ospina, "Literacy," last modified September 20, 2018, *Our World in Data*, <https://ourworldindata.org/literacy>

128. William V. Harris, *Ancient Literacy* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989), 22.

129. Samuel N. Kramer, "Schooldays: A Sumerian Composition Relating to the Education of a Scribe," *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 69, vol. 4 (Oct-Dec 1949): 199-215; Samuel N. Kramer, *History Begins at Sumer: Thirty-Nine Firsts in Recorded History* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1981), 3–5. [Kramer published artifact translations and commentary related to scribal schools in ancient Sumer; however, he clearly indicated that literary (non-accounting) works like ID were primarily dated to ca. 1000–1500 BCE. He argued that these isolated examples were a cultural exception, likely reserved exclusively for children of wealthy individuals. Consequently, these discoveries do not imply mass readership or literacy.]

readership as we practice today. Indeed, Kramer and many others have indicated that stories like ID were poetry intended for public consumption with the aid of a musical instrument.<sup>130</sup> However, this modality consideration is often tucked away in a footnote when *perhaps* it should not be. Perhaps this information deserves more concrete and scientific study in all facets of interpretation and analysis.

In light of the aforementioned literacy considerations, interesting questions emerge—who was ID initially written for, why was it written, and what are the implications of the answers to these questions? Was ID consumed by the masses in a public gathering at major cities like Ur and others, or was it intended for private royal gatherings of kings and Sumerian aristocracy? Did someone directly authorize its initial composition or was it an oral story that everyone just knew? What purpose (if any at all) did ID have in the broader scheme of Sumerian culture, especially during the turbulent times of the third and fourth Ur dynasties? The questions presented depart massively from spiritual or existential inquiry and dig deeper into the practical, political, and social facets of the poem's role. More can be said about this matter, but that endeavor is for future scholars with proper training to unpack.

### **Conclusion**

In these last few pages, we have outlined potential areas of research for ID. Of main concern was the issue of unknown artifact provenance, particularly as it relates to dating methods. The contextual differences between the Sumerian Inanna and Assyrian Ishtar were also cited as promising for the future of clarifying how the myth either evolved or was diffused into the latter from the former. Finally, statistics on literacy rates in ancient times were highlighted to show how the poetic nature of ID may provide important clues as to how it was meant to be

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130. Almost every scholarly publication pertaining to ID indicated the poetic modality of the poem.

consumed. Given the general trajectory of digital publishing and the desire for inclusive access of resources, it is highly likely that new and innovative digital indexes and tools will be designed for broader audiences. Such tools will likely connect researchers directly to the artifacts and original scholarship without the need for many years of proprietary training. The world is collectively grateful for the digital efforts by institutions like Oxford, Chicago, Penn, and UCLA, and more are likely to follow.

Whatever future scholarship on ID yields, it is my sincere hope that the few pages I have provided here will inspire and enable further interest in ID from all walks of life—regardless of discipline or other factors. If anything (at all) can be learned from the centennial survey presented, it is that advancements in understanding ID will require a team effort whereby new individuals will build on the work of prior generations. Perhaps then, we may hope to find out what *really* happened to Inanna's husband Dumuzi, why she would take a risky journey to be killed and hung like a rotting piece of meat at the hands of her sister, and whether she *really* repented for her actions. Then, finally, we may be able to confidently peer not just *at* but *into* those fierce alabaster carved eyes and see, as the Sumerians perhaps saw, a glimpse of Inanna's divine catharsis—or nothing whatever.

## Appendix A: Artifacts Table and Visualizations

When attempting to search for artifact publications related to ID, navigating through obscure abbreviations for defunct journals may cause researchers to spend more time than is necessary. **Table 3.1** provides an organized manifest of all artifacts related to ETCSL's 2001 version of ID and an abbreviation of each publication. Such a table may save future researchers valuable time and energy. In a similar vein, **Table 3.2** provides a comprehensive version of Table 1.1, whereby every artifact utilized in the ETCSL version of ID is listed by order of translated line number, first appearance, and frequency in a waterfall style view. All 412 lines of ID are mapped on axis A with respect to the associated artifact on axis B. A color key provides a museum number reference guide for the three-page table. Some artifacts have been purposefully excluded from this table and those reasons are provided in the footer of the table.

**Table 2.1. Detail artifact table for “Inanna’s descent to the nether world,” ETCSL (2001)**

#	Museum number(s) and corresponding lines of ID	Publications *
1/A	<b>CBS 12638 + 12702 + 12752 + 12684 (4 artifacts)</b> Lines: 1-31 (obverse), 32-48 (reverse)	SEM/OIP 15, Chiera, 1934, pl. 50. PAPS 85, Kramer, 1942, pg. 303. JCS 5, Kramer, 1951.
2/B	<b>CBS 13932</b> Lines: 1-25 (obverse), 26-29 (reverse)	SEM/OIP 15, Chiera, 1934, pl. 49. PAPS 85, Kramer, 1942, pg. 303. JCS 5, Kramer, 1951.
3/C	<b>CBS 9800 + Ni 368</b> Lines: 3-57 (Column I), 58-84, 89-113 (Column II), 114-167 (Column III), 168-211 (Column IV)	BE, Langdon, 1914, pl. 33. SRT, Chiera, 1924, pl. 53. RA 34, Kramer, 1937. RA 36, Kramer, 1939. PAPS 85, Kramer, 1942, pg. 293. JCS 5, Kramer, 1951, pg. 1. Sladek, 1974, pg. 100.
4/D	<b>Ni 2279</b> Lines: 3-23 (obverse), destroyed (reverse)	BE 31, Langdon, 1914, pl. 34. JAOS, Kramer, 1940, pg. 246.
5/E	<b>HS 1480 + HS 1580 + 2505</b> Lines: 5-45 (Column I), 55-95 (Column II), 124-173 (Column III), 185-236 (Column IV)	TMH NF 3, Kramer & Bernhardt, 1961, pl. 2. PAPS 107, Kramer, 1963, pg. 256-7, figure III.
6/F	<b>N 2523</b> Lines: 28 (obverse), 29-31 (reverse)	Sladek, 1974, pg. 281, Figure I.
7/G	<b>CBS 13908</b> Lines: 52-74 (obverse), 76-97 (reverse)	SEM/OIP 15, Chiera, 1934, pl. 48. PAPS 85, Kramer, 1942, pg. 303, pl. 5. JCS 5, Kramer, 1951, 001.
8/H	<b>CBS 12757</b> Lines: 59-61 (obverse), destroyed (reverse)	Sladek, 1974, pg. 282, Figure II.
9/I	<b>3N-T 211 (IM 058380)</b> Lines: 66-76 (obverse), 77-81 (reverse)	Sladek, 1974, pg. 283, Figure III.
10/J	<b>3N-T 499 (IM 058522)</b> Lines: 80-94 (obverse), 116-123 (reverse)	Sladek, 1974, pg. 284, Figure IV.
11/K	<b>Ni 4034</b> Lines: 89-94 (obverse), destroyed (reverse)	SLTNi, Kramer, 1944, pl. 030. PAPS 85, Kramer, 1942, pl. 10, pg. 323.
12/L	<b>BM 80054</b> Lines: 99-107 (obverse), 161-7 and 202-8 (reverse)	CT 58, Alster, 1990, pl. 49a.
13/M	<b>CBS 11064 + 11088</b> Lines: 100-23 (obverse), 124-44 (reverse)	PBS 5, Poebel, 1914, pl. 023. PAPS 85, Kramer, 1942, pg. 303. Sladek, 1974, pg. 101.
14/N	<b>Ni 9685</b> Lines: 107-22 (obverse), 129-40 (reverse)	JCS 4, Kramer, 1950, p. 214. Sladek, 1974, pg.101.
15/O	<b>UET 6/1 8 (UET VI 8)</b> Lines: 114-121 (Column I), 164-181 (Column II), 265-278 (Column III)	UET 6 8, Kramer & Gadd 1963. UET 6 8, Kramer & Gadd 1966. UET 6 8, Shaffer, 2006.

<b>16/P BM 80094</b> Lines: 115-129, 130-135 (obverse), 185-189, 195-203, 209-217 (reverse)	CT 58, Alster, 1990, pl. 49b.
<b>17/Q CBS (?) lost artifact</b> Lines: 131-135 (obverse), destroyed (reverse)	PBS 5 24, Poebel, 1914, pl. 24.
<b>18/R CBS 15212</b> Lines: 145, 147-149, 150-177 (obverse), 180-207 (reverse)	BASOR 79, Kramer, 1940, pg. 22-3. PAPS 85, Kramer, 1942, pl. 7.
<b>19/S UET 6/1 9 (UET VI 9)</b> Lines: 149, 151-154, 156-166 (obverse), 167-177 (reverse)	UET 6 9, Kramer & Gadd 1963. UET 6 9, Kramer & Gadd 1966. UET 6 9, Shaffer, 2006.
<b>20/T Ni 4200 + Ni 4187</b> Lines: 211-233 (obverse), 234-253 (reverse)	PAPS 85, Kramer, 1942, pl. 8. PAPS 107, Kramer, 1963, pg. 525. SLTNi, Kramer, 1944, pl. 028. RA 36, Kramer, 1939, pg. 78.
<b>21/U BM 17427</b> Lines: 224-230 (obverse), 253-257 (reverse)	CT 42, Figulla, 1959, pl. 03. JCS 23, Kramer, 1970, pl. 010.
<b>22/V UET 6/1 10 (UET VI 10)</b> Lines: 231-251, 280-295 (obverse), 351-398 (reverse), 398-412 (reverse)	UET 6 10, Kramer & Gadd 1963. UET 6 10, Kramer & Gadd 1966. UET 6 10, Shaffer, 2006.
<b>23/W Ni 9838 + Ni 2762</b> Lines: 253-274 (obverse), 287-312 (reverse)	ISET 2, Kramer, 1976, pl. 17, Ni 9838. SLTNi, Kramer, 1944, pl. 029. PAPS 85, Kramer, 1942, pl. 8, Ni 2762. PAPS 107, Kramer, 1963, pg. 524, fg. 8, Ni 9838.
<b>24/X N 983</b> Lines: 258-265 (obverse), destroyed (reverse)	Sladek, 1975, pg. 285, Figure V.
<b>25/Y YBC 4621 (now YPM BC 018686)</b> Lines: 273-325 (obverse), 327-375 (reverse)	JCS 4, Kramer, 1950, pg. 212-3. ASJ 18, Alster, 1996.
<b>26/Z CBS 13902</b> Lines: 275-306 (obverse), 307-339 (reverse)	PBS 5, Poebel, 1914, pl. 022. PAPS 85, Kramer, 1942, pl. 9. JCS 5, Kramer, 1951.
<b>27/a 3N-T 400 (Museum No. IM 058460)</b> Lines: 300-333 (obverse), 340-370 (reverse)	Sladek, 1974, pg. 286-7, Figures VI-VII
<b>28/b Ni 9776</b> Lines: Destroyed (obverse), 322-327, 339-340 (Column I, reverse), 376-384 (Column II, reverse)	ISET 1, Kramer & Muazzez, pg. 183, pl. 025.
<b>29/c CBS 15162 + N 953 + N 3200</b> Lines: 338-354 (obverse), 358 (reverse), 345-351 (obverse)	PAPS 85, Kramer, 1942, pl. 10, CBS 15162. Sladek, 1974, pg. 288, Figure VIII. BPOA 09 033, Peterson, 2011.
<b>30/d N 2986</b> Lines: Different composition (obverse), 375-380 (reverse)	Sladek, 1974, Figure IX JCS 29, Sjöberg, 1977, pg. 33.
<b>31/e CBS 6894</b> Lines: Destroyed (obverse), 380-412 (reverse)	ASJ 18, Alster, 1996, pg. 10.
<b>32/f BM 67932</b> Lines: (?)	BMDR, 67932.

<b>33/g BM 69737</b> Lines: (?)	PAPS 124, Kramer, pg. 297-8, 302. CT 58, Alster & Geller, 1990, pl. 50, pg. 62.
<b>34/h BM 96680</b> Lines: (?)	PAPS 124, Kramer, 1980, pg. 297-8. BA 46, Kramer, 1983, pg. 74. BMDR, 96680. AuOr 05, Kramer, 1987, 89-90.
<b>35/i UET 6 *269</b>	CDLI
<b>36/j UET 6 *306</b>	CDLI
<b>37/k UET 6 *320</b>	CDLI

**Table 2.2. Waterfall view of cuneiform sources for “Inanna’s Descent” (lines 1-145)**

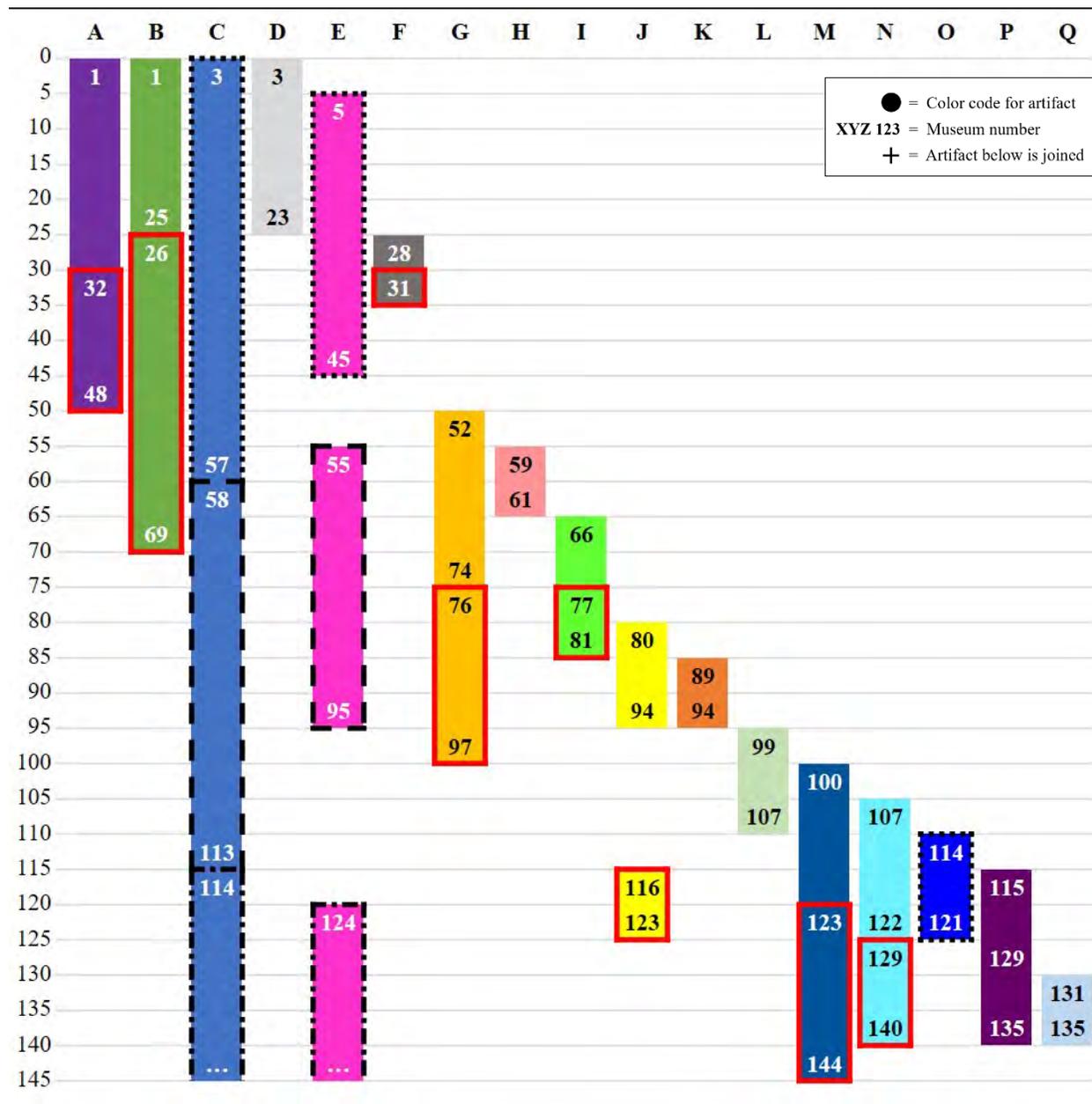
**Cuneiform sources by line count and first appearance**

**Artifact color key**

<p><b>A</b> CBS 12638 + CBS 12702 + CBS 12752 + CBS 12684</p> <p><b>B</b> CBS 13932</p> <p><b>C</b> CBS 9800 + Ni 368</p>	<p><b>D</b> Ni 2279</p> <p><b>E</b> HS 1480 + HS 1580 + HS 2505</p> <p><b>F</b> N 2523</p> <p><b>G</b> CBS 13908</p>	<p><b>H</b> CBS 12757</p> <p><b>I</b> 3N-T 211</p> <p><b>J</b> 3N-T 499</p> <p><b>K</b> Ni 4034</p> <p><b>L</b> BM 80054</p>	<p><b>M</b> CBS 11064 + CBS 11088</p> <p><b>N</b> Ni 9685</p> <p><b>O</b> UET 6/1 8</p> <p><b>P</b> BM 80094</p> <p><b>Q</b> CBS (?) lost</p>
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**Border key**

<span style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 10px; height: 10px;"></span> = Obverse	<span style="border: 1px solid red; display: inline-block; width: 10px; height: 10px;"></span> = Reverse
<span style="border: 1px dashed black; display: inline-block; width: 10px; height: 10px;"></span> = Column I	<span style="border: 1px dashed gray; display: inline-block; width: 10px; height: 10px;"></span> = Column II
<span style="border: 1px dotted black; display: inline-block; width: 10px; height: 10px;"></span> = Column III	<span style="border: 1px dotted gray; display: inline-block; width: 10px; height: 10px;"></span> = Column IV



**Table 2.2. Waterfall view of cuneiform sources for “Inanna’s Descent” (lines 145-290)**

**Cuneiform sources by line count and first appearance**

**Artifact color key**

<b>C</b> CBS 9800 + Ni 368	<b>O</b> UET 6/1 8	<b>U</b> BM 17427	<b>Y</b> YBC 4621
<b>E</b> HS 1480 + HS 1580 + HS 2505	<b>P</b> BM 80094	<b>V</b> UET 6/1 10	<b>Z</b> CBS 13902
<b>L</b> BM 80054	<b>R</b> CBS 15212	<b>W</b> Ni 9838 + Ni 2762	
	<b>S</b> UET 6/1 9	<b>X</b> N 983	
	<b>T</b> Ni 4200 + Ni 4187		

**Border key**

 = Obverse	 = Reverse
 = Column I	 = Column II
 = Column III	 = Column IV

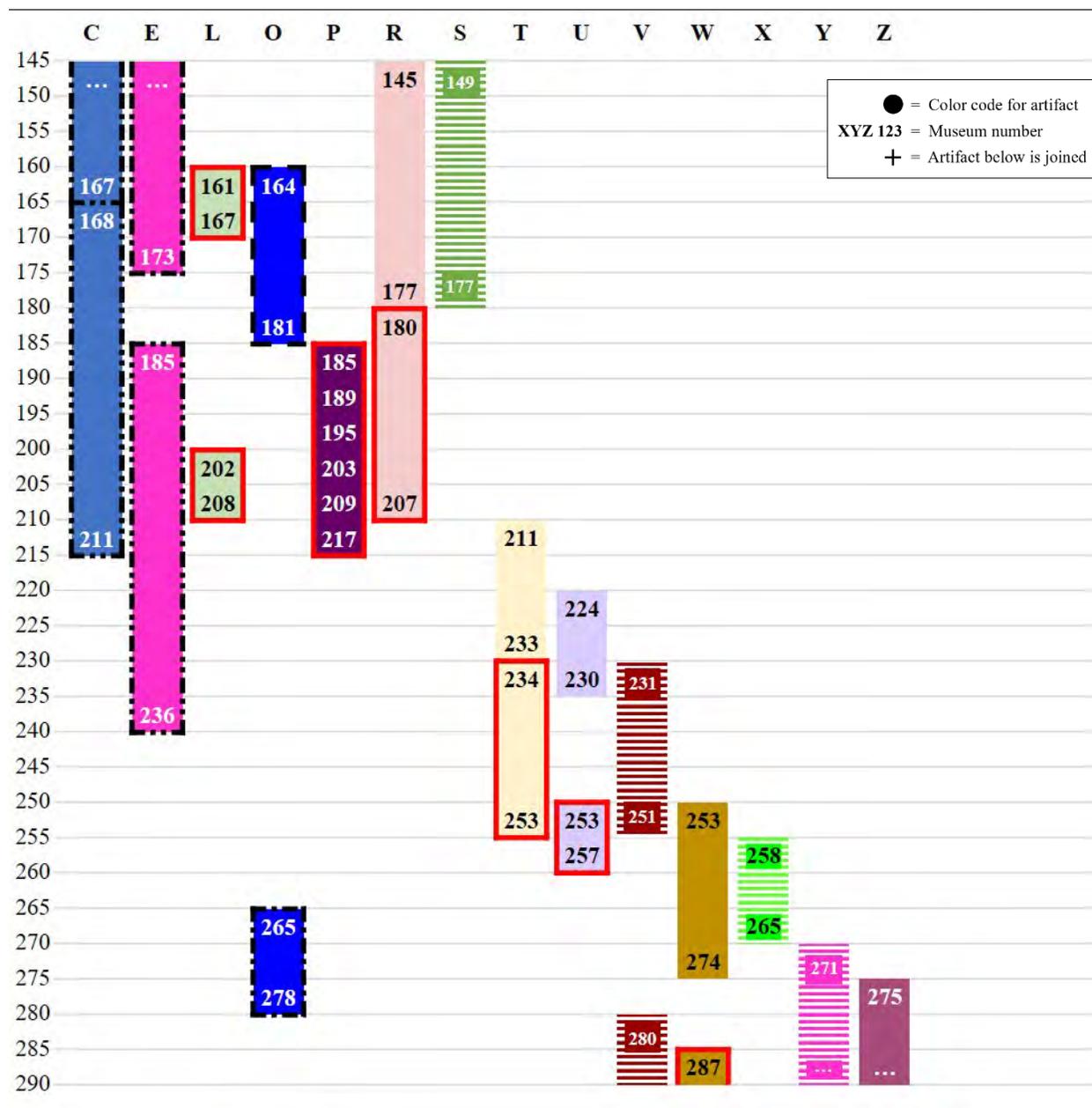


Table 2.2. Waterfall view of cuneiform sources for “Inanna’s Descent” (lines 290-412)

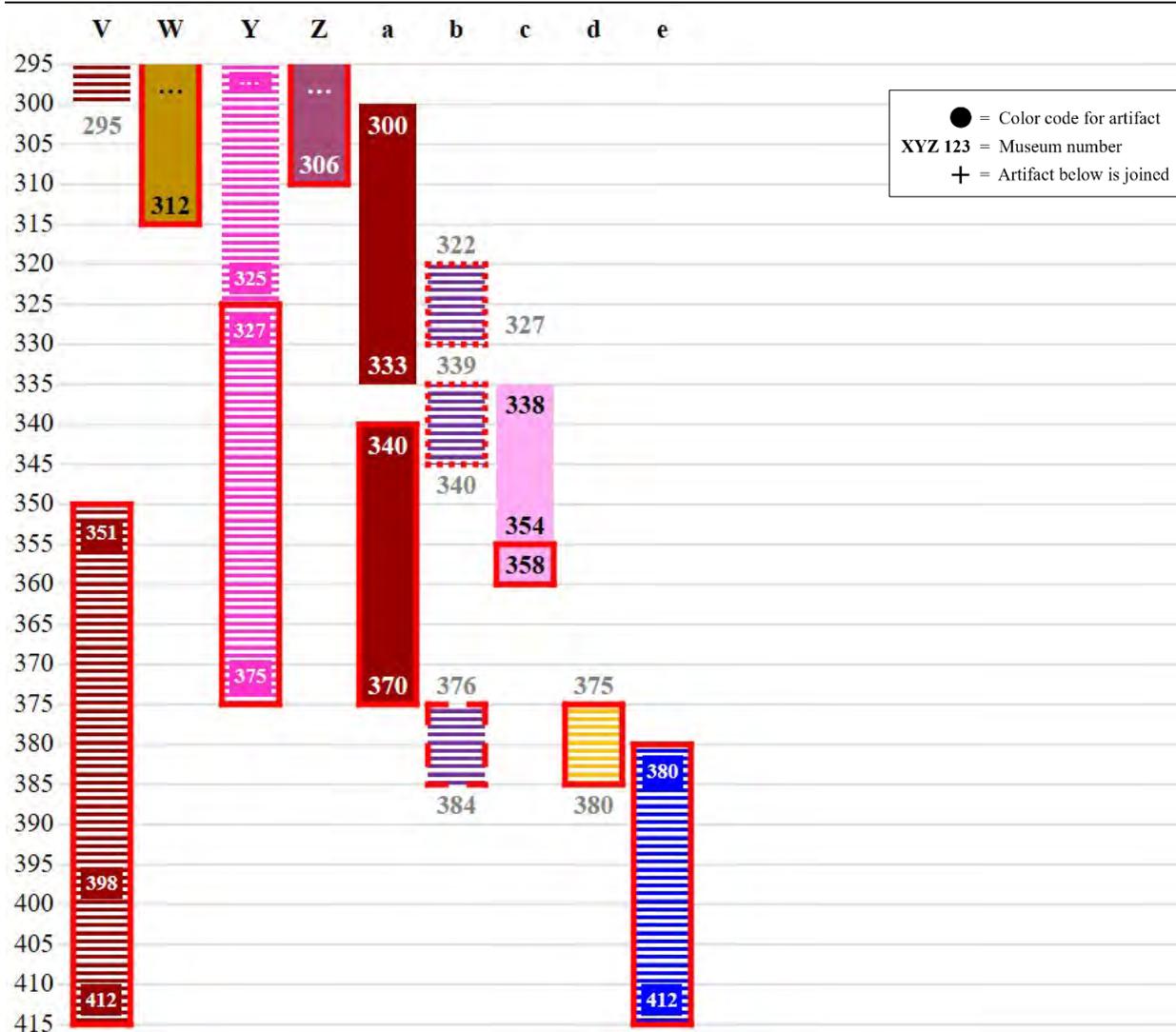
## Cuneiform sources by line count and first appearance

## Artifact color key \*

## Border key

	= Obverse		= Reverse
	= Column I		= Column II
	= Column III		= Column IV



Note: Lines 380-412 rely solely on two sources, clouding our precise understanding of the myth’s ending.

\* Artifacts f – k are not included in the line count table because they either belong to different compositions or may have been recataloged by the museum. Please see the full artifact page in Appendix B for more precise information.

## Appendix B: All Artifact Data

Less experienced researchers in other disciplines or members of the general public interested in ID may have trepidation over using currently available online resources for the purpose of artifact research and discovery. For that reason, the following appendix provides detail pages for all cuneiform artifacts utilized in the 2001 ETCSL version of ID. Full citations and references are provided as well as links to online indexes of similar contents.

Basic information about each artifact is provided: museum number, line numbers, current location, initial publication, secondary publication(s), CDLI number, photograph, and the autograph (where available). Artifacts are listed in the order they appear on the tables in Appendix B and are color coded similarly to the waterfall table for easier side-by-side comparison. Redactions and other useful notes are listed in the foot of each table as an additional resource. The fully listed citations are purposefully redundant so that less familiar researchers do not have to rely on navigating between the bibliography and appendix.

While this appendix does not provide *all* the information needed for future researchers interested in ID, it may provide a useful introductory framework that will assist in artifact location and identification. Please note that catalog numbers and classification information may change, so the utility of this (and any) static resource will diminish with respect to the time of its publication. All data are current as of April 8, 2019. Unless otherwise noted, the high-resolution color images are derived from the corresponding CDLI record for the artifact in question.

All contents from the CDLI and other sources are property of their respective owners. The fair use of third-party images and artifacts within this unpublished undergraduate seminar research paper is asserted through its purely educational and noncommercial nature. All other non-third-party contents have rights reserved by the author.

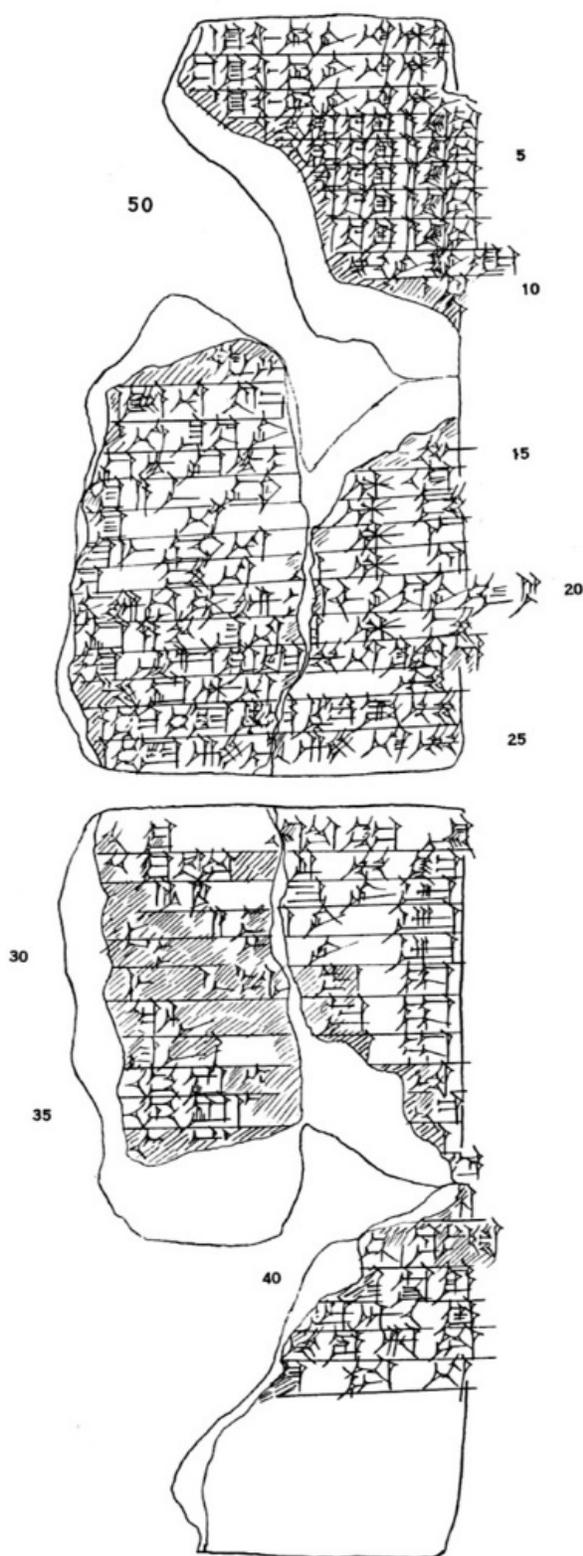
<b>1/A</b>	<b>CBS 12638 + 12702 + 12572 + 12684</b>	<b>Locate</b>
	<b>Lines:</b> 1-31 (obverse), 32-48 (reverse) <b>Location:</b> Penn Museum (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania)	<b>CDLI:</b> <a href="#">P267276</a> <b>OMNIKA:</b> <a href="#">CBS 12XXX</a>
<b>Publications: Shorthand Name &amp; Full Citation</b>		<b>Includes</b>
<b>OIP 15 or SEM 50</b>		Line art (sketches)
<p>Chiera, Edward. <i>Sumerian Epics and Myths: Cuneiform Series—Volume III</i>. The Oriental Institute, Vol. 15. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1934. [See plate no. 50; Available on the Oriental Institute’s website:  <a href="https://oi.uchicago.edu/sites/oi.uchicago.edu/files/uploads/shared/docs/oip15.pdf">https://oi.uchicago.edu/sites/oi.uchicago.edu/files/uploads/shared/docs/oip15.pdf</a>]</p>		
<b>PAPS 85</b>		Translation Transliteration Collation Commentary
<p>Kramer, Samuel N. “Sumerian Literature; A Preliminary Survey of the Oldest Literature in the World.” <i>Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society</i> 85, no. 3 (February 1942): 293-323.</p>		
<b>JCS 05</b>		Translation Transliteration Commentary
<p>Kramer, Samuel N. “‘Inanna’s Descent to the Nether World’ Continued and Revised. Second Part: Revised Edition of ‘Inanna’s Descent to the Nether World.’” <i>Journal of Cuneiform Studies</i> 5, no. 1 (1951): 1-17.</p>		

1/A CBS 12638 + 12702 + 12572 + 12684 \*

Photo



Line art (sketch)



\* More 12XXX series artifacts have been added to this source and later versions of the ID composition.

<b>2/B</b>	<b>CBS 13932</b> <b>Lines:</b> 1-25 (obverse), 26-69 (reverse) <b>Location:</b> Penn Museum (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania)	<b>Locate</b> <b>CDLI:</b> <a href="#">P268937</a> <b>OMNIKA:</b> <a href="#">CBS 13932</a>
	<b>Publications: Shorthand Name &amp; Full Citation</b>	<b>Includes</b>
	<b>OIP 15 or SEM 49</b> Chiera, Edward. <i>Sumerian Epics and Myths: Cuneiform Series—Volume III</i> . The Oriental Institute, Vol. 15. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1934. [See plate no. 49; Available on the Oriental Institute’s website: <a href="https://oi.uchicago.edu/sites/oi.uchicago.edu/files/uploads/shared/docs/oip15.pdf">https://oi.uchicago.edu/sites/oi.uchicago.edu/files/uploads/shared/docs/oip15.pdf</a> ]	Line art (sketches)
	<b>PAPS 85</b> Kramer, Samuel N. “Sumerian Literature; A Preliminary Survey of the Oldest Literature in the World.” <i>Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society</i> 85, no. 3 (February 1942): 293-323.	Translation Collation
	<b>JCS 05</b> Kramer, Samuel N. “‘Inanna’s Descent to the Nether World’ Continued and Revised. Second Part: Revised Edition of ‘Inanna’s Descent to the Nether World.’” <i>Journal of Cuneiform Studies</i> 5, no. 1 (1951): 1-17.	Translation

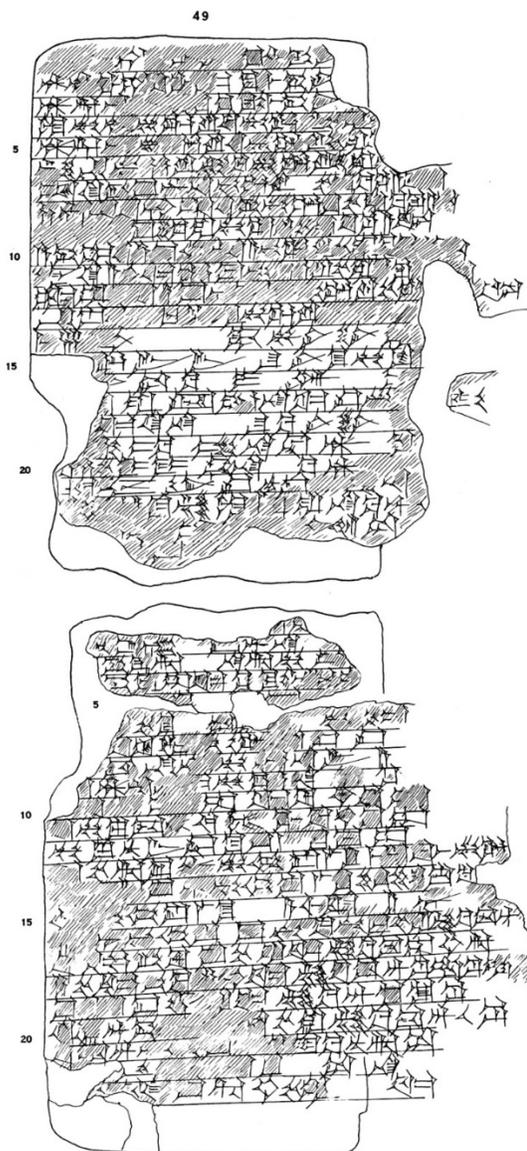
2/B

CBS 13932

Photo



Line art (sketch)



\* More 12XXX series artifacts have been added to this source and later versions of the ID composition.

3/C	<b>CBS 9800 + Ni 368</b> <b>Lines:</b> 3-57 (Column I), 58-84, 89-113 (Column II), 114-167 (Column III), 168-211 (Column IV) <b>Location:</b> Penn Museum (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania) [CBS 9800]; Istanbul Archaeology Museum (Istanbul, Turkey) [Ni 368]	<b>Locate</b> <b>CDLI:</b> <a href="#">P345344</a> <b>OMNIKA:</b> <a href="#">CBS 9800</a> + <a href="#">Ni 368</a>
	<b>Publications: Shorthand Name &amp; Full Citation</b>	<b>Includes</b>
<b>BE Vol. 31, Plate 33</b> Langdon, Stephen. <i>The Babylonian Expedition of The University of Pennsylvania: Series A: Cuneiform Texts</i> . Vol. XXXI, <i>Historical and Religious Texts from the Temple Library of Nippur</i> . Leipzig: August Pries, 1914. [Sketch of Ni 368; Plate 34 also contains Ni 2279]	Line art (sketches)	
<b>RA 36</b> Kramer, Samuel N. "Additional Material to « INANNA'S DESCENT TO THE NETHER WORLD »." <i>Revue d'Assyriologie et d'Archéologie Orientale</i> 36, No. 2 (1939): 68-80. [See pages 72 and 75 for photographs of Ni 368]	Photograph Partial collation Commentary	
<b>RA 34</b> Kramer, Samuel N. "Inanna's Descent to the Nether World. The Sumerian Version of Ištar's Descent." <i>Revue d'Assyriologie et d'Archéologie Orientale</i> 34, No. 3 (1937): 93-134. [See pages 72 and 75 for photographs of CBS 9800; Kramer noted CBS 9800 could not be copied because of its condition.]	Photograph Translation Collation Transliteration	
<b>SRT, Plate 53</b> Chiera, Edward. <i>Sumerian Religious Texts</i> . Upland: Crozer Theological Seminary, 1924. [Sketch of Ni 368]	Line art (sketches)	
<b>PAPS 85</b> Kramer, Samuel N. "Sumerian Literature; A Preliminary Survey of the Oldest Literature in the World." <i>Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society</i> 85, no. 3 (February 1942): 293-323.	Translation Collation	
<b>JCS 05</b> Kramer, Samuel N. "'Inanna's Descent to the Nether World' Continued and Revised. Second Part: Revised Edition of 'Inanna's Descent to the Nether World.'" <i>Journal of Cuneiform Studies</i> 5, no. 1 (1951): 1-17.	Translation	
<b>Sladek Inanna</b> Sladek, William R. "Inanna's Descent to the Netherworld." Ann Arbor: University Microfilms, 1974.	Translation Transliteration Collation Commentary	

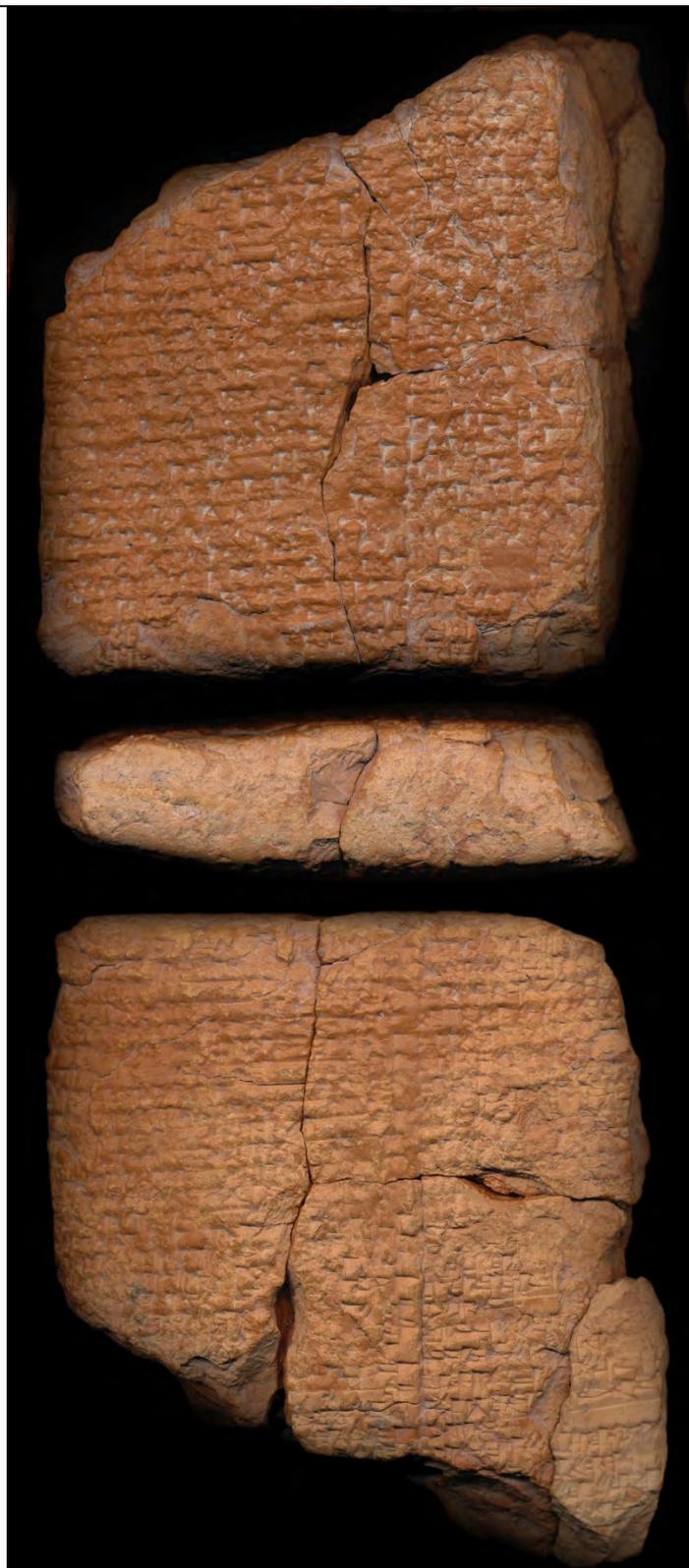
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**3/C CBS 9800 (Columns III & IV)**

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**Photo**

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\* Because of the condition of CBS 9800, Kramer cited that he could not copy sketches of it (unpublished).

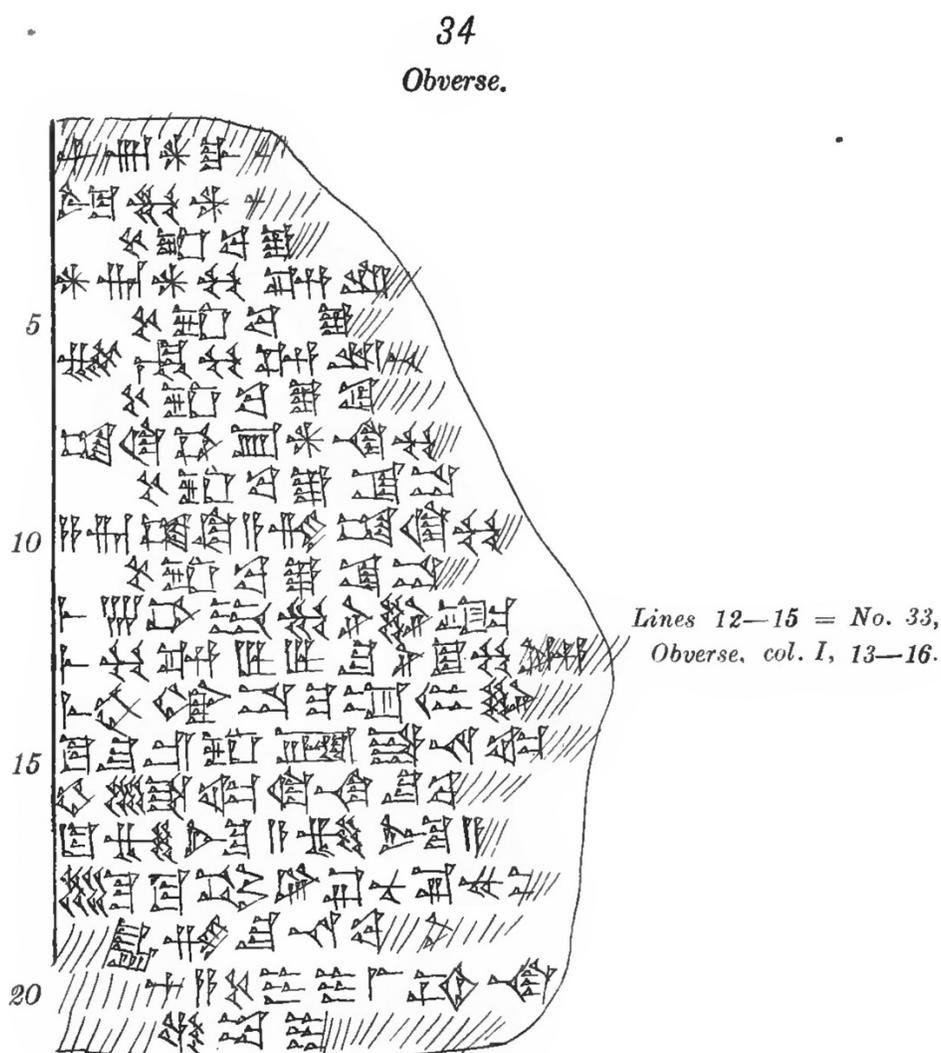


<b>4/D</b>	<b>Ni 2279</b>	<b>Locate</b>
	<b>Lines:</b> 3-23 (obverse), destroyed (reverse) <b>Location:</b> Istanbul Archaeology Museum (Istanbul, Turkey)	<b>CDLI:</b> <a href="#">P345106</a> <b>OMNIKA:</b> <a href="#">Ni 2279</a>
<b>Publications: Shorthand Name &amp; Full Citation</b>		<b>Includes</b>
<b>BE Vol. 31, Plate 34</b>		Line art (sketches)
Langdon, Stephen. <i>The Babylonian Expedition of The University of Pennsylvania: Series A: Cuneiform Texts</i> . Vol. XXXI, <i>Historical and Religious Texts from the Temple Library of Nippur</i> . Leipzig: August Pries, 1914. [Plate 33 also contains Ni 368]		
<b>JAOS 60</b>		Translation Collation
Kramer, Samuel N. "Langdon's Historical and Religious Texts from the Temple Library of Nippur-Additions and Corrections." <i>Journal of the American Oriental Society</i> 60, no. 2 (June 1940): 234-257. [See page 246]		

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**Line art (sketch)**

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\* Photos could not be recovered for this artifact.

<b>5/E</b>	<p><b>HS 1480 + HS 1580 + 2505</b></p> <p><b>Lines:</b> 5-45 (Column I), 55-95 (Column II), 124-173 (Column III), 185-236 (Column IV)</p> <p><b>Location:</b> University of Jena, Germany (Hilprecht collection)</p>	<p><b>Locate</b></p> <p><b>CDLI:</b> <a href="#">P345597</a></p> <p><b>OMNIKA:</b> <a href="#">HS Series</a></p>
	<p><b>Publications: Shorthand Name &amp; Full Citation</b></p> <hr/> <p><b>TMH NF 3</b></p> <p>Kramer, Samuel N., and Inez Bernhardt. <i>Texte und Materialien der Frau Professor Hilprecht-Sammlung vorderasiatischer Altertümer im Eigentum der Friedrich-Schiller-Universität Jen.</i> Vol. 1. <i>Mythen, Epen, Weisheitsliteratur und andere Literaturgattungen.</i> Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1961. [See NF III]</p> <hr/> <p><b>PAPS 107</b></p> <p>Kramer, Samuel N. "Cuneiform Studies and the History of Literature: The Sumerian Sacred Marriage Texts." <i>Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society</i> 107, no. 6 (December 20, 1963): 485-527. [See figure 3, pages 526-7]</p>	<p><b>Includes</b></p> <p>Translation</p> <hr/> <p>Photograph Translation Transliteration Commentary</p>

Photo (obverse)

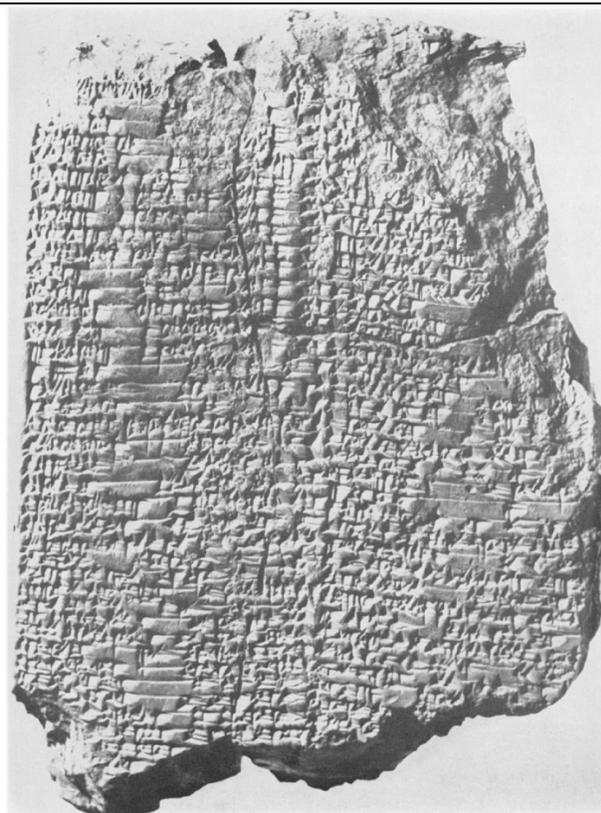
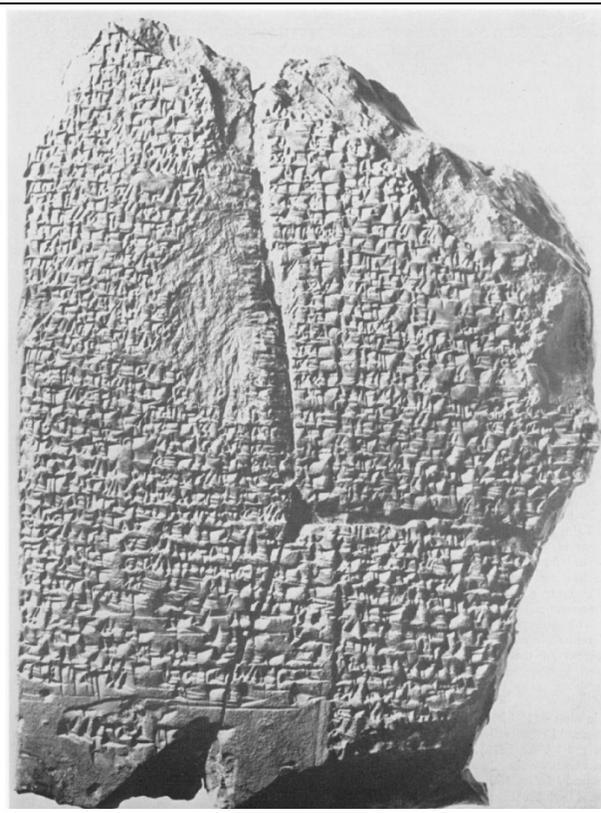
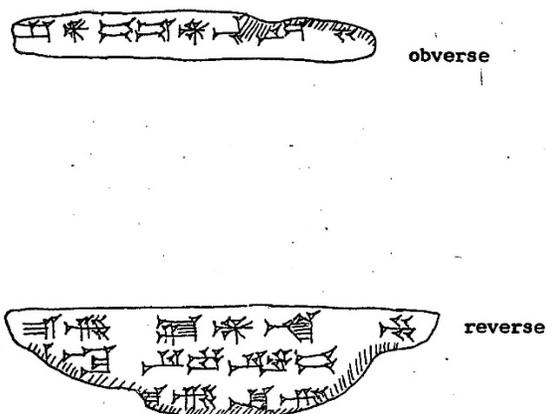


Photo (reverse)



\* Line art could not be located.

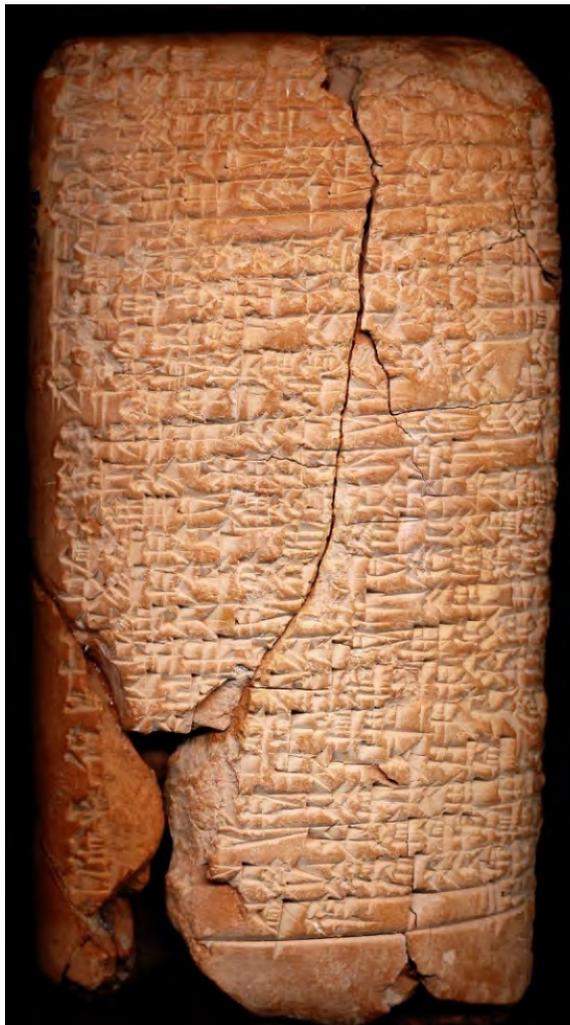
<b>6/F</b>	<b>N 2523</b> <b>Lines:</b> 28 (obverse), 29-31 (reverse) <b>Location:</b> Penn Museum (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania)	<b>Locate</b> <b>CDLI:</b> <a href="#">P275003</a> <b>OMNIKA:</b> <a href="#">N 2523</a>
	<b>Publications: Shorthand Name &amp; Full Citation</b> <b>Sladek Inanna</b> Sladek, William R. "Inanna's Descent to the Netherworld." Ann Arbor: University Microfilms, 1974, 281. [Figure I]	<b>Includes</b> Line art (sketches) Translation Transliteration Collation Commentary

**Photo****Line art (sketch)**

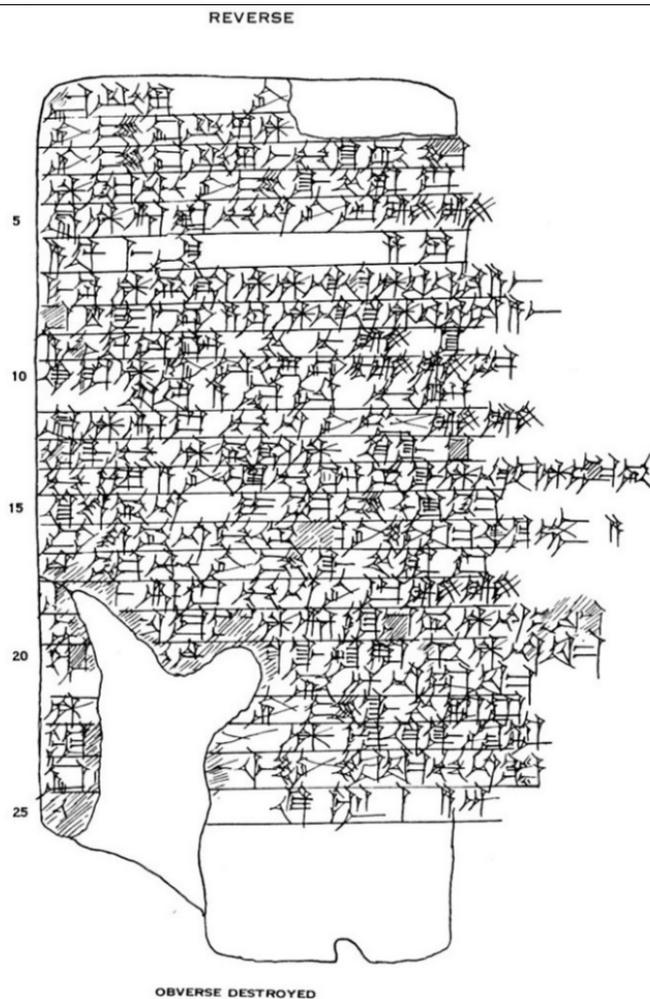
7/G	CBS 13908	Locate
	<p><b>Lines:</b> 52-74 (obverse), 76-97 (reverse)  <b>Location:</b> Penn Museum (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania)</p>	<p><b>CDLI:</b> <a href="#">P268918</a>  <b>OMNIKA:</b> <a href="#">CBS 13908</a></p>
Publications: Shorthand Name & Full Citation	Includes	
<p><b>OIP 15</b> or <b>SEM 48</b></p>	<p>Line art (sketches)</p>	
<p>Chiera, Edward. <i>Sumerian Epics and Myths: Cuneiform Series—Volume III</i>. The Oriental Institute, Vol. 15. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1934. [See plate no. 48; Available on the Oriental Institute’s website: <a href="https://oi.uchicago.edu/sites/oi.uchicago.edu/files/uploads/shared/docs/oip15.pdf">https://oi.uchicago.edu/sites/oi.uchicago.edu/files/uploads/shared/docs/oip15.pdf</a>]</p>		
<p><b>PAPS 85</b></p>	<p>Translation Transliteration Collation</p>	
<p>Kramer, Samuel N. “Sumerian Literature; A Preliminary Survey of the Oldest Literature in the World.” <i>Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society</i> 85, no. 3 (February 1942): 293-323. [Plate number 5]</p>		
<p><b>JCS 05</b></p>	<p>Translation Photograph</p>	
<p>Kramer, Samuel N. “‘Inanna’s Descent to the Nether World’ Continued and Revised. Second Part: Revised Edition of ‘Inanna’s Descent to the Nether World.’” <i>Journal of Cuneiform Studies</i> 5, no. 1 (1951): 1-17. [Plate number 5]</p>		
<p><b>BPOA 09 030</b></p>	<p>Line art (sketches)</p>	
<p>Peterson, Jeremiah. <i>Sumerian Literary Fragments in the University Museum, Philadelphia. (Biblioteca del Próximo Oriente Antiguo, 9.)</i> 372 pp., 68 plates. Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 2011.</p>		

7/G CBS 13908

Photo

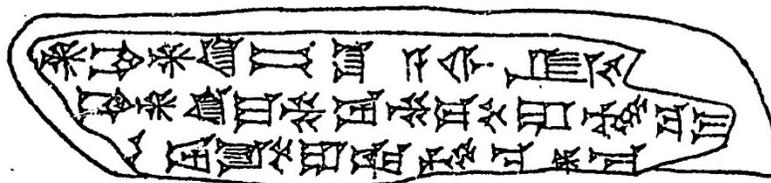


Line art (sketch) \*



\* The obverse side of the tablet seems to be destroyed.

<b>8/H</b>	<b>CBS 12757</b>	<b>Locate</b>
	<b>Lines:</b> 59-61 (obverse), destroyed (reverse) <b>Location:</b> Penn Museum (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania)	<b>CDLI:</b> <a href="#">P267359</a> <b>OMNIKA:</b> <a href="#">CBS 12757</a>
<b>Publications: Shorthand Name &amp; Full Citation *</b>		<b>Includes</b>
<b>Sladek Inanna</b> Sladek, William R. "Inanna's Descent to the Netherworld." Ann Arbor: University Microfilms, 1974, 282. [Figure II]		Line art (sketch) Translation Transliteration Collation Commentary
<b>Line Art (sketch) **</b>		



obverse

\* The CDLI lists this artifact as being originally published by "Shaffer, Aaron, Inanna, p.101 [sic]." This citation and the contents of the publication could not be verified.

\*\* A photograph could not be recovered for this artifact.

**3N-T 211 (Museum No. IM 058380)****9/1****Lines:** 66-76 (obverse), 77-81 (reverse)**Location:** National Museum of Iraq (Baghdad, Iraq)**Locate**CDLI: [P274954](#)OMNIKA: [3N-T 211](#)**Publications: Shorthand Name & Full Citation****Includes****Sladek Inanna**

Sladek, William R. "Inanna's Descent to the Netherworld." Ann Arbor: University Microfilms, 1974, 283. [Figure III]

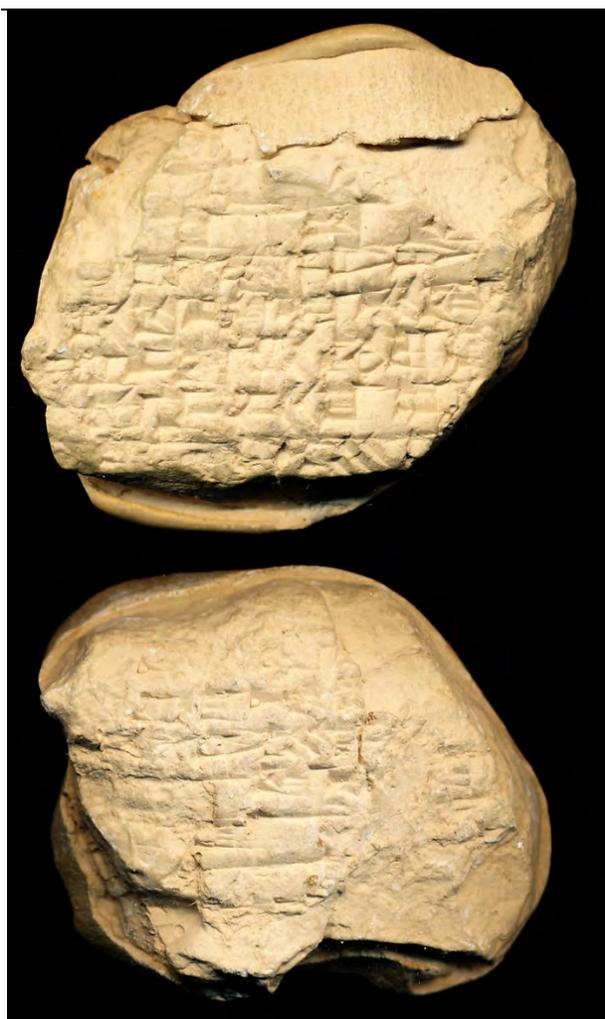
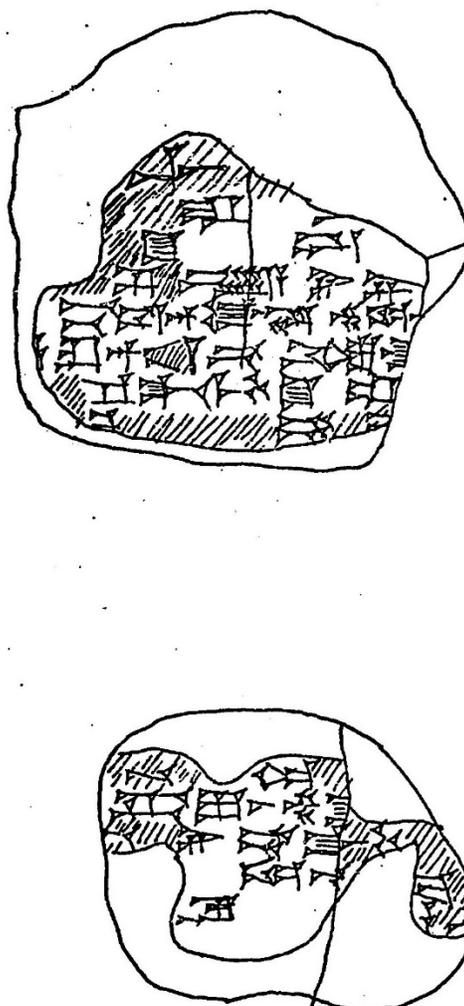
Line art (sketch)

Translation

Transliteration

Collation

Commentary

**Photo****Line art (sketch) \***

\* The top is the obverse and the bottom is the reverse side.

**3N-T 499 (Museum No. IM 058522)****10/J****Lines:** 80-94 (obverse), 116-123 (reverse)**Location:** National Museum of Iraq (Baghdad, Iraq)**Locate**CDLI: [P274957](#)OMNIKA: [3N-T 499](#)**Publications: Shorthand Name & Full Citation****Includes****Sladek Inanna**

Sladek, William R. "Inanna's Descent to the Netherworld." Ann Arbor: University Microfilms, 1974, 284. [Figure IV]

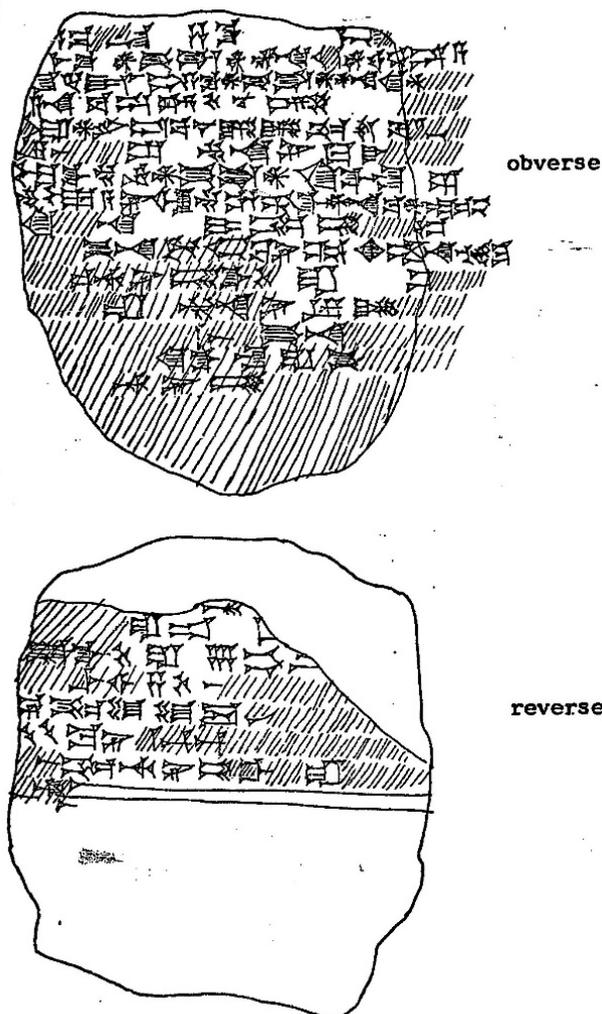
Line art (sketch)

Translation

Transliteration

Collation

Commentary

**Photo****Line art (sketch)**

**11/K****Ni 4034 \*****Lines:** 89-94 (obverse), destroyed (reverse)**Location:** Istanbul Archaeology Museum (Istanbul, Turkey)**Locate****CDLI:** [P345161](#)**OMNIKA:** [Ni 4034](#)**Publications: Shorthand Name & Full Citation****Includes****SLTNi or SLT 1944**

Line art (sketch)

Kramer, Samuel N. *Annual of the American Schools of Oriental Research*. Vol. XXIII. *Sumerian Literary Texts from Nippur in the Museum of the Ancient Orient at Istanbul*. New Haven: 1944. [Plate XV (15), number 30]

**PAPS 85**

Translation

Kramer, Samuel N. "Sumerian Literature; A Preliminary Survey of the Oldest Literature in the World." *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 85, no. 3 (February 1942): 293-323. [Plate 10, page 323]

Transliteration

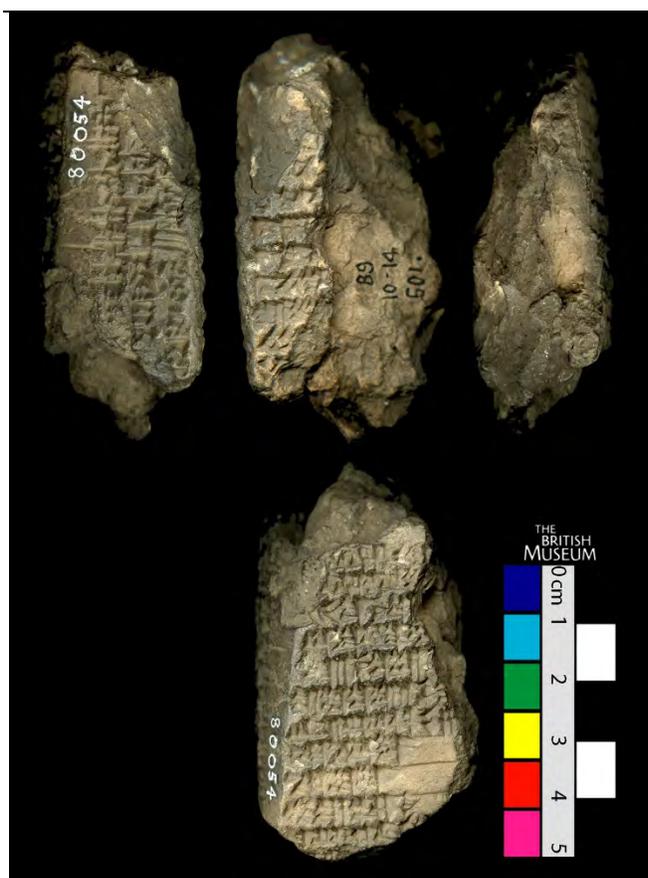
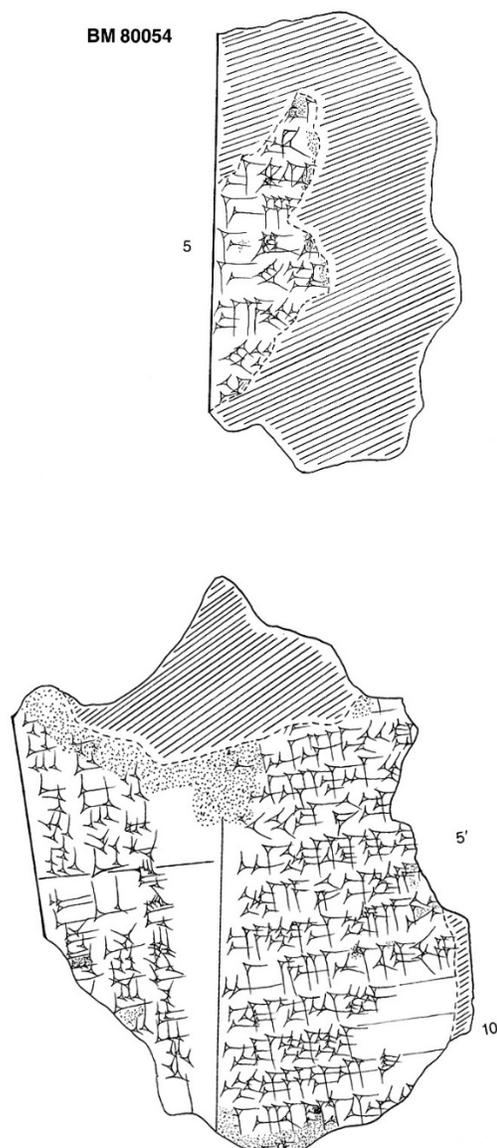
Collation

Line art (sketch)

**Line art (sketch)****OBVERSE****Reverse Destroyed**

\* Existence of a photograph is not confirmed.

<b>12/L</b>	<b>BM 80054</b>	<b>Locate</b>
	<b>Lines:</b> 99-107 (obverse), 161-7 and 202-8 (reverse) <b>Location:</b> British Museum (London, United Kingdom)	<b>CDLI:</b> <a href="#">P274244</a> <b>OMNIKA:</b> <a href="#">BM 80054</a>
<b>Publications: Shorthand Name &amp; Full Citation *</b>		<b>Includes</b>
<b>CT 58</b> Alster, Bendt, and Geller, Markham J. <i>Cuneiform Texts from Babylonian Tablets in the British Museum</i> . Vol. [Part] 58. <i>Sumerian Literary Texts</i> . London: British Museum Publications, 1990. [Plate 49a]		Translation Transliteration Collation Photograph Line art (sketches)

**Photo****Line art (sketch)**

\* The British Museum lists publication of the artifact under the name “Leichty E et al 1988a p.212-3” and indicates it is joined with BM 80094, another artifact in this composition.

13/M	<b>CBS 11064 + 11088</b> <b>Lines:</b> 100-23 (obverse), 124-44 (reverse) <b>Location:</b> Penn Museum (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania)	<b>Locate</b> <b>CDLI:</b> <a href="#">P266238</a> <b>OMNIKA:</b> <a href="#">CBS 11064+11088</a>
<b>Publications: Shorthand Name &amp; Full Citation</b>		<b>Includes</b>
<b>PBS 5</b> Poebel, Arno. <i>The University of Pennsylvania: The University Museum Publications of the Babylonian Section</i> . Vol. 5 [V]. <i>Historical and Grammatical Texts</i> . Philadelphia: The University Museum, 1914. <a href="https://archive.org/details/historicalandgr00sectgoog/page/n6">https://archive.org/details/historicalandgr00sectgoog/page/n6</a> . [Plate 023]		Line art (sketches)
<b>Museum Journal 07 180 *</b>		(?)
<b>PAPS 85</b> Kramer, Samuel N. "Sumerian Literature; A Preliminary Survey of the Oldest Literature in the World." <i>Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society</i> 85 no. 3 (February 1942): 303.		Translation Transliteration Collation
<b>Sladek Inanna</b> Sladek, William R. "Inanna's Descent to the Netherworld." Ann Arbor: University Microfilms, 1974, 101. [Artifact referenced in list]		Translation Transliteration Collation

\* *Museum Journal* is a journal in the field of curatorship. 07 may refer to volume 7, which was published in July of 1964 as issue number 3. Page 180 corresponds to an article titled "A Great Museum Pioneer of the Nineteenth Century" by Bo Lagercrantz, and has to do with recent trends in unearthing artifacts related to Genesis (Adam and Eve), among other topics. Artifact information was not be verified.

13/M CBS 11064 + 11088

Photo



Line art (sketch) \*

23

REVERSE



\* The obverse was so mutilated that the author did not compose a sketch (noted by CDLI curators).

<b>14/N</b>	<b>Ni 9685</b>	<b>Locate</b>
	<b>Lines:</b> 107-22 (obverse), 129-40 (reverse) <b>Location:</b> Istanbul Archaeology Museum (Istanbul, Turkey)	<b>CDLI *:</b> <a href="#">P356898</a> <b>OMNIKA:</b> <a href="#">Ni 9685</a>
<b>Publications: Shorthand Name &amp; Full Citation</b>		<b>Includes</b>
<b>JCS 4 214</b>		Line art (sketches)
Kramer, Samuel N. "‘Inanna’s Descent to the Nether World’ Continued and Revised." <i>Journal of Cuneiform Studies</i> 4, no. 4 (1950): 199-214. [See page 214]		Translation Transliteration Collation Commentary
<b>Sladek Inanna</b>		Translation
Sladek, William R. "Inanna's Descent to the Netherworld." Ann Arbor: University Microfilms, 1974, 101. [Artifact referenced in list on page 101 and also cited as being published by Kramer in 1950 on page seven]		Transliteration Commentary

\* An important note should be made about the CDLI’s page for this artifact. They list “ISET 3, 025, Ni 09685” as the original publication; however, this artifact was first published by Kramer some nineteen years earlier, based on the publication dates. For the sake of thoroughness, the citation for ISET I is provided below.

Muazzez, Cig, and Hatice Kizilyay, *Istanbul Arkeoloji Müzelerinde Bulunan Sumer Edebî Tablet ve Parçaları (Sumerian Literary Tablets and Fragments in the Archaeological Museum of Istanbul)* – I 183 (1969). [pl. 025]

Ni 09685 may be published in ISET 3, but it likely wasn’t the oldest publication. Sladek, 1974 (page 101), also lists this artifact’s publication date as Kramer’s 1950 publication. This artifact is not listed in ISET II (Kramer, 1976).

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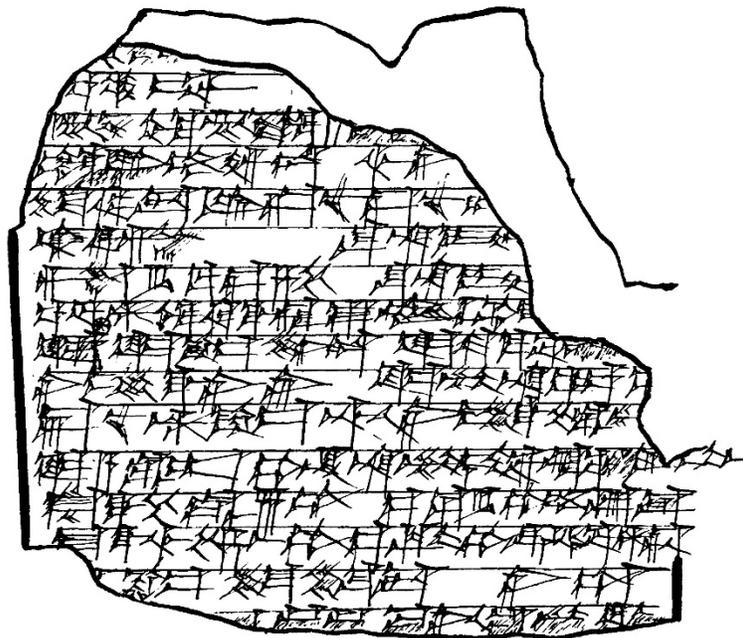
**14/N Ni 9685 \***

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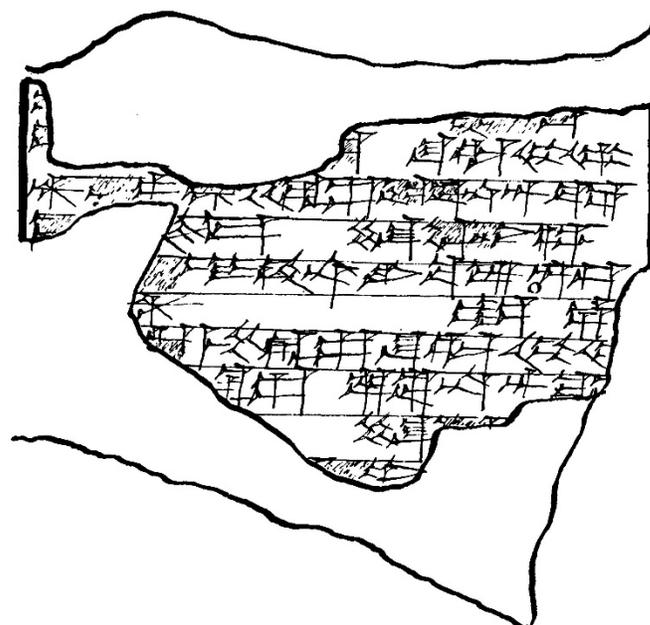
**Line art (sketch)**

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Ni 9685



Obv.



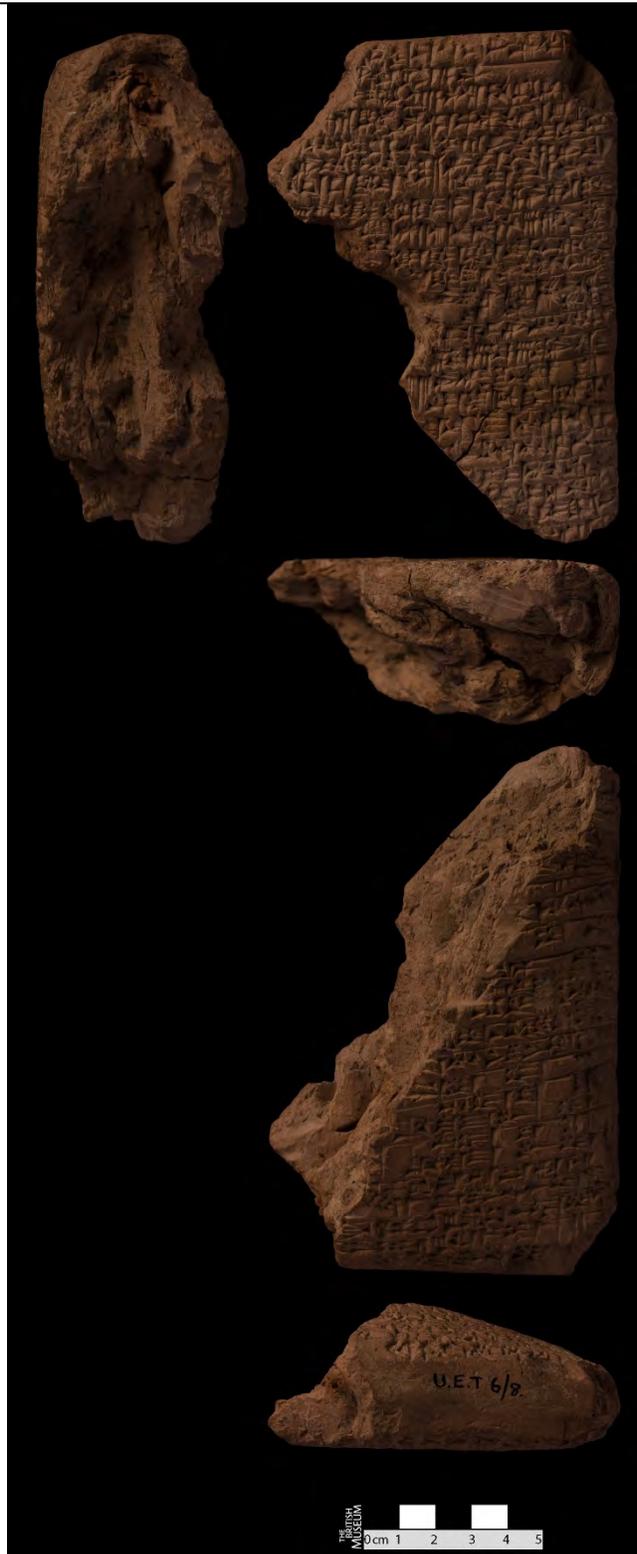
Rev.

\* A photograph could not be located for this artifact.

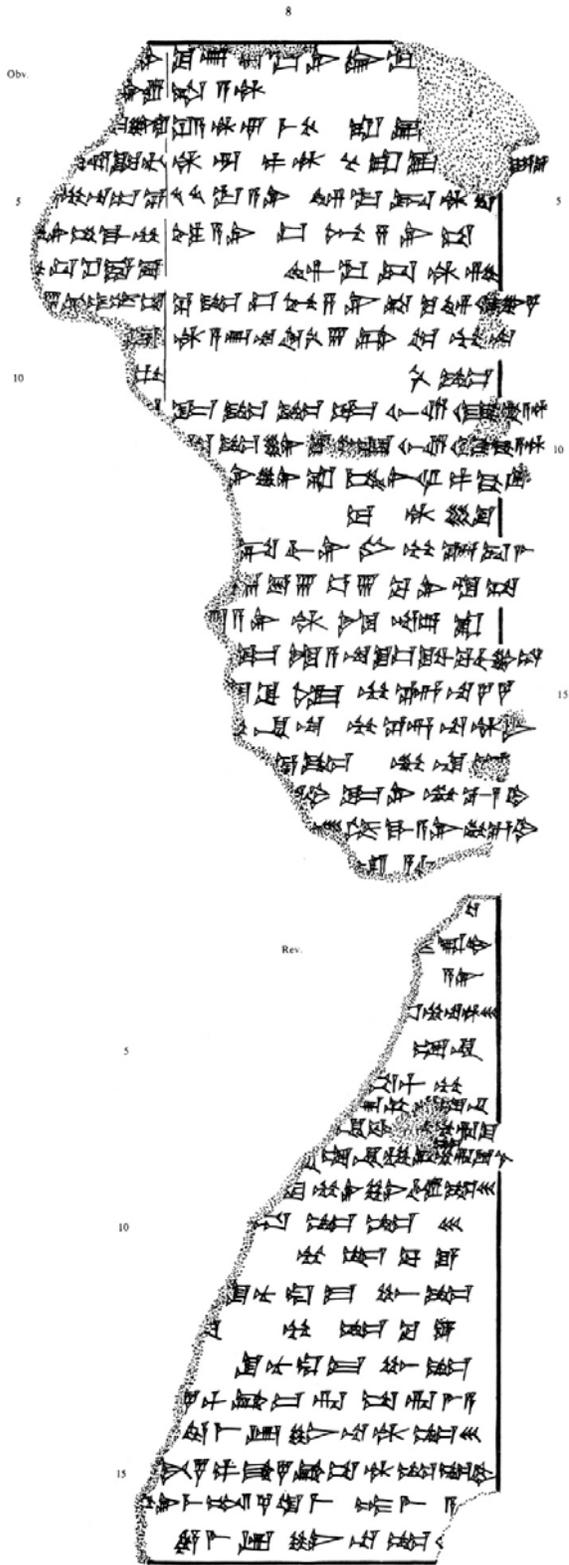
15/O	<b>UET 6/1 8 (UET VI 8)</b> <b>Lines:</b> 114-121 (Column I), 164-181 (Column II), 265-278 (Column III) <b>Location:</b> The British Museum (London, United Kingdom)	<b>Locate</b> <b>CDLI:</b> <a href="#">P346093</a> <b>OMNIKA:</b> <a href="#">UET VI 8</a>
<b>Publications: Shorthand Name &amp; Full Citation</b>	<b>Includes</b>	
<b>UET 6 0008 (1963) *</b> Gadd, Cyril J. and Samuel N. Kramer. <i>Ur excavations texts. /VI.1, Literary and religious texts. First part.</i> London: Publications of the British Museum and of the University Museum of Pennsylvania, 1963.	Varied contents	
<b>UET 6 0008 (1966)</b> Gadd, Cyril J. and Samuel N. Kramer. <i>Ur excavations texts. /VI.2, Literary and religious texts. Second part.</i> London: Publications of the British Museum and of the University Museum of Pennsylvania, 1966.		
<b>UET 6 0008 (2006)</b> Shaffer, Aaron and Marie-Christine Ludwig. <i>Ur Excavations Texts V6.3: Literary and Religious Texts. Third part.</i> London: British Museum Publications, 2006.		

\* This artifact first appeared in the 1963 UET publication. Subsequent publications may have added minor fragments and new lines.

Photo



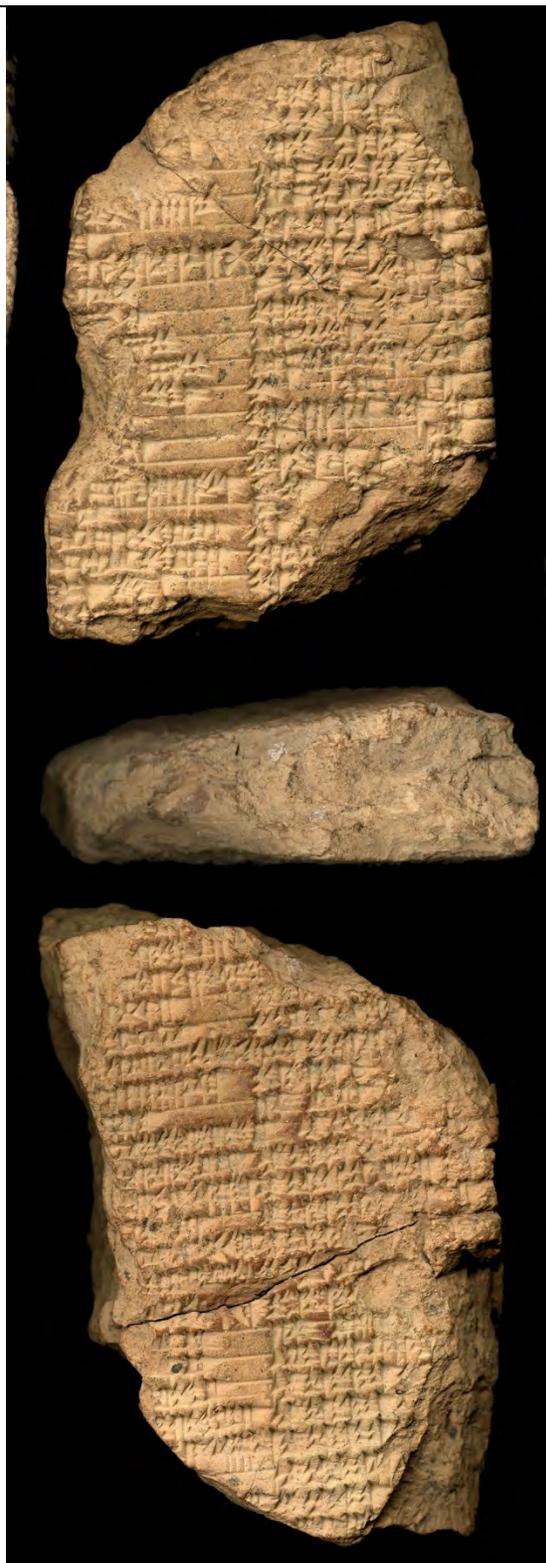
Line art (sketch)



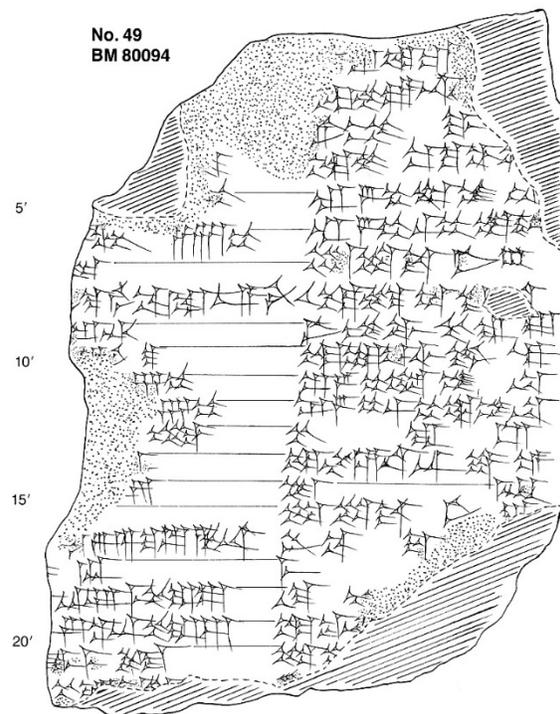
<b>16/P</b>	<b>BM 80094</b> <b>Lines:</b> 115-129, 130-135 (obverse), 185-189, 195-203, 209-217 (reverse) <b>Location:</b> The British Museum (London, United Kingdom)	<b>Locate</b> <b>CDLI:</b> <a href="#">P469280</a> <b>OMNIKA:</b> <a href="#">BM 80094</a>
	<b>Publications: Shorthand Name &amp; Full Citation</b> <hr/> <b>CT 58</b> Alster, Bendt, and Geller, Markham J. <i>Cuneiform Texts from Babylonian Tablets in the British Museum</i> . Vol. [Part] 58. <i>Sumerian Literary Texts</i> . London: British Museum Publications, 1990. [Plate 49b]	<b>Includes</b> Line art (sketches)

16/P BM 80094

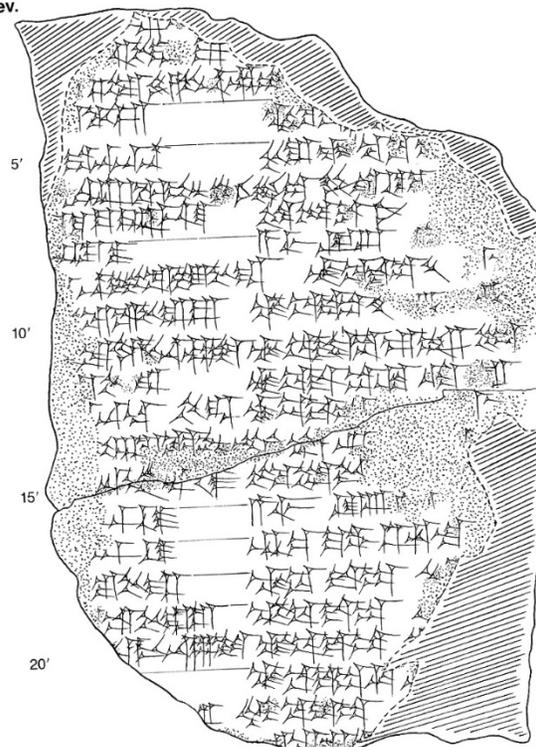
Photo



Line art (sketch) \*



Rev.



<b>17/Q</b>	<b>CBS (?) lost artifact</b> <b>Lines:</b> 131-135 (obverse), destroyed (reverse) <b>Location:</b> Penn Museum (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania)	<b>Locate</b> <b>CDLI:</b> <a href="#">P404875</a>
<b>Publications: Shorthand Name &amp; Full Citation</b>		<b>Includes</b>
<b>PBS 5 *</b> Poebel, Arno. <i>The University of Pennsylvania: The University Museum Publications of the Babylonian Section</i> . Vol. 5 [V]. <i>Historical and Grammatical Texts</i> . Philadelphia: The University Museum, 1914. <a href="https://archive.org/details/historicalandgr00sectgoog/page/n6">https://archive.org/details/historicalandgr00sectgoog/page/n6</a> . [Plate 024]		Line art (sketch)
<b>Line Art (Sketch)</b>		



\* The CDLI lists this artifact as plate number 24 of Poebel's 1914 publication; however, most records indicate this artifact cannot be located. Sladek (1974) also listed this artifact as lost. For that reason, a photograph could not be recovered.

18/R	<b>CBS 15212</b> <b>Lines:</b> Lines: 145, 147-149, 150-177 (obverse), 180-207 (reverse) <b>Location:</b> Penn Museum (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania)	<b>Locate</b> <b>CDLI:</b> <a href="#">P269767</a> <b>OMNIKA:</b> <a href="#">CBS 15212</a>
<b>Publications: Shorthand Name &amp; Full Citation</b>		<b>Includes</b>
<b>BASOR 079</b>	Kramer, Samuel N. "Ishtar in the Nether World According to a New Sumerian Text." <i>Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research</i> 79 (October 1940): 18-27. [See pages 22-3]	Line art (sketches) Translation Transliteration Collation Commentary
<b>PAPS 85</b>	Kramer, Samuel N. "Sumerian Literature; A Preliminary Survey of the Oldest Literature in the World." <i>Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society</i> 85, no. 3 (February 1942): 293-323. [See plate seven in the appendix after page 323. These sketches are a recopy of the 1940 BASOR publication.]	Line art (sketches) Photograph Translation Transliteration Collation Commentary

18/R

CBS 15212

Photo



Line art (sketch)



rev.

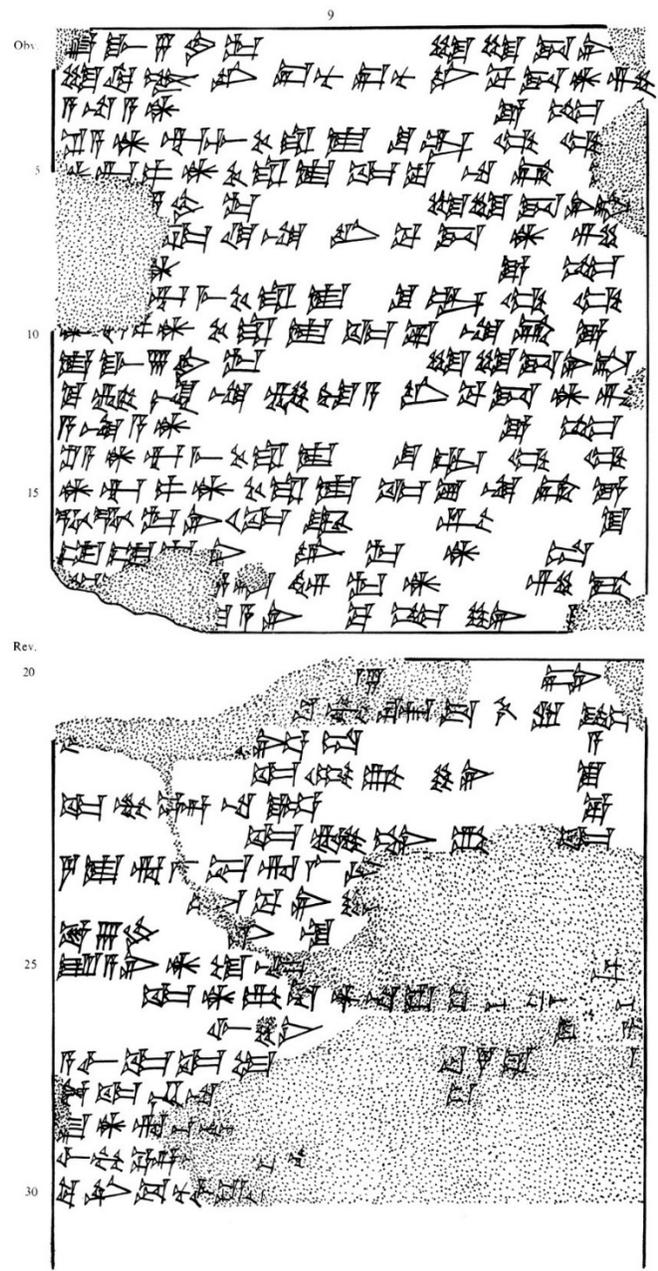


	<b>19/S UET 6/1 9 (UET VI 9)</b> <b>Lines:</b> 149, 151-154, 156-166 (obverse), 167-177 (reverse) <b>Location:</b> The British Museum (London, United Kingdom)	<b>Locate</b> <b>CDLI:</b> <a href="#">P346094</a> <b>OMNIKA:</b> <a href="#">UET VI 9</a>
<b>Publications: Shorthand Name &amp; Full Citation</b>		<b>Includes</b>
<b>UET 6 0008 (1963) *</b> Gadd, Cyril J. and Samuel N. Kramer. <i>Ur excavations texts. / VI.1, Literary and religious texts. First part.</i> London: Publications of the British Museum and of the University Museum of Pennsylvania, 1963.		Varied contents
<b>UET 6 0008 (1966)</b> Gadd, Cyril J. and Samuel N. Kramer. <i>Ur excavations texts. / VI.2, Literary and religious texts. Second part.</i> London: Publications of the British Museum and of the University Museum of Pennsylvania, 1966.		
<b>UET 6 0008 (2006)</b> Shaffer, Aaron and Marie-Christine Ludwig. <i>Ur Excavations Texts V6.3: Literary and Religious Texts. Third part.</i> London: British Museum Publications, 2006.		

\* This artifact first appeared in the 1963 UET publication. Subsequent publications may have added minor fragments and new lines.

Photo

Line art (sketch) \*



<b>20/T</b>	<b>Ni 4200 + Ni 4187</b> <b>Lines:</b> Lines: 211-233 (obverse), 234-253 (reverse) <b>Location:</b> Istanbul Archaeology Museum (Istanbul, Turkey)	<b>Locate</b> <b>CDLI:</b> <a href="#">P345159</a> <b>OMNIKA:</b> <a href="#">Ni 4200</a> + <a href="#">Ni 4187</a>
<b>Publications: Shorthand Name &amp; Full Citation</b>		<b>Includes</b>
<b>RA 36</b>	Kramer, Samuel N. "Additional Material to « INANNA'S DESCENT TO THE NETHER WORLD » [sic]." <i>Revue d'Assyriologie et d'Archéologie Orientale</i> 36, No. 2 (1939): 68-80. [See page 78 for a sketch of Ni 4200]	Line art (sketches)
<b>SLTNi or SLT 1944</b>	Kramer, Samuel N. <i>Annual of the American Schools of Oriental Research</i> . Vol. XXIII. <i>Sumerian Literary Texts from Nippur in the Museum of the Ancient Orient at Istanbul</i> . New Haven: 1944. [Ni 4200 sketches, plate 14 (XIV), number 28]	Line art (sketches) Collation
<b>PAPS 85</b>	Kramer, Samuel N. "Sumerian Literature; A Preliminary Survey of the Oldest Literature in the World." <i>Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society</i> 85, no. 3 (February 1942): 293-323. [Ni 4200 sketches; See plate 8. It's in the appendix after page 323.]	Line art (sketches) Translation Transliteration Collation Commentary
<b>PAPS 107</b>	Kramer, Samuel N. "Cuneiform Studies and the History of Literature: The Sumerian Sacred Marriage." <i>Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society</i> 107, no. 6, Cuneiform Studies and the History of Civilization (December 20, 1963): 485-527. [Sketch of Ni 4187, page 525.]	Line art (sketches)

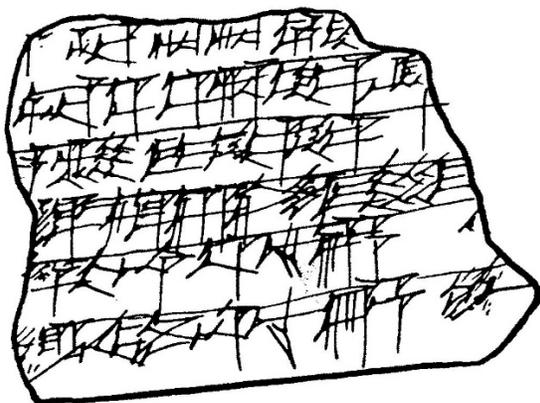
\* A photograph of either artifacts could not be located.

20/T Ni 4200 + Ni 4187

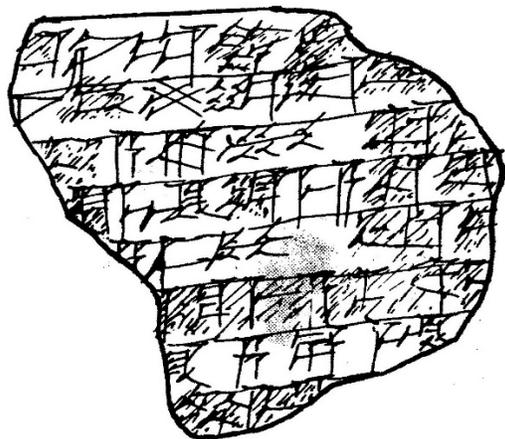
Line art (sketch, Ni 4187)

Line art (sketch, Ni 4200)

PLATE 8

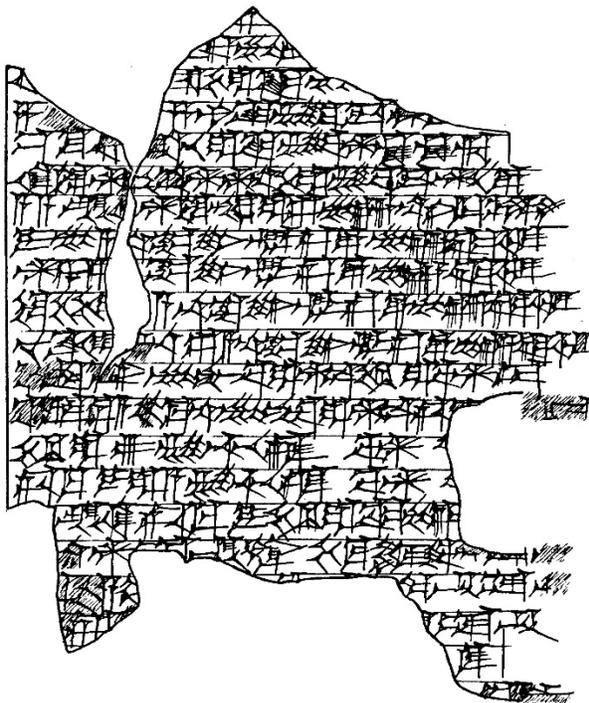


obv.

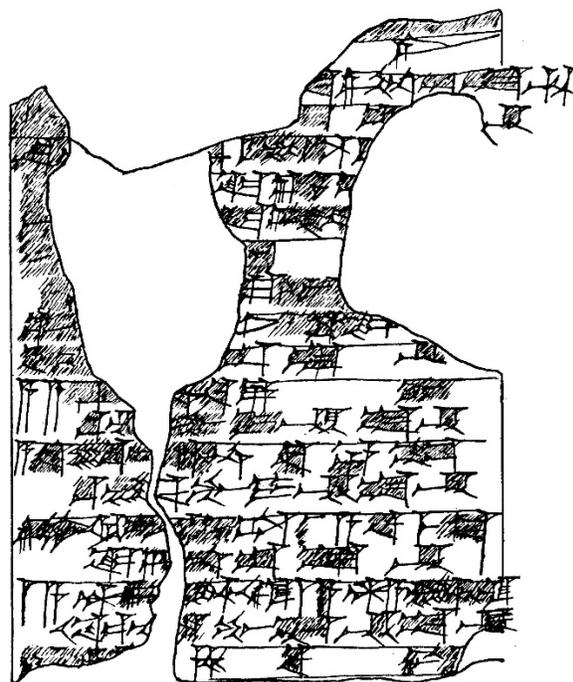


rev.

Ni 4200.  
obv.



rev.



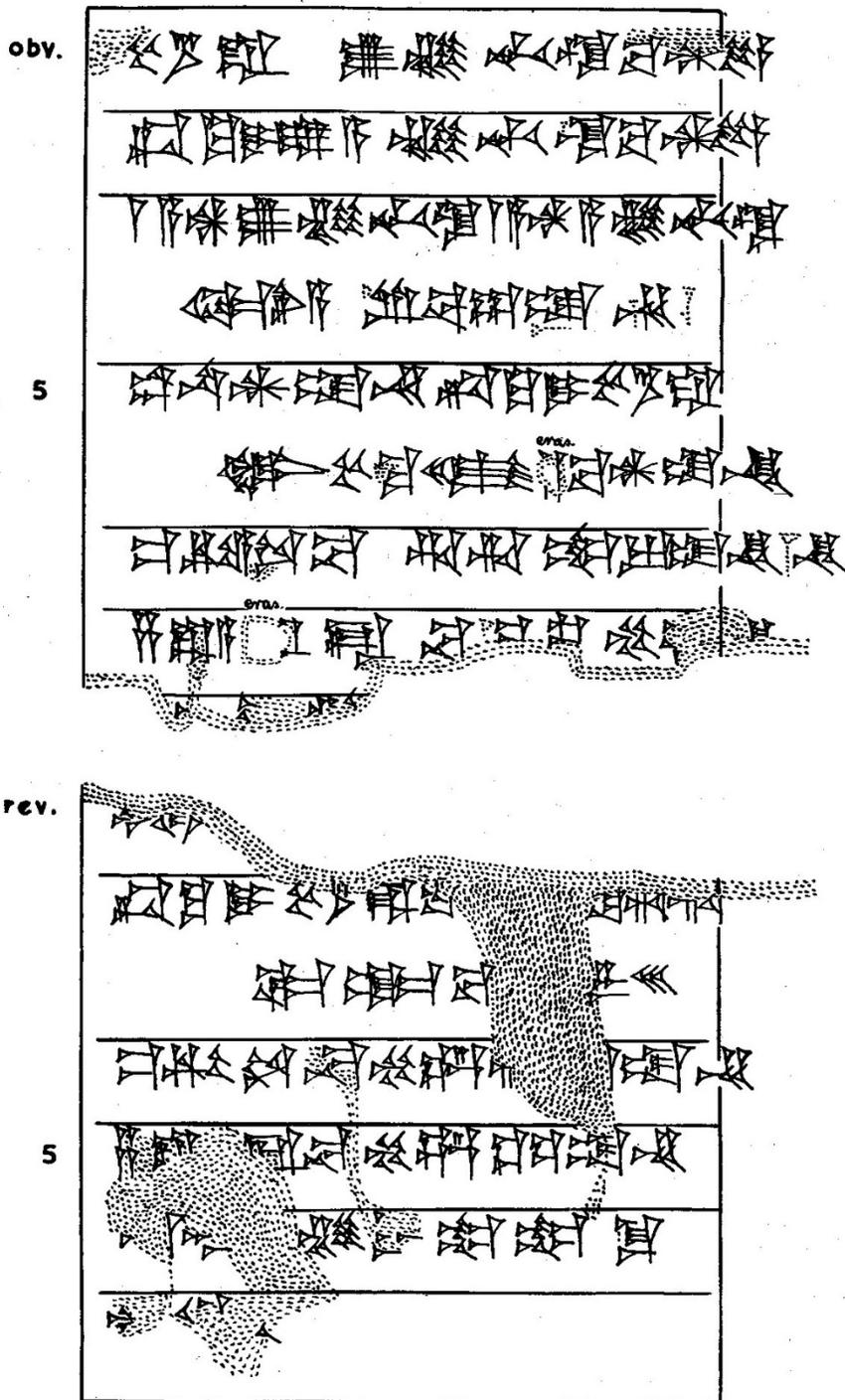
\* Photographs could not be located for this artifact.

<b>21/U</b>	<b>BM 17427</b>	<b>Locate</b>
	<b>Lines:</b> 224-230 (obverse), 253-257 (reverse) <b>Location:</b> The British Museum (London, United Kingdom)	<b>CDLI:</b> <a href="#">P283756</a> <b>OMNIKA:</b> <a href="#">BM 17427</a>
<b>Publications: Shorthand Name &amp; Full Citation *</b>		<b>Includes</b>
<b>CT 42</b> Figulla, H. H. <i>Cuneiform texts from Babylonian tablets in the British Museum. Pt. 42 [XLII]</i> / by H. H. Figulla. London: Trustees of the British Museum, 1959. [See plate 3]		Line art (sketches)
<b>JCS 23</b> Kramer, Samuel N. "Collations to 'CT XLII.'" <i>Journal of Cuneiform Studies</i> 23, no. 1 (1970): 10-16.		Collation

\* The CDLI did not explicitly list a major translation publication; however, most translations of ID after 1970 include this artifact (including the ETCSL translation).

Line art (sketch) \*

17427.



\* A photograph could not be located for this artifact.

	<b>UET 6/1 10 (UET VI 10)</b> <b>Lines:</b> 231-251, 280-295 (obverse), 351-398 (reverse), 398-412 (reverse) <b>Location:</b> The British Museum (London, United Kingdom)	<b>Locate</b> <b>CDLI:</b> <a href="#">P346095</a> <b>OMNIKA:</b> <a href="#">UET VI 10</a>
	<b>Publications: Shorthand Name &amp; Full Citation</b> <hr/> <b>UET 6 0008 (1963) *</b> Gadd, Cyril J. and Samuel N. Kramer. <i>Ur excavations texts. / VI.1, Literary and religious texts. First part.</i> London: Publications of the British Museum and of the University Museum of Pennsylvania, 1963.  <b>UET 6 0008 (1966)</b> Gadd, Cyril J. and Samuel N. Kramer. <i>Ur excavations texts. / VI.2, Literary and religious texts. Second part.</i> London: Publications of the British Museum and of the University Museum of Pennsylvania, 1966.  <b>UET 6 0008 (2006)</b> Shaffer, Aaron and Marie-Christine Ludwig. <i>Ur Excavations Texts V6.3: Literary and Religious Texts. Third part.</i> London: British Museum Publications, 2006.	<b>Includes</b> <hr/> Varied contents

\* This artifact first appeared in the 1963 UET publication. Subsequent publications may have added minor fragments and new lines.

22/V UET 6/1 10 (UET VI 10)

Photo (obverse)

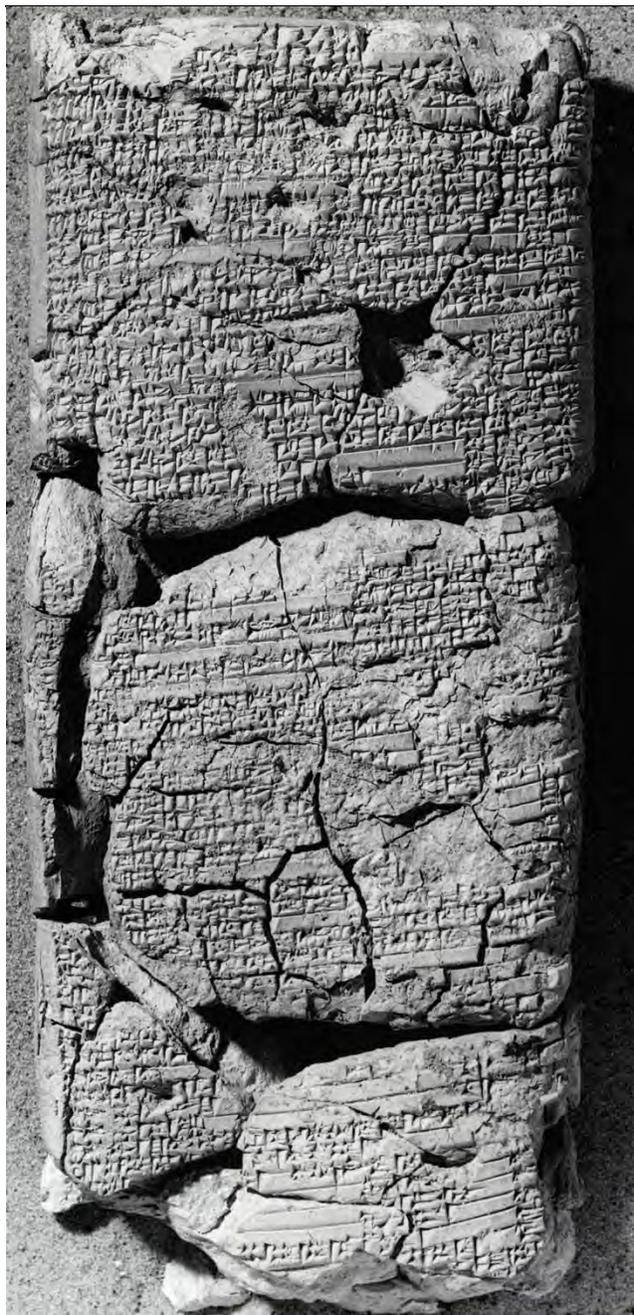
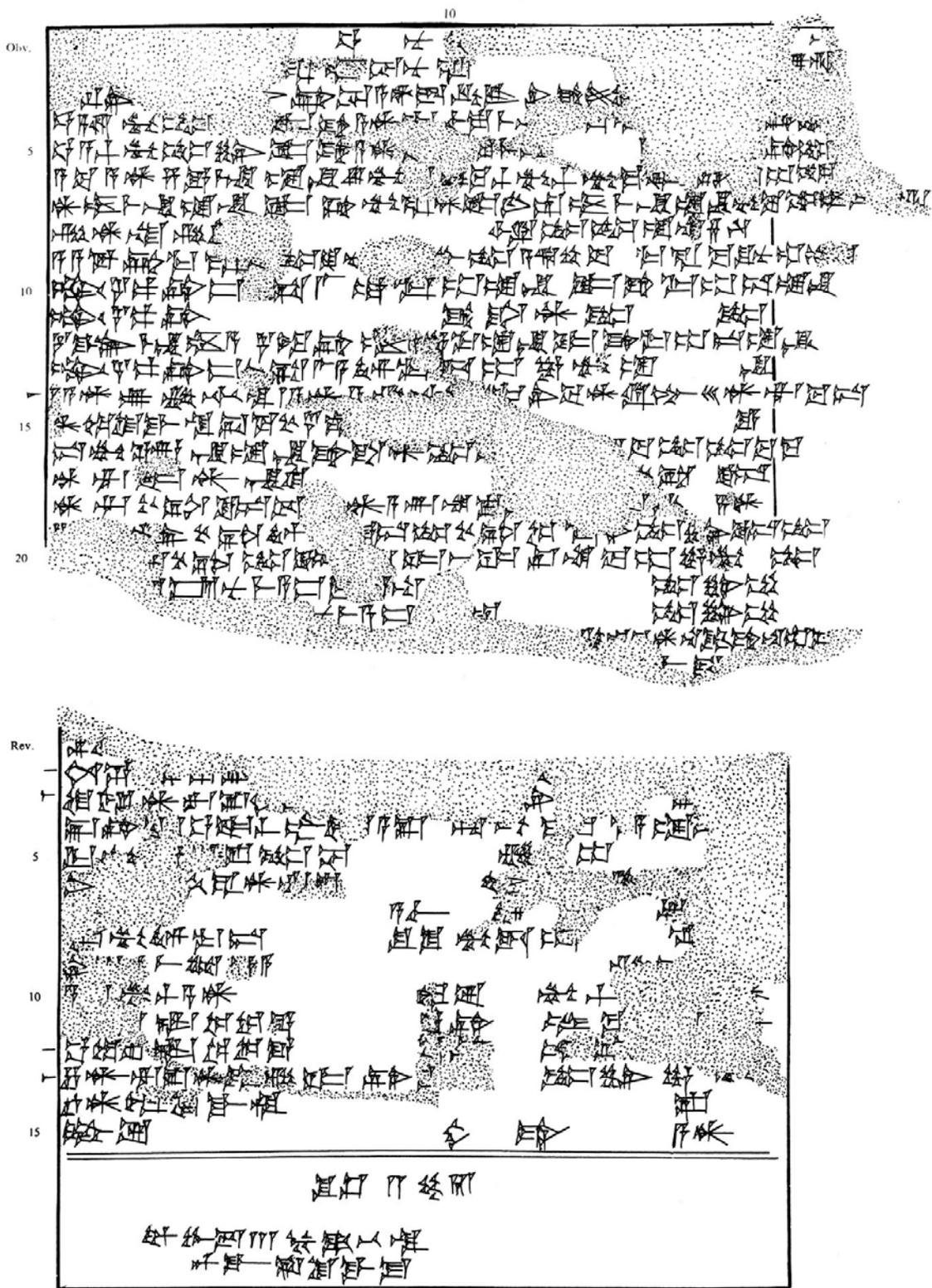


Photo (reverse)





Line art (sketch)

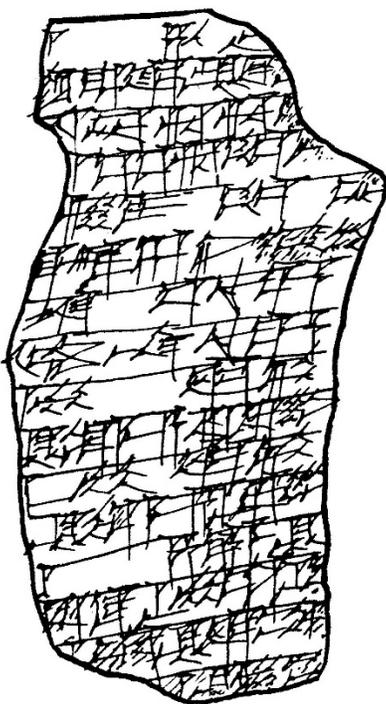


23/W	<b>Ni 9838 + Ni 2762</b> <b>Lines:</b> 253-274 (obverse), 287-312 (reverse) <b>Location:</b> Istanbul Archaeology Museum (Istanbul, Turkey)	<b>Locate</b> <b>CDLI:</b> <a href="#">P343629</a> <b>OMNIKA:</b> <a href="#">Ni 9838 + Ni 2762</a>
<b>Publications: Shorthand Name &amp; Full Citation</b>		<b>Includes</b>
<b>ISET 2</b> Kramer, Samuel N. <i>Istanbul Arkeoloji Müzelerinde Bulunan Sumer Edebî Tablet ve Parçaları (Sumerian Literary Tablets and Fragments in the Archaeological Museum of Istanbul) – II</i> (1976). [Ni 9838, plate 17]		Line art (sketches)
<b>SLTNi or SLT 1944</b> Kramer, Samuel N. <i>Annual of the American Schools of Oriental Research</i> . Vol. XXIII. <i>Sumerian Literary Texts from Nippur in the Museum of the Ancient Orient at Istanbul</i> . New Haven, 1944. [Ni 2762, plate 14 (XIV), number 29]		Line art (sketches) Collation
<b>PAPS 85</b> Kramer, Samuel N. "Sumerian Literature; A Preliminary Survey of the Oldest Literature in the World." <i>Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society</i> 85 no. 3 (February 1942): 293-323. [See plate 8 for Ni 2762]		Line art (sketches) Translation Transliteration
<b>PAPS 107</b> Kramer, Samuel N. "Cuneiform Studies and the History of Literature: The Sumerian Sacred Marriage." <i>Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society</i> 107, no. 6, <i>Cuneiform Studies and the History of Civilization</i> (December 20, 1963): 485-527. [Sketch of Ni 9838, page 524, figure 8.]		Line art (sketches) Translation Transliteration

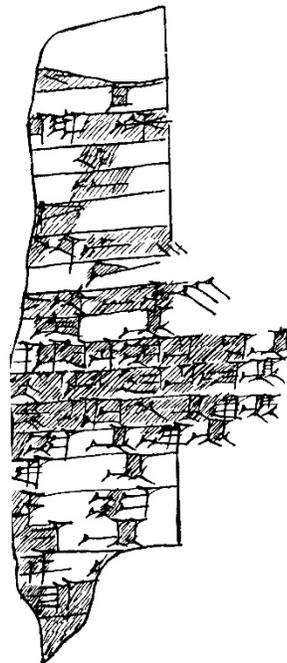
23/W Ni 9838 + Ni 2762

Ni 9838 – Line art (sketch)

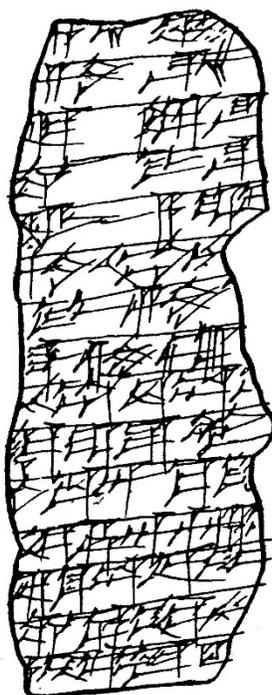
Ni 2762 – Line art (sketch)



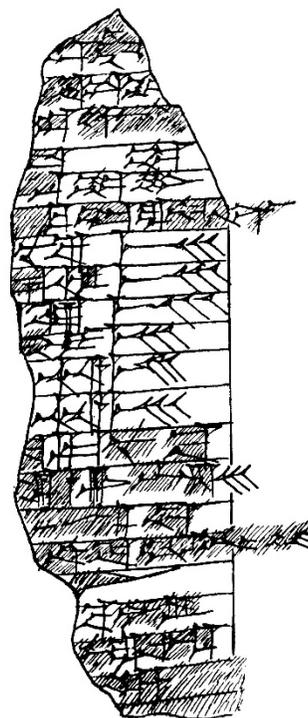
obv.

Ni 2762.  
obv.

rev.



rev.



\* Photographs could not be located for these artifacts.

<b>24/X</b>	<b>N 983 *</b>	<b>Locate</b>
	<b>Lines:</b> 258-265 (obverse), destroyed (reverse) <b>Location:</b> Penn Museum (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania)	<b>CDLI:</b> <a href="#">P275001</a> <b>OMNIKA:</b> <a href="#">N 983</a>
<b>Publications: Shorthand Name &amp; Full Citation</b>		<b>Includes</b>
<b>Sladek Inanna</b> Sladek, William R. "Inanna's Descent to the Netherworld." Ann Arbor: University Microfilms, 1974, 285. [Figure V]		Line art (sketch) Translation Translation Collation Commentary

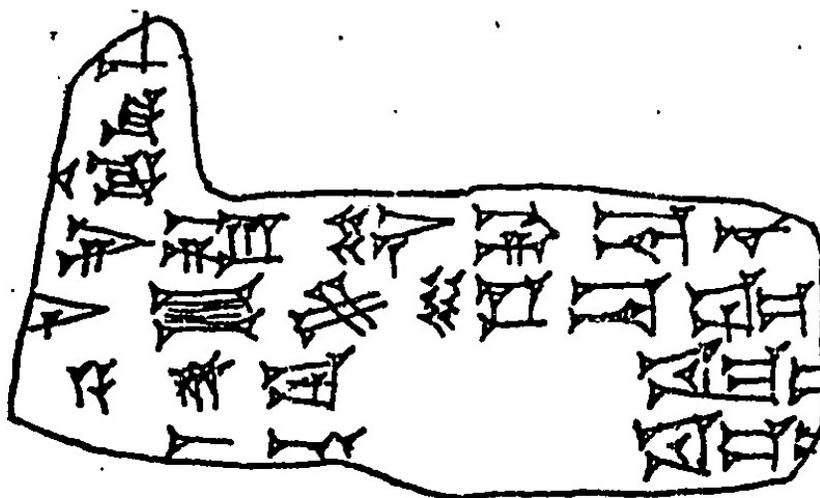
\* The CDLI lists this artifact as joining N 7710 (Peterson, Jeremiah, BPOA 09, 031), but it is not included in this survey.

24/X N 983

Photo



Line art (sketch)



	<b>YBC 4621 (now YPM BC 018686)</b> <b>Lines:</b> 273-325 (obverse), 327-375 (reverse) <b>Location:</b> Yale Peabody Museum (New Haven, Connecticut)	<b>Locate</b> <b>CDLI:</b> * <a href="#">P293336</a> <b>OMNIKA:</b> <a href="#">YPM BC 018686</a>
<b>Publications: Shorthand Name &amp; Full Citation</b>		<b>Includes</b>
<b>JCS 4 214</b> Kramer, Samuel N. "‘Inanna’s Descent to the Nether World’ Continued and Revised." <i>Journal of Cuneiform Studies</i> 4, no. 4 (1950): 199-214. [See page 214]		Line art (sketches) Translation Transliteration Collation Commentary
<b>Yale Museum (YPM BC 018686)</b> "YPM BC 018686: Tablet. Inanna's Descent. Old Babylonian. Clay.," Yale Peabody Museum of Natural History, <i>Yale University</i> , accessed May 2, 2019, <a href="https://collections.peabody.yale.edu/search/Record/YPM-BC-018686">https://collections.peabody.yale.edu/search/Record/YPM-BC-018686</a> .		Photograph
<b>ASJ 18 010f.</b> Alster, Bendt. "Inanna Repenting. The Conclusion of Inanna's Descent." <i>Acta</i> <i>Sumerologica</i> 18 (1996): 1-18.		Translation Transliteration Commentary

\* The CDLI listing does not contain sketches or photographs.

25/Y YBC 4621 (now YPM BC 018686)

Photo (obverse) \*

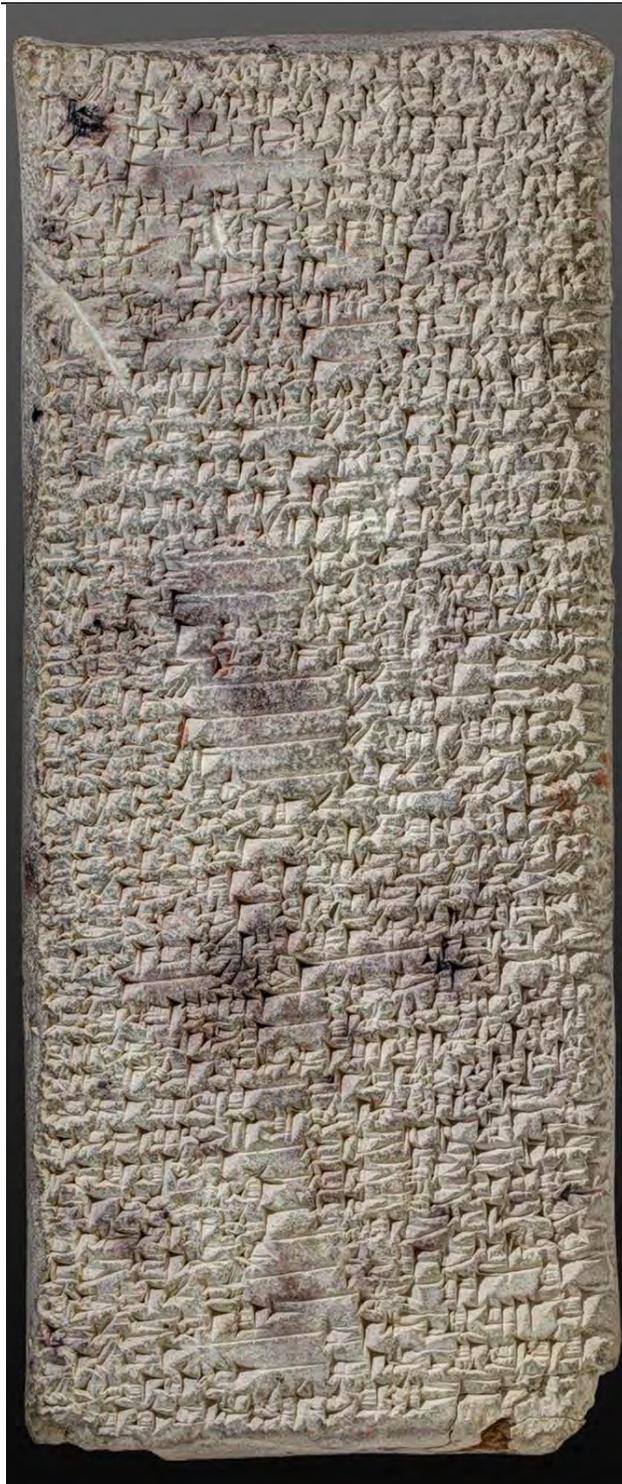
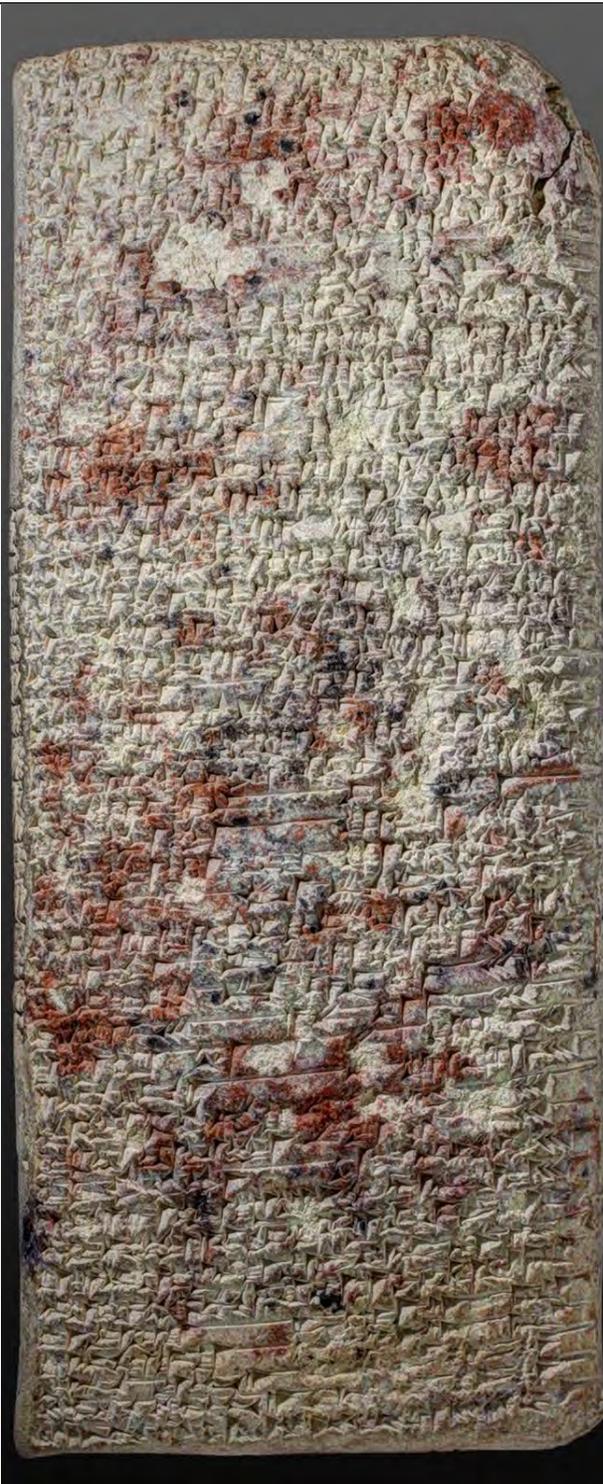


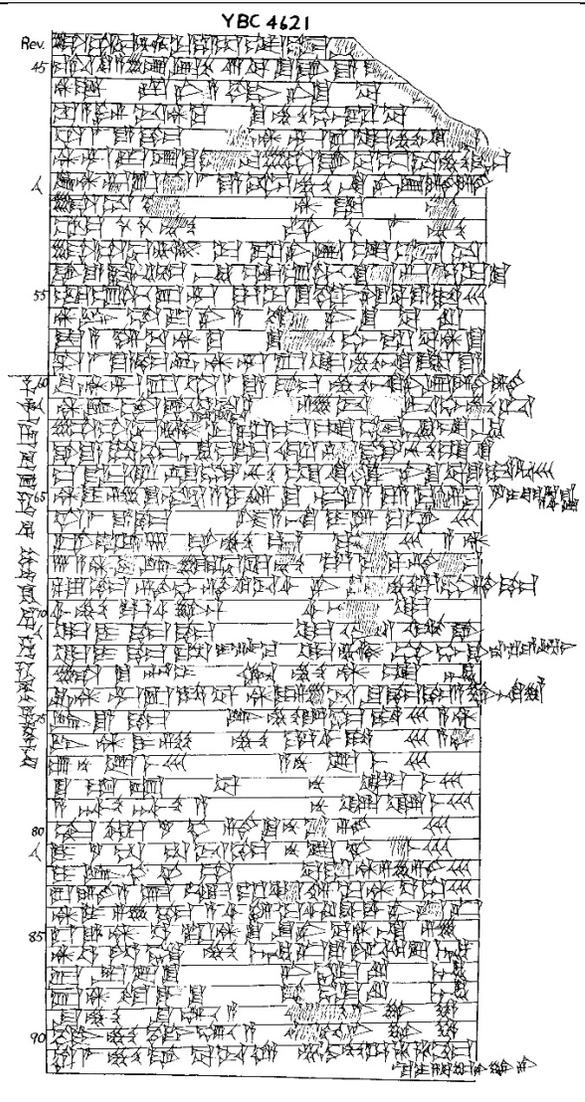
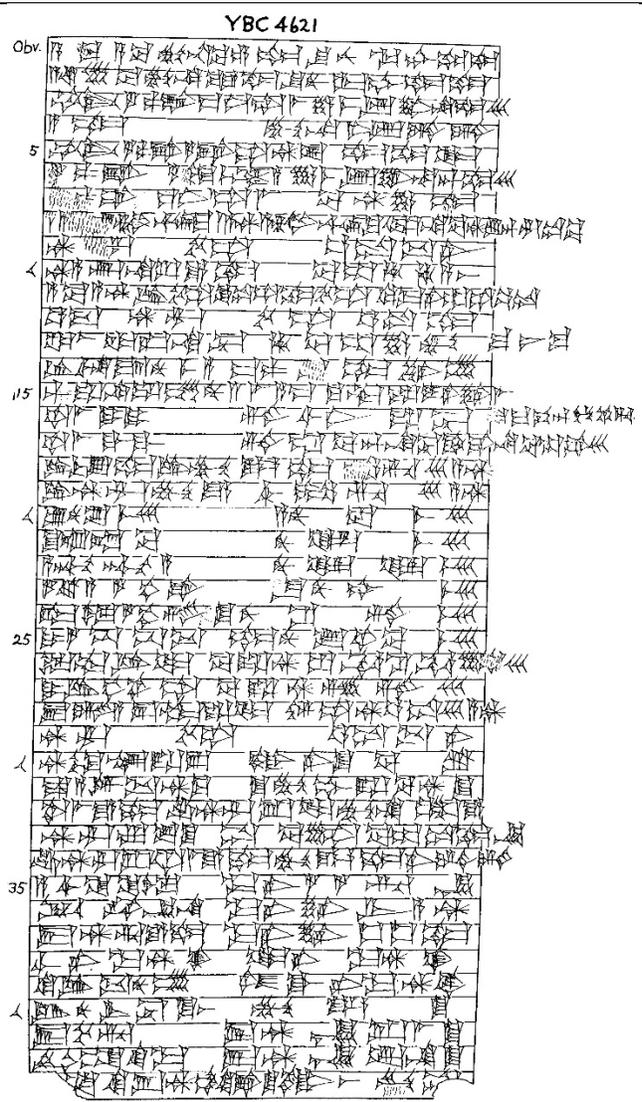
Photo (reverse)



\* The side of the tablet also has several lines. The Yale Museum reference contains high resolution images.

Line art (sketch, obverse) \*

Line art (sketch, reverse) \*



\* This tablet contains some lines on its sides as well.

26/Z	<b>CBS 13902</b> <b>Lines:</b> 275-306 (obverse), 307-339 (reverse) <b>Location:</b> Penn Museum (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania)	<b>Locate</b> <b>CDLI:</b> <a href="#">P268913</a> <b>OMNIKA:</b> <a href="#">CBS 13902</a>
<b>Publications: Shorthand Name &amp; Full Citation</b>		<b>Includes</b>
<b>PBS 5</b> Poebel, Arno. <i>The University of Pennsylvania: The University Museum Publications of the Babylonian Section</i> . Vol. 5 [V]. <i>Historical and Grammatical Texts</i> . Philadelphia: The University Museum, 1914. <a href="https://archive.org/details/historicalandgr00sectgoog/page/n6">https://archive.org/details/historicalandgr00sectgoog/page/n6</a> . [Plate 022]		Line art (sketches)
<b>PAPS 85</b> Kramer, Samuel N. "Sumerian Literature; A Preliminary Survey of the Oldest Literature in the World." <i>Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society</i> 85 no. 3 (February 1942): 293-323. [Plate 9]		Line art (sketches) Translation Transliteration Collation
<b>JCS 05</b> Kramer, Samuel N. "'Inanna's Descent to the Nether World' Continued and Revised. Second Part: Revised Edition of 'Inanna's Descent to the Nether World.'" <i>Journal of Cuneiform Studies</i> 5, no. 1 (1951): 1-17.		Translation Transliteration Collation

26/Z

CBS 13902

Photograph - Obverse

Photograph - Reverse

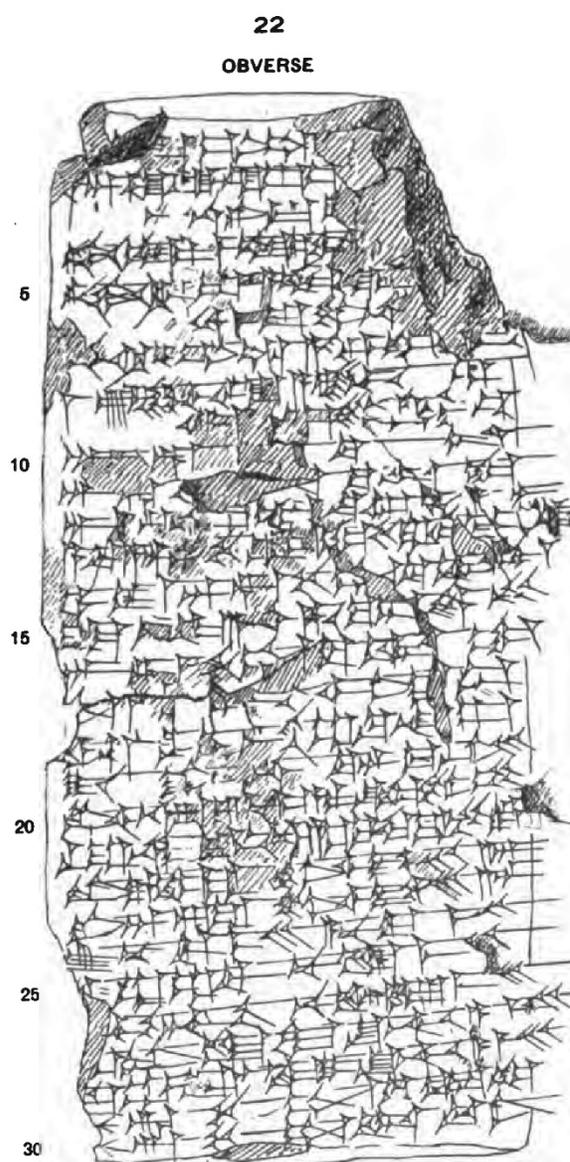


26/Z

CBS 13902

Line art (sketch) - Obverse

Line art (sketch) - Reverse

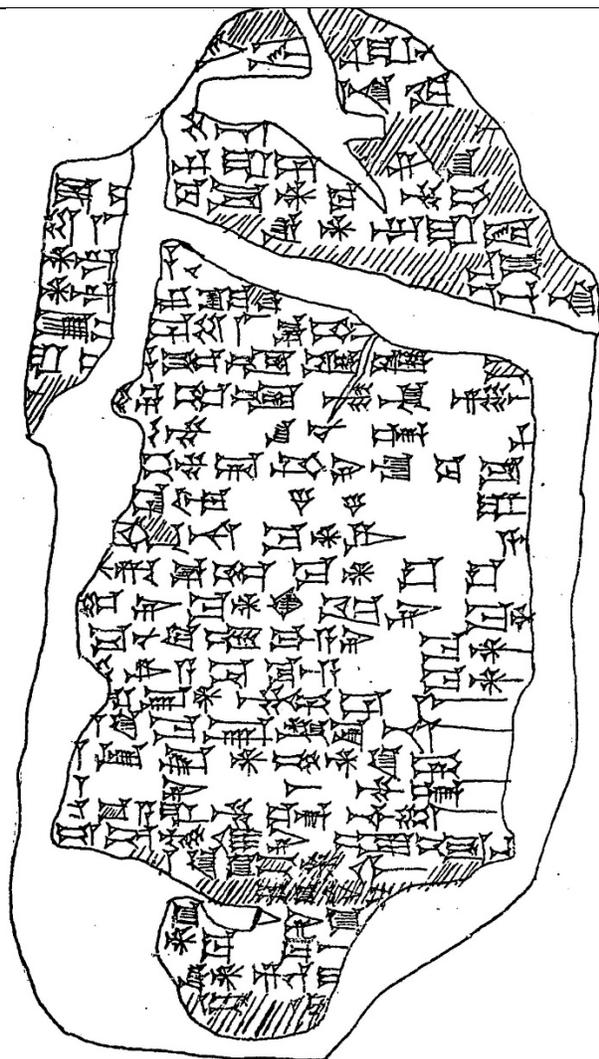


<b>27/a</b>	<b>3N-T 400 (Museum No. IM 058460)</b>	<b>Locate</b>
	<b>Lines:</b> 300-333 (obverse), 340-370 (reverse) <b>Location:</b> National Museum of Iraq (Baghdad, Iraq)	<b>CDLI:</b> <a href="#">P356670</a> <b>OMNIKA:</b> <a href="#">3N-T 400</a>
<b>Publications: Shorthand Name &amp; Full Citation</b>		<b>Includes</b>
<b>Sladek Inanna</b> Sladek, William R. "Inanna's Descent to the Netherworld." Ann Arbor: University Microfilms, 1974, 286-7. [Figures VI-VII]		Line art (sketches) Translation Transliteration Collation Commentary

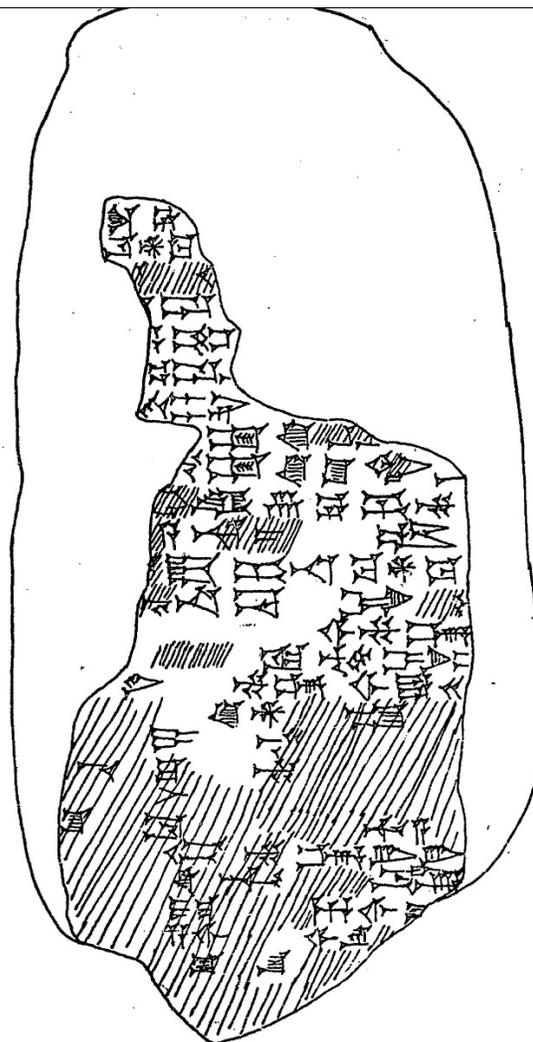
27/a

3N-T 400 \*

Line art (sketch) - Obverse



Line art (sketch) - Reverse



\* Photographs could not be located for this artifact.

	<b>28/b Ni 9776 *</b> <b>Lines:</b> Destroyed (obverse), 322-327, 339-340 (Column I, reverse), 376-384 (Column II, reverse) <b>Location:</b> Istanbul Archaeology Museum (Istanbul, Turkey)	<b>Locate</b> <b>CDLI:</b> <a href="#">P343420</a> <b>OMNIKA:</b> <a href="#">Ni 9776</a>
<b>Publications: Shorthand Name &amp; Full Citation</b>		<b>Includes</b>
<b>ISET 1 (1969) 183</b> Muazzez, Çig, and Hatice Kizilyay. <i>Istanbul Arkeoloji Müzelerinde Bulunan Sumer Edebî Tablet ve Parçaları – I 183</i> , 1969. [Plate number 125]		Line art (sketches) Collation
<b>Sladek 1974</b> Sladek, William R. "Inanna's Descent to the Netherworld." Ann Arbor: University Microfilms, 1974, 102. [Sladek uses the artifact as source X]		Translation Transliteration Commentary

\* Usable photographs and line art could not be located for this artifact.

29/c	<b>CBS 15162 + N 953 + N 3200 *</b> <b>Lines:</b> 338-354 (obverse), 358 (reverse), 345-351 (obverse) <b>Location:</b> Penn Museum (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania) [CBS]; Istanbul Archaeology Museum (Istanbul, Turkey) [N]	<b>Locate</b> <b>CDLI:</b> <a href="#">P269717</a> <b>OMNIKA:</b> <a href="#">CBS 15162 + [...]</a>
<b>Publications: Shorthand Name &amp; Full Citation</b>	<b>Includes</b>	
<b>PAPS 85</b> Kramer, Samuel N. "Sumerian Literature; A Preliminary Survey of the Oldest Literature in the World." <i>Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society</i> 85, no. 3 (February 1942): 293-323. [CBS 15162, plate number 10]	Line art (sketches) Translation Transliteration Commentary	
<b>Sladek Inanna</b> Sladek, William R. "Inanna's Descent to the Netherworld." Ann Arbor: University Microfilms, 1974, 288. [N 953, Figure VIII]	Line art (sketches) Translation Transliteration Collation Commentary	
<b>BPOA 09 033</b> Peterson, Jeremiah. <i>Sumerian Literary Fragments in the University Museum, Philadelphia. (Biblioteca del Próximo Oriente Antiguo, 9.)</i> 372 pp., 68 plates. Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 2011. [The CDLI record lists page 48 as join information for the artifact, which may correspond to plate number 33]	Line art (sketches)	

\* N 3200 is listed as an unpublished artifact, so line art could not be located.

29/c CBS 15162 + N 953 + N 3200 \*

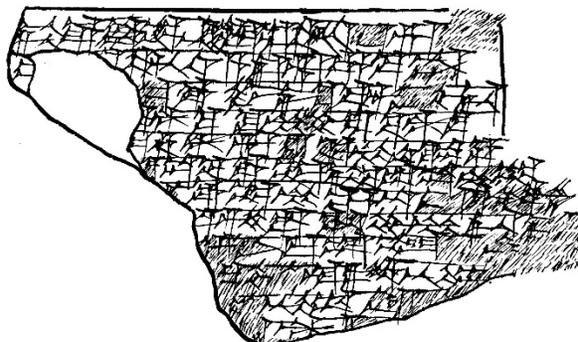
Photo



Line art (sketch) \*

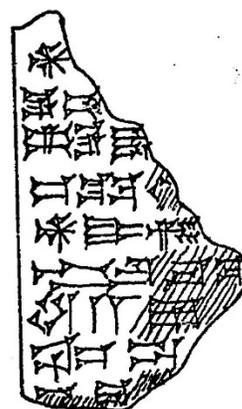
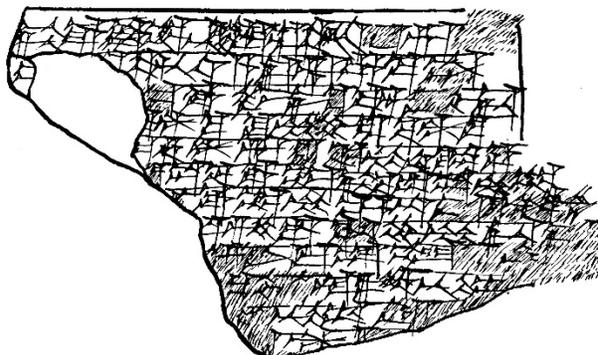
CBS 15162.

obv.



CBS 15162.

obv.



obverse

\* Line art could not be located for N 3200.

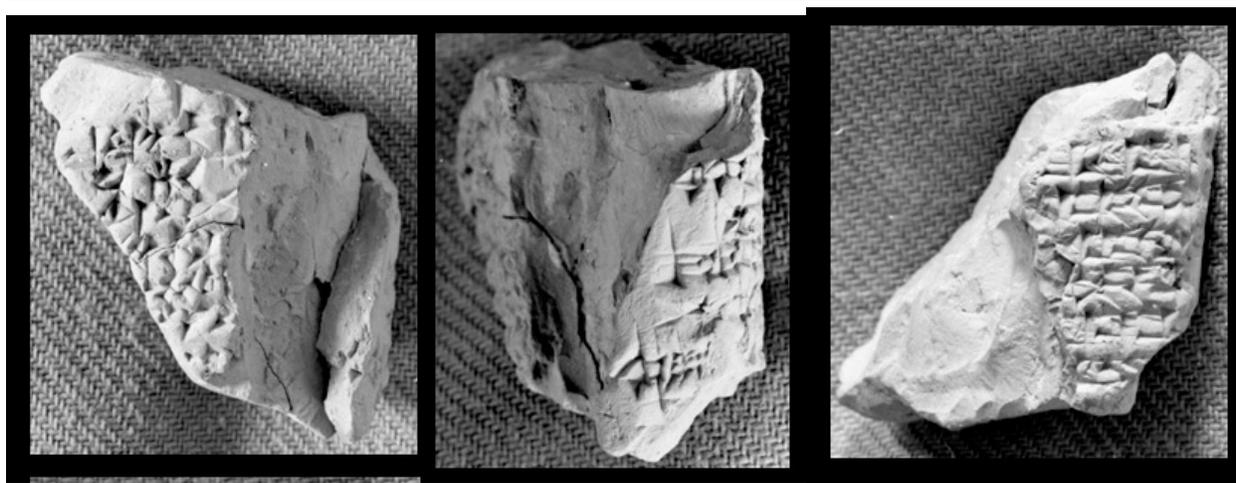
	<b>30/d N 2986</b> <b>Lines:</b> Different composition (obverse), 375-380 (reverse) <b>Location:</b> Penn Museum (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania)	<b>Locate</b> <b>CDLI:</b> <a href="#">P275004</a> <b>OMNIKA:</b> <a href="#">N 2986</a>
<b>Publications: Shorthand Name &amp; Full Citation</b>	<b>Includes</b>	
<b>Sladek Inanna</b> Sladek, William R. "Inanna's Descent to the Netherworld." Ann Arbor: University Microfilms, 1974, 289. [See N 2986, Figure IX, for the obverse side only. Sladek indicated the reverse side belonged to a different composition]	Line art (sketches) Translation Transliteration Collation Commentary	
<b>Sjöberg (1977) 033 (JCS 29)</b> Sjöberg, Åke. "Miscellaneous Sumerian Texts, II." <i>Journal of Cuneiform Studies</i> 29, no. 1 (January 1977): 3-45. [Page 33 has the sketches of the obverse and reverse side]	Line art (sketches)	

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30/d N 2986

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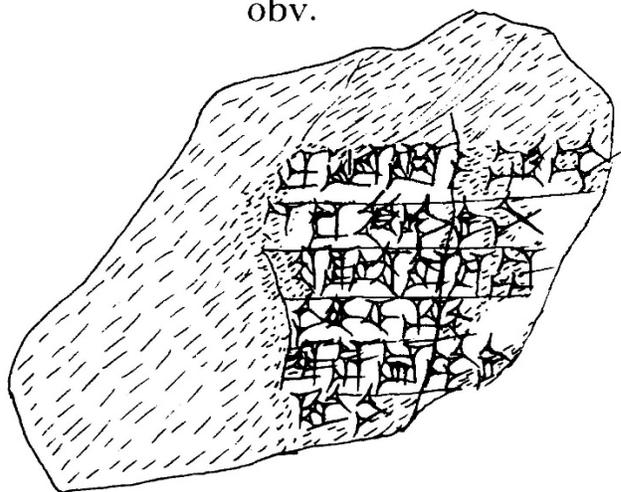
Photo



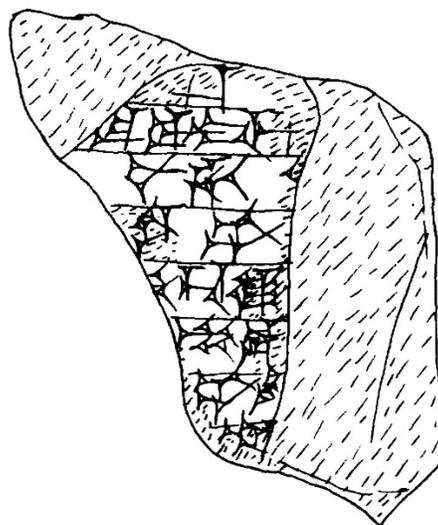
Line art (sketch) - Obverse

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obv.



rev.



31/e

CBS 6894 \*

**Lines:** Destroyed (obverse), 380-412 (reverse)**Location:** Penn Museum (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania)**Locate****CDLI:** [P264321](#)**OMNIKA:** [CBS 6894](#)**Publications: Shorthand Name & Full Citation****Includes**

ASJ 18 010f.

Alster, Bendt. "Inanna Repenting. The Conclusion of Inanna's Descent." *Acta Sumerologica* 18 (1996): 1-18.

Translation

Transliteration

Collation

**Photo (obverse, reverse, left to right)**

\* Line art could not be located for this artifact.

<b>32/f</b>	<b>BM 67932 *</b>	<b>Locate</b> CDLI: <a href="#">P357189</a>
	<b>Lines:</b> (?) <b>Location:</b> The British Museum (London, United Kingdom)	
<b>Publications: Shorthand Name &amp; Full Citation</b>		<b>Includes</b>
<b>British Museum Digital Record</b> “BM 067932: Collection online.” The British Museum (Trustees of the British Museum). <a href="https://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=343318&amp;partId=1&amp;searchText=67932&amp;page=1">https://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=343318&amp;partId=1&amp;searchText=67932&amp;page=1</a> (accessed May 12, 2019).		General information

\* The CDLI does not list any secondary publications, translations, transliterations, or anything else whatever. The British Museum does not list photographs and indicates the dimensions are roughly 4.13 by 5.08 centimeters, meaning it is a very small artifact. The curator’s comments read “See also 1902,0415.1 (BM.96680),” perhaps indicating, that it is joined. The bibliography field listed “Leichty E & Grayson A K 1987a p.219” as the source; however, the resource only provided a tabular list of contents at the British Museum and no other information. The source listed from the British Museum was found as follows:

Leichty, Erle, and Albert Kirk. *Catalogue of the Babylonian Tablets in the British Museum, Volume VII: Tablets from Sippar 2*. London: Trustees of the British Museum, 1987, 219.

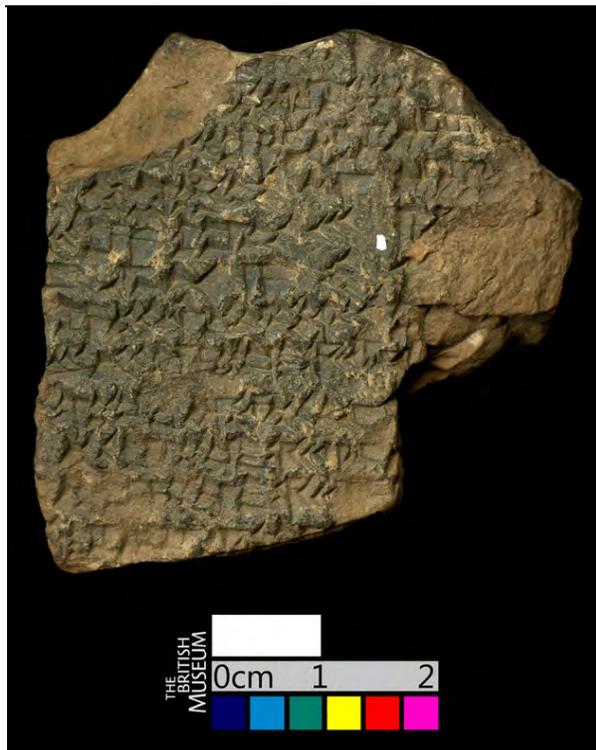
Kramer also made mention of the artifact in a few publications. However, no evidence reviewed suggested that this artifact provided meaningful lines of text towards the decipherment of the composition.

<b>33/g</b>	<b>BM 69737</b>	<b>Locate</b>
	<b>Lines:</b> (?) <b>Location:</b> The British Museum (London, United Kingdom)	<b>CDLI:</b> <a href="#">P274245</a>
<b>Publications: Shorthand Name &amp; Full Citation</b>		<b>Includes</b>
<b>PAPS 124 *</b>		Line art (sketches)
Kramer, Samuel Noah. "Sumerian Literature and the British Museum: The Promise of the Future." <i>Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society</i> 124, no. 4 (August 19, 1980): 295-312. [Line art on page 302. The author noted that the artifact was recently identified by himself]		Commentary Translation Transliteration Collation
<b>CT 58 (1990) 50</b>		Line art (sketch)
Alster, Bendt, and Markham J. Geller. <i>Cuneiform texts from Babylonian tablets in the British Museum. Part 58, Sumerian literary texts</i> . London: British Museum Publications, 1990. [Plate 50, page 62]		

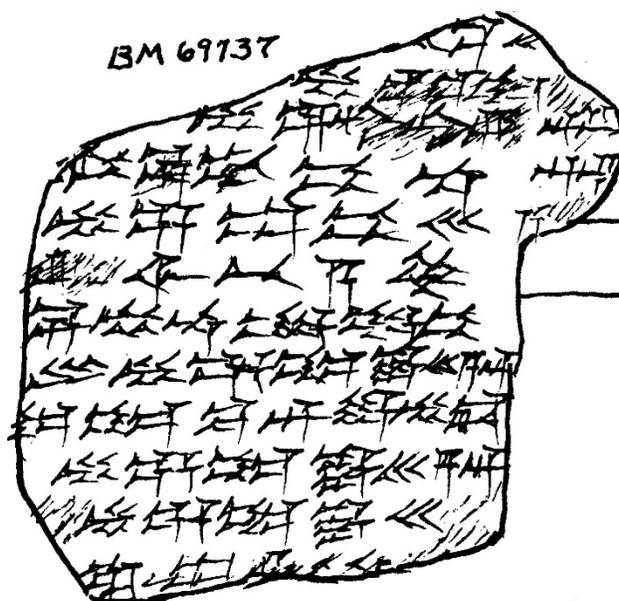
\* The footnote on page 302 notes that the table may be a duplicate of line 70ff [sic] of the Ur [sic] "UET 10 (?)" tablet. Further documentation by Kramer suggests this artifact relates to a composition named "Dumuzi's Dream." Otherwise, it may belong to an alternate version of "Inanna's Descent."

33/g BM 69737 \*

Photo



Line art (sketch)



\* Kramer and other scholars have noted that this artifact *likely* contains text that belongs to a different composition, or an alternate version of "Inanna's Descent."

<b>34/h</b>	<b>BM 96680</b>	<b>Locate</b>
	<b>Lines:</b> (?) <b>Location:</b> The British Museum (London, United Kingdom)	<b>CDLI:</b> <a href="#">P345778</a>
<b>Publications: Shorthand Name &amp; Full Citation ****</b>		<b>Includes</b>
<b>PAPS 124 *</b>		General information
<p>Kramer, Samuel Noah. "Sumerian Literature and the British Museum: The Promise of the Future." <i>Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society</i> 124, no. 4 (August 19, 1980): 295-312. [A brief description of the tablet on pages 297-8. Note that this artifact contains a different myth entirely and is <u>not</u> "Inanna's Descent."]</p>		
<b>BA 46 **</b>		Line art (sketch)
<p>Kramer, Samuel Noah. "The Weeping Goddess: Sumerian Prototypes of the Mater Dolorosa." <i>The Biblical Archaeologist</i> 46, no. 2 (Spring, 1983): 69-80. [See page 74 for a description]</p>		
<b>British Museum Digital Record ***</b>		General information
<p>"BM 096680: Collection online." The British Museum (Trustees of the British Museum). <a href="https://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=801579&amp;partId=1&amp;searchText=sumerian&amp;page=4">https://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=801579&amp;partId=1&amp;searchText=sumerian&amp;page=4</a> (accessed May 12, 2019). [The British Museum describes the artifact as follows: "Clay tablet with two and two columns of inscription; literary - Sumerian religious composition; Old Babylonian."]</p>		

\* In PAPS 124, Kramer noted the following description of the artifact: "BM 96680. 'The Suffering Goddess: A balag of Inanna.' This four-column tablet of one hundred and ninety-six lines, more than half preserved, consists of kirugu 16-22, that is, the last seven kirugu, of a composition known from the published British Museum tablet 96933. The text inscribed on our tablet, which is structured somewhat differently from that inscribed on the published piece-it is divided into twenty-two kirugu as contrasted with twenty-nine in the latter, but some of these have a much fuller text-and has numerous variants, will be of immense value for filling in the gaps and breaks in the second half of the composition, which consists largely of a prayerful dialogue between some concerned individual and Inanna who is depicted as having suffered dire calamities because of the wrath of Enlil." (297)

\*\* Kramer noted that this artifact did not contain lines for the composition of "Inanna's Descent." At the time of the writing, 1983, he described BM 96680 as a "Tablet containing first Inanna liturgic lament. Housed in the British Museum."

\*\*\* The British Museum listings cited the two articles presented here. The listing indicates its dimensions as 4.5 inches by 8.5 inches.

\*\*\*\* The citation named "AuOr 05, Kramer, 1987, 89-90." could not be located.

<b>35/i</b>	<b>UET 6 *269 [sic]</b> Lines: (?)	<b>Locate</b> N/A
<b>Information</b>		<b>Includes</b>
The CDLI indicates this is a small fragment containing mathematical (accounting) records.		(?)
<b>36/j</b>	<b>?UET 6 *306 [sic]</b> Lines: (?)	<b>Locate</b> N/A
<b>Information</b>		<b>Includes</b>
The CDLI indicates this is a small fragment containing mathematical (accounting) records.		(?)
<b>37/k</b>	<b>UET 6 *320 [sic]</b> Lines: (?)	<b>Locate</b> N/A
<b>Information</b>		<b>Includes</b>
The CDLI indicates this is a small fragment containing mathematical (accounting) records.		(?)

### **Appendix C: Translations of “Inanna’s Descent”**

**Table 2.1** lists selected translations of ID and includes additional information that may be useful: publication reference, textual contribution, and artifact usage. The selected translation section includes the full text of ID (the 2001, ETCSL version).

**Table 3.1. Top translation publications of “Inanna’s Descent” (1900-2019)**

◆ Partial translation    🎵 Verse form    ★ Text included in appendix		
Publication details	Textual contribution*	
❶ Year, nickname, citation	Lines	Artifacts
<b>1937 (Kramer’s first version)</b> Kramer, Samuel N. “Inanna’s Descent to the Nether World. The Sumerian Version of Is[h]tar’s Descent.” <i>Revue d’Assyriologie et d’Archéologie Orientale</i> 34, no. 3 (1937): 93-134. [JSTOR] Unusable lines: 96-9, 115, 119, 161-6, x1-x9, x35-x36, x54-x56	276 Available 250 Usable 26 Unusable <b>250/412 Total</b>	10 (11 fr.)
<b>1951 (Kramer’s canonical version)</b> Kramer, Samuel N. “‘Inanna’s Descent to the Nether World’ Continued and Revised. Second Part: Revised Edition of ‘Inanna’s Descent to the Nether World.’” <i>Journal of Cuneiform Studies</i> 5, no. 1 (1951): 1-17. [JSTOR] Missing/unusable lines: 224-40 and 381-412	363 Available 44 Usable 19 Unusable <b>344/412 Total</b>	15 (19 fr.)
◆ <b>1963 (Kramer adds UET series items)</b> Kramer, Samuel N. “Cuneiform Studies and the History of Literature: The Sumerian Sacred Marriage Texts.” <i>Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society</i> 107, no. 6 (December 1963): 485-527. [JSTOR]	Various lines added from 150-412 from addition of artifacts UET VI 8, 9, 10	
<b>1974 (Sladek’s PhD dissertation version)</b> Sladek Jr., William R. “Inanna’s Descent to the Netherworld.” Ann Arbor: University Microfilms, 1974, 153-181. [OMNIKA] Unusable lines: 245, 272, and 381-406.	412 available 360 usable 26 unusable <b>386/412 Total</b>	29 (36 fr.)
🎵 <b>1983 (Kramer and Wolkstein version)</b> Kramer, Samuel Noah, and Diane Wolkstein. <i>Inanna: Queen of Heaven and Earth: Her Stories and Hymns from Sumer</i> . New York: Harper & Row, 1983, 51-89. [Archive.org]	N/A (verse form)	
🎵 <b>1987 (Jacobsen’s final version)</b> Jacobsen, Thorkild. <i>The Harps that Once...: Sumerian Poetry in Translation</i> . New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987, 205-33. [Google Books]	N/A (verse form)	
◆ <b>1996 (Alster’s ending)</b> Alster, Bendt. “Inanna Repenting. The Conclusion of Inanna’s Descent.” <i>Acta Sumerologica</i> 18 (1996): 1-18. [OMNIKA]	Translated lines 351-412 from 8 artifacts (mainly CBS 6894)	
★ <b>2001 (ETCSL version)</b> Black, Jeremy A., Graham E Cunningham, Eleanor Robson, Gábor Zólyomi, and Esther Flückiger-Hawker. <i>Inana’s descent to the nether world: translation</i> . July 9, 2001. <a href="http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/section1/tr141.htm">http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/section1/tr141.htm</a> (accessed April 5, 2019). Note: Unusable lines: 245, 381-2, 385-9	412 available 405 usable 7 unusable <b>405/412 total</b>	37 (48 fr.)
<b>2019 (CDLI composite version – score)</b> “Q000343 = CDLI Literary 000343 (Inanna’s Descent) composite.” Cuneiform Digital Library Initiative (CDLI). University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA). Accessed May 5, 2019. <a href="https://cdli.ucla.edu/tools/scores/Q000343.html">https://cdli.ucla.edu/tools/scores/Q000343.html</a>	<b>412/412 total</b>	(78 fr.)

\* A source includes joins while an artifact represents a single fragment. “10 (11 fr.)” = ten sources, eleven fragments.

*Selected Translation: "Inanna's Descent" (ETCSL, 2001)*

**"Inana's descent to the nether world"**

**Citation:** Black, Jeremy A., Graham E Cunningham, Eleanor Robson, Gábor Zólyomi, and Esther Flückiger-Hawker. *Inana's descent to the nether world: translation*. July 9, 2001. <http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/section1/tr141.htm> (accessed April 5, 2019).

**Redactor's Note:** The translation has not been modified by the author (as is).

[1-5] From the great heaven she set her mind on the great below. From the great heaven the goddess set her mind on the great below. From the great heaven Inana set her mind on the great below. My mistress abandoned heaven, abandoned earth, and descended to the underworld. Inana abandoned heaven, abandoned earth, and descended to the underworld.

[6-13] She abandoned the office of en, abandoned the office of lagar, and descended to the underworld. She abandoned the E-ana in Unug, and descended to the underworld. She abandoned the E-muc-kalama in Bad-tibira, and descended to the underworld. She abandoned the Giguna in Zabalam, and descended to the underworld. She abandoned the E-cara in Adab, and descended to the underworld. She abandoned the Barag-dur-jara in Nibru, and descended to the underworld. She abandoned the Hursaj-kalama in Kic, and descended to the underworld. She abandoned the E-Ulmac in Agade, and descended to the underworld. (1 ms. adds 8 s: She abandoned the Ibgal in Umma, and descended to the underworld. She abandoned the E-Dilmuna in Urim, and descended to the underworld. She abandoned the Amac-e-kug in Kisiga, and descended to the underworld. She abandoned the E-eccdam-kug in Jirsu, and descended to the underworld. She abandoned the E-sig-mece-du in Isin, and descended to the underworld. She abandoned the Anzagar in Akcak, and descended to the underworld. She abandoned the Nijin-jar-kug in Curuppag, and descended to the underworld. She abandoned the E-cag-hula in Kazallu, and descended to the underworld.)

[14-19] She took the seven divine powers. She collected the divine powers and grasped them in her hand. With the good divine powers, she went on her way. She put a turban, headgear for the open country, on her head. She took a wig for her forehead. She hung small lapis-lazuli beads around her neck.

[20-25 ] She placed twin egg-shaped beads on her breast. She covered her body with a pala dress, the garment of ladyship. She placed mascara which is called "Let a man come, let him come" on her eyes. She pulled the pectoral which is called "Come, man, come" over her breast. She placed a golden ring on her hand. She held the lapis-lazuli measuring rod and measuring line in her hand.

[26-27] Inana travelled towards the underworld. Her minister Nincubura travelled behind her.

[28-31] Holy Inana said to Nincubura: "Come my faithful minister of E-ana, my minister who speaks fair words, my escort who speaks trustworthy words (1 ms. has instead: I am going to give you instructions: my instructions must be followed; I am going to say something to you: it must be observed).

[32-36] "On this day I will descend to the underworld. When I have arrived in the underworld, make a lament for me on the ruin mounds. Beat the drum for me in the sanctuary. Make the rounds of the houses of the gods for me.

[37-40] "Lacerate your eyes for me, lacerate your nose for me. (1 ms. adds the line: Lacerate your ears for me, in public.) In private, lacerate your buttocks for me. Like a pauper, clothe yourself in a single garment and all alone set your foot in the E-kur, the house of Enlil.

[41-47] "When you have entered the E-kur, the house of Enlil, lament before Enlil: "Father Enlil, don't let anyone kill your daughter in the underworld. Don't let your precious metal be alloyed there with the dirt of the underworld. Don't let your precious lapis lazuli be split there with the mason's stone. Don't let your boxwood be chopped up there with the carpenter's wood. Don't let young lady Inana be killed in the underworld."

[48-56] "If Enlil does not help you in this matter, go to Urim. In the E-mud-kura at Urim, when you have entered the E-kic-nu-jal, the house of Nanna, lament before Nanna: "Father Nanna, don't let anyone kill your daughter in the underworld. Don't let your precious metal be alloyed there with the dirt of the underworld. Don't let your precious lapis lazuli be split there with the mason's stone. Don't let your boxwood be chopped up there with the carpenter's wood. Don't let young lady Inana be killed in the underworld."

[57-64] "And if Nanna does not help you in this matter, go to Eridug. In Eridug, when you have entered the house of Enki, lament before Enki: "Father Enki, don't let anyone kill your daughter in the underworld. Don't let your precious metal be alloyed there with the dirt of the underworld. Don't let your precious lapis lazuli be split there with the mason's stone. Don't let your boxwood be chopped up there with the carpenter's wood. Don't let young lady Inana be killed in the underworld."

[65-67] "Father Enki, the lord of great wisdom, knows about the life-giving plant and the life-giving water. He is the one who will restore me to life."

[68-72] When Inana travelled on towards the underworld, her minister Nincubura travelled on behind her. She said to her minister Nincubura: "Go now, my Nincubura, and pay attention. Don't neglect the instructions I gave you."

[73-77] When Inana arrived at the palace Ganzer, she pushed aggressively on the door of the underworld. She shouted aggressively at the gate of the underworld: "Open up, doorman, open up. Open up, Neti, open up. I am all alone and I want to come in."

[78-84] Neti, the chief doorman of the underworld, answered holy Inana: "Who are you?" "I am Inana going to the east." "If you are Inana going to the east, why have you travelled to the land of no return? How did you set your heart on the road whose traveller never returns?"

[85-89] Holy Inana answered him: "Because lord Gud-gal-ana, the husband of my elder sister holy Erec-ki-gala, has died; in order to have his funeral rites observed, she offers generous libations at his wake -- that is the reason."

[90-93] Neti, the chief doorman of the underworld, answered holy Inana: "Stay here, Inana. I will speak to my mistress. I will speak to my mistress Erec-ki-gala and tell her what you have said."

[94-101] Neti, the chief doorman of the underworld, entered the house of his mistress Erec-ki-gala and said: "My mistress, there is a lone girl outside. It is Inana, your sister, and she has arrived at the palace Ganzer. She pushed aggressively on the door of the underworld. She shouted aggressively at the gate of the underworld. She has abandoned E-ana and has descended to the underworld."

[102-107] "She has taken the seven divine powers. She has collected the divine powers and grasped them in her hand. She has come on her way with all the good divine powers. She has put a turban, headgear for the open country, on her head. She has taken a wig for her forehead. She has hung small lapis-lazuli beads around her neck."

[108-113] "She has placed twin egg-shaped beads on her breast. She has covered her body with the pala dress of ladyship. She has placed mascara which is called "Let a man come" on her eyes. She has pulled the pectoral which is called "Come, man, come" over her breast. She has placed a golden ring on her hand. She is holding the lapis-lazuli measuring rod and measuring line in her hand."

[114-122] When she heard this, Erec-ki-gala slapped the side of her thigh. She bit her lip and took the words to heart. She said to Neti, her chief doorman: "Come Neti, my chief doorman of the underworld, don't neglect the instructions I will give you. Let the seven gates of the underworld be bolted. Then let each door of the palace Ganzur be opened separately. As for her, after she has entered, and crouched down and had her clothes removed, they will be carried away."

[123-128] Neti, the chief doorman of the underworld, paid attention to the instructions of his mistress. He bolted the seven gates of the underworld. Then he opened each of the doors of the palace Ganzur separately. He said to holy Inana: "Come on, Inana, and enter."

[129-133] And when Inana entered, (1 ms. adds 2 lines: the lapis-lazuli measuring rod and measuring line were removed from her hand, when she entered the first gate,) the turban, headgear for the open country, was removed from her head. "What is this?" "Be satisfied, Inana, a divine power of the underworld has been fulfilled. Inana, you must not open your mouth against the rites of the underworld."

[134-138] When she entered the second gate, the small lapis-lazuli beads were removed from her neck. "What is this?" "Be satisfied, Inana, a divine power of the underworld has been fulfilled. Inana, you must not open your mouth against the rites of the underworld."

[139-143] When she entered the third gate, the twin egg-shaped beads were removed from her breast. "What is this?" "Be satisfied, Inana, a divine power of the underworld has been fulfilled. Inana, you must not open your mouth against the rites of the underworld."

[144-148] When she entered the fourth gate, the "Come, man, come" pectoral was removed from her breast. "What is this?" "Be satisfied, Inana, a divine power of the underworld has been fulfilled. Inana, you must not open your mouth against the rites of the underworld."

[149-153] When she entered the fifth gate, the golden ring was removed from her hand. "What is this?" "Be satisfied, Inana, a divine power of the underworld has been fulfilled. Inana, you must not open your mouth against the rites of the underworld."

[154-158] When she entered the sixth gate, the lapis-lazuli measuring rod and measuring line were removed from her hand. "What is this?" "Be satisfied, Inana, a divine power of the underworld has been fulfilled. Inana, you must not open your mouth against the rites of the underworld."

[159-163] When she entered the seventh gate, the pala dress, the garment of ladyship, was removed from her body. "What is this?" "Be satisfied, Inana, a divine power of the underworld has been fulfilled. Inana, you must not open your mouth against the rites of the underworld."

[164-172] After she had crouched down and had her clothes removed, they were carried away. Then she made her sister Erec-ki-gala rise from her throne, and instead she sat on her throne. The Anuna, the seven judges, rendered their decision against her. They looked at her -- it was the look of death. They spoke to her -- it was the speech of anger. They shouted at her -- it was the shout of heavy guilt. The afflicted woman was turned into a corpse. And the corpse was hung on a hook.

[173-175] After three days and three nights had passed, her minister Nincubura (2 mss. add 2 lines: , her minister who speaks fair words, her escort who speaks trustworthy words,) carried out the instructions of her mistress (1 ms. has instead 2 lines: did not forget her orders, she did not neglect her instructions).

[176-182] She made a lament for her in her ruined (houses). She beat the drum for her in the sanctuaries. She made the rounds of the houses of the gods for her. She lacerated her eyes for her, she lacerated her nose. In private she lacerated her buttocks for her. Like a pauper, she clothed herself in a single garment, and all alone she set her foot in the E-kur, the house of Enlil.

[183-189] When she had entered the E-kur, the house of Enlil, she lamented before Enlil: "Father Enlil, don't let anyone kill your daughter in the underworld. Don't let your precious metal be alloyed there with the dirt of the underworld. Don't let your precious lapis lazuli be split there with the mason's stone. Don't let your boxwood be chopped up there with the carpenter's wood. Don't let young lady Inana be killed in the underworld."

[190-194] In his rage father Enlil answered Nincubura: "My daughter craved the great heaven and she craved the great below as well. Inana craved the great heaven and she craved the great below as well. The divine powers of the underworld are divine powers which should not be craved, for whoever gets them must remain in the underworld. Who, having got to that place, could then expect to come up again?"

[195-203] Thus father Enlil did not help in this matter, so she went to Urim. In the E-mud-kura at Urim, when she had entered the E-kic-nu-jal, the house of Nanna, she lamented before Nanna: "Father Nanna, don't let your daughter be killed in the underworld. Don't let your precious metal be alloyed there with the dirt of the underworld. Don't let your precious lapis lazuli be split there with the mason's stone. Don't let your boxwood be chopped up there with the carpenter's wood. Don't let young lady Inana be killed in the underworld."

[204-208] In his rage father Nanna answered Nincubura: "My daughter craved the great heaven and she craved the great below as well. Inana craved the great heaven and she craved the great below as well. The divine powers of the underworld are divine powers which should not be craved, for whoever gets them must remain in the underworld. Who, having got to that place, could then expect to come up again?"

[209-216] Thus father Nanna did not help her in this matter, so she went to Eridug. In Eridug, when she had entered the house of Enki, she lamented before Enki: "Father Enki, don't let anyone kill your daughter in the underworld. Don't let your precious metal be alloyed there with the dirt of the underworld. Don't let your precious lapis lazuli be split there with the mason's stone. Don't let your boxwood be chopped up there with the carpenter's wood. Don't let young lady Inana be killed in the underworld."

[217-225] Father Enki answered Nincubura: "What has my daughter done? She has me worried. What has Inana done? She has me worried. What has the mistress of all the lands done? She has me worried. What has the hierodule of An done? She has me worried." (1 ms. adds 1 line: Thus father Enki helped her in this matter.) He removed some dirt from the tip of his fingernail and created the kur-jara. He removed some dirt from the tip of his other fingernail and created the gala-tura. To the kur-jara he gave the life-giving plant. To the gala-tura he gave the life-giving water.

[226-235] Then father Enki spoke out to the gala-tura and the kur-jara: " (1 ms. has instead the line: One of you sprinkle the life-giving plant over her, and the other the life-giving water.) Go and direct your steps to the underworld. Flit past the door like flies. Slip through the door pivots like phantoms.

The mother who gave birth, Erec-ki-gala, on account of her children, is lying there. Her holy shoulders are not covered by a linen cloth. Her breasts are not full like a cagan vessel. Her nails are like a pickaxe (?) upon her. The hair on her head is bunched up as if it were leeks.

[236-245] "When she says "Oh my heart", you are to say "You are troubled, our mistress, oh your heart". When she says "Oh my liver", you are to say "You are troubled, our mistress, oh your liver". (She will then ask:) "Who are you? Speaking to you from my heart to your heart, from my liver to your liver -- if you are gods, let me talk with you; if you are mortals, may a destiny be decreed for you." Make her swear this by heaven and earth.

*1 line fragmentary*

[246-253] "They will offer you a riverful of water -- don't accept it. They will offer you a field with its grain -- don't accept it. But say to her: "Give us the corpse hanging on the hook." (She will answer:) "That is the corpse of your queen." Say to her: "Whether it is that of our king, whether it is that of our queen, give it to us." She will give you the corpse hanging on the hook. One of you sprinkle on it the life-giving plant and the other the life-giving water. Thus let Inana arise."

[254-262] The gala-tura and the kur-jara paid attention to the instructions of Enki. They flitted through the door like flies. They slipped through the door pivots like phantoms. The mother who gave birth, Erec-ki-gala, because of her children, was lying there. Her holy shoulders were not covered by a linen cloth. Her breasts were not full like a cagan vessel. Her nails were like a pickaxe (?) upon her. The hair on her head was bunched up as if it were leeks.

[263-272] When she said "Oh my heart", they said to her "You are troubled, our mistress, oh your heart". When she said "Oh my liver", they said to her "You are troubled, our mistress, oh your liver". (Then she asked:) "Who are you? I tell you from my heart to your heart, from my liver to your liver -- if you are gods, I will talk with you; if you are mortals, may a destiny be decreed for you." They made her swear this by heaven and earth. They .....

[273-281] They were offered a river with its water -- they did not accept it. They were offered a field with its grain -- they did not accept it. They said to her: "Give us the corpse hanging on the hook." Holy Erec-ki-gala answered the gala-tura and the kur-jara: "The corpse is that of your queen." They said to her: "Whether it is that of our king or that of our queen, give it to us." They were given the corpse hanging on the hook. One of them sprinkled on it the life-giving plant and the other the life-giving water. And thus Inana arose.

[282-289] Erec-ki-gala said to the gala-tura and the kur-jara: "Bring your queen ....., your ..... has been seized." Inana, because of Enki's instructions, was about to ascend from the underworld. But as Inana was about to ascend from the underworld, the Anuna seized her: "Who has ever ascended from the underworld, has ascended unscathed from the underworld? If Inana is to ascend from the underworld, let her provide a substitute for herself."

[290-294] So when Inana left the underworld, the one in front of her, though not a minister, held a sceptre in his hand; the one behind her, though not an escort, carried a mace at his hip, while the small demons, like a reed enclosure, and the big demons, like the reeds of a fence, restrained her on all sides.

[295-305] Those who accompanied her, those who accompanied Inana, know no food, know no drink, eat no flour offering and drink no libation. They accept no pleasant gifts. They never enjoy the pleasures of the marital embrace, never have any sweet children to kiss. They tear away the wife from a man's embrace. They snatch the son from a man's knee. They make the bride leave the house of her father-in-law (instead of lines 300-305, 1 ms. has 2 lines: They take the wife away from a man's

embrace. They take away the child hanging on a wet-nurse's breasts). (1 ms. adds 3 lines: They crush no bitter garlic. They eat no fish, they eat no leeks. They, it was, who accompanied Inana.)

[306-310] After Inana had ascended from the underworld, Nincubura threw herself at her feet at the door of the Ganzer. She had sat in the dust and clothed herself in a filthy garment. The demons said to holy Inana: "Inana, proceed to your city, we will take her back."

[311-321] Holy Inana answered the demons: "This is my minister of fair words, my escort of trustworthy words. She did not forget my instructions. She did not neglect the orders I gave her. She made a lament for me on the ruin mounds. She beat the drum for me in the sanctuaries. She made the rounds of the gods' houses for me. She lacerated her eyes for me, lacerated her nose for me. (1 ms. adds 1 line: She lacerated her ears for me in public.) In private, she lacerated her buttocks for me. Like a pauper, she clothed herself in a single garment.

[322-328] "All alone she directed her steps to the E-kur, to the house of Enlil, and to Urim, to the house of Nanna, and to Eridug, to the house of Enki. (1 ms. adds 1 line: She wept before Enki.) She brought me back to life. How could I turn her over to you? Let us go on. Let us go on to the Sig-kur-caga in Umma."

[329-333] At the Sig-kur-caga in Umma, Cara, in his own city, threw himself at her feet. He had sat in the dust and dressed himself in a filthy garment. The demons said to holy Inana: "Inana, proceed to your city, we will take him back."

[334-338] Holy Inana answered the demons: "Cara is my singer, my manicurist and my hairdresser. How could I turn him over to you? Let us go on. Let us go on to the E-muc-kalama in Bad-tibira."

[339-343] At the E-muc-kalama in Bad-tibira, Lulal, in his own city, threw himself at her feet. He had sat in the dust and clothed himself in a filthy garment. The demons said to holy Inana: "Inana, proceed to your city, we will take him back."

[344-347] Holy Inana answered the demons: "Outstanding Lulal follows me at my right and my left. How could I turn him over to you? Let us go on. Let us go on to the great apple tree in the plain of Kulaba."

[348-353] They followed her to the great apple tree in the plain of Kulaba. There was Dumuzid clothed in a magnificent garment and seated magnificently on a throne. The demons seized him there by his thighs. The seven of them poured the milk from his churns. The seven of them shook their heads like ..... They would not let the shepherd play the pipe and flute before her (?).

[354-358] She looked at him, it was the look of death. She spoke to him (?), it was the speech of anger. She shouted at him (?), it was the shout of heavy guilt: "How much longer? Take him away." Holy Inana gave Dumuzid the shepherd into their hands.

[359-367] Those who had accompanied her, who had come for Dumuzid, know no food, know no drink, eat no flour offering, drink no libation. They never enjoy the pleasures of the marital embrace, never have any sweet children to kiss. They snatch the son from a man's knee. They make the bride leave the house of her father-in-law.

[368-375] Dumuzid let out a wail and turned very pale. The lad raised his hands to heaven, to Utu: "Utu, you are my brother-in-law. I am your relation by marriage. I brought butter to your mother's house. I brought milk to Ningal's house. Turn my hands into snake's hands and turn my feet into snake's feet, so I can escape my demons, let them not keep hold of me."

[376-383] Utu accepted his tears. (1 ms. adds 1 line: Dumuzid's demons could not keep hold of him.)  
 Utu turned Dumuzid's hands into snake's hands. He turned his feet into snake's feet. Dumuzid escaped  
 his demons. (1 ms. adds 1 line: Like a sajkal snake he .....) They seized .....

*2 lines fragmentary*

Holy Inana ..... her heart.

[384-393] Holy Inana wept bitterly for her husband.

*4 lines fragmentary*

She tore at her hair like esparto grass, she ripped it out like esparto grass. "You wives who lie in your  
 men's embrace, where is my precious husband? You children who lie in your men's embrace, where is  
 my precious child? Where is my man? Where .....? Where is my man? Where ....."

[394-398] A fly spoke to holy Inana: "If I show you where your man is, what will be my reward?" Holy  
 Inana answered the fly: "If you show me where my man is, I will give you this gift: I will cover ....."

[399-403] The fly helped (?) holy Inana. The young lady Inana decreed the destiny of the fly: "In the  
 beer-house and the tavern (?), may there ..... for you. You will live (?) like the sons of the wise." Now  
 Inana decreed this fate and thus it came to be.

[404-410] ..... was weeping. She came up to the sister (?) and ..... by the hand: "Now, alas, my .....  
 You for half the year and your sister for half the year: when you are demanded, on that day you will  
 stay, when your sister is demanded, on that day you will be released." Thus holy Inana gave Dumuzid  
 as a substitute .....

[411-412] Holy Erec-ki-gala -- sweet is your praise.

<b>Artifact sources</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BM 17427 (CT 42 2), BM 67932, BM 69737 (CT 58 50)</li> <li>• BM 80054 (+) BM 80094 (CT 53 49) ***</li> <li>• BM 96680</li> <li>• CBS 9800 (photo RA 34 94f.; PAPS 85 pl. 5)</li> <li>• CBS 11064 + CBS 11088 (r. PBS 5 23; both photo PAPS 85 pl. 6)</li> <li>• CBS n/u (PBS 5 24) ***</li> <li>• CBS 12638 + CBS 12702 + CBS 12752 (all SEM 50)</li> <li>• CBS 12684, CBS 12757 (fig. 2), CBS 13902 (PBS 5 22)</li> <li>• CBS 13908 (r. SEM 48; photo PAPS 85 pl. 5)</li> <li>• CBS 13932 (SEM 49; photo PAPS 85 pl. 3)</li> <li>• Ni 368 (BE 31 33; SRT 53; photo RA 36 75)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• N 953 (fig. 8), N 983 (fig. 5), N 2523 (fig. 1)</li> <li>• N 2986 (fig. 9), N 3200, Ni 2279 (BE 31 34)</li> <li>• Ni 2762 (SLTN 29; RA 36 78) + Ni 9838 (ISET 2 17)</li> <li>• Ni 4034 (SLTN 30)</li> <li>• Ni 4187 (ISET 2 11; PAPS 107 525) + Ni 4200 (SLTN 28; RA 36 78)</li> <li>• Ni 9776 (ISET 1 125), Ni 9685 (JCS 4 124)</li> <li>• UET 6 8, UET 6 9 = U 16873, UET 6 10</li> <li>• UET 6 *269, ?UET 6 *306, UET 6 *320</li> <li>• YBC 4621</li> <li>• 3N-T211, 3N-T400, 3N-T499</li> <li>• CBS 15162 (PAPS 85 pl. 10), CBS 15212 (BASOR 79 22f.)</li> <li>• HS 1480 + HS 1580 (both TMH NF 3 2; photo PAPS 107 526f.) + HS 2505 (WK* 13)</li> </ul>
<b>Print sources (provided as is from the ETCSL page)</b>	
<p>Alster, Bendt, "Inanna Repenting. The Conclusion of Inanna's Descent", <i>Acta Sumerologica</i> 18 (1996), 1-18: commentary, translation, score transliteration</p> <p>Alster, Bendt, "The Mythology of Mourning", <i>Acta Sumerologica translation, commentary</i> (ll. 230, 231=257, 258, ll. 233-234=258-260)</p> <p>Bottéro, Jean, and Kramer, Samuel Noah, <i>Lorsque les dieux faisaient l'homme</i>. (rev.ed.), Éditions Gallimard: 1989, reprinted 1993, 276-290: translation</p> <p>Jacobsen, Thorkild, <i>The Harps that Once.... Sumerian Poetry in Translation</i>. Yale University Press: New Haven/London, 1987, 205-232: translation</p> <p>Kramer, Samuel Noah, "Sumerian literature and the British Museum: the promise of the future", <i>Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society</i> 124-5 (1980), 299-310: commentary, photograph, translation, composite text</p> <p>Römer, Willem H.Ph., and Edzard, Dietz Otto; Kaiser, Otto, (ed.) <i>Mythen und Epen</i>, 1 (Texte aus der Umwelt des Alten Testaments III, 3), Gütersloher Verlagshaus Gerd Mohn: Gütersloh 1993, 458-495: translation, commentary (by Römer)</p> <p>Sladek, William R., <i>Inanna's Descent to the Netherworld</i>. University Microfilms: Ann Arbor, 1974: translation, composite text, score transliteration, handcopy, commentary</p>	

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