**Why did Inana Ascend from the Netherworld So Many Times?**

**The Literary Growth of *Angalta*, 282–306**

1. Introduction

Lines 282–306 in *Angalta* (= *Inana’s Descent to the Netherworld*) follow the account of Inana’s departure from the netherworld with Enki’s assistance. One striking feature in these lines is the multiple repetitions of the phrase “Inana ascended (èd) from the netherworld (kur-ta),” in both the temporal and the indicative moods. This phrase repeats in lines 284, 285, 288, 290, 305c and 306.[[1]](#footnote-1) Looking at each duplicate *per se*, this phrase is repeated five times within approximately thirty lines in Duplicate S; four times in V; and three times in U and T (though T is partially broken).[[2]](#footnote-2) In addition, line 281 (which is followed directly by line 285 in most of the duplicates) also relates to Inana’s rising from the netherworld, though with a different verb: “Inana arose (gub).” Given this literary situation, modern translators of this work often omit some of those lines or, alternatively, add particles that do not exist in the original text or use different verbs in place of the same repetitive one, so as to smooth the sequence.[[3]](#footnote-3) This textual difficulty was probably also one of the main reasons why Dina Katz, who brilliantly analyzed the development of *Angalta* as a whole, stated that “the development of the first literary unit, which describes the intervention of the Anuna and the dispatch of the *galla* [ll. 285–306 according to Katz], is impossible to trace”.[[4]](#footnote-4)

In terms of narrative, it is indeed difficult to comprehend the author’s motive for the numerous repetitions of this phrase, or the circumstances which led to so many differences between the duplicates in this short unit.[[5]](#footnote-5) However, in terms of the compositional process of the work, the fact that such phenomenon is found precisely in these lines is not surprising. These are the lines that open the section situated between the unit recounting the journey of Inana to the netherworld (ll. 1–281) and the unit recounting of descent of Dumuzi to the netherworld (ll. 368–403), each of which contain entirely different traditions. Places where traditions or sources are joined together tend to absorb multiple additions, occasionally resulting in repetitions and textual variations. Moreover, when such by-products are preserved, they can help tracing the development of the works in which they are found. In light of this, the present article seeks to examine the motivations for the repetitions and textual differences in *Angalta*, 282–306, thus tracing the gradual literary growth of this section. As a first step, however, it is essential to specify the significance of lines 282–306 within the composition of *Angalta*.

1. The Placement and Significance of Lines 282–306 in *Angalta*

The complete work of *Angalta* contains several redundancies and inconsistencies. Prominent among them are: (1) The double rescues of Inana from the netherworld: once with the assistance of Enki (ll. 221–284), per Inana’s instructions to her minister Ninšubur before she descended to the netherworld (l. 67), as portrayed in the first part of *Angalta*; and once through a substitute, as Inana was ordered by the Anuna after her ascent from the netherworld (ll. 286–305), which leads to the capture of Dumuzi in the next part of the work (ll. 307 ff.). (2) The pleas of Dumuzi to the sun god, his brother-in-law, to save him from the demons of the netherworld by virtue of his marriage with Inana (ll. 368–383), though it was the same Inana who handed him over to these demons (ll. 348–367). (3) Inana’s cry to the fly requesting it to reveal Dumuzi’s whereabouts, after he was taken to the netherworld (ll. 384–403), though Inana was the one whose revengeful command brought him there in the first place (ll. 348–367).

The circumstances that led to the numerous redundancies and inconsistencies have been well presented by the studies of Katz, Bendt Alster and Annette Zgoll.[[6]](#footnote-6) Their research shows that *Angalta* appears to consist of several independent traditions, some relating to Inana, and others to Dumuzi. These traditions have been set in two separate units. The first, lines 1–281 (S ends this unit at l. 284, see below), recounts Inana’s descent to the netherworld and her subsequent ascent with the help of Enki (henceforth, ‘Inana Unit’). It belongs to the group of accounts describing Inana’s journeys outside her city and her rescue by (the wisdom of) Enki,[[7]](#footnote-7) as well as to the tradition referring Inana’s (cyclical) descent to, and ascent from, the netherworld, as attested to in other compositions.[[8]](#footnote-8) The second unit, lines 368–403, recounting Dumuzi’s descent to the netherworld (henceforth, ‘Dumuzi Unit’), is based on diverse traditions regarding Dumuzi’s death, as preserved in numerous additional works as well.[[9]](#footnote-9)

The literary link between Inana Unit and Dumuzi Unit occurs in the section between them, lines 285­–367 (henceforth, the ‘Middle Section’). This section describes how the Anuna council instructed Inana, after she had already ascended from the netherworld, to find a substitute in order to be freed from the netherworld unscathed, and she chose Dumuzi because he had wronged her. This section created, probably for the first time in Mesopotamian literature, a direct link between the descent of Dumuzi to the netherworld and the ascent of Inana from the netherworld.[[10]](#footnote-10) At the same time, however, it created inconsistencies and redundancies in the work as a whole, as the latter still preserved the firm Sumerian traditions regarding Inana’s ascent from the netherworld without the need for substitution. Likewise, it preserves Inana’s endless loyalty to her spouse Dumuzi after he was imprisoned in the netherworld. In other words, while the section between the Inana Unit and the Dumuzi Unit serves as a ‘literary glue’ between these two distinctive units, it is also, and for that reason, responsible for the inconsistencies and redundancies found in the work.

Lines 282–306, the focus of this study, are located between the end of Inana Unit and the beginning of the Middle Section that tells of Inana’s search for a substitute, which eventually leads to Dumuzi’s descent to the netherworld. Now that the placement and significance of these lines are clear, we can examine the issue of their composition.

1. The Repetitions and Variants in *Angalta* 282–306 according to the Four Duplicates

The following chart (Figure 1) illustrates the relationship between the four (relatively complete) duplicates of *Angalta*, lines 284, 285, 288, 290, 305c, and 306. To present the context, the chart begins with line 281, which terminates Inana Unit in most of the duplicates, and ends with line 307, which commences the account of Inana's meeting with her minister Ninšubur out of the netherworld. For the sake of convenience, the English translation of the relevant sentences is in bold and accompanied by the Sumerian text.

Figure 1: Lines 281–307 in the Four Duplicates of *Angalta*

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **T** | **V** | **U** | **S** | **Line no.** |
| BROKEN | **Inana arose.**dinana ba-gub | **“Inana, raise up!”**[[11]](#footnote-11)dinana gub-ba | **Inana arose.**dInana ba-gub  | 281 |
| Ereškigal said to the galatura and the kurgara: | 282 |
| “Carry your queen, your seized […]” | 283 |
| **Inana**, through Enki's instructions, **ascended from the netherworld.**dinana enim den-ki [ku]r-ta èd | 284 |
| **Inana ascended from the netherworld,**dinana ku[r-t]a ba-èd-dè | **As Inana was getting out of the netherworld**,d[i]nnana kur-ta è-da-ni [[12]](#footnote-12) | **As Inana was ascending from the netherworld,**dinana kur-ta èd-da-[ni] | 285 |
| the Anuna seized her (saying): | 286 |
| “Who has ever ascended from the netherworld, has ascended unscathed from the netherworld?”[[13]](#footnote-13) | 287 |
| **[When Inana] will ascend [from the netherworld,]**[ud-da dinana kur-ta bí]-èd-dè | **When Inana will ascend from the netherworld,**ud-da dinana kur-ta ba-èd-dè | **[When Ina]na will go out of the netherworld,**ud-da dinana kur-ta è-dè | **[When Ina]na will ascend from the netherworld,**[ud-da dinna]na kur-ta bí-èd-[d]è | 288[[14]](#footnote-14) |
| let her provide a substitute for herself.” | 289 |
| **Inana ascended from the netherworld.**dinana kur-ta ba-èd-dè | **Inana ascended from the netherworld.**dinana kur-ta ba-èd-dè |  |  | 290 |
| DESCRIPTIONS OF THE DEMONS DIFFER IN ORDER AND WORDING WITHIN EACH DUPLICATE (S,U,T: 291, 292 = V after line 294; S,V,U: 293, 294 = T after line 305; S,U,V: 295,296; S,U,V,T: 297,298,299; U,T: 300; U: 301,302; S,U,V,T: 303; S,U: 304 similar to V,T: 304; S,U: 305; different from T 305; S: 305a–c).  | 291–305c |
|  | **Inana ascended from the netherworld.**dinana kur-ta ba-èd-dè |  |  | 305c(differs from S 305c) |
| **As Inana was ascending from the netherworld,**[dinana k]ur-ta èd-d[a]-ni | **As Inana was ascending from the netherworld,**dinana kur-ta èd-da-ni | **As Inana was getting out of the netherworld,**dinana kur-ta è-da-[ni] | **When Inana was ascending from the netherworld,**ud-[da?] dinana-ke4 kur-ta èd-da-ni-ta | 306 |
| Ninšubur threw herself at her feet[[15]](#footnote-15)… | 307 ff. |

A quick look at this chart—both horizontally and vertically—reveals how often the phrase “Inana ascended (èd)[[16]](#footnote-16) from the netherworld” appears, usually without a plot justification, and with different occurrences, within each duplicate. As stated above, the phrase in line 281, “Inana arose (gub),” that concludes the ascent of Inana from the netherworld with Enki’s assistance, bears a close meaning to the following repetitive lines. Nevertheless, line 281 conforms to Inana Unit both thematically and in terms of vocabulary as it refers to the fulfillment of Enki’s plan by using the same verb (ba-gub) that previously described his instructions to his two aides (cf. l. 253: “Thus Inana would rise [Inana ḫa-ba-gub]”) in the same Unit. On the other hand, the verb èd, repeated several times between lines 284 to 306, relates to the command given by the Anuna council to find a substitute for Inana (lines 286–290), a theme restricted to the Middle Section of the work.[[17]](#footnote-17)

It is very plausible that the alternation between these verbs had no significance for the composer of *Angalta*, just as some of the modern translators of this work ​​ did not distinguish between the different verbs. Nevertheless, this difference is another mark of the borderline between the independent Inana Unit and the section that follows it, which were joined together by the composer of *Angalta*. The multiple repetitions of the phrase “Inana ascended (èd) from the netherworld” in the following lines, which creates inconsistencies in the sequence, seems to be the result of a similar compositional activity.

As I aim to demonstrate below, lines 282–306 consist of additions upon additions, which led to the aforementioned repetitions. While some of the additions are documented in all duplicates, and therefore seem to have been added at an earlier stage of the formation of *Angalta*, others were added at a later stage, and so are only documented in a few. In all cases, the new addition was prefaced and/or followed by a repetition of the moment in which Inana was ascending from the netherworld—the event which terminates the previous unit—in order to create a smooth transition within the sequence.

The techniques in which a composer connects interpolations to the preceding unit by means of repeating phrases from the closing sentences of the previous unit, was identified long ago in various biblical and some Mesopotamian texts. Scholars name this phenomenon ‘related expansion’ and ‘resumptive repetition,’ where the former term relates to the sentence that introduces a new addition, while the latter relates to the sentence that concludes it.[[18]](#footnote-18) Neither of these techniques was invented specifically for interpolations, but rather served narrators who sought to deviate from one topic to another. Nevertheless, the massive presence of these techniques in texts whose content and/or their manuscripts testify to the inclusion of later additions, indicates that these techniques were considered incredibly useful to the interpolation process.

1. The Development of *Angalta*,282–306

An additional look at Figure 1 above reveals that the temporal sentence in line 306: “As Inana was ascending from the netherworld,” is common to all the duplicates. Most of them share the same sentence in line 285 as well.[[19]](#footnote-19) The Anuna’s statement wherein no one can leave the netherworld without a substitution (ll. 286–289) is also common to all, and contains another temporal sentence regarding Inana's departure from the netherworld in line 288. Following that, the *galla*-demons are described using different wording and order in each duplicate. This description is introduced by three of the duplicates (T, V and apparently also y: l. 290) with an indicative sentence identical to that found in lines 285, 288, and 306 (without a temporal component). One extant duplicate (V, 305c) also concludes this description with the same indicative sentence. A final significant variation between the duplicates in these lines is the plus between lines 281 and 285 that occurs only in one duplicate (S, 282–284), and which concludes with a sentence close to that of lines 285, 288, 290, 305c and 306, though with extras.

In most cases, uniformity in textual witnesses indicates an earlier stratum within a given work, whereas different versions indicate changes that took place later, only after the textual witnesses (or their *ur*-text) had already separated from one another.[[20]](#footnote-20) In light of this, the earlier stratum of the first lines of the Middle Section appears to include lines 285–289 and 306, which are similar in all the duplicates.

Figure 2: Lines Shared by All Duplicates

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **As Inana was ascending from the netherworld,**  | (285) |
| the Anuna seized her (saying): | (286) |
| “Who has ever ascended from the netherworld, has ascended unscathed from the netherworld? | (287) |
| When Inana will ascend from the netherworld, | (288) |
| let her provide a substitute for herself.” | (289) |
| **As Inana was ascending from the netherworld.** | (306) |

Similar to the situation in most of the extant duplicates, line 285 seems to open the older stratum of the Middle Section, right after the end of Inana Unit. This line anchors the beginning of the Middle Section by means of a temporal sentence at the very moment the previous unit ends, i.e., when Inana departs from the netherworld. Katz suggested that line 306, which closes this unit and repeats the same temporal sentence “As Inana was ascending from the netherworld,” functions together with line 285 as a framework (or *inclusio*), defining the content between them as a sub-unit.[[21]](#footnote-21) However, since temporal sentences tend to precede the narrative rather than conclude it, it is much more likely that line 306 introduces the second episode of the Middle Section (ll. 307 ff.), as it was indeed translated and interpreted by other scholars.[[22]](#footnote-22) On the other hand, the repetition of the same temporal sentence as an introduction to the subsequent episode obviates the previous one. Therefore, most of these scholars have translated each of the sentences (ll. 285 and 306) differently, as opposed to the original Sumerian text, thus reflecting the literary difficulties that arise in this place.[[23]](#footnote-23) However, as argued above, the reason for these difficulties is not literary, but textual. To better clarify the situation, we must first examine two more repetitive sentences that are not documented in all the manuscripts and were probably not part of the old stratum: line 284, and lines 290 and 305c. Then we can return to this conundrum.

1. Line 284: “Inana, through Enki's instructions, ascended from the netherworld.”

 According to S, this line concludes the story of Inana’s ascension from the netherworld with the help of Enki. Together with lines 282–283, this plus of three sentences is missing in the other duplicates (U, V and y; see Figure 1, above). In terms of content and terminology, line 284 looks like another one of the ‘Inana’s ascent’ sentences (dinana… [ku]r-ta èd), with minor extras (enim den-ki). A broader look at the context reveals, however, that together with lines 282–283, these minor extras correspond to line 254 (earlier in the work) which introduces the fulfillment of Enki’s instructions: “The gala-tura and the kur-gar paid attention to the instructions of Enki (gala-tur kur-ĝar-ra enim den-ki-ga-ta saĝ-kešé ba-[ši-A]K-eš).” Since line 281 (“Inana arose [Inana ba-gub]”) corresponds respectively to line 253, “Let Inana rise (Inana ḫa-ba-gub),” it appears that the author of the edition reflected in Duplicate S sought to extend the correlation between lines 253 and 281—shared by all duplicates—into lines 254 and 281–284 as well. By doing so, he followed the general trend of *Angalta* which correlated between Enki’s instructions to his two aides and the consequent fulfillment of these instructions. In all other duplicates, this matter ends in line 281, while in S it is extended three additional lines.

This conjecture is seemingly inconsistent with another unique feature of Duplicate S, namely, the omission of most of the lines describing the fulfillment of Enki’s instructions, including lines 253 and 254 mentioned above.[[24]](#footnote-24) However, that minus in fact already starts before the end of Enki’s instructions, placed between two almost identical lines —one still belonging to the section of the instructions (l. 251, after which the omission begins) and the other belonging to the section of their fulfillment (l. 280, then the omission ends). As a result of the omission, there is no clear demarcation in S between the instructions section to the fulfillment section, unlike the other duplicates.[[25]](#footnote-25) This may indicate that the enormous omission was erroneously caused by an homoearchton, namely, a haplography due to a similar beginning of texts. The copyist of S thus unintentionally skipped from line 251 to line 280, due to its identical beginning (in fact, only the last verb in ll. 251 and 280 conjugates differently).[[26]](#footnote-26) It is thus essential to distinguish between a compositional or editorial process, which deliberately designs the unique literary and linguistic feature of a given text, and scribal errors. While the latter create changes as well, sometimes even in the very same place, they are all unintentional.[[27]](#footnote-27)

The affinity between the instruction and fulfillment sections revealed in lines 282–284, as compared to line 254, is revealed in further places in Duplicate S. For example, lines 249–251, which belong to the section of Enki’s instruction, also occur only in S. These lines precisely correspond to lines 277–279 of the fulfillment section, as found in the rest of the manuscripts other than S. It appears, therefore, that this plus too was added by the author of S in order to achieve a complete symmetry between the section of Enki’s instructions and that of their fulfillment, prior to the homoearchton. The distinction between the two phenomena, editorial process and scribal error, appears to solve this difficulty as well.[[28]](#footnote-28) Moreover, the author who added lines 227–229 was probably the same one who caused the later copyist to err due to the former’s fondness of symmetry.

An additional example of this occurs on line 306 in S (see Figure 1, above), which does not repeat on line 285 as in the other duplicates, but rather on line 288. The latter is part of the instructions given by the Anuna council to Inana. Since Inana begins to fulfill these instructions in line 306, the author of S apparently changed the original text to accurately match the instructions.

To conclude, it seems that lines 282–284 were added by the author of S to complete the symmetry between Enki’s instructions and their fulfillment. The tendency reflected in Duplicate S, to correlate between instructions and their fulfillment in other places, supports the conjecture that this plus is unique to S, rather than it having been omitted by the other duplicates. Moreover, the occurrence in line 284 of terminology that appears only in the following lines, i.e., lines 285–306, raises the possibility that this plus was added after all the units had already been combined.[[29]](#footnote-29)

2. Lines 290 and 305c: “Inana ascended from the netherworld”.

Between these two identical lines (290 and 305c), documented in only a few of the duplicates, the text describes the *galla*-demons who were sent with Inana to help find her a substitute. As Katz correctly argued, viewing the *galla* as emissaries of the netherworld who prosecute the instructions of the Anuna is also one of *Angalta*’s innovations. No wonder, therefore, that they are presented as related to the netherworld only in the Middle Section, where all the innovations of *Angalta* occur. Nevertheless, as the wording and order of lines 291–305 in each duplicate are different, it seems that the passage dedicated to the detailed description of the *galla* was probably added at a relatively later stage of the work’s formation, after the textual witnesses were already separated but still influenced—or contaminated—each other. The latter suggestion may also explain the presence of the ‘Inana’s ascent’ sentences at the beginning of the passage or both at its beginning and its end.[[30]](#footnote-30)

In Duplicates V, T and y, the ‘Inana’s ascent’ sentence opens the paragraph of the *galla*-demons (l. 290, see Figure 1, above), while V also concludes the paragraph with the same sentence (l. 305c), as an *inclusio*. By appending this phrase to the *galla*-paragraph, the new addition is placed precisely at the time of Inana’s departure from the netherworld. In terms of the narrative, this is again not necessary, and creates difficulties in the sequence. However, for the author, this appended sentence helped connect the new addition to the older sequence.[[31]](#footnote-31) As mentioned above, V is the only version that used this sentence in both the beginning and the end of the paragraph; or perhaps it was the only version that preserved it. Either way, the numerous repetitions of this sentence probably led one of the copyists of V to erroneously alter the original temporal sentence in line 285 into an indicative sentence as well.[[32]](#footnote-32)

The discussion so far has shown that wherever the textual witnesses present pluses or major wording and order changes, the repetitive sentence relating to Inana’s ascent from the netherworld appears as well. In each of them, further philological considerations show that these are later additions that were inserted into the older sequence by means of the ‘Inana’s ascent’ sentence. In light of this, can we assume that one of the ‘Inana’s ascent’ sentences in lines 285 or 306 also indicates an interpolation—together with the following or subsequent lines—one that occurred in an *early* stage of the formation of *Angalta*? After all, similar to the other cases, here too the presence of two identical sentences with such a small distance between them is odd in terms of the narrative.

We may therefore suggest that the older stratum of lines 282–396 in fact comprises two stages of the text’s formation. At first, only one of the temporal sentences attested to in the older stratum connected between the end of the Inana Unit and the deeds of Inana after her release from the netherworld. In other words, immediately after recounting Inana’s rescue (l. 281: “Inana arose”), the author proceeded to tell how on the day of her departure (l. 306: “as Inana was ascending from the netherworld”) she first met the grieving Ninšubur, then the grieving Šara and Lulal, and finally found the happy Dumuzi whom she sent to the netherworld as her substitute. In this very early stage, only one temporal sentence linked Inana Unit with the Middle Section.

At a later stage of the work’s formation, when the author (the same, or perhaps a later author) sought to further strengthen the connection between Inana’s departure from the netherworld and Dumuzi’s death, he added that her search for a substitute was carried out only in light of the Anuna’s instructions (ll. 286–289), the same council that determined the death of Inana in the netherworld.[[33]](#footnote-33) To this end, the author repeated the temporal sentence “as Inana was ascending from the netherworld” (l. 285) in order to place the new addition, as well, at the moment of Inana’s departure from the netherworld, before her meeting with Ninšubur. This editorial act led to the assumption that the Anuna verdict was deliberately framed within two identical sentences, forcing modern scholars to translate each sentence differently; in fact, this is a result of the gradual development of the passage. As stated, since all duplicates share these lines (that is, the two temporal sentences, with the Anuna verdict situated between them), this development took place prior to the separation of the duplicates from each other. In contrast, the other additions discussed above, which are not found in all duplicates, took place at a later stage.

The following chart (Figure 3) illustrates the two early stages in the formation of lines 285–306 as proposed above and two of the later stages as reflected in Duplicates V and S.

Figure 3: The Proposed Growth of Lines 282–306

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **S** | ***Ur*-text of V (before contamination)**[[34]](#footnote-34) | **Second stage** | **First stage** |
| Inana arose. | Inana arose. | Inana arose. | (281) Inana arose. |
| Ereškigal said to the galatura and the kurgara: |  |  |  |
| “Carry your queen, your seized […]” |
| **Inana**, through Enki's instructions, **ascended from the netherworld.** |
| **As Inana was ascending from the netherworld,** | **As Inana was ascending from the netherworld,** | **As Inana was ascending from the netherworld,** |
| the Anuna seized her (saying): | the Anuna seized her (saying): | the Anuna seized her (saying): |
| "Who has ever ascended from the netherworld, could they make him ascend unscathed from the netherworld? [[35]](#footnote-35) | "Who has ever ascended from the netherworld, has ascended unscathed from the netherworld? | "Who has ever ascended from the netherworld, has ascended unscathed from the netherworld? |
| **[When Ina]na will ascend from the netherworld,** | **When Inana will ascend from the netherworld,** | **When Inana will ascend from the netherworld,** |
| let her provide a substitute for herself." | let her provide a substitute for herself." | let her provide a substitute for herself." |
|  | **Inana ascended from the netherworld.** |  |
| DESCRIPTIONS OF THE DEMONS  | DESCRIPTIONS OF THE DEMONS  |
|  | **Inana ascended from the netherworld.** |
| **When Inana was ascending from the netherworld,** | **As Inana was ascending from the netherworld,** | **As Inana was ascending from the netherworld,** | **As Inana was ascending from the netherworld,** |
| Ninšubur [threw herself at her feet] at the door of the Ganzer… | [Her minister] Ninšubur threw herself at her feet … | Ninšubur threw herself at her feet … | (307 ff.) Ninšubur threw herself at her feet… |

1. Conclusions

The present discussion suggests that the multiple repetitions in the first lines of the Middle Section, that linked the Inana Unit with the Dumuzi Unit in *Angalta*, are not a literary phenomenon—as was suggested by earlier scholars—but a textual one. In other words, it is the gradual development of the passage from one sentence into a paragraph of ca. 30 lines that created this messy structure. For the reader seeking a smoother plot, these repetitive sentences seem unnecessary and disturbing. However, as the textual witnesses testify, these repetitive sentences were a means by which the authors—whether those of the older version of the text or those of the later layers—anchored the various additions, over and over, into the moment when Inana departed from the netherworld. In time, the few other compositions that absorbed the innovations embodied in *Angalta* took these additions for granted, and no longer needed any of these editorial techniques (as well as theological explanations), when making Inana responsible for the death of Dumuzi.[[36]](#footnote-36)

1. The lines are numbered according to the composite edition. For the various duplicates, their provenance, and the transliteration (below) see Attinger 2019; Cuperly 2020. I am grateful to Bénédicte Cuperly for kindly sending me her doctoral dissertation. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Duplicates t, y and W are very broken in this section and are therefore not included here. They will be referenced below when possible. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. See some examples in nn. 28 and 29, below. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Katz 2003, 278. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Cuperly 2020, 355, suggested that “[t]he result is a mirroring of Innana’s difficult way up. The story keeps being interrupted, like Innana’s journey.” However, since this ‘textual mirroring’ is not used in all the other events where Inana or Dumuzi experienced difficulties, it seems to be an *ad hoc* interpretation of a complex textual situation, and therefore cannot be accepted. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Katz 1996; 2003, 251–287 ; 2015, 65–66; Alster 2011; Zgoll 2020a; 2020b; and see also Sladek 1974, 26–27; Jacobsen 1976, 62; Wilcke 1973, 59-62; 1993; Ferrara 2010, 40. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Cf. Alster 2011 and further bibliography there. For similar traditions about Inana’s getting into trouble and getting out of it with Enki’s help, see the works *Inana and Šukalletuda*, *Inana and Ebiḫ, Inana and Enki*, and the hymn *Inana Nin-egala*, and cf. also Alster 1975, 30. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. See *Inana and Enki* (ETCSL 1.3.1) seg. 1, ll. 19–20. For further texts from Fara and Abu-Salabih see Zgoll 2020b, 484–485. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Katz 1996; 2003, 251–287; Wilcke 1993, 49–56; Ferrara 2010, 27–28, 35; Alster 2011. For close, or even identical descriptions of Dumuzi’s descent to the netherworld, his plea to the sun god to save him from his executioners, and Inana’s search for Dumuzi assisted by the fly, see *Dumuzi and Geštinana*; *Dumuzi’s Dream; Death of Dumuzi*; Eršemma 88 (Cohen 1988, 84–87); Eršemma 97 (Cohen 1981, 71–84); Eršemma 165 (Cohen 1988, 87–89). Note, however, that *Angalta* omits the traditional introduction of Dumuzi’s descent to the netherworld which lacks an emic explanation to his death, since it was linked directly to the Inana Unit, as will be discussed below. The content of *Angalta*, 404–409 has not been found in other Sumerian texts, and seems to be part of a different tradition relating to the cyclical descent and ascent of Dumuzi from the netherworld. To date, it is only known from 18th century Mari texts (A. 1146 and probably also *MARI* 5, 1987.14). For a discussion of this topic, see... [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Cf. Katz 1996; 2003, 270–274. It should be emphasized that the theme of substitution in the netherworld is not an innovation, except for its use in the context of the ascent of Inana and descent of Dumuzi. However, the extant Mesopotamian texts give the impression that viewing Inana as the one who led to the death of Dumuzi was not accepted by most narrators (and this is true also regarding the rising of Dumuzi which concludes *Angalta*). The few exceptions are *Dumuzi and* *Geštinana* (ETCSL 1.4.1.1); *The Death of Dumuzi* (BM 100046; CT 58,42); *Gilgameš* VI and *Ištar’s Descent*. They all relate, directly or indirectly, to Inana as responsible for the death of Dumuzi (but even these works do not relate to the rising of Dumuzi). [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. The difference between an indicative sentence and an imperative one here stems from the location of the component ba. Kramer 1950 assumed that the deviation of U resulted from a scribal error (metathesis) which should be corrected to an indicative sentence (ba-gub). Since the imperative indeed does not fit into the context, it may have been created by a scribal error (regardless of whether it was copied from memory, dictation, or another written exemplar; cf. Delnero 2012, 35, 38ff), but may also stem from a scribe’s misinterpretation of the context. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. For the permanent use of è instead of èd (=e11) in U, see n. 16, below. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. V has kur-ra instead of kur-ta, implying the opposite direction of descending to the netherworld. See further below, nn. 16 and 34. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Note that l. 288 in Duplicate y (which is very broken in this place) begins without the temporal component ud-da (“when”). [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. For the few variations between the duplicates in this line, see Figure 3, below. [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. As Figure 1 shows, U has a clear preference for the verb è over èd. This alternation may also be traced to a scribal error. An exception is found in line 287, where the first verb is èd (rather than è); but this line seems to suffer from several other scribal errors, see Attinger 2019, 94, n. 419. Another possibility is that the exception in line 287 related originally to the descent to the netherworld, rather than to the ascent from there, as possibly attested to in the parallel line in V (see n. 34 below, and cf. the introduction of *Angalta* in all duplicates). Alternatively, Kramer 1950 suggested to correct all è in U to èd. [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. The only additional unit that includes the verb èd is the introduction of *Angalta* (ll. 1–13), but there it portrays the descent of Inana to the netherworld rather than her ascent from there. Nevertheless, the occurrence of this verb in both units may attest to deliberate inter-textualism. [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Alexander Rofé used the term ‘related expansion’ to refer to cases where the final words of a passage to which an addition is appended introduce the new addition in a form of a temporal close, in order to anchor the addition in the passage to which it is added. See Rofé 2011 (first published in Hebrew, 1979); cf. Zakovitch 1979; Polak 1999. Kurt Kuhl used the term ‘resumptive repetition’ (in German: ‘Wiederaufnahme’) to refer to the technique wherein the author repeats or rephrases the final words of the unit preceding the addition, at the end of the new addition, in order to resume the original sequence at the same place where the addition interrupted it. See Kuhl 1952; cf. Seeligmann 1962; Anbar 1988; Ska 2006, 77–82, and nn 4–7; Ayali-Darshan 2017; 2021. [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. In V, 185 the sentence is in an indicative mood, unlike the rest of the duplicates, while the temporal sentence in S, 306 differs a bit from the rest. For the possible circumstances that led to these variants see below. [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. This is of course not an absolute rule, since it is possible that most of the extant duplicates of any given work are derived from a corrupt, or revised version, while only a few duplicates stem from a less-corrupted version; though this is rarer. Therefore, each case should be examined on its own, according to its unique features. In this case, as will be shown below, further evidence suggests that lines 282–284, occurring only in S, were added at a later stage of the formation of *Angalta*, namely, only after the *ur*-text of S was separated from the other duplicates. [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Katz 2003, 269–270 called this sub-unit ‘the first episode,’ and lines 307–367 ‘the second episode.’ [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Such as Jacobsen 1987, 222: “Inana was about to ascend from Hades, her page Ninshubur threw herself at her feet”; ETCSL 1.4.1: “After Inana had ascended from the underworld, Ninšubur threw herself at her feet at the door of the Ganzer…”; Attinger 2019, 95: “Lorsque Innana remonta du monde infernal Ninsubura se jeta à ses pieds…”; Peterson 2019, 34: “After Inana came up from the netherworld, Ninšubur [fell at her feet before her at(?)] the gate of Ganzer…;” Cuperly 2020, 713: “As Innana was ascending from the Kur, Nin-subur felt at her feet”. [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Among the scholars mentioned above, only Cuperly 2020, who suggested a literary explanation for the repetitive sentences, translated the two identical sentences with the same words, as in Sumerian. All others translated this line differently than the subsequent one. Thus Jacobsen: “Inanna was about to ascend from Hades, but the Anunaki laughed at it (saying:)…”; Attinger 2019: “Comme elle s'apprêtait à remonter du monde infernal, les Anuna la retinrent (en disant):…”; ETCSL 1.4.1: “But as Inana was about to ascend from the underworld, the Anuna seized her:…”; Petersen 2019: “When Inana ascended from the netherworld, Anuna seized her (saying:)…”. [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. See Sladek 1974, 134; Kramer 1980, 303, 308. [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. A similar omission of Ea’s instructions in *Ištar’s Descent* (ll. 99–100) may suggest that this revised Akkadian version stems from the same *ur*-text of S. [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Line 252: deš-àm ú nam-tìl-la deš-àm a nam-tìl-la uugu6-n[a š]ub-dè-en-zé-en (Q) // line 280: deš-àm ú nam-tìl-la deš-àm a nam-tìl-la uugu6-ni ba-an-šub-bu-eš (S). The large omission (‘parablepsis’, see Delnero 2012, 35, 201), due to a scribal error, coheres well with a process of copying from memory, but it can also occur while copying from another exemplar or from dictation, as is demonstrated by biblical and classical examples. For additional examples of homoeoteleuton in Sumerian and Akkadian texts, though only relating to an omission of a few cuneiform signs, see Delnero ibid and Worthington 2012, 103. For a similar phenomenon of homoearchton in an Akkadian text, see George 2003, 894, regarding the omission of lines 268–267 in *Gilg.* XI, duplicate J. [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. As was emphasized by Delnero 2012, 25 (and others), one of the parameters which help distinguish between a scribal error and an editorial process is that “the source in which it [i.e., the scribal error] occurs does not contain multiple variants of the same type.” In the present source, although both these phenomena happen to occur in the same lines, the homoearchton is unique to this place, whereas the wish to maintain a complete correlation between the instructions part and the fulfillment part characterizes S, as will be elaborated further below. [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Cf. Attinger 2019, 1 n. 6: “Problématique dans cette reconstruction est toutefois le fait que les ll. 249–251 ne sont attestées que dans S (elles font défaut dans Q et w), alors que les ll. 277–279 le sont dans tous les autres duplicats préservant le passage.” Note that Peterson 2019, 33–34 tried to mediate the homoearchton through a harmonistic translation of the text, and compare Kramer 1980, 306, whose translation reflects this omission. [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. *Contra* Katz 2003, 278, who argues that these lines originally ended the Inana Unit, but were omitted from all other duplicates. Note, however, Katz’s comment (ibid, n. 43) regarding the attribution of Larsa as Dumuzi’s meeting place with the *galla*-demons in S, rather than the traditional Kulaba as in the other duplicates of *Angalta* and additional works, which implies for a later revision of S. For further unique features of S, see also Ferrara 2003. [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. Katz 2003, 268–269, on the other hand, assumes that only line 290 was added at a later stage in V and T in order to separate the *galla*-demons’ paragraph from the Anuna episode. However, it is difficult to find a reason for such an editorial intervention, and it is indeed left unexplained by Katz as well. [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. While the opening sentences fulfil the function of a ‘related expansion,’ the closing sentence might be a case of a ‘resumptive repetition’; both these phenomena are familiar from other texts, as explained above. Whether such sentences were dropped by the later authors of other duplicates, erroneously or intentionally, or were never added by them, remains unclear. [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. Cf., also Attinger 2019, 94, n. 418, who defines this as a contamination. [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. Note that although the Anuna council functions in a similar role in other compositions (cf., e.g., the fragmentary *Iškur and Enlil* [Ni 12501]), its role is not limited to the netherworld. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. The contamination relates to both line 285, which is assumed to originally be a temporal sentence, and line 287, where the element ra appears instead of ta, changing the direction from ascending into descending. A plausible reason to the latter change (l. 287), which does not fit the context and seems secondary, can be attributed to a contamination resulting from the many occurrences of “inana kur-ra èd” in the text (even though the closer context has “inana kur-ta èd”). [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. The translation here follows that of Cuperly 2020, 358, which is closer to the Sumerian content. For the philological considerations, see there. [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. For these compositions, see n. 10, above. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)