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A Study of Terminology of the Netherworld in Sumero-Akkadian Literature (2)

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2.4. HUR.SAG

As the general distinction between KUR and HUR.SAG has already been treated, in the entry 2. 1. KUR, it need not be taken up again here. From the semantic point of view, HUR.SAG is quite clear. It hardly represents the Netherworld in the Sumerian literatures. However, HUR.SAG, KI and KUR both in a bilingual and Akkadian texts are confused their semantic distribution.

a. Word level¹

- 1) mountain(-range)
- 2) cosmic sense of mountain

An interesting question is whether the concept of the cosmic mountain, the so called *Weltberg*, found elsewhere as in the North-West semitic religions² and the Greek *Olympus*, existed or not in the Sumerian literature.³ Since L.W. King, the concept of *weltberg* has been widely accepted as a huge mountain whose peak reaches to heaven and whose root reaches to the base of Netherworld. However, scholars' attitudes toward the concept of *Weltberg* began to change with E.

Dhorme, who does not use either the concept or the term in his book.⁴ D.O. Edzard lists du₆-kù, *Heiliger Hügel*, in the mythology of Sumerian and Akkadian, but rather avoids using the concept of *Weltberg*⁵.

S.N. Kramer started off the argument on the concept of *Weltberg* again⁶ quoting the myth *Cattle and Grain*.⁷

“Upon the mountain of heaven and earth,
When An had spawned the Anunnaki ,...

It is not unreasonable to assume, therefore, that heaven and earth united were conceived as a mountain whose base was the bottom of the earth and whose peak was the top of the heaven.”⁸ Th. Jacobsen comments on Kramer’s concept of hur-sag in his review article.⁹ His point against Kramer’s assumption of hur-sag-an-ki-bi-da “the mountain of heaven and earth” as the *Weltberg* is based on a different interpretation;

“The Sumerian word hursag usually has reference to the range of mountains bordering the Mesopotamian plain on the east. As seen on the eastern horizon, its shining peaks towering from the earth up to both of these cosmic entities, and the epithet here applied to it, ‘of both heaven and earth,’ is therefore as forceful as it is apt,”¹⁰ and he concludes that; “there is in these lines no evidence for a Sumerian *Weltberg*.”¹¹ But again van Dijk, supports the concept of *Weltberg*, hur-sag-an-ki-bi-da “mountain of heaven and earth”:¹²

“Es (du₆-kù) ist der heilige Hüel über dem Weltberg, auf dem in der Urzeit die Anunna-Göter wohnten und auf dem Landwirtschaft, Viehzucht, Weberei, alles, was zur Kulture Sumers gehörte, entstanden ist”.¹³

I favor admitting the existence of the cosmic HUR.SAG “mountain,” but not the sense of Kramer’s description of the *Weltberg*, that is, “whose base was the bottom of the earth and whose peak was the top of the heaven,” which apparently occurs later, for instance, in the epic

of Gilgamesh.¹⁴ More probably HUR.SAG may be used just as the poetic expression for cosmic entities. The Ziggrat in Nippur is represented poetically as a hur-sag-galam-ma “artful mountain”, and in Ur as hur-sag-sukud-rā “high mountain.” Just like é-temen-an-ki, “temple-foundation of heaven and earth,” the name of the ziqqurrat in Babylon, HUR.SAG represents the cosmic sense of a mountain as a part of a gigantic presentation of the cosmos. This usage of HUR.SAG as a poetic expression of greatness is truly seen when it occurs the phrase like hur-sag-ıl-la-gim, “like a high mountain,” hur-sag-gal-gim, “like a gigantic mountain.”

b. Sentence level

The cosmic sense of mountain can encompass the semantic range of the Netherworld.

- (36) má-ùr-má-ùr-hur-sag-gā-ke₄ hu-[mu-ni-ib-túm-a-ka]
[hur]-sag-diš-kam-ma in-ti-bal-e-ne-ne
...-ga(?)-ni nu-[mu-ni]-in-pàd-dè
hur-sag-imin-kam-ma bal-e-da-ne-ne
“Hav[ing been brought]into the ... mountain,
The first[mo]untain you cross, he comes not[upon]his ...
Upon their crossing the seventh mountain”

Gilgamesh and the Land of the Living 60-62.

The cosmos may be seen from both the vertical and horizontal point of view. On the one hand, Sumero-Akkadian literature is inclined to describe the cosmos from the perspective of the vertical structures of the universe, such as “heaven, earth and the Netherworld” just as many other world mythologies do. On the other hand, some of the descriptions, such as the implications of the rising sun and reference

of (36), point to another way to look at the cosmos, that is, the horizontal dimension which we can not discount if we want to comprehend the cosmology or cosmogony of the ancient near eastern world.

The concept of the Netherworld in the Aciént Near East can accept both the vertical and horizontal expansion of the cosmos without any discrepancy. In other words, the Netherworld is conceived as extending below the earth, as well as extending a horizontal distance far from this world.

Gilgamesh's journey to the Land of the Living (36) is not an actual picture of the Netherworld. However, it describes the cosmic mountains (which corespond to a part of the Netherworld reached after a long journey of crossing the seven mountains) in terms of the perspective of the horizontal expansion of the cosmos, just as the concept of the sunrise and sunset are regarded as an exit from and an entrance to the Netherworld. The journey toward the seven cosmic mountains which must be crossed over to enter the Land (KUR) of the Living remind us of the seven cosmic gates in the Netherworld. The semantic range of HUR.SAG in reference (36) is clarified by understanding the overlapping distribution to the Netherworld through a code of cosmology.

- (37) h[ur]-sag-ki-a ukû-gú-si-[a]
a-[a]-zu ^den-líl-le sag-e-eš mu-ri-in-r[ig₇]
“The mountain of earth, where the people are gathered,
Your father Enlil has given to you (=Nergal)”
SGL II 17. *TCL* XV 23, 12-13=17-18).

Hymn to Nergal, reference of (37) clearly uses HUR.SAG as the distributional equivalent to the Netherworld in terms of a code of theology; the place where the dead are gathered is given to Nergal, king

of the Netherworld. The usage of HUR.SAG here is not the expression of the *Weltberg* whose top reaches to heaven and root reaches to the bottom of the Netherworld, but rather is a poetic description of the other world as a mountain located in a far land where the people are gathered.

hur-sag-an-ki, the “mountain of the heaven and earth,” and gaba-hur-sag, “the breast of the (cosmic) mountain”¹⁵ belong to the same category as hur-sag-ki-a (37) in terms of semantic range.

2.5. GANZIR¹⁶

This is a term in the texts designating an entrance to the Netherworld; this meaning of the term is supported by lexical references:

hi-lib IGI.KUR = *pa-an er-še(!)-ti, er-še(!)-tu, ir-kal-la, dan-ni-na(!), ga-an-zī-ir (Diri II 145ff.)*

ga-an-zèr IGI.KUR.ZA = KÁ ^d*er-še-tu, ^dir-kal-la, ^ddan-ni-na, ga-an-zèr (ibid. 150ff.)*.

[g]a-an-zè-er = nablu¹⁷ CBS 13294 iv 25' (*Nabnitu* XXII).

CAD suggests the translation “Let-me-Remove” for GANZIR, but *SGL* proposes another alternative: “ich will zerstören.” Both translation would be possible in terms of the word level *zi-ir/éz -er*, but the composition *Inanna's Descent* favors the interpretation “I shall destroy,” based on context.

(38) inim-a-ra-dug₄-ga-mu gú-zu la-ba-an-šub-be-en(?)

abul-kur-ra imin-bi ^{giš}i-gar-bi hé-eb-?

é-gal ganzir (IGI.KUR.ZA) [igi kur.ra.ka]

aš-bi ^{giš}ig-bi su ba-an-ús

“You must not neglect the word which I say to you.

Let seven main gates of the Netherworld be bolted.

Let the doors of the palace, Ganzir, [the face of the
Netherworld] be opened one at a time”

Inanna's Descent 115-117.

As soon as Inanna reached and stood in front of the land of the Netherworld she asked arrogantly, “Open the house, gatekeeper, open the house, open the house Piti, open the house, all alone I would enter.” Probably implied in her command is the threat, “otherwise I shall destroy the gates”. It is very possible to read her intimidation of the gatekeeper Piti into this address. The arrogance and violence ascribed to her character supports this interpretation of the etymology of GANZIR, “I shall destroy,” at least in *Inanna's Descent*.

Apparently GANZIR is associated with the main gates of the palace which is located at the surface of the Netherworld rather than at the bottom of it. The fact of the GANZIR's association with the palace, actually Ereshkigal's palace, leads to an interesting picture regarding the entrance to the other world and the structure of the Netherworld as well. The composition of *Inanna's Descent* is a witness for it; 1. GANZIR is a term which describes an entrance to the under world, the surface of the Netherworld. 2. It is the term which represents the main gates including doors. 3. The capital of the Netherworld is Ereshkigal's palace and its complex, and it is at GANZIR.

- (39) šu-ni mu-ni-in-du₁₁ sá nu-mu-un-da-du₁₁
gîr-ni mu-ni-in-du₁₁ sá nu-mu-un-da-du₁₁
kâ-gal-ganzir-igi-kur-ra-ka tuš im-ma-ni-in-gar
“He used his hand, but he could not reach it,

He used his foot, but he could not reach it,
At the gate of Ganzir, the face of the Netherworld they
(*pukku and mekkû*) took a place”

Gilgamesh, Enkidu and the Netherworld 165-7.

The lexical references GANZIR=IGI.KUR=*pān erṣeti*, as well as text reference of (39), *abul-gal-ganzir-igi-kur-ra-ka*, make it clear that GANZIR would be not far from the place of the living, even though we can not measure how far or near it is. On the other hand, what is clear here from both the lexical and textual references is that GANZIR represents the place which is not far from this world in the Netherworld.

GANZIR is a specification of the Netherworld in terms of the structure just like HILIB.¹⁸ KI>KUR>GANZIR. Therefore, the semantic range of GANZIR lies in distributional inclusion to KI and KUR represents the Netherworld through a code of literary environment involved with the cosmology.

2.6. ABZU¹⁹

The concept of ABZU demonstrates those characteristics that aid us in understanding the cosmology of both Sumerian and Akkadian literature.²⁰ Apparently, the ABZU concept was generated and developed in the literature of the so called Enki cycle where Enki plays a prominent role and is the lord of the ABZU. His main temple stands in Eridu and is called *é-abzu*, “Temple of Abzu,” or *é-engur-ra* “House of Engur.

According to the lexical references ABZU is almost synonymous to ENGUR.²¹ It is certain that there is a strong association with the

Agrun/é-nun, a temple in Eridu like é-engur-ra.²²

a. Word level

- 1) Deep water
- 2) Cosmic underground freshwater
- 3) (mythological) source

The etymology of ABZU is still uncertain, but its concept is fairly certain. First of all, the term ABZU is exclusively conceptual or metaphysical rather than actual, even though it it sometimes means “sea” and also is related to “river.” ABZU basically represents underground cosmic water which is located in the deep under the earth, but also it is associated with the water of rivers, canals, and the marshes which are located on the earth. The resolution of such a discrepancy is not to be based on the semantic articulation, but on the linguistic definition. In the discussion of the principle of this word analysis a distinction was made between a sign and symbol. As a sign, ABZU would mean fresh water for all sources of life sprung up from the under the earth. On the other hand, it would expand its representations by the much larger mythological or cosmological meaning; the deep subterranean water as a symbol. In general, a symbol overwhelms a sign, sometimes a symbol takes over the position of a sign through a certain semantic process.²³

In this sense, ABZU conveys quite a flexible connotation in terms of the semantic distribution. It ranges from waters under the subsoil to the deep cosmic water, but not as deep as the bottom of the Netherworld. Rather it constitutes the surface of the entire underworld.

2. Sentence level

- (40) šà-im-ugu-abzu-ka ù-mu-e-ni-in-šár
sig₇-en-sig₇-du₁₀ im mu-e-kîr-kîr-re-ne
za-e me-dím ù-mu-e-ni-gál
“When you have kneaded the heart of the clay that is over
the Apsu”

The Sigensigdu will nip off the clay,
You bring the form into existence.”

Enki and Ninmah 31-32.

- (41) [lu]gal^{gišmes} abzu-a dū-a kur-kur-ta íl-la
usum[ga]l-mah eridu^{ki}-ga gub-ba
[giz]zu-bi an-ki-a dul-la
[giš]tir-gis-kurùn-na kalam-ma lá-a
“O king, who planted the mes-tree in the Apsu, who is
elevated in all the lands,

The great dragon, who stands in Eridu,
Whose shadow covers heaven and earth”

An orchard full of fruit trees stretched over the Land”

Enki and the World Order 4-7.

- (42) urî-gal abzu-ta si-ga an-dùl-le-es ag-a
gizzu-bi ki-šár-ra lá-a ukù-e ni-[t]e-en-te
ús-sag MÁ-DÛ sag-[muš]-a dū-a kur-kur-ta íl-la
en-ensí-gal-abzu-ke₄
dàra-abzu-ka á ša-mu-un-ág-e
mes abzu-ta se-er-ka-an dug₄-ga
(Under) its shade extended out to the horizon, the people
refresh themselves,
...built upon the [...]marsh, is raised over all the foreign
lands.

The lord, the great governor of the Apsu,
Give instruction to the ibex of the Apsu.
Mesu-tree, decorated in the Apsu,
Has made the mesu-tree luxuriantly in the Apsu”

Enki and the World Order 166-171.

(43) ^den-ki-ke₄ engur-bùru a sur-ra ki dingir-na-me
šâ-bi u₆ nu-um-me

“Enki, in the deep Engur where water flows, into whose
midst no god
can see” *Enki and Ninmah* 13.

Prior to the argument on each syntagma in the references we will quote a bilingual text to examine the structure of the Apsu in relation to the Netherworld.

(44) ^den-ki-ke₄ du-du-a-ta eridu^{ki}-ga hé-gál si-ga-âm
ki-dúr-a-na ki hi-lib-âm
ki-nâ-a itima ^dnammu-âm

“The haunts of Enki in Eridu are full of bounty.
In his place where he is sitting is the place of the surface
of the Netherworld,
In the place where he lies is the chamber of Nammu”

The legend of the Kishkan;

CT 16 46-47,187-192.²⁴

Enki, the god of the freshwater, dwells in Eridu in the Nammu chamber which is located in the hilib written IGI.KUR (ra). In the reference (44) the key word is hilib whose etymology is unknown but whose meaning is tangible from the lexical texts:²⁵

hi-lib IGI.KUR=ir-kal-la *Diri* II 147.

ga-an-zèr IGI.KUR.ZA=dir-kal-la *ibid.* 152.

My understanding of hi-lib here is that it may be a part of the Apsu, supported by the context (44), and it is related to ga-an-zèr and ir-kal-la which denote the “surface of the Netherworld”.²⁶ From these facts we conclude that in the structure of the Netherworld, the Apsu stratum is its surface and HILIB would be the general term for the entrance to Netherworld. Therefore, ABZU is a surface of the Netherworld by which one may enter to the other domain.

Returning to reference (40), an expression, ugu-abzu, the “top of the Apsu” will add to our picture of the structure of the Apsu. According to the text, ugu-abzu is the place from which a new life comes; šà-im-ugu-abzu-ka -mu-e-ni-šár, “when you have kneaded the heart of the clay located at the top part of the Apsu.” In conjunction with reference (44), we are aware of a similar picture of the Apsu, and probably both hilib and ugu-abzu would describe a similar stratum in the Apsu. The chamber of Nammu, the goddess who personifies underground fresh water, is located down in the earth, on the surface of the Netherworld. As a matter of fact, ugu-abzu, “the top of the Apsu,” produces the clay, as it were mother’s womb, which is nipped off and brings mankind into existence.²⁷ In terms of our principle for analyzing the distribution of meaning, the Apsu is in distributional inclusion to the Netherworld through the code of theology as well as cosmology.

ABZU, KUR, KI, and KALAM occur in references (41) and (42). The semantic distinction of those terms that have already been treated will not be repeated.²⁸ In these references, ABZU is associated with the cosmic tree whose shadow covers heaven and earth and whose roots reach to the Netherworld. The concept of the cosmic tree reminds us of the cosmic mountain whose base reaches the surface of the Nether-

world, rather than the bottom of the Netherworld. Most likely the same understanding of the base of the cosmic mountain can be extended to the concept of the cosmic tree.

In Mesopotamian religion and life, fresh water is important as the source of rivers, wells, canals, and marshes; all made possible by the Apsû. The root of the fruit trees should stretch down through the ground provided with the fresh water of the Apsu.

Conceptually ENGUR is approximately the same as ABZU.²⁹ The expression *dingir-na-me šà-bi u₆ nu-um-me*, “its interior no god can see,” deserves some attention. It echoes the two physical aspects of the Netherworld: 1. a dark place, 2. a distant, deep place. The Apu shares the same atmosphere as the general description of the Netherworld, the place “no god can see” and “no one can know.”

It is certain that the Apu denotes the deep water like a sea, and it is clear from the references that Apsu comprises the subsoil, clay stratum which is the matrix of life in Mesopotamian thought.

2.7. ENGUR See 2.6. ABZU/3.15. *apsû*

2.8. HILIB

A general term expressing the entrance to the Netherworld “or” the surface of the Netherworld. See 2.6.ABZU/3.5. *hilibû*. Cf.2.5. GANZIR and 3.6. *irkallu*.

2.9. É.NUN See 2.6. ABZU.

2.10. EDIN³⁰

From a literary point of view, EDIN often occurs in compositions relating to Dumuzi. This is quite understandable because the Dumuzi cult originally existed in the cities surrounding the open desert, the so called grassland of the Edin, between the region of Nippur, Shuruppak, Uruk, and Ur (the farming regions) and the region of Adab, Zabalum, Umma, Bad-tibira, Girsu and Lagash (herding regions).³¹ Therefore, EDIN primarily represents a geographical place such as ARALI which originally would have been a geographical name .

a. Word level

- 1) Open country, steppe
- 2) Desert
- 3) The Netherworld

Edin is derived primarily from a topographical term which means the open country in the alluvial plain of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers. In between them runs a range of dunes, an extension of the desert, which separates the deltas. This geographical picture explains the semantic conjunction of “open country” with “desert.” In this sense, Edin shares the connotation of “desert” with Arali: edin a-ra-li, “Arali desert,” a-rali edin da-mal-la, “Arali, the wide steppe.”³²

The open country in which nomadic tribes are assumed to have roamed³³ grows wild plants and is the habitat of wild animals, as well as being a popular place for demons to associate with the other world ghosts, Edin is also the silent house.³⁴ Those characteristics of Edin

show that the semantic range of Edin is similar in nature to that of the Netherworld. Edin does not always denote the Netherworld, but the commonly shared natures of Edin and Netherworld are sufficient to extend its semantic range from the open country/desert to an entrance to the Netherworld.

b. Sentence level

What we find in the study of the paradigm on Edin is the linkage of Edin with the Netherworld. The other discovery is that the semantic integrity of Edin is founded on its geographic aspect. It means that Edin belongs to a way of describing the Netherworld from the horizontal perspective on the universe.

- (45) šâ-ga-né ir im-si edin-šè ba-ra-è
guruš šâ-ga-né ir im-si edin-šè ba-ra-è
^ddumu-zi šâ-ga-né ir im-si edin-šè ba-ra-è
gidri gû-na mu-un-di-lá i-lu mu-un-di₆(DU)-di₆
“His heart was filled with tears, he went out to the
steppe,³⁵
The lad, his heart was filled with tears, he went out to the
steppe,
Dumuzi, his heart was filled with tears, he went out to the
steppe,
He carried a stick on his shoulder, and cried again and
again.”
Dumuzi's Dream 1-4.

This text is from the prologue of Dumuzi's Dream, and is saturated with the tone of lament. Probably this introduction is a premonition of

Dumuzi's death, by which the Edin is given a more negative connotation. In addition, the atmosphere of Edin, such as the sense of the haunting by demons³⁶ and its relationship with the Arali³⁷ facilitates Edin's identification as an entrance to the Netherworld.

- (46) ^dgeštin-an-na-ke₄ edin-na sag-gā-gā-ke₄
 edin nigín-nigín edin nigín-nigín šěš-mu edin
 nigín-nigín
 edin a-ra-li edin nigín-nigín šěš-mu edin NIGIN.NIGIN
 "Geshtinanna, who is rushing headlong in the steppe,
 Going about the steppe, "My brother!," going about the
 steppe,
 The steppe Aralli, going about the steppe, "My brother!,"
 going about the steppe."
Ershemma 165:27-29.

Dumuzi is tortured by the demons in Edin, but neither Inanna nor Geshtinanna know where he is. Both Inanna and Geshtinanna have competed to bribe the fly whose reward reveal the hiding place of Dumuzi and when Geshtinanna's bribe succeeds in enticing the fly she runs to the Edin bringing food and drink to help him. In this poem, as in many other Dumuzi-related compositions, Edin is depicted as an awful place through which Dumuzi descends to the Netherworld.

- (47) ^{kuš}ummù a še₁₂ nì-edin-na hé-me-en
 dumu-ni gír-gír-re [e]-ne-bi-da
 udug edin-na ^dlamma edin-na hé-em-ma-da-me-eš-àm
 dumu-na ku-li-na SIR-ru e[dín]-líl-lá
 edin-na ha-mu-ni-ib-gub zî hu-mu-ni-ib-ŠID-e

“May you become the water skin for cold water in the
desert,

May her son Girgire and she

Become the utukku and the lamma of the desert,

May SIR-RU of Edin-lilla, no child and no friend,

Stand in the desert and keep count of flour.”

Inanna and Bilulu 110-114.

Here we enumerate the associations of Edin: the haunt of the demon (47)(edin-lil-lá),³⁸ Bandit,³⁹ silent house,⁴⁰ Arali-desert, *gišbur*-trap⁴¹ set eslam, preparatory for burial,⁴² river nearby Edin on which the demons come by boat.⁴³ These negative attachments to Edin enable an interpretation of Edin as an entrance to the Netherworld.

Damu compositions reinforce the meaning of Edin as an entrance to the other domain. The main theme of the story, searching for son or brother Damu, reaches its zenith at Edin, near which a river flows into the Netherworld. His sister follows him along a river to communicate with him, soon after that they finally reach the gate of the Netherworld. Damu enters the gate, but she pushes against it in vain.

The other image of Edin as an entrance to the underworld is again provided in Damu texts.

(48) ʔu-mu-bi-ra an-edin-na šu mu-un-na-ni-in-bar
an-edin ki-edin-na šu mu-un-na-ni-in-bar
edin-ki en-nu-un-mà mu-un-da-ab-dù mu-nu₁₀-dīm
ki-áb-lu-a-na en-nu-un mu-un-da-ab-ab-dù
su₈-ba-dim e-zé-lu-a-na en-nu-un mu-un-da-ab-dù

“It (the *elpetu*-rush) released that child into the high desert,

Released him into the high desert and the low desert,
The desert kept watch over him at the place
Like a cowherd over the place of his numerous cows, it
kept watch over him,
Like a shepherd over (the place) of his numerous sheep it
kept watch over him.”
*CT 15 27:43-47.*⁴⁴

The desert keeps watch over Damu as if he were in a jail or an enclosure surrounded by a great wall. *an-edin-ki-edin* literally means, “heavenly desert and earthly desert,” but here *an-ki* functions as a metaphor for how firmly Damu is confined in the desert, as if he were in the Netherworld. Once Damu has stepped into the Edin, the entrance to the other domain, then he may not return from it. In this image of Edin it shares an overlapping distribution with the Netherworld through a code of literary environment.

2.11. ARALI⁴⁵

ARALI mainly occurs in the Dumuzi and Damu texts in Sumerian literature. Not only the content of the texts but also the lexical references⁴⁶ prove the prominent association of ARALI with the Dumuzi literary traditions.

a. Word level

- 1) Arali desert
- 2) The Netherworld

Most likely ARALI would be a topographical designation for the

desert area between Bad-tibira and Uruk. Dumuzi leads his flock from the pastures in the Arali desert.⁴⁷ In conjunction with the Arali's character as a desert it includes the notion of the Netherworld through the implication of the Dumuzi tradition, just as the city Gudua, Akkadian Kutha, became an entrance to the Netherworld through its association with the deities of the Netherworld, especially Ereshkigal and Nergal.

b. Sentence level

(49) e-a-ra-li-ka hé-en-šub ki-ni ba-ra-zu

°dumu-zi-dè e-a-ra-li-ka mu-ni-in-dab₅-bé-ne

°dumu-zi-dè ir im-ma-an-pà sig₇-sig₇ ì-gá-gá

uru-a nin₉-mu mu-un-ti-le-en ku-li-mu mu-un-ug₅-ge-en

“He (Dumuzi's friend) has fallen down in the ditches of Arali, but I do not know his location.’

They (the demons) caught Dumuzi in the ditches of Arali, Dumuzi began to weep and turned very pale:

‘In this city my sister saved my life, but my friend caused my death!’”

Dumuzi's Dream 150-153.

The context is that the demons bribe Dumuzi's friend to betray Dumuzi. In fact, the composition is dedicated to Geshtinanna's interpretation of Dumuzi's dream, in which he is caught by the demons in the ditches of Arali as a part of the story. The fact that the literary environment of the Dumuzi texts centers around the city Bad-tibira implies that the Arali in the Dumuzi texts still holds the sense of the geographical place which is a desert, an entrance to the Netherworld. However, we recognize that the usage of Arali in this text reference

(49) attenuates the original geographical factor, because under the context of the dream interpretation, the character of Arali as proper name is generalized or symbolized.

(50) [e-ne-ne] uš₁₂-zu-a-[ra]-li imin hé-na-[me-eš]
[uš₁₂-zu-a-ra-li imin hé-na-[me-eš]
...kar(?) ša-àm-me šu gišha-lu-ub₄-a[g-me-eš]
?-?-šír-re-me-eš gišha-lu-ub₄-ag-me-eš imin
hé-na-[me-eš]

“[They], the sorcerers of Arali, were seven,

[The sorcerers] of Arali, were seven,

...They were those who worked a *huluppu*-tree,

They were..., they were those who worked a *huluppu*-tree.

They were seven”

The Death of Dumuzi 61-64.

This passage is from the last portion of Dumuzi’s death. It introduces the Arali-sorcerers who worked magic with huluppu trees or wood. Unfortunately this last section does not elucidate the function of the sorcerers of Arali. However, the main theme of the composition, the Death of Dumuzi, may tell us something about it. From the theme we realize that their actions are somehow preparatory to the burial of Dumuzi. At least it is conceivable that the Arali-sorcerers are related to the burial rites of Dumuzi. Anyhow the meaning of Arali here holds a double meaning in its semantic range, it is the geographic place and an entrance to the Netherworld.

Arali’s association with the place name suggests the semantic range on the Netherworld. It conveys a realistic entrance to Netherworld. In other words, it represents a description of the surface of the

other realm. We may recall other expressions which describe the surface of the Netherworld, such as HILIB, and GANZIR, but ARALI should be differentiated from them, because the lexical references demand this differentiation.

(51) [a].ra.li, É.KUR^{MIN} BAD, ú-ru-gal^{AB} x GAL =
a-ra-al-[lu-u] *Nabnitu* L 72ff..

(52) É.KUR^{a-ra-li} BAD = *a-r* [*a-al-lu-u*]
Igituh short version 158.

IGI.KUR is the ideogram for both HILIB and GANZIR,⁴⁸ whereas É.KUR.BAD is the ideogram for ARALI.⁴⁹ This difference derives from the imagery of HILIB and É.KUR.BAD. On the one hand, HILIB apparently pictures the structure of the Netherworld from the point of view of the vertical perspective of the cosmos. On the other hand, the notion of É.KUR.BAD is “Ekur⁵⁰ Fortress”,⁵¹ that is “Netherworld Fortress.” This differentiation is supported by the following lexical and textual references:

(53) a-ra-li ká-edin-na-ke₄ [...]: *á-ra-á-lá-a* [...]
TCL 6 54r. 20f.

(54) im-ma-al gú-íd-da-ke₄ i-bi-zu gar-ra-àm-ma
 am-a-ra-li gú-edin-na-ke₄ i-bi-zu gar-ra-àm-ma
 “Cow, set your face toward the bank of the river!
 Wild bull of the Arali, set your face toward the edge of the
 steppe!”
Ershemma of Ninhursag 30-31.

ARALI is thus associated with ká-edin-na, “the mouth of edin,” and gú-edin-na, “the edge of edin.” ARALI, as we have mentioned above,

often appears in the literature dealing with the Dumuzi cult, in which one of elements is connected with EDIN, “steppe.” References (53) and (54) suggest not only Arali’s association with Edin, but Arali’s location next to Edin. In this sense, application of our principle of word analysis to Arali yields ARALI to the Netherworld, like KUR, is related in a distributional inclusion, ARALI to EDIN is in an overlapping distribution through the code of the literary environment as well as through geography.

2.12. URU.GAL

This is a rather uncommon term for representing the Netherworld in Sumerian literature. It is clear, however, that in both the bilingual and Akkadian texts URUGAL/*qabru* is an entrance to the other realm.⁵²

(55) ga-ša-an-uru₁₆(EN)-gal-DU-DU-mèn

ù!-tuk-é-mu an-ta ki-a gub-ba-mu

ma-[x]-mu še-eb an-úr-ta ki-gi₄-ra-mu

“I am the lady who roams the Netherworld. Oh Eanna!

Oh holy gipar!

The [...] my house! My house which stands from the
heaven upon the earth!

... my ...! My brickwork which sinks below the earth at the
horizon!

Ershemma no.32:9-11.

(56) ad-da-uru-gal ki-utu-è-a

“The father (Utu) of the great city, in the place where the
sun rises”

EWO 374; TCS III 89.

The meaning of Netherworld=uru-gal in these references derives from two different signs; urul₆-gal, uru-gal “great city”.

I infer that the story of *Inanna's* Descent is behind this *Ershemma* (55); “she who roams the ‘great city,’” that is, she is trapped in the Netherworld, where Ereshkigal holds her and does not allow her to return to this world. In terms of the semantic range, uru₁₆-gal is identical with the Netherworld through the code of literary environment.

uru-gal, “great city” in (56) denotes here the Netherworld by modification of a cosmic expression; “place where the sun rises,” as well as the code of socio-psychology from which point of view the other domain is interpreted as the great underworld city.

- (57) [ur-^anammu-ke₄].. -kur-ra-ke₄ si bí-in-sá-ta
 [dingir-nam-tar-ra]-uru-gal-la-ke₄-ne
 “After [Ur-Nammu] had carried out the... of the Nether-
 world,
 [The fate-decreeing gods] of the Netherworld.”
Death of Ur-Nammu 132-133.

This passage is in fragmentary condition, but it is clear that KUR parallels URUGAL in the sense of the Netherworld. In other words, URUGAL is identical with the KUR in this context.

URU.GAL can be read as iri(URU)-gal for Akkadian *irkallu*.⁵³

Notes:

- Abbreviations for journals and reference works are those found in:
- (1). *The Assyrian Dictionary of the University of Chicago*, ed. E. Reiner, et. al. (Chicago-Glückstadt, 1956-1989.);
 - (2). W. von Soden's *Akkadisches Handwörterbuch* (Otto Harrassowitz, 1965-1981.);
 - (3). R. Borger's *Handbuch der Keilschriftliteratur* vol.I (Berlin, 1967) 661-672.
1. CAD H253; AHw360; Tallqvist *StOr* 5/4 23-34.
 2. Cf.R. J Clifford, *The Cosmic Mountain in Canaan and the Old Testament* (Harvard, 1972).
 3. L.W.King, *Babylonian Religion and Mythology* (London, 1899). Peter Jensen, *Die Kosmologie der Babylonier* (Strasbourg, 1890) 195-201, in which he interpreted Sumerian hursag as *Weltberg*. Bruno Meissner, *Babylonien und Assyrien* (Heidelberg, 1925) 107-111.
 4. *Les religions de Babylonie et d'Assyrie* (Paris, 1949).
 5. "Die Mythologie der Sumer und Akkader," in *Götter und Mythen im Vorderen Orient, Wörterbuch der Mythologie*, ed., H.W.Haussig, vol.II (Stuttgart, 1965) 17-140.
 6. *Sumerian Mythology* (New York, 1961).
 7. Kramer, *ibid.*, 53-54; A. Falkenstein, *BiOr.* 5 (1948) 165; Goldon, 1960, 145; G.Pettinato, *Menschenbild* (1971) 86-90; C.Wilcke, *AbhLipzig* 65/4 (1976) 69-70.; edition, B.Alster and H.Vanstiphout, "Lahar and Ashnan-presentation and analysis of a Sumerian Disputation," in *Acta Sumerologica* 9 (1987) 1-43.
 8. *ibid.*, 39.
 9. "Sumerian Mythology: A Review Article." *JNES*, 5 (1946) 128-152. *Toward the Image of Tammuz and other Essays on Mesopotamian History and Culture* (Cambridge, 1970) 121-126.
 10. Th. Jacobsen, A Review Article, 141.
 11. *ibid.*
 12. *SGL* II, 17.
 13. *ibid.*, 34.
 14. "The name of the mountain is Mâshu, as he (Gilgamesh) arrives at the mountain of Mâsh, which every day keeps watch over the rising and

- setting of the sum, whose peaks reach the 'banks of heaven,' and whose breast reaches down to the underworld, the scorpion-people keep watch at its gate." *Gilg.* IX ii 1-6. In addition to the cosmic mountain the cosmic tree will be compared in a motif of the cosmogony/cosmology.
15. Cf. *SGL* II 17. See also gaba-kur-kur-ra in the entry 2.1.
 16. *CAD* G; *AHw* 281; Tallqvist *StOr* 5/4 38⁵; *SGL* II 139.
 17. *nablu* "flame, (firaball?)." Flame as destructive power develops in later Akkadian texts, for example: *kīma girri kubumma humṭ kīma nabli* "scorch like fire, burn like flame" *Epic of Erra* I 33.
 18. See 2.8. *HILIB* below.
 19. *CAD* A/2 194-195; *AHw* 61; Tallqvist *StOr* 5/4 8; Edzard in Houssig, *Wörterbuch der Mythologie* I 38.
 20. See Akkadian entry 3.15. *apsû* below.
 21. engur LAGAB × HAL = ABZU-um (*MSL* 2,128 ii 25).
engur, abzu = *a-ap-su-um* (*Proto-Izi* AKK. 363-364).
The detailed discussion of the association between ABZU and ENGUR is provided by Th. Jacobsen, *JNES* 5 (1946) 139²¹, 145²⁸.
 22. Cf. R. Caplice, "É.NUN in Mesopotamian Literature," in *Festschrift I* Gelb. S. Cohen, *Enmerkar and the Lord of Aratta*, (diss. University of Pennsylvania, 1973).
 23. On the semantic development between a sign and symbol see the discussion 2.1. *KUR*.
 24. See Th. Jacobsen for his comments on the text in *JNES* 5 (1946) 145²⁸.
 25. *CAD* H 185 *hilibana*, *AHw* 345 *hilibû*.
 26. We must recognize the semantic difference between *hilib* and *ganzir* as the "surface of the Netherworld." *hilib* as the surface on the Netherworld is associated with the *Apsu*. On the other hand, *ganzir* probably is related to the gate of the temple complex in the Netherworld.
 27. In the Akkadian *Atrahasis* Epic the Mother Goddess creates males and females with the clay between which she places the "divine wombs" made of the clay-brick. Cf. A. D. Kilmer, "The Brick of Birth" Appendix C in "Proportional Guidelines in Ancient Near Eastern Art," *JNES* 46 (1987) 211-213.
 28. See specially the entry 2.1. *KUR* and 2.2. *KI*.

29. Cf. lexical texts:

en-gur ð = *ap-su-ú*, *en-gu-ru* (A I/w: 233-234).

en-gur ð = ABZU-*um*, *en-gur-um* (MSL 2 128 ii 25-26, Proto-Ea).

30. CAD S 138ff.; AHw 1093, Tallqvist *StOr* 5/4 17ff.

31. Th. Jacobsen, *Toward Image of Tammuz*, 136-137.

32. Cf. Tallqvist, *op. cit.*, 6

33. See Jacobsen, *ibid.*

34. *šuharru šēru parkā dalāti*: “The open country is silent, the doors are closed” OECT 6:12:8.

35. Also the “steppe” is Dumuzi’s nomal home, as shepherd.

36. The demon is called *lú-edin-na*, “the one of the steppe” in *Ershemma* 165:5.

37. See the entry 2.11. ARALI and the text reference (3) in that entry.

38. Note for *edin-líl-lá*:

edin.líl.lá = [*uru.ni.šè edin.líl.lá*] *ba.an.si*: [*ana ālišu*] *šēr zaqīqī mulli*

“Replace his (enemy’s city) with an open country haunted by phantoms.”

(ASKTP. 121 No.18: 2f., citation from CAD Z 59 s.v. *zaqqu*). On the other

hand, *edin-líl-lá* occurs in *Inanna and Bilulu* as the place name: “*bi-lu-lu edin-líl-lá*, and it is called *é-um-ma-be-li-li*, “house of Old Belili,” in the

Dumuzi’s Dream (line 204, 205; 216, 217).

39. B. Alster, *Dumuzi’s Dream* 98 and line in 45.

40. *op. cit.* in the line 54.

41. See line 54-57 in *Death of Dumuzi*.

42. For example, *Death of Dumuzi* line 40-43.

43. For instance. line 80 in *Dumuzi’s Dream*. Furthermore, the following reference may support the Edin’s relation to the Abzu:

[*u₄-ba*] [*idim*]-*an-edin-na ugu-bal-la um-mi-šú*

“On that day pour out the subterranean waters of the high steppe upon the rebellious!”

Ershemma 168:33.

On this suggestion, see *hi-li-bu* = AN (probably *šēru*) CT 19:19, 28 (quotation from Tallqvist 38⁵). On the HILIBU’s association with ABZU, see the entry 2.6. ABZU.

44. The citation is from Th. Jacobsen in N. Goedicke, ed., *Unity and*

Diversity 92.

45. CAD A/2 227; AHW 64; Tallqvist *StOr* 5/4 6f.
46. MSL 14, 441:
 [a-ra-li][URU×X] = *eršetu*, *a-ra-li*, *biš* (É) Dumu-zi
 [ú-ru-gal][URU×X] = *er-še-tum*, *qā-ab-rum* (A VI/4 29-33).
47. Th.Jacobsen, "Lad in the Desert," *JAOS* 103 (1983) 193-194.
48. See the entries 2.6. ABZU and 2.5. GANZIR in which one will find discussion on the surface of the Netherworld.
49. In the bilingual texts Akkadian *arallû* often corresponds to Sumerian E. KUR. BAD under 2.1. KUR.
50. See the entry 3.3. *ekur* where the demons live.
51. On our interpretation of É. KUR. BAD, see 3.2. *arallû*.
52. See the entry 3.27. *qabru*.
 ú-ru-gal; AB×GAL = *qab-ru* (S^b II, 190).
53. See Akkadian entry 3.6. *irkallu*.