The Pyramid Texts
Utterance 262 § 334 from the pyramid of Unas.

Translation by James Allen

Look, Unis has come. Look, Unis has come. Look, Unis has emerged. Unis has not come of his own accord, a dispatch having come for him. Unis has passed by his ba’s house; the Great Lake’s wrath has missed him.

What is of interest here is the last clause: the Great Lake’s wrath has missed him (according to Faulkner: the striking power of the Great Lake). Which - in the case that it actually is the meaning the ancient scribe wanted to convey - is evidence enough to justify the translators’ assertion that the texts are magical incantations. In the case, however, it is proved to be a mistranslation, it would be educating to find out whether the mistranslation was due solely to the translators’ prejudice.

Behold, Unas came

The West is meant. The place where the vindicated go/arrive after their judgment.

Unas arrived at the place of the pure ones.

Behold, thou Unas passed

“Passing into the light” is the title of the Book of the Dead and it refers to the passage from East to West which is also called “Passing to the West”

Unas did not report to the Hall of judgment himself.

A note in behalf of Unas was handed to the judging gods.
Unas arranged with his Ba for the note to be sent to the judges.

As a result of the above, Unas did not have to go into the Great Estate where the Hall of Judgment was obviously located.

Below are cited the last three lines of the passage as they appear in a copy of the particular Utterance in the pyramid of Teti:

Messages of the gods.

The words of the gods exalted Pharaoh Teti (to the status of words of god raised him). Pharaoh Teti (to the status of words of god raised him).

Looks like the word ba was written with both the stork and the cup glyphs and that these glyphs were later selectively erased.

One more copy of this passage occurs in the pyramid of Pepi II but the hieroglyphic text is not available.

James Allen translates the passage as follows:
Look], Pepi Neferkare has come. Look, Pepi Neferkare [has emerged.
Pepi Neferkare has not come] of his own accord: what came for Pepi Neferkare was a god’s dispatch, and [the god’s] word is elevating Pepi [Neferkare to] the path above that ba’s house, and [Pepi Neferkare] has missed [the Great Lake’s wrath].

The sentence  the Great Lake’s wrath has missed him  as it occurs in the pyramid of Unas:

If are taken to be two separate words with depicting the head of an infuriated bull (which is used as determinative sign in the word dnd, rage. Although it clearly shows to be a lion’s head with a serpent on top), and to be the ideogram exclusively of a lake, then we get Allen’s translation.

If on the other hand the glyph is taken to be the ideogram of the word power (Kraft, as translated in the relative section of the “Worterbuch”, the main dictionary of the hieroglyphic script)....

...then we get Faulkner’s translation:
Both of these renderings have no relation whatsoever to the particular context. The signs  and  are interchangeable.


Glyph: , Ideogram, canal, channel filled with water.

Glyph: , irrigation canal. Determinative irrigated land. “Early identical with , and clearly a mere differentiation of ”.

The word  earth, land is determined by  .

The sentence in question is, in the pyramid of Teti, written as follows:

\[
\text{avoided he the estate the great}
\]

There is an entry in the “Worterbuch” for the word  where the glyph  is used as a determinative sign in the place of  :

The comment reads: Vielleicht für  “Ort, Stätte”, Perhaps it is about  “Ort” (place, village, town), “Stätte” (place).

The entry for the word  is the following:

The comment reads:

Ort, Stätte (besonders auch von heiligen Stätten).
Place, village, town (especially for holy places)

The glyph $i$ depicts a mound of earth with shrubs. It signifies holy place because it is the glyph used for the estates of the gods. Known variously as regions, portions, establishments, settlements, lands of the gods.

Plato in his “Critias” (109b), writes:

_Sometime, the gods divided by lot, between themselves, the regions of the entire earth without quarreling....

...and when they settled they were feeding us as herds, as possessions and cattle theirs; without using violence, as do the herdsmen when they take the herds to pasture ground hitting them...._

In a Sumerian Hymn to Enlil we read:

_Enlil, when you marked off holy settlements on earth._

(Hymn to Enlil, the All-Beneficent, line 65)

From the Creation Epic (Enuma Elish):

_To the Anunnaki of heaven and earth had allotted their portions._

(VI,46)

_All the gods apportioned the stations of heaven and earth._ (VI,79)

_Gishnumunab, creator of all people, who made the (world) regions._ (VII,89)

In the Akkadian myth “Etana,” it is the Anunnaki themselves who create the regions.

Old Babylonian version, opening lines:

_The great Anunnaki, who decree the fate,
Sat down, taking counsel about the land._

_They who created the regions, who set up the establishments._

(67/114)
As for the Egyptian texts, in Utterance 224 the dead King, who is supposed to have been transformed into a supreme deity, is given to rule the regions of Horus, the regions of Seth and the regions of Osiris.

In Utterance 477 everything is given to the King:

*The sky is given to you, the earth is given to you, and the Fields of Rushes, the regions of Horus (𓊥𓊠𓊡𓊠𓊤), and the regions of Seth (𓊥𓊠𓊦𓊠𓊤); the towns are given to you and the nomes assembled for you by Atum.* (§961)

Deuteronomy 32:8

*When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of God”*

* * *

Translators are also fond of “Lakes of Fire”!

A passage in Chapter 17 of the Book of the Dead reads, in Naville’s translation:

*O lord of the Great Temple, sovereign of the gods. May you rescue the Osiris N (Nebseni) from that god whose face is that of a dog, whose eyebrows are human, who lives on sacrifices, he is the keeper of the bend of the Lake of Fire*, consuming corpses with seizing chests, inflicting injuries without being seen.

What does it mean?

His name is swallower of millions, and he exists in the lake of Wenet. As for the Lake of Fire**, (it is) the one which is in Naref at the circuit, and anyone who treads on it should guard against falling to the slaughter.

“Lake of Fire” also by Wallis Budge and R. O. Faulkner. “Pool of Fire” according to Renouf.

In the Papyrus of Ani the first time that the phrase Lake of Fire occurs (*) it is written as 𓊥𓊠𓊦𓊠𓊤, 𓊥𓊠𓊦𓊠𓊤 n sdt
The small glyph \(\sqsubset\) depicts a tongue of land and is used as determinative sign in words signifying land sites, bank, region, earth, fields, town.

The second time that the expression in question occurs in the passage being discussed (***) is written as \(\text{št} \ n \text{sDt}\), estate in fire.

The expression \(\text{št} \ n \text{sDt}\), means burnt because \(\text{ḥt} \ n \text{sDt}\), wood in fire means firewood and \(\text{ms} \ n \text{sDt}\), offerings in fire means burnt offerings (Faulkner’s Concise Dictionary, p.257).

Naville is most probably translating from the papyrus of Nebseni. The expression appearing there is given in the transliteration as \(\sqsubset \ \text{n sr} \).

\(\text{št}\) as above and \(\text{n sr}\) signifying simply fire, flame.

No ancient scribe would read the phrase “land flame” or “estate in fire” as “Lake of fire”!!