

- 153 lu<sub>2</sub> a-[ša<sub>2</sub>-g]a ba-an-da-zal-la  
« et l'homme qui a passé la journée aux champs, »
- 154 ġuruš [a-ša<sub>2</sub>-ga ġi<sub>6</sub> ba-an]-da-sa<sub>2</sub>-a  
« ou le gars qui s'attarde aux champs le soir »
155. a[n-za-gara<sub>2</sub>-ba u<sub>3</sub>-mu-e-e<sub>3</sub>]  
« montent dans cette ferme fortifiée et (y trouvent un asile sûr) ... »  
(il manque tout au plus une ligne jusqu'à la fin de la colonne iii)

## Bibliographie

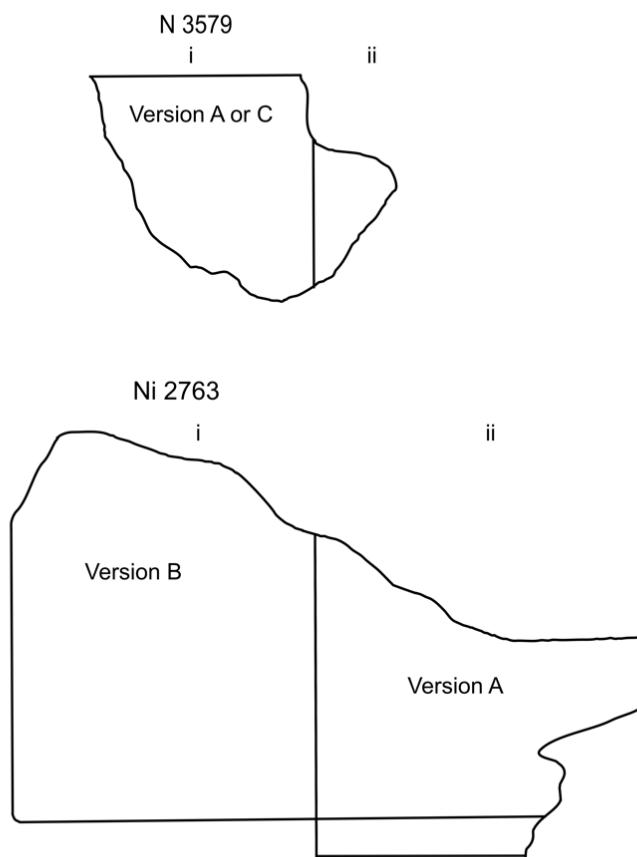
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**91) On “Nothing is of Value” I: N 3579 (+) Ni 2763 (SLTNi 128)<sup>1)</sup>** — “Nothing is of Value” is a short Sumerian wisdom composition published by Alster (2005) in four different versions. All manuscripts are in unilingual Sumerian and date to the Old Babylonian period. In Alster's reconstruction Version A includes three manuscripts: N 3579 (+) Ni 2763 (SLTNi 128) is a two-column tablet; UM 29-16-616 is a fragment from the bottom end of the second column of the reverse of a tablet; Ni 3023 (SLTNi 131) is a *Sammeltafel* of four columns on each side. A revision of these manuscripts will show that they cannot be attributed to one single version and probably the idea to reconcile the high variation of sources by assigning them to versions should be abandoned as it leads to artificial results.

Alster's reconstruction of N 3579+ has two (or three) versions of “Nothing is of Value” on the obverse of the tablet, which is very unlikely. Instead, we can read the fragments as a single version of the composition, which does not coincide with any of the versions identified by Alster. The reverse of the tablet contains some fragmentary lines from Old Man and Young Girl<sup>2)</sup> and a numerical list published by Cavigneaux (2009).<sup>3)</sup> Alster's reconstruction can be represented in the figure to the right.

Alster includes N 3579 column i 1-5 in his edition of Version A (p. 270-271), but in the separate edition of the source (p. 284) he attributes these lines to Version C. Nevertheless, the edition of Version C does not include the beginning of N 3579+. Column i continues on N 2763 with six broken lines edited by Alster as Version B 5-8. The few broken lines of column ii on N 3579 remain unassigned to any version. Column ii continues on Ni 2763 with the end of Version A followed by a double ruling. It is clear that this reconstruction appears artificial and unlikely because the tablet would contain Version A or C, followed by Version B, followed (again) by Version A. It seems more likely that the tablet was inscribed with one single version that can be reconstructed as follows:



**N 3579 (= Alster's Version A or C)**

i 1	[niġ <sub>2</sub> -nam nu-kal z]i ku <sub>7</sub> -ku <sub>7</sub> -dam	Nothing is of value, but life should be sweet.
i 2	[me-na-am <sub>3</sub> niġ <sub>2</sub> ]-tuku lu <sub>2</sub> la-ba-an-tuku	When a man has no property,
i 3	[lu <sub>2</sub> niġ <sub>2</sub> -tuku b]a-an-tuku	(that) man owns something.
i 4	[nam-uš <sub>2</sub> -a ħa-la n]am-lu <sub>2</sub> -ulu <sub>3</sub> -ka	Death(?) is the share of mankind
i 5	[...] x da-ri <sub>2</sub>	
	[Some missing lines]	

**Ni 2763 (= Alster's Version B)**

i 6'	[x]-ta [...] x	From(?) ...
i 7'	x [...] lu <sub>2</sub> <sup>2</sup>	... a man(?)
i 8'	x [...] i]b <sub>2</sub> -ġa <sub>2</sub> -ġa <sub>2</sub> -a	... who will place(?)
i 9'	du <sub>6</sub> 'x <sup>1</sup> [...] 'x <sup>1</sup> x sur-ra	mound ...
	ku <sub>4</sub> -[ku <sub>4</sub> -d]e <sub>3</sub> x x x mu-a	in order to enter ...
i 10'	umuš-bi [x <sup>2</sup> ] eġir-bi	That plan – its outcome was carried away by the
	i[m] ba-e-tum <sub>3</sub>	wind.
i 11'	e <sub>2</sub> -bi du <sub>6</sub> -du <sub>6</sub> -da ba-šid-e	That house became a ruined mound. It turned into the
	a-ri-a-še <sub>3</sub> mu-un-ku <sub>4</sub>	wasteland.
i 12'	ku <sub>3</sub> bala la-la-bi ak-da	The money made abundant from transactions, will
	ku <sub>3</sub> ib <sub>2</sub> -ba-aš ba-an-ku <sub>4</sub>	turn into lost money.

**N 3579**

ii 3	KA
ii 4	zi-[...]
ii 5	lu <sub>2</sub> [...]
	[Some missing lines]

**Ni 2763 (= Alster's Version A)**

ii 6'	ša <sub>3</sub> -ta-'a <sup>1</sup> [...]	
	lu <sub>2</sub> nam-'x <sup>1</sup> [...]	
ii 7'	sukud-du an-na-še <sub>3</sub> nu-um-[da-la <sub>2</sub> ]	Even the tallest one cannot reach the heavens.
ii 8'	daġal-la kur-ra la-ba-šu <sub>2</sub> -šu <sub>2</sub>	Even the broadest one cannot encompass the
		Netherworld.
ii 9'	kala-ga ki-a ne nu-mu-u[n-gid <sub>2</sub> -de <sub>3</sub> ]	Even the strongest one cannot stretch himself on
		Earth.
ii 10'	ti niġ <sub>2</sub> -du <sub>10</sub> ša <sub>3</sub> -ħul <sub>2</sub> -[la]	Precious life should be ... in joy
	šu ħe <sub>2</sub> -ni- ib-ka[r-kar-re]	
ii 11'	hub <sub>2</sub> -sar ša <sub>3</sub> -ħul <sub>2</sub> -[la]	Let the race be spent in joy!
	u <sub>4</sub> ħe <sub>2</sub> -ni-ib <sub>2</sub> -za[l-zal-e]	

This tablet contained an independent version that shared the end with Version D and likely included other parallel lines in the missing parts of manuscript. Nevertheless, N 3579+ did not contain the same version as the main manuscript of Version D, 3N-T 326 + 3N-T 360, because Ni 2763 i 6'-12' find no parallels, perhaps except for i 10', which reminds D 4, umuš nam l[u<sub>2</sub> ...] / na-me l[u<sub>2</sub> ...].

**Notes**

1. This research has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant agreement No 795154. I thank Niek Veldhuis for his suggestions.
2. For this composition see Matuszak 2022.
3. The text exists in a more complete version on a tablet published as CUSAS 42, 604.

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