

READINGS IN

THE *W*ESTERN  
HUMANITIES

VOLUME I

202

Edited by

JULIE WILDHABER  
KATHLEEN ENGELBERG  
C. LANSING HAYS



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## Preface

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This collection of literary and philosophical writings is designed to accompany Roy Matthews and DeWitt Platt's *The Western Humanities*, a textbook that surveys the artistic, cultural, and intellectual heritage of Western civilization from prehistory to the present. Volume I covers ancient Mesopotamia through the Renaissance; Volume II covers the Renaissance through the twentieth century.

Our principal goal in assembling this volume has been to bring the student into contact with as many diverse and representative voices as possible. Compiling an anthology is a quixotic process; the giants of Western thought stand before us, and we, armed with computers and liberal educations, cannot force them into a modest volume without compromises. Thus, we had to make choices.

Our first choice was to include certain voices and not others. The range of Western literature and philosophy is vast, and to keep these books within manageable length we had to exclude many worthwhile writers. Our second choice was

to include particular selections and excerpts. Again, our desire for diversity and broad representation compelled us to reproduce relatively brief samples of many writers' work. We hope these samples will entice students into reading more of each of these writers.

The third choice we made was to devote each page to the selections themselves rather than to introductions, notes, annotations, or biographical material. This choice allows the instructor the freedom and flexibility to provide his or her own commentary and interpretations. The student will find in these pages only the unadorned, original works.

We have been aided in selecting these writings by a number of experienced humanities faculties from around the country. We wish to thank them for their generous and thoughtful advice. Special thanks must go to Roy Matthews and DeWitt Platt for their counsel and for their superb work on *The Western Humanities*, which inspired the demand for this anthology.

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## Chapter

# 1

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## Prehistory and Near Eastern Civilizations

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### from *Inanna:* *Queen of Heaven and Earth*

From the Great Above to the Great Below

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From the Great Above she opened her ear to the Great Below.

From the Great Above the goddess opened her ear to the Great Below.

From the Great Above Inanna opened her ear to the Great Below.

My Lady abandoned heaven and earth to descend to the underworld.

Inanna abandoned heaven and earth to descend to the underworld.

She abandoned her office of holy priestess to descend to the underworld.

In Uruk she abandoned her temple to descend to the underworld.

In Badtibira she abandoned her temple to descend to the underworld.

In Zabalam she abandoned her temple to descend to the underworld.

In Adab she abandoned her temple to descend to the underworld.

In Nippur she abandoned her temple to descend to the underworld.

In Kish she abandoned her temple to descend to the underworld.

In Akkad she abandoned her temple to descend to the underworld.

She gathered together the seven *me*.

She took them into her hands.

With the *me* in her possession, she prepared herself:

She placed the *shugurra*, the crown of the steppe, on her head.

She arranged the dark locks of hair across her forehead.

She tied the small lapis beads around her neck,

Let the double strand of beads fall to her breast,

And wrapped the royal robe around her body.

She daubed her eyes with ointment called "Let him come, Let him come,"

Bound the breastplate called "Come, man, come!" around her chest,

Slipped the gold ring over her wrist,  
And took the lapis measuring rod and line in her hand.

Inanna set out for the underworld.

Ninshubur, her faithful servant, went with her.

Inanna spoke to her, saying:

"Ninshubur, my constant support,  
My *sukkal* who gives me wise advice,  
My warrior who fights by my side,  
I am descending to the *kur*, to the underworld.  
If I do not return,  
Set up a lament for me by the ruins.  
Beat the drum for me in the assembly places.  
Circle the houses of the gods.  
Tear at your eyes, at your mouth, at your thighs.  
Dress yourself in a single garment like a beggar.  
Go to Nippur, to the temple of Enlil.

When you enter his holy shrine, cry out:  
'O Father Enlil, do not let your daughter  
Be put to death in the underworld.  
Do not let your bright silver  
Be covered with the dust of the underworld.  
Do not let your precious lapis  
Be broken into stone for the stoneworker.  
Do not let your fragrant boxwood  
Be cut into wood for the woodworker.  
Do not let the holy priestess of heaven  
Be put to death in the underworld.'

If Enlil will not help you,  
Go to Ur, to the temple of Nanna.  
Weep before Father Nanna.  
If Nanna will not help you,  
Go to Eridu, to the temple of Enki.  
Weep before Father Enki.  
Father Enki, the God of Wisdom, knows the food  
of life,  
He knows the water of life;  
He knows the secrets.  
Surely he will not let me die."

Inanna continued on her way to the underworld.

Then she stopped and said:

"Go now, Ninshubur—  
Do not forget the words I have commanded you."

When Inanna arrived at the outer gates of the  
underworld,  
She knocked loudly.

She cried out in a fierce voice:

"Open the door, gatekeeper!  
Open the door, Neti!  
I alone would enter!"

Neti, the chief gatekeeper of the *kur*, asked:

"Who are you?"

She answered:

"I am Inanna, Queen of Heaven,  
On my way to the East."

Neti said:

"If you are truly Inanna, Queen of Heaven,  
On your way to the East,  
Why has your heart led you on the road  
From which no traveler returns?"

Inanna answered:

"Because . . . of my older sister, Ereshkigal,  
Her husband, Gugalanna, the Bull of Heaven,  
has died.  
I have come to witness the funeral rites.  
Let the beer of his funeral rites be poured into  
the cup.  
Let it be done."

Neti spoke:

"Stay here, Inanna, I will speak to my queen.  
I will give her your message."

Neti, the chief gatekeeper of the *kur*,

Entered the palace of Ereshkigal, the Queen of the  
Underworld, and said:

"My queen, a maid  
As tall as heaven,  
As wide as the earth,  
As strong as the foundations of the city wall,  
Waits outside the palace gates.

She has gathered together the seven *me*.  
She has taken them into her hands.  
With the *me* in her possession, she has  
prepared herself:

On her head she wears the *shugurra*, the crown  
of the steppe.  
Across her forehead her dark locks of hair are  
carefully arranged.  
Around her neck she wears the small lapis beads.  
At her breast she wears the double strand of beads.  
Her body is wrapped with the royal robe.  
Her eyes are daubed with the ointment called, 'Let  
him come, let him come.'  
Around her chest she wears the breastplate called  
'Come, man, come!'  
On her wrist she wears the gold ring.  
In her hand she carries the lapis measuring  
rod and line."

When Ereshkigal heard this,

She slapped her thigh and bit her lip.

She took the matter into her heart and dwelt on it.

Then she spoke:

"Come, Neti, my chief gatekeeper of the *kur*,  
Heed my words:



Bolt the seven gates of the underworld.  
 Then, one by one, open each gate a crack.  
 Let Inanna enter.  
 As she enters, remove her royal garments.  
 Let the holy priestess of heaven enter  
     bowed low." . . .

Naked and bowed low, Inanna entered the throne room.  
 Ereshkigal rose from her throne.  
 Inanna started toward the throne.  
 The Annuna, the judges of the underworld, surrounded  
     her.  
 They passed judgment against her.

Then Ereshkigal fastened on Inanna the eye of death.  
 She spoke against her the word of wrath.  
 She uttered against her the cry of guilt.

She struck her.

Inanna was turned into a corpse,  
 A piece of rotting meat,  
 And was hung from a hook on the wall.

When, after three days and three nights, Inanna had not  
     returned,  
 Ninshubur set up a lament for her by the ruins.  
 She beat the drum for her in the assembly places.  
 She circled the houses of the gods.  
 She tore at her eyes; she tore at her mouth; she tore at  
     her thighs.  
 She dressed herself in a single garment like a beggar.  
 Alone, she set out for Nippur and the temple of Enlil. . . .

Father Enki said:

"What has happened?  
 What has my daughter done?  
 Inanna! Queen of All the Lands! Holy Priestess  
     of Heaven!  
 What has happened?  
 I am troubled. I am grieved."

From under his fingernail Father Enki brought forth dirt.  
 He fashioned the dirt into a *kurgarra*, a creature neither  
     male nor female.  
 From under the fingernail of his other hand he brought  
     forth dirt.  
 He fashioned the dirt into a *galatur*, a creature neither  
     male nor female.  
 He gave the food of life to the *kurgarra*.  
 He gave the water of life to the *galatur*.  
 Enki spoke to the *kurgarra* and *galatur*, saying:  
     "Go to the underworld,  
     Enter the door like flies.  
     Ereshkigal, the Queen of the Underworld,  
         is moaning  
     With the cries of a woman about to give birth.  
     No linen is spread over her body.

Her breasts are uncovered.  
 Her hair swirls about her head like leeks.  
 When she cries, 'Oh! Oh! My inside!'  
 Cry also, 'Oh! Oh! Your inside!'  
 When she cries, 'Oh! Oh! My outside!'  
 Cry also, 'Oh! Oh! Your outside!'  
 The queen will be pleased.  
 She will offer you a gift.  
 Ask her only for the corpse that hangs from the  
     hook on the wall.  
 One of you will sprinkle the food of life on it.  
 The other will sprinkle the water of life.  
 Inanna will arise."

The *kurgarra* and the *galatur* heeded Enki's words.  
 They set out for the underworld.  
 Like flies, they slipped through the cracks of the gates.  
 They entered the throne room of the Queen of the  
     Underworld.

No linen was spread over her body.  
 Her breasts were uncovered.  
 Her hair swirled around her head like leeks.

Ereshkigal was moaning:  
     "Oh! Oh! My inside!"

They moaned:  
     "Oh! Oh! Your inside!"

She moaned:  
     "Ohhhh! Oh! My outside!"

They moaned:  
     "Ohhhh! Oh! Your outside!"

She groaned:  
     "Oh! Oh! My belly!"

They groaned:  
     "Oh! Oh! Your belly!"

She groaned:  
     "Oh! Ohhhh! My back!!!"

They groaned:  
     "Oh! Ohhhh! Your back!!!"

She sighed:  
     "Ah! Ah! My heart!"

They sighed:  
     "Ah! Ah! Your heart!"

She sighed:  
     "Ah! Ahhhh! My liver!"

They sighed:  
     "Ah! Ahhhh! Your liver!"

Ereshkigal stopped.  
She looked at them.  
She asked:

"Who are you,  
Moaning—groaning—sighing with me?  
If you are gods, I will bless you.  
If you are mortals, I will give you a gift.  
I will give you the water-gift, the river  
in its fullness."

The *kurgarra* and *galatur* answered:  
"We do not wish it."

Ereshkigal said:  
"I will give you the grain-gift, the fields in harvest."

The *kurgarra* and *galatur* said:  
"We do not wish it."

Ereshkigal said:  
"Speak then! What do you wish?"

They answered:  
"We wish only the corpse that hangs from the  
hook on the wall."

Ereshkigal said:  
"The corpse belongs to Inanna."

They said:  
"Whether it belongs to our queen,  
Whether it belongs to our king,  
That is what we wish."

The corpse was given to them.

The *kurgarra* sprinkled the food of life on the corpse.  
The *galatur* sprinkled the water of life on the corpse.  
Inanna arose. . . .

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## from *The Epic of Gilgamesh*

### Ishtar and Gilgamesh, and the Death of Enkidu

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Gilgamesh washed out his long locks and cleaned his weapons; he flung back his hair from his shoulders; he threw off his stained clothes and changed them for new. He put on his royal robes and made them fast. When Gilgamesh had put on the crown, glorious Ishtar lifted her eyes, seeing the beauty of Gilgamesh. She said, 'Come to me Gilgamesh, and be my bridegroom; grant me seed of your body, let me be your bride and you shall be my husband. I will harness for you a chariot of lapis lazuli and of gold, with wheels of gold and horns of copper; and you shall have mighty demons of the storm for draft-mules. When you enter our house in the fragrance of cedar-wood, threshold and throne will kiss your feet. Kings, rulers, and princes will bow down before you; they shall bring you tribute from the mountains and the plain. Your ewes shall drop twins and your goats triplets; your pack-ass shall outrun mules; your oxen shall have no rivals, and your chariot horses shall be famous far-off for their swiftness.'

Gilgamesh opened his mouth and answered glorious Ishtar, 'If I take you in marriage, what gifts can I give in return? What ointments and clothing for your body? I would gladly give you bread and all sorts of food fit for a god. I would give

you wine to drink fit for a queen. I would pour out barley to stuff your granary; but as for making you my wife—that I will not. How would it go with me? Your lovers have found you like a brazier which smoulders in the cold, a backdoor which keeps out neither squall of wind nor storm, a castle which crushes the garrison, pitch that blackens the bearer, a water-skin that chafes the carrier, a stone which falls from the parapet, a battering-ram turned back from the enemy, a sandal that trips the wearer. Which of your lovers did you ever love for ever? What shepherd of yours has pleased you for all time? Listen to me while I tell the tale of your lovers. There was Tammuz, the lover of your youth, for him you decreed wailing, year after year. You loved the many-coloured roller, but still you struck and broke his wing; now in the grove he sits and cries, "kappi, kappi, my wing, my wing." You have loved the lion tremendous in strength: seven pits you dug for him, and seven. You have loved the stallion magnificent in battle, and for him you decreed whip and spur and a thong, to gallop seven leagues by force and to muddy the water before he drinks; and for his mother Silili lamentations. You have loved the shepherd of the flock; he

made meal-cake for you day after day, he killed kids for your sake. You struck and turned him into a wolf; now his own herd-boys chase him away, his own hounds worry his flanks. And did you not love Ishullanu, the gardener of your father's palm-grove? He brought you baskets filled with dates without end; every day he loaded your table. Then you turned your eyes on him and said, "Dearest Ishullanu, come here to me, let us enjoy your manhood, come forward and take me, I am yours." Ishullanu answered, "What are you asking from me? My mother has baked and I have eaten; why should I come to such as you for food that is tainted and rotten? For when was a screen of rushes sufficient protection from frosts?" But when you had heard his answer you struck him. He was changed to a blind mole deep in the earth, one whose desire is always beyond his reach. And if you and I should be lovers, should not I be served in the same fashion as all these others whom you loved once?"

When Ishtar heard this she fell into a bitter rage, she went up to high heaven. Her tears poured down in front of her father Anu, and Antum her mother. She said, 'My father, Gilgamesh has heaped insults on me, he has told over all my abominable behaviour, my foul and hideous acts.' Anu opened his mouth and said, 'Are you a father of gods? Did not you quarrel with Gilgamesh the king, so now he has related your abominable behaviour, your foul and hideous acts.'

Ishtar opened her mouth and said again, 'My father, give me the Bull of Heaven to destroy Gilgamesh. Fill Gilgamesh, I say, with arrogance to his destruction; but if you refuse to give me the Bull of Heaven I will break in the doors of hell and smash the bolts; there will be confusion of people, those above with those from the lower depths. I shall bring up the dead to eat food like the living; and the hosts of dead will outnumber the living.' Anu said to great Ishtar, 'If I do what you desire there will be seven years of drought throughout Uruk when corn will be seedless husks. Have you saved grain enough for the people and grass for the cattle?' Ishtar replied, 'I have saved grain for the people, grass for the cattle; for seven years of seedless husks there is grain and there is grass enough.'

When Anu heard what Ishtar had said he gave her the Bull of Heaven to lead by the halter down to Uruk. When they reached the gates of Uruk the Bull went to the river; with his first snort cracks opened in the earth and a hundred young men fell down to death. With his second snort cracks opened and two hundred fell down to death. With his third snort cracks opened, Enkidu doubled over but instantly recovered, he dodged aside and leapt on the Bull and seized it by the horns. The Bull of Heaven foamed in his face, it brushed him with the thick of its tail. Enkidu cried to Gilgamesh, 'My friend, we boasted that we would leave enduring names behind us. Now thrust in your sword between the nape and the horns.' So Gilgamesh followed the Bull, he seized the thick of its tail, he thrust the sword between the nape and the horns and slew the Bull. When they had killed the Bull of Heaven they cut out its heart and gave it to Shamash, and the brothers rested.

But Ishtar rose up and mounted the great wall of Uruk; she sprang on to the tower and uttered a curse: 'Woe to

Gilgamesh, for he has scorned me in killing the Bull of Heaven.' When Enkidu heard these words he tore out the Bull's right thigh and tossed it in her face saying, 'If I could lay my hands on you, it is this I should do to you, and lash the entrails to your side.' Then Ishtar called together her people, the dancing and singing girls, the prostitutes of the temple, the courtesans. Over the thigh of the Bull of Heaven she set up lamentation.

But Gilgamesh called the smiths and the armourers, all of them together. They admired the immensity of the horns. They were plated with lapis lazuli two fingers thick. They were thirty pounds each in weight, and their capacity in oil was six measures, which he gave to his guardian god, Lugulbanda. But he carried the horns into the palace and hung them on the wall. Then they washed their hands in Euphrates, they embraced each other and went away. They drove through the streets of Uruk where the heroes were gathered to see them, and Gilgamesh called to the singing girls, 'Who is most glorious of the heroes, who is most eminent among men?' 'Gilgamesh is the most glorious of heroes, Gilgamesh is most eminent among men.' And now there was feasting, and celebrations and joy in the palace, till the heroes lay down saying, 'Now we will rest for the night.'

When the daylight came Enkidu got up and cried to Gilgamesh, 'Oh my brother, such a dream I had last night. Anu, Enlil, Ea and heavenly Shamash took counsel together, and Anu said to Enlil, "Because they have killed the Bull of Heaven, and because they have killed Humbaba who guarded the Cedar Mountain one of the two must die." Then glorious Shamash answered the hero Enlil, "It was by your command they killed the Bull of Heaven, and killed Humbaba, and must Enkidu die although innocent?" Enlil flung round in rage at glorious Shamash, "You dare to say this, you who went about with them every day like one of themselves!"'

So Enkidu lay stretched out before Gilgamesh; his tears ran down in streams and he said to Gilgamesh, 'O my brother, so dear as you are to me, brother, yet they will take me from you.' Again he said, 'I must sit down on the threshold of the dead and never again will I see my dear brother with my eyes.'

While Enkidu lay alone in his sickness he cursed the gate as though it was living flesh, 'You there, wood of the gate, dull and insensible, witless, I searched for you over twenty leagues until I saw the towering cedar. There is no wood like you in our land. Seventy-two cubits high and twenty-four wide, the pivot and the ferrule and the jambs are perfect. A master craftsman from Nippur has made you; but O, if I had known the conclusion! If I had known that this was all the good that would come of it, I would have raised the axe and split you into little pieces and set up here a gate of wattle instead. Ah, if only some future king had brought you here, or some god had fashioned you. Let him obliterate my name and write his own, and the curse fall on him instead of on Enkidu.'

With the first brightening of dawn Enkidu raised his head and wept before the Sun God, in the brilliance of the sunlight

his tears streamed down. 'Sun God, I beseech you, about that vile Trapper, that Trapper of nothing because of whom I was to catch less than my comrade; let him catch least; make his game scarce, make him feeble, taking the smaller of every share, let his quarry escape from his nets.'

When he had cursed the Trapper to his heart's content he turned on the harlot. He was roused to curse her also. 'As for you, woman, with a great curse I curse you! I will promise you a destiny to all eternity. My curse shall come on you soon and sudden. You shall be without a roof for your commerce, for you shall not keep house with other girls in the tavern, but do your business in places fouled by the vomit of the drunkard. Your hire will be potter's earth, your thievings will be flung into the hovel, you will sit at the cross-roads in the dust of the potter's quarter, you will make your bed on the dunghill at night, and by day take your stand in the wall's shadow. Brambles and thorns will tear your feet, the drunk and the dry will strike your cheek and your mouth will ache. Let you be stripped of your purple dyes, for I too once in the wilderness with my wife had all the treasure I wished.'

When Shamash heard the words of Enkidu he called to him from heaven: 'Enkidu, why are you cursing the woman, the mistress who taught you to eat bread fit for gods and drink wine of kings? She who put upon you a magnificent garment, did she not give you glorious Gilgamesh for your companion, and has not Gilgamesh, your own brother, made you rest on a royal bed and recline on a couch at his left hand? He has made the princes of the earth kiss your feet, and now all the people of Uruk lament and wail over you. When you are dead he will let his hair grow long for your sake, he will wear a lion's pelt and wander through the desert.'

When Enkidu heard glorious Shamash his angry heart grew quiet, he called back the curse and said, 'Woman, I promise you another destiny. The mouth which cursed you shall bless you! Kings, princes and nobles shall adore you. On your account a man though twelve miles off will clap his hand to his thigh and his hair will twitch. For you he will undo his belt and open his treasure and you shall have your desire; lapis lazuli, gold and carnelian from the heap in the treasury. A ring for your hand and a robe shall be yours. The priest will lead you into the presence of the gods. On your account a wife, a mother of seven, was forsaken.'

As Enkidu slept alone in his sickness, in bitterness of spirit he poured out his heart to his friend. 'It was I who cut down the cedar, I who levelled the forest, I who slew Humbaba and now see what has become of me. Listen, my friend, this is the dream I dreamed last night. The heavens roared, and earth rumbled back an answer; between them stood I before an awful being, the somber-faced man-bird; he had directed on me his purpose. His was a vampire face, his foot was a lion's foot, his hand was an eagle's talon. He fell on me and his claws were in my hair, he held me fast and I smothered; then he transformed me so that my arms became wings covered with feathers. He turned his stare towards me, and he led me away to the palace of Irkalla, the Queen of Darkness, to the house from which none who enters ever returns, down the road from which there is no coming back.

'There is the house whose people sit in darkness; dust is their food and clay their meat. They are clothed like birds with wings for covering, they see no light, they sit in darkness. I entered the house of dust and I saw the kings of the earth, their crowns put away for ever; rulers and princes, all those who once wore kingly crowns and ruled the world in the days of old. They who had stood in the place of the gods like Anu and Enlil, stood now like servants to fetch baked meats in the house of dust, to carry cooked meat and cold water from the water-skin. In the house of dust which I entered were high priests and acolytes, priests of the incantation and of ecstasy; there were servers of the temple, and there was Etana, that King of Kish whom the eagle carried to heaven in the days of old. I saw also Samuqan, god of cattle, and there was Ereshkigal the Queen of the Underworld; and Belit-Sheri squatted in front of her, she who is recorder of the gods and keeps the book of death. She held a tablet from which she read. She raised her head, she saw me and spoke: "Who has brought this one here?" Then I awoke like a man drained of blood who wanders alone in a waste of rushes; like one whom the bailiff has seized and his heart pounds with terror.'

Gilgamesh had peeled off his clothes, he listened to his words and wept quick tears, Gilgamesh listened and his tears flowed. He opened his mouth and spoke to Enkidu: 'Who is there in strong-walled Uruk who has wisdom like this? Strange things have been spoken, why does your heart speak strangely? The dream was marvellous but the terror was great; we must treasure the dream whatever the terror; for the dream has shown that misery comes at last to the healthy man, the end of life is sorrow.' And Gilgamesh lamented, 'Now I will pray to the great gods, for my friend had an ominous dream.'

This day on which Enkidu dreamed came to an end and he lay stricken with sickness. One whole day he lay on his bed and his suffering increased. He said to Gilgamesh, the friend on whose account he had left the wilderness, 'Once I ran for you, for the water of life, and I now have nothing.' A second day he lay on his bed and Gilgamesh watched over him but the sickness increased. A third day he lay on his bed, he called out to Gilgamesh, rousing him up. Now he was weak and his eyes were blind with weeping. Ten days he lay and his suffering increased, eleven and twelve days he lay on his bed of pain. Then he called to Gilgamesh, 'My friend, the great goddess cursed me and I must die in shame. I shall not die like a man fallen in battle; I feared to fall, but happy is the man who falls in the battle, for I must die in shame.' And Gilgamesh wept over Enkidu. . . .

He touched his heart but it did not beat, nor did he lift his eyes again. When Gilgamesh touched his heart it did not beat. So Gilgamesh laid a veil, as one veils the bride, over his friend. He began to rage like a lion, like a lioness robbed of her whelps. This way and that he paced round the bed, he tore out his hair and strewed it around. He dragged off his splendid robes and flung them down as though they were abominations.

In the first light of dawn Gilgamesh cried out, 'I made you rest on a royal bed, you reclined on a couch at my left hand, the princes of the earth kissed your feet. I will cause all the people of Uruk to weep over you and raise the dirge

of the dead. The joyful people will stoop with sorrow; and when you have gone to the earth I will let my hair grow long for your sake, I will wander through the wilderness in the skin of a lion.' The next day also, in the first light, Gilgamesh lamented; seven days and seven nights he wept for Enkidu, until the worm fastened on him. Only then he gave him up to the earth, for the Anunnaki, the judges, had seized him.

Then Gilgamesh issued a proclamation through the land, he summoned them all, the coppersmiths, the goldsmiths,

the stone-workers, and commanded them, 'Make a statue of my friend.' The statue was fashioned with a great weight of lapis lazuli for the breast and of gold for the body. A table of hard-wood was set out, and on it a bowl of carnelian filled with honey, and a bowl of lapis lazuli filled with butter. These he exposed and offered to the Sun; and weeping he went away.

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## The Story of the Flood

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'You know the city Shurruapak, it stands on the banks of Euphrates? That city grew old and the gods that were in it were old. There was Anu, lord of the firmament, their father, and warrior Enlil their counsellor, Ninurta the helper, and Ennugi watcher over canals; and with them also was Ea. In those days the world teemed, the people multiplied, the world bellowed like a wild bull, and the great god was aroused by the clamour. Enlil heard the clamour and he said to the gods in council, "The uproar of mankind is intolerable and sleep is no longer possible by reason of the babel." So the gods agreed to exterminate mankind. Enlil did this, but Ea because of his oath warned me in a dream. He whispered their words to my house of reeds, "Reed-house, reed-house! Wall, O wall, hearken reed-house, wall reflect; O man of Shurruapak, son of Ubara-Tutu; tear down your house and build a boat, abandon possessions and look for life, despise worldly goods and save your soul alive. Tear down your house, I say, and build a boat. These are the measurements of the barque as you shall build her: let her beam equal her length, let her deck be roofed like the vault that covers the abyss; then take up into the boat the seed of all living creatures."

'When I had understood I said to my lord, "Behold, what you have commanded I will honour and perform, but how shall I answer the people, the city, the elders?" Then Ea opened his mouth and said to me, his servant, "Tell them this: I have learnt that Enlil is wrathful against me, I dare no longer walk in his land nor live in his city; I will go down to the Gulf to dwell with Ea my lord. But on you he will rain down abundance, rare fish and shy wild-fowl, a rich harvest-tide. In the evening the rider of the storm will bring you wheat in torrents."

'In the first light of dawn all my household gathered round me, the children brought pitch and the men whatever was necessary. On the fifth day I laid the keel and the ribs, then I made fast the planking. The ground-space was one acre, each side of the deck measured one hundred and twenty cubits, making a square. I built six decks below, seven in all, I divided them into nine sections with bulkheads between.

I drove in wedges where needed, I saw to the punt-poles, and laid in supplies. The carriers brought oil in baskets, I poured pitch into the furnace and asphalt and oil; more oil was consumed in caulking, and more again the master of the board took into his stores. I slaughtered bullocks for the people and every day I killed sheep. I gave the shipwrights wine to drink as though it were river water, raw wine and red wine and oil and white wine. There was feasting then as there is at the time of the New Year's festival; I myself anointed my head. On the seventh day the boat was complete.

'Then was the launching full of difficulty; there was shifting of ballast above and below till two thirds was submerged. I loaded into her all that I had of gold and of living things, my family, my kin, the beast of the field both wild and tame, and all the craftsmen. I sent them on board, for the time that Shamash had ordained was already fulfilled when he said, "In the evening, when the rider of the storm sends down the destroying rain, enter the boat and batten her down." The time was fulfilled, the evening came, the rider of the storm sent down the rain. I looked out at the weather and it was terrible, so I too boarded the boat and battened her down. All was now complete, the battening and the caulking; so I handed the tiller to Puzur-Amurri the steersman, with the navigation and the care of the whole boat.

'With the first light of dawn a black cloud came from the horizon; it thundered within where Adad, lord of the storm was riding. In front over hill and plain Shullat and Hanish, heralds of the storm, led on. Then the gods of the abyss rose up; Nergal pulled out the dams of the nether waters, Ninurta the war-lord threw down the dykes, and the seven judges of hell, the Annunaki, raised their torches, lighting the land with their livid flame. A stupor of despair went up to heaven when the god of the storm turned daylight to darkness, when he smashed the land like a cup. One whole day the tempest raged, gathering fury as it went, it poured over the people like the tides of battle; a man could not see his brother nor the people be seen from heaven. Even the gods were terrified at the flood, they fled to the highest heaven, the firmament



of Anu; they crouched against the walls, cowering like curs. Then Ishtar the sweet-voiced Queen of Heaven cried out like a woman in travail: "Alas the days of old are turned to dust because I commanded evil; why did I command this evil in the council of all the gods? I commanded wars to destroy the people, but are they not my people, for I brought them forth? Now like the spawn of fish they float in the ocean." The great gods of heaven and of hell wept, they covered their mouths.

'For six days and six nights the winds blew, torrent and tempest and flood overwhelmed the world, tempest and flood raged together like warring hosts. When the seventh day dawned the storm from the south subsided, the sea grew calm, the flood was stilled; I looked at the face of the world and there was silence, all mankind was turned to clay. The surface of the sea stretched as flat as a roof-top; I opened a hatch and the light fell on my face. Then I bowed low, I sat down and I wept, the tears streamed down my face, for on every side was the waste of water. I looked for land in vain, but fourteen leagues distant there appeared a mountain, and there the boat grounded; on the mountain of Nisir the boat held fast, she held fast and did not budge. One day she held, and a second day on the mountain of Nisir she held fast and did not budge. A third day, and a fourth day she held fast on the mountain and did not budge; a fifth day and a sixth day she held fast on the mountain. When the seventh day dawned I loosed a dove and let her go. She flew away, but finding no resting-place she returned. Then I loosed a swallow, and she flew away but finding no resting-place she returned. I loosed a raven, she saw that the waters had retreated, she ate, she flew around, she cawed, and she did not come back. Then I threw everything open to the four winds, I made a sacrifice and poured out a libation on the mountain top. Seven and again seven cauldrons I set up on their stands, I heaped up wood and cane and cedar and myrtle. When the gods smelled the sweet savour, they gathered like flies over the sacrifice. Then, at last, Ishtar also came, she lifted her necklace with the jewels of heaven that once Anu had made to please her. "O you gods here present,

by the lapis lazuli round my neck I shall remember these days as I remember the jewels of my throat; these last days I shall not forget. Let all the gods gather round the sacrifice, except Enlil. He shall not approach this offering, for without reflection he brought the flood; he consigned my people to destruction."

'When Enlil had come, when he saw the boat, he was wrath and swelled with anger at the gods, the host of heaven, "Has any of these mortals escaped? Not one was to have survived the destruction." Then the god of the wells and canals Ninurta opened his mouth and said to the warrior Enlil, "Who is there of the gods that can devise without Ea? It is Ea alone who knows all things." Then Ea opened his mouth and spoke to warrior Enlil, "Wiseest of gods, hero Enlil, how could you so senselessly bring down the flood?

*Lay upon the sinner his sin,  
Lay upon the transgressor his transgression,  
Punish him a little when he breaks loose,  
Do not drive him too hard or he perishes;  
Would that a lion had ravaged mankind  
Rather than the flood,  
Would that a wolf had ravaged mankind  
Rather than the flood,  
Would that famine had wasted the world  
Rather than the flood,  
Would that pestilence had wasted mankind  
Rather than the flood.*

It was not I that revealed the secret of the gods; the wise man learned it in a dream. Now take your counsel what shall be done with him."

"Then Enlil went up into the boat, he took me by the hand and my wife and made us enter the boat and kneel down on either side, he standing between us. He touched our foreheads to bless us saying, "In time past Utnapishtim was a mortal man; henceforth he and his wife shall live in the distance at the mouth of the rivers." Thus it was that the gods took me and placed me here to live in the distance, at the mouth of the rivers.'

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## from the Unas Pyramid Texts

Utterance 217

*Sarcophagus Chamber, South Wall  
The king joins the sun-god*

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Re-Atum, this Unas comes to you,  
A spirit indestructible  
Who lays claim to the place of the four pillars!  
Your son comes to you, this Unas comes to you,  
May you cross the sky united in the dark,  
May you rise in lightland, the place in which you shine!

Seth, Nephthys, go proclaim to Upper Egypt's gods  
And their spirits:  
"This Unas comes, a spirit indestructible,  
If he wishes you to die, you will die,  
If he wishes you to live, you will live!"  
Re-Atum, this Unas comes to you,



A spirit indestructible  
 Who lays claim to the place of the four pillars!  
 Your son comes to you, this Unas comes to you,  
 May you cross the sky united in the dark,  
 May you rise in lightland, the place in which you shine!  
 Osiris, Isis, go proclaim to Lower Egypt's gods  
 And their spirits:  
 "This Unas comes, a spirit indestructible,  
 Like the morning star above Hapy,  
 Whom the water-spirits worship;  
 Whom he wishes to live will live,  
 Whom he wishes to die will die!"

Re-Atum, this Unas comes to you,  
 A spirit indestructible  
 Who lays claim to the place of the four pillars!  
 Your son comes to you, this Unas comes to you,  
 May you cross the sky united in the dark,  
 May you rise in lightland, the place in which you shine!  
 Thoth, go proclaim to the gods of the west  
 And their spirits:  
 "This Unas comes, a spirit indestructible,

Decked above the neck as Anubis,  
 Lord of the western height,  
 He will count hearts, he will claim hearts,  
 Whom he wishes to live will live,  
 Whom he wishes to die will die!"

Re-Atum, this Unas comes to you,  
 A spirit indestructible  
 Who lays claim to the place of the four pillars!  
 Your son comes to you, this Unas comes to you,  
 May you cross the sky united in the dark,  
 May you rise in lightland, the place in which you shine!  
 Horus, go proclaim to the powers of the east  
 And their spirits:  
 "This Unas comes, a spirit indestructible,  
 Whom he wishes to live will live,  
 Whom he wishes to die will die!"

Re-Atum, your son comes to you,  
 Unas comes to you,  
 Raise him to you, hold him in your arms,  
 He is your son, of your body, forever!

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## *The Dispute of a Man With His Soul*

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. . . Then I opened my mouth to my soul, that I might answer what it had said: "This is too much for me now, that my soul does not speak with me. My soul goes forth; let it stand and wait for me!

"Behold, my soul disobeys me because I did not hearken to it, and drag myself to death ere I have come to it, to cast myself upon the fire in order to consume myself. Rather, let it be near to me on this day of misfortune, and wait on the other side!

"My soul is foolish to hold back one wretched over life and delay me from death before I have come to it. Rather, make the West pleasant for me! Is it something bad? The period of life is limited in any case: even the trees must fall! Thoth, who contents the gods, he will judge me! Khonsu, the Scribe in Truth, he will defend me! Ra, who guides the Solar Bark, he will hear my words! My distress is heavy, and he bears it for me!"

And this is what my soul said to me: "And are you not a plain man? Yet you are as concerned as if you were a possessor of wealth!"

I said: "If my soul will hearken to me, and its heart agrees with me, it will be happy. I will cause it to reach the West, like one who is in his pyramid, and at whose burial there has stood a survivor. I shall drink from the river whose water is drawn, and look down on the souls that are unsatisfied!"

Then my soul opened its mouth to me, to answer what I had said: "If you are calling burial to mind, that is a distress of the heart; it is a bringing of tears, it is making a man

sorrowful. It is haling a man from his house and throwing him upon the hill. Never shall you go up above to behold the sun. They who built in granite and fashioned pyramids—fine things of good work—when the builders have become gods, their offering tables are as empty as those of the wretches who die on the riverbank—part of their bodies held by the water and part by the heat of the sun, and the fish of the bank hold converse with them! Listen, then, to me; lo, it is good to listen to people! Follow the happy day and forget care!

"Take the case of a poor man who plows his field and then loads his harvest on to a boat, and hurries to tow the boat since his feast day approaches. He sees a flood coming on in the night, and keeps vigil when Ra goes down. He comes forth with his wife, but his children perish upon the water, dangerous with crocodiles in the night. At last he sits down, when he can regain his voice, and says: 'I do not weep for that girl; there is no coming forth into the West for her. I am troubled for her children that are broken in the egg, that behold the face of the crocodile-god before they had lived.'"

Then I opened my mouth to my soul, that I might answer what it had said:

"Behold, you make my name reek,  
 lo, more than the stench of carrion  
 on days in summer, when the sky is hot.

"Behold, you make my name reek  
lo, more than a fisherman  
on the day of the catch, when the sky is hot.

"Behold, you make my name reek  
lo, more than the stench of bird droppings,  
more than the hill of willows with the geese.

"Behold, you make my name reek  
lo, more than the odor of fishermen,  
more than the shores of the swamps when they have  
fished.

"Behold, you make my name reek  
lo, more than the stench of crocodiles,  
more than sitting among crocodiles.

"Behold, you make my name reek  
lo, more than that of a woman  
when lies are told about her to her man.

"Behold, you make my name reek  
lo, more than that of a lusty boy  
against whom it is said, 'He belongs to his hated one!'

"Behold, you make my name reek  
lo, more than a treacherous city,  
more than a traitor who turns his back.

"To whom shall I speak today?  
One's fellows are evil;  
the friends of today do not love.

"To whom shall I speak today?  
Men are rapacious;  
every one seizes his neighbor's goods.

"To whom shall I speak today?  
Gentleness has perished;  
insolence has access to all men.

"To whom shall I speak today?  
The evil have a contented countenance;  
good is rejected in every place.

"To whom shall I speak today?  
He who by his evil deeds should arouse wrath  
moves all men to laughter, though his iniquity is  
grievous.

"To whom shall I speak today?  
Men rob;  
Every man seizes his neighbor's goods.

"To whom shall I speak today?  
The foul man is trusted,  
but one who was a brother to him has become an  
enemy.

"To whom shall I speak today?  
No one remembers yesterday;  
no one now requites good to him who has done it.

"To whom shall I speak today?  
Brothers are evil;  
a man is treated as an enemy for his uprightness.

"To whom shall I speak today?  
Faces are not seen;  
every man's face is downcast toward his brethren.

"To whom shall I speak today?  
Hearts are greedy;  
the man on whom men rely has no heart.

"To whom shall I speak today?  
There are no righteous ones;  
the land is given over to the doers of evil.

"To whom shall I speak today?  
There is lack of a trusty friend;  
one must go to an unknown in order to complain.

"To whom shall I speak today?  
There is none that is peaceable;  
the one with whom one went no longer exists.

"To whom shall I speak today?  
I am laden with misery,  
and lack a trusted friend.

"To whom shall I speak today?  
The evil which treads the earth,  
it has no end.

"Death is in my sight today  
as when a sick man becomes whole,  
as when one goes out after an illness.

"Death is in my sight today  
as the odor of myrrh,  
as when sitting under sail on a breezy day.

"Death is in my sight today  
as the odor of lotus flowers,  
as when sitting on the riverbank getting drunk.

"Death is in my sight today  
as a well-trodden path,  
as when a man returns home to his house from war.

"Death is in my sight today  
as a clearing of the sky,  
as a man discerning what he knew not.

"Death is in my sight today  
as when a man longs to see his home again  
after he has spent many years in captivity.

"Nay, but he who is Yonder  
will be as a living god,  
inflicting punishment for evil upon him who does it.

"Nay, but he who is Yonder  
will stand in the bark of the Sun-god  
and will assign the choicest things therein to the temples.

"Nay, but he who is Yonder  
will be a man of knowledge,  
not hindered from petitioning Ra when he speaks."

This is what my soul said to me: "Set aside lamentation, you who are mine, my brother! Although offered up on the brazier, still you shall cling to life, as you say. Whether I remain here if you reject the West, or whether you reach the West and your body is joined with the earth, I will alight after you go to rest. Then we shall make an abode together!"

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## *The Story of Sinuhe the Egyptian*

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The Hereditary Prince and Chief, Treasurer of the King, and Unique Courtier, Administrative Dignitary of the districts and estates of the Sovereign in the lands of the Syrians, Actual Acquaintance of the King and beloved of him, the King's Retainer Sinuhe says:

I was a retainer who followed his lord, a servant of the Royal Harem and of the Princess great of praise, the wife of King Sen-Wesret and daughter of King Amen-em-Hat, namely, Neferu, Lady of Reverence.

In the year 30 of his reign, in the third month of the season of Inundation, the god ascended unto his horizon; the King of Upper and Lower Egypt, Amen-em-Hat, was taken up to heaven and united with the sun. The body of the god was united with him who made him. The city of royal residence was silent, all hearts were in grief, and the great Double Gates were sealed. The courtiers sat with heads bent down upon their laps, and the people were in mourning.

Now His Majesty had sent a great army to the land of the Lybians, with his eldest son in command of it, namely, the beautiful god Sen-Wesret. He had been sent to smite the foreign lands, to strike down the dwellers in Lybia. Indeed, even now was he returning, bringing living prisoners from among the Lybians and all kinds of cattle without limit.

The courtiers of the palace sent to the western border, advising the King's son of what had come about in the Palace. The messengers found him on the road, having reached him at the time of evening. Not a moment at all did he delay: The Falcon flew with his attendants, not letting his army know what had happened.

Now those others of the King's sons who were following him in this expedition were sought out, and one of them was called aside. And lo, I happened to be standing near by, and heard his voice as he was speaking. My heart was distraught, my arms flung apart, and trembling seized all my limbs. I sprang bounding away to seek myself a place to hide. I placed myself between two bushes to hide from the passers-by. I certainly had no intention of returning to the Residence, for

I expected civil strife to break out, and I did not think I would live after the King's death.

I crossed Lake Maati near Nehet and landed at the island of Senefru. I passed the day at the edge of the fields, and at dawn the next morning I set forth again. I met a man standing on the road. He was frightened of me, and stood in awe. When it was time for supper, I reached the town of Negau. I crossed the river on a barge without a rudder, with the aid of a westerly wind. I passed eastward of the quarry, above the temple of Hathor, Lady of the Red Hill. I gave road to my legs and went northward.

I arrived at the Walls of the Ruler, which were made to repel the Syrians and to defeat the Sand-crossers. I took up a crouching position under a bush, in fear lest the watch of the day standing on the wall would see me. At the time of late evening I journeyed on, and when the sun came forth again I reached Peten, and halted at the island of Kem-Wer. A great attack of thirst overtook me. My throat was hot and dry, and I said, "This is the taste of death."

Then I lifted up my heart and pulled my limbs together, for I heard the sound of the lowing of cattle and I spied some Syrians. A distinguished chieftain among them, who had been in Egypt, recognized me. Then he gave me water and cooked milk for me. I proceeded with him to his tribe, and they treated me well.

Land gave me to land. I went forth to Byblos, and then I turned back to Kedem. There I spent a year and a half. Then Amu-nenshi, a ruler in Palestine, fetched me. He said to me, "You will fare well with me; here you will hear the speech of Egypt." He said this since he knew my character and had heard of my capacities. The Egyptians who were there with him bore witness for me.

He said to me, "For what reason have you come to this place? What is it? Has something happened at the Residence?"

Then I said to him, "King Amen-em-Hat has proceeded to the Horizon. No one knows what can happen because of it." But I added, untruthfully: