A NEW PIECE OF AN INANNA/DUMUZI LAMENTATION

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CUNES 53-08-060 is a large piece of a three-column Old Babylonian tablet that contained all or part of a lamentation to Inanna or Dumuzi. The piece measures 83 × 136 × 30 mm and appears to be the bottom half of the original tablet, with the leftmost part of the tablet missing. I have been unable to identify any known Dumuzi or Inanna composition to which this text may have belonged.

The theme, as expected, is Inanna’s search for the battered and dying shepherd Dumuzi, who, in one unusually graphic passage, is depicted as a slaughtered bull: “His eyes (blankly) stare straight in front of him; a ḫaluppū-tree is formed at (his) nose/mouth by the (spurting) blood; everything in his innards is broken up.” The final literary section (rev. iii) on our tablet seems to be a fitting conclusion to Inanna’s search for Dumuzi, which suggests that this was the conclusion to the entire composition. This section begins: “As long as there are laments for the street that has fallen silent, when is there rest?” and concludes “(Not until) you finally come across (his) corpse will you be able to rest.”

The text contains some passages common to published Emesal balags and eršemmas (obv. i 8–9; ii 3–4; rev ii).

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I offer this treatment of a small piece of Sumerian literature to my teacher, Åke W. Sjöberg, who has dedicated himself these many years to the publication of so much Sumerian literature.
Obv.
i (beginning not preserved)
1` [ . . ] 'x'
2` [ . . ] da-bi
3` [x (x)] 'x' ša₃-mu-da ša₃-mu
4` [ga-ša]-an-an-na-men₃
5` [ x k]i? u₂ du-da ša₃-mu
6` 'x-ga'-ta na-ma-gig-ga-mu
7` ga-am₃-du₁₁ ga-A<AN>-du₁₁
8` e₂-zi-bi uru₂-a ba-an-gul-gul
9` e₂ mu-lu-zi-bi uru₂-a ba-an-tu₁₀-be₂-es
10` e₂-mu <i(z)><zi-gal-gal-la-bi ba-gul
11` [a]-ša₃-ma₄ mu-šu₃-lu₂ si il₂-il₂-bi-ta' uš₂
12` 'x x x' gu₄-'re' ba-ab-ir
   (remainder of column not preserved)

ii
1` [ . . ] šumgal-an-na
2` am kun₄-maḥ am e₂-gal-an-na
3` u₃-zu al-dib₂ sil₄-zu al-rig₇
4` u₃₃-zu al-dib₂ ma₃₂-zu al-rig₇
5` a₃-šu me-ri-zu am₂-[x x D]IB?
6` mu-gi-na-zu am₂-'x' [x D]IB?
7` teš₂-ba ub-lil₂-la₂ (x x)
8` gu₃-gig-ga bi₂-ib-be₂
9` u₃-mu-un e₂-sag'?-zu? ub-lil₂-la₂
10` šukur₃ i₃([-ba?]) 'al'-gu-re
11` šid al-ti [x] al-gi₄-ga
12` uru₂ šeš še[š x] bi im-me mu-tin-an-na-ke₄
13` 'ki?-sikil?-e ga-ša-an-an-na-ke₄'
   (remainder of column not preserved)

iii
1` [x] 'x' 'x' [ . . ]
2` am-ug₅-ga 'x i-bi₂ x'
3` i-bi₂-na i-bi₂ mu-un-na-bar-bar-re
4` mud-da? K₄-e ši₄ha-lu 'ub₂'-al-ak-e
5` am₂-tul₂-sag-ga₂-na al-ku₅-de₃
6` ama-gan-e uru₂? mu-'šu₃-mu i₃? tu-mu? pel₂-la₂-bi a[m₂-m]e
7` ta-am₃ gu-lu-'bi [x m]e?
8` u₄-ba ge₁₆-le-ma₃ na-mu-'x' e-le (x)
9` me-er-me-re ḫe₂-em-zi-ga a-nigin₂? eden-na ma-ir-ra
10` su₄-ba amaš-ku₃ gi-er₂-ra B[U-x]
11` amaš-ku₃ su₄-ba amaš-ku₃ 'gi'-er₂-ra BU-'x'
   (remainder of column not preserved)