



Cuneiform Tablets in the Bristol Public Library

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Source: *Journal of Cuneiform Studies*, 2005, Vol. 57 (2005), pp. 113-125

Published by: The University of Chicago Press on behalf of The American Schools of Oriental Research

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CUNEIFORM TABLETS IN THE BRISTOL PUBLIC LIBRARY

Michael Jursa (*Universität Wien*) and Elizabeth E. Payne (*Yale University*)

The following tablets comprise the cuneiform holdings at the Bristol Public Library in Bristol, Connecticut. The tablets were purchased in 1921

The authors would like to thank the Bristol Public Library, especially the Library's Director Francine Petosa, for permission to publish these texts, and Mr. Jay Manewitz for his assistance and for bringing the correspondence between the Library and Banks to our attention. We would also like to thank Benjamin R. Foster for allowing us to work on the tablets. In preparation of the Ur III material, E. E. Payne would also like to thank William W. Hallo, Marcel Sigrist, and Walther Sallaberger for their assistance with difficult passages. Any mistakes that remain are, of course, our own.

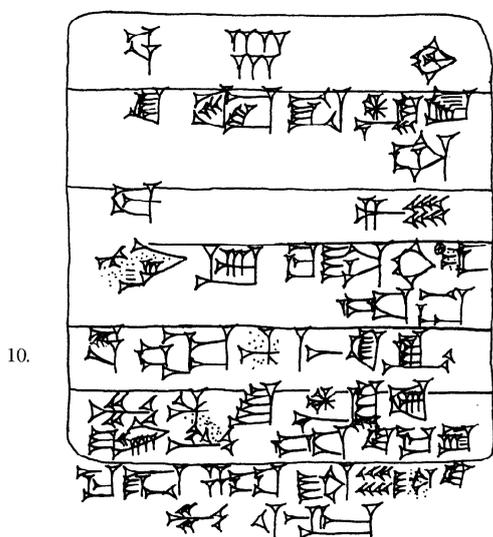
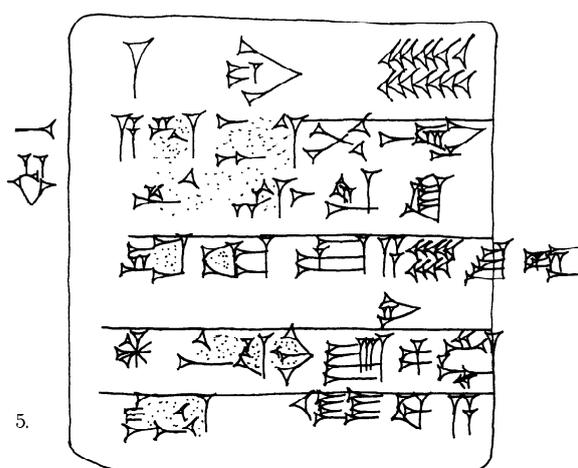
Abbreviations are those of W. von Soden, *Akkadisches Handwörterbuch (AHw)* and *The Sumerian Dictionary of the University Museum of the University of Pennsylvania (PSD)*, with the following exceptions and additions: Bongenaar, *Ebabbar* = A. C. V. M. Bongenaar, *The Neo-Babylonian Ebabbar Temple at Sippar: Its Administration and Its Prosopography*, Uitgaven van het Nederlands Historisch-Archaeologisch Instituut te Istanbul 80 (Leiden: Nederlands Historisch-Archaeologisch Instituut te Istanbul, 1997), *CTMMA* = *Cuneiform Tablets in the Metropolitan Museum of Art*, Ebeling, *NBU* = E. Ebeling, *Neubabylonische Briefe aus Uruk* (Berlin: im Verlage des Herausgebers, 1930–34), *FLP* = tablet in the Free Library of Philadelphia, Frame, *Fs. Dion III* = "A Neo-Babylonian Tablet with an Aramaic Docket and the Surety Phrase *pūt šep(i) . . . našū*," in *The World of the Aramaeans III. Studies in Language and Literature in Honour of Paul-Eugène Dion*, eds. P. M. Michèle Daviau, J. W. Wevers and M. Weigl (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), 100–133, *HSM* = tablet in the Harvard Semitic Museum, Kümmel, *Familie* = H. M. Kümmel, *Familie, Beruf und Amt im spätbabylonischen Uruk. Prosopographische Untersuchungen zu Berufsgruppen des 6. Jahrhunderts v. Chr. in Uruk*, *Abhandlungen der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft*, 20 (Berlin: Gebr. Mann Verlag, 1979), *NBC* = tablet in the Nies Babylonian Collection (at Yale), *NCBT* = tablet in the Newell Collection of Babylonian Tablets (at Yale), *PTS* = tablet in the Princeton Theological Seminary, Sack, *CD* = R. H. Sack, *Cuneiform Documents from the Chaldean and Persian Periods* (Selinsgrove: Susquehanna University Press, London and Toronto: Associated University

Presses, 1994), Sigrist, *SAT II* = M. Sigrist, *Texts from the Yale Babylonian Collections, Part I, Sumerian Archival Texts II* (Bethesda: CDL Press, 2000), *YBC* = tablet in the Yale Babylonian Collection.

from the antiquities dealer Edgar J. Banks.¹ During the summer of 2002, the tablets were brought to the Yale Babylonian Collection for conservation and translation, at which time they came to the attention of the authors. The eight tablets published here comprise six Ur III administrative documents and one royal inscription of Sin-kašid (edited by E. E. Payne), as well as one Neo-Babylonian document (edited by M. Jursa).

M. Jursa's research on this article was conducted within the framework of an ongoing project titled "Economic History of Babylonia in the First Millennium B.C." funded by the *Fonds zur Förderung der Wissenschaftlichen Forschung* (Vienna). Unpublished texts in the British Museum, the Harvard Semitic Museum, and the Yale Babylonian Collection are cited with permission of the Trustees of the British Museum, P. Steinkeller (Harvard University) and B. Foster and U. Kasten (Yale University) respectively.

1. Three letters in the files of the Bristol Public Library, dated between 2 June and 20 June 1921, recount the purchase of these tablets. According to the first of these letters, Banks offered the library a lot containing twenty tablets: the eight tablets published here, plus nine additional Ur III tablets, one from Girsu, one dated, by Banks, to ca. 2250 B.C., and one Neo-Babylonian mathematical text. Due to a conflict regarding the price, the Library purchased only these eight tablets and the final destination of the remaining twelve tablets is not known. Banks continued to do business with the library on at least one other occasion. In a letter dated 2 June 1924, Banks offered three "very rare cone-shaped symbols of Ištar." The library did not purchase these objects.



Tablet I

1. Ur III Administrative Text from Drehem
(41×37×17mm); (Šu-Sin 7/ XII/7)

Expenditure of an ox.

obv. 1 gu₄ niga
a-^rri-du¹-bu-uk ^rlú ša¹-aš-ru^{ki}
^rdub-sag¹ iri-a ku₄-ra-ni
^{dr}nanna-kam¹ sukkal maškim
5. ^rá¹-gi₆-ba-a
rev. u₄ 7-kam
ki puzur₄-^den-líl-ta
ba-zi

^rgiri₃¹ ip-qú-ša šár-^rra¹-ab-du
10. iti ezen ^rme-ki-gál
mu ^dšu-^den.zu lugal úri^{ki}-ma-ke₄
UE ma-da za-ab-ša-^rli^{ki} mu-^hul
LeE 1 gu₄

“One barley-fattened ox was expended from Puzur-Enlil (for a ceremony) at midnight on the seventh day, *before* Aridubuk, the man of Šašrum, entered the city. Nanna-kam, the messenger, was the maškim; (conducted) under the authority of Ipquša, the šarrabdu. Month 12, ŠS7. (Total) 1 ox.”

Commentary

line 2: In addition to this text, Aridubuk of Šašrum (*RGTC* 2, 178–79) is known from three other sources: Sigrist, *AUCT I*, 414: 3 (AS4/X/8); Fish, *Rylands*, 455: 6 (ŠS9/XII/14) (see below); de Genouillac, *Bab.* 8 (1924), Pl. VII, no. 30:7 (ŠS2/XI/24). An Aridubuk without gentilic is also known from *SET* 297: iii 15 (n.d.).

line 3: The meaning of *dub-sag* in this line is unclear. Alster and Vanstiphout offer the general meaning of “first anything” from the literal meaning “first tablet”² and this general meaning can be found in both administrative and literary sources.³ The same, basic meaning for *dub-sag* continues to be found in bilingual sources of the first millennium where *dub-sag* = *mahrû*, *mahru*, *muttu* and *qudmu*.

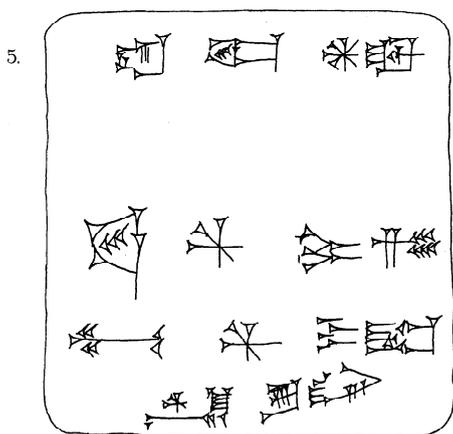
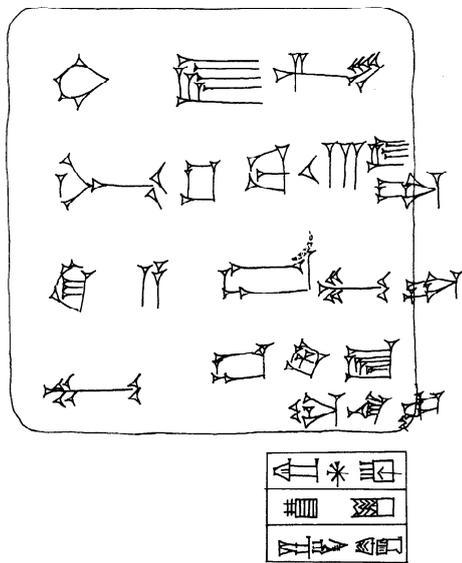
The phrase under consideration here (*dub-sag iri-a ku₄-ra-ni*) can be found in four additional texts: Fish, *Rylands* 455: obv. 7 (ŠS9/XII/14; a text also involving Aridubuk of Šašrum), *JCS* 10, 28, no. 5: rev. 6 (IS1/II/25), *FAOS* 16, 1172: obv. 6 (ŠS6/VII/4), Sigrist, *SAT II*, 316: obv. 6 (Š43/I/9).

2. B. Alster and H. Vanstiphout, *ASJ* 9 (1987) 34.

3. To cite one example from each genre, see *bala dub-sag* = “first term of duty” (*PSD* B, 66; Ur III) and, more clearly, Eršemma No. 97 line 40’ and following. (M. E. Cohen, *Sumerian Hymnology: The Eršemma* [Cincinnati: Hebrew Union College, 1981], 76, 81; V. Scheil, *RA* 8 [1911] 164, OB), where *gal₅-lá dub-sag amaš-e ku₄-r[a-e . . .]* “The first demon to enter the sheepfold . . .” is followed by *gal₅-lá min-kam-ma amaš-e ku₄-r[a-e . . .]* (l. 41’), *gal₅-lá eš₅-kam-ma amaš-e ku₄-ra-e* (l. 42’) and so forth through seven demons.

In treating this line, Sollberger translates: “as he entered the City for the first time.”⁴ I would propose, however, that *dub-sag iri-a ku₄-ra-ni* might better be understood, in this context, as “before he entered the city.” This suggestion is supported by the later Akkadian equivalents of *dub-sag* and by the fact that Aridubuk is known to have entered the city on at least two occasions (Bristol I; Fish, *Rylands* 455). The phrase, however, merits further discussion.

4. E. Sollberger, *JCS* 10 (1956) 19 and notes to line 20.

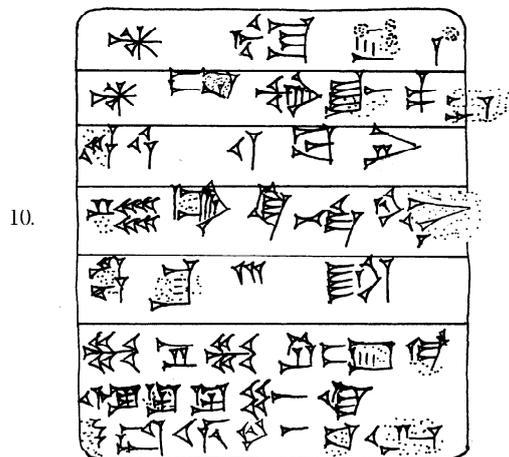
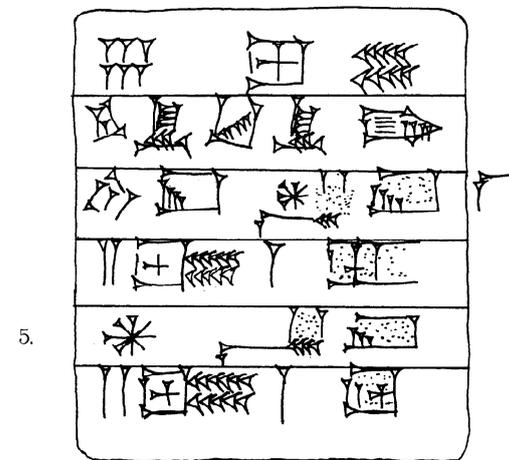


Tablet 2

2. Ur III Administrative Text from Umma
(49x48x17mm); (Ibbi-Sin 1/XII/-)
Delivery of reed bundles.

obv. 1.0.0 sa-gi
gu-kilib-ba 13 sa-ta
ki a-du-mu-ta
mu-DU šà é-te-na-ka
rev. 5. kišib inim-^dšára
iti ^ddumu-zi
mu ^di-bí-^den.zu lugal
Seal: inim-^dšára, dub-sar, dumu lugal-iti-da

“3600 reed bundles, with 13 bundles per bale, from Adumu. Delivery in Etena. Sealed by Inim-šara. Month 12, IS 1. Seal: Inim-šara, the scribe, son of Lugal-itida.”



Tablet 3

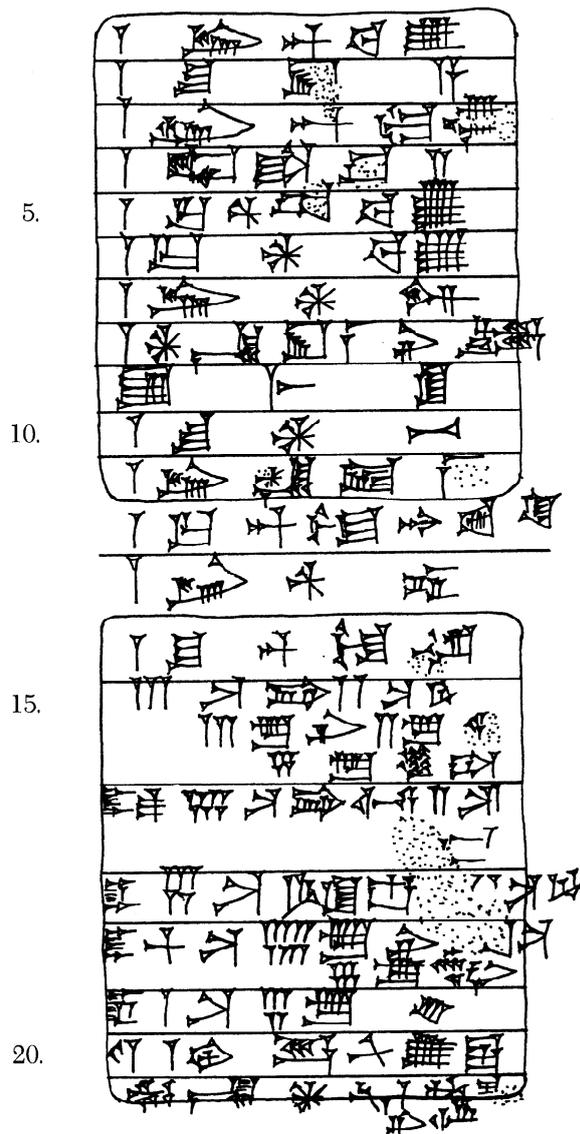
3. Ur III Administrative Text from Drehem
(36×30×16mm); (Šulgi 44/VIII/11)
Withdrawal of animals.

- obv. 6 udu niga
nīg-kù du₆-kù-ga
ša é^{d1}en-líl-lá
2 udu-niga 1¹ sila₄²¹
5. ^{d1}en-líl¹
2 udu niga 1¹ sila₄¹
rev. ^{d1}nin-líl-lá¹
^{d1}nanše¹-ušum-gal¹ maškim¹
iti¹ u₄ 11 ba-zal
10. zi-ga¹ ki na-lu₅¹
iti šu¹-eš-ša
mu si-mu-ru-¹um^{ki1} ù lu-lu-bu-<um>^{ki}
¹a¹-rá 10 lá-1 kam-aš¹ ba-ḥul¹

“6 barley-fattened sheep . . . for the Holy Hill, in the temple of Enlil, 2 barley-fattened sheep and 1 lamb (for) Enlil, 2 barley-fattened sheep and 1 lamb (for) Ninlil (were) withdrawn from Nalu. Nanše-ušumgal (was) the administrator. The 11th day of the month having passed. Month 8, Š44.”

Commentary

line 2: No parallels for this line are known to me and it seems likely that nīg-dab₅ du₆-kù-ga is intended. The writing of kù for ku (= dab₅) would then be a scribal error in anticipation of the kù following almost immediately thereafter.



Tablet 4

4. Ur III Messenger Text from Umma
(32×27×13mm); (Ibbi-Sin 2/XI/1)

The messenger text published here belongs to Group L, as identified by R. McNeil, “The “Messenger Texts” of the Third Ur Dynasty” (Ph.D. Diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1970), 168–70; see also, F. D’Agostino and F. Pomponio, *Umma Messenger Texts in the British Museum, Part I. NISABA I* (Rome: Dipartimento di Scienze

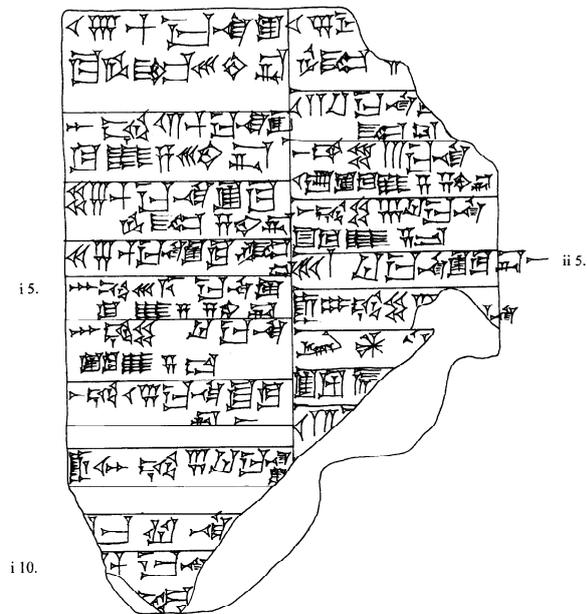
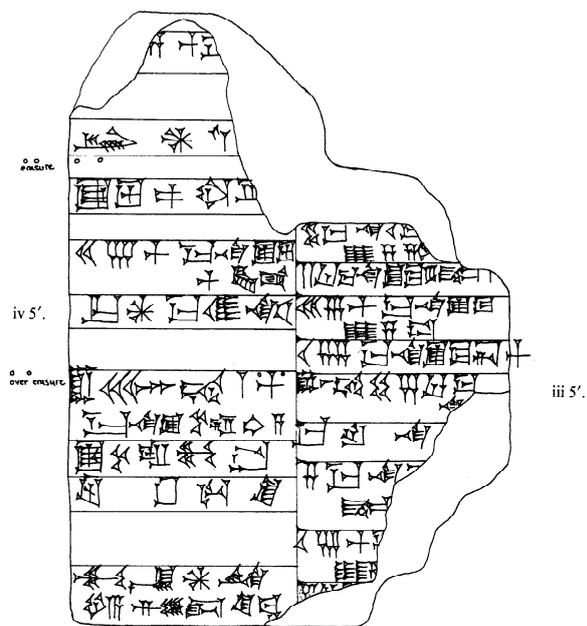
dell'Antichità dell'Università degli Studi di Messina, 2002), 16. It is one of the latest known examples of this type.

- obv. ¹lú-^dba-ba₆
¹šu-^ré¹-a
¹lú-^dnin-^ršubur¹
¹puzur₄-^ré¹-a
 5. ¹ur-^dab-ba-ú
¹ur-^dba-ba₆
¹lú-^diskur
¹d^en-líl-lá-ì-sa₆
 sukkal-me-éš
 10. ¹šu-^dIDIM
¹lú-^den-líl-lá
 LoE ¹ur-^dnin-gír-su^{ki}
¹lú-dingir-ra
 rev. ¹šu-^dnin-šubur
 15. 3 sila kaš 2 sila ninda 3 gín ì 2 gín ¹naga¹
 5 gín sum-ta
 šu-nigin 3 bán 7 sila kaš-sig₅ 2 sila [kaš]-
 gin
 šu-nigin 5 sila ninda zì-sig₁₅ [(x)] ¹2 bán¹
 1 sila ninda
 šu-nigin $\frac{1}{2}$ sila 9 gín ì ¹š^u-nigin $\frac{1}{3}$ sila 6 gín
 naga
 šu-nigin 1 sila 5 gín sum
 20. u₄ 1-kam iti pa₄-ú-c
 mu en ^dinanna máš-^re¹ ì-pàd

“Lu-Baba, Šu-Ea, Lu-Ninšubur, Puzur-Ea, Ur-Abba’u, Ur-Baba, Lu-Iškur, and Enlil-isa, the messengers; and Šu-IDIM, Lu-Enlil, Ur-Ningirsu, Lu-dingir, and Šu-Ninšubur (received) 3 sila beer, 2 sila bread, 3 gín oil, 2 gín naga-herb, and 5 gín onions each. (For a) total (of): 3 ban 7 sila beer of good quality and 2 sila beer of normal quality; 5 sila bread of “ground flour” and 2 *ban* 1 sila bread; $\frac{1}{2}$ sila 9 gín oil; $\frac{1}{3}$ sila 6 gín naga-herb; 1 sila 5 gín onions. Day 1, month 11, IS2.”

Commentary

line 5: A parallel to this name was kindly brought to my attention by M. Sigrist. In YBC 16034 (unpubl.) obv. 6’ we find the name ¹lú-^dab-ba-ú.



Tablet 5

5. Ur III Administrative Document (82×58×24 mm); (Amar-Sîn 9/-/-)

This document is a summary report of wool delivered to the city of Umma. The wool recorded

was used to weave textiles of various types and qualities. For the textile industry during the Ur III period, see H. Waetzoldt, *Untersuchungen zur neusumerischen Textilindustrie*, Studi Economici e Tecnologici 1 (Rome: Centro per le Antichità e la Storia della Arte del Vicino Oriente, 1972).

- obv. i. 17½ ma-na síg túg nì-lám 3-kam-ús
 2 gú 12½ ma-na síg túg-guz-za 3-kam-ús
 45½ ma-na síg túg nì-lám 4-kam-ús
 25½ ma-na síg túg nì-lám gin
 5. 3 gú 30 lá-1 ma-na síg túg-guz-za 4-kam-ús
 3 gú 40⅔ ma-na síg túg-guz-za-gin
 1 gú 15 ma-na síg túg uš-bar
 šu-nígin 12 gú 5⅓ ma-na sí[g]
 [u]r-ru na-[gada]
10. [x+] 1½ ma-na¹ [síg túg] [nì]-lám
 [x-kam-ús]
 (rest of column 1 broken)
- ii. 15 m[a-na síg túg] nì-lám 14¹-[kam-ús]
 12⅓ ma-na síg túg nì]-lám gin
 1 gú 53 ma-na 10 gín síg túg-guz-za
 4-kam-ús
 1 gú 46⅔ ma-na síg túg-guz-za gin
 5. 31⅔ ma-na síg túg uš-bar
 šu-nígin 6 gú 43 + [x m]a-na [síg]
 lú-^dutu¹ [na-gada]
 síg udu 1é¹-[x x]
 13 1ma¹-[na síg x]
 (rest of column 2 broken)
 (beginning of column 3 broken)
- rev. iii. 140 ma-na 10 g¹[in síg túg]-guz-za
 4-ka[m-ús]
 2⅔ ma-na síg túg nì-lám [x x]
 36½ ma-na síg túg-guz-za gin
 18 ma-na síg túg uš-bar
 5. šu-nígin 1 gú 45⅓ ma-na[a síg]
 ur-ru na-[gada]
 4 ma-na s[í]g túg nì]-lám [x x]
 17½ m[a-na síg túg]-guz-za [a x]
 [(x+)] 14⅔ ma¹-[na síg túg x]
 (beginning of column 4 broken)
- iv. [šu-nígin x+] 14½ m[a-na síg]
 lú-^dutu [na-gada]
 síg udu 1énsi¹-[ka]
 27½ ma-na síg udu bar-su¹(=kù)-ga

- 5'. ur-^dma-mi na-gada
 šu-nígin 33 gú 1½ ma-na síg-kur-ra hi-a
 síg-kur-ra mu-DU
 šà umma^{ki}
 mu en ^dnanna kar-zi-da^{ki} ba-h[un]

(column i) “17½ mina wool for a nilam-garment of the third quality; 2 talents, 12½ mina wool for a guzza-garment of the third quality; 45½ mina wool for a nilam-garment of the fourth quality; 25½ mina wool for a nilam-garment of normal quality; 3 talents 29 mina wool for a guzza-garment of the fourth quality; 3 talents 40⅔ mina wool for a guzza-garment of normal quality; 1 talent 15 mina wool for an uš-bar-garment. Total: 12 talent 5⅓ mina wool (from) Urru, the shepherd. [x +] 1½ mina wool for a nilam-garment [of the x quality] ... (rest of column broken).

(column ii) “15 mina wool for a nilam-garment of the fourth quality; 12⅓ mina wool for a nilam-garment of normal quality; 1 talent 53 mina 10 shekels wool for a guzza-garment of the fourth quality; 1 talent 46⅔ mina wool for a guzza-garment of the normal quality; 31⅔ mina wool for an uš-bar-garment. Total: 6 talent 43 [+x] mina wool (from) Lu-Utu, *the shepherd*, wool of the sheep of the ... *house*. 13 mina wool ... (rest of column broken).

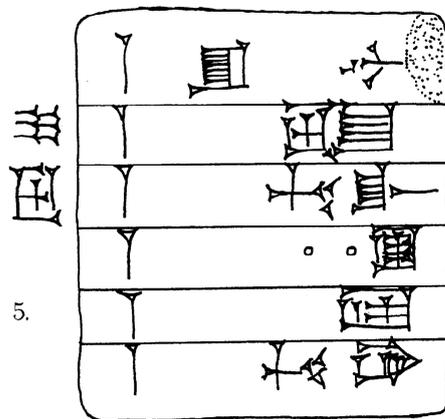
(column iii; beginning broken) “... 40 mina 10 gin wool for a guzza-garment of the fourth quality; 2⅔ mina wool for a nilam-garment of the [x quality]; 36½ mina wool for a guzza-garment of normal quality; 18 mina wool for an uš-bar-garment. Total: 1 talent 45⅓ mina wool (from) Urru, the shepherd. 4 mina wool for a nilam-garment [of the x quality]; 17½ mina wool for a guzza-garment [of the x quality]; [(x+)] 4⅔ (or ⅓?) m[ina wool for an x garment of the x quality].

(column iv; beginning broken) “... [Total: x+] 4½ m[ina wool] (from) Lu-Utu, *the shepherd*; wool of the sheep of the governor; 27½ mina wool from the bar-su-ga-sheep; Ur-Mami, the shepherd; Total: 33 talents 1½ mina wool of the mountain (sheep); the wool of the mountain (sheep) delivery in Umma. AS 9.”

Commentary

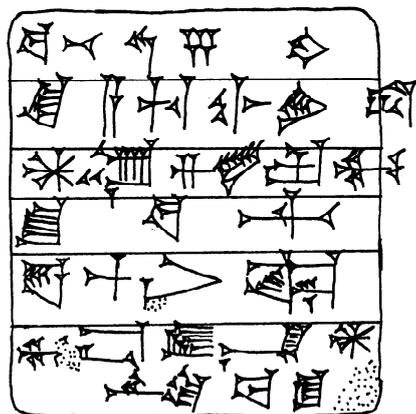
line ii 7: Compare *SET* 275, 17-18 (Umma, AS 6/-/-) where Lu-Utu (na-gada) is among the shepherds collectively referred to as the "shepherds of the mountain sheep" (*SET* 275, 24: ki sipa udu-kur-ra-ke₄-ne-ta) and *MVN* 16, 965: 16-17 (Umma, AS 6/-/-) where Lu-Utu is described as a shepherd of the mountain sheep (na-gada / udu-kur-ra). Such characterizations are in keeping with the summary line of this tablet (i.e., delivery of wool of the mountain (sheep)), but Lu-Utu's association with the wool of the governor in iv 2'-3' is unexpected.

line iv 5': See *MCS* 8/4 (1959) 93 (unnumbered), rev. col. i, line 8 for ur-^dma-mi na-gada mentioned in a similar text (Umma, ŠS 1/-/-).



5.

10.



Tablet 6

**6. Ur III Administrative Text from Drehem
(29x27x14mm); (Amar-Sîn 5a/1/5)
Receipt of animals.**

- obv. 1 dara₄[?] nit[a₂]
 1 gukkal
 1 máš-gal
 1 u₈
 5. 1 sila₄
 1 máš-ga
 rev. ba-úš u₄ 5-kam
 ki a-ḥu-we-er-ta
^dšul-gi-iri-mu
 10. šu ba-ti
 iti maš-dù-kú
 mu ús-sa en ^dnanna ba-ḥun

LeE 6 udu
 "Šulgi-iri-mu received 1 male *ibex*, 1 fat-tailed sheep, 1 full-grown goat, 1 ewe, 1 lamb, and 1 suckling goat, (all) dead, from Aḥu-Wer. Day 5, month 1, AS 5. (Total) 6 sheep."

**7. Building Inscription of Sîn-kāšid
(56.8x45.1x20.0mm)**

(RIME 4.4.1.2; not copied)

- obv. ^dEN.ZU-kā-ši-id
 nita kala-ga
 lugal unu^{ki}-ga
 lugal *am-na-nu-um*
 rev. é-gal
 nam-lugal-la-ka-ni
 mu-dù

"Sîn-kāšid, mighty man, king of Uruk, king of the Amnānum, built his royal palace."



Tablet 8

8. Neo-Babylonian receipt (Neriglissar 0/VII/17)

- 1 $1\frac{1}{2}$ ma.na kù.babbar
 šá¹ igi-^den¹-[a]-dag-gal^lugal é
 šá¹ en-lugal-ùru^l sag lugal
 a-na dul-lu^{id} pa-la-gu
- 5 ina muh-^{hi} é¹ en-lugal-ùru
^lsag lugal ina¹ kù^l.babbar šá¹ ina igi
^{id}u.gur-^lda-a¹-nu a-šú
 šá¹ du¹-[nu]mu[n] u¹ umbisag égal
- le. ina šu^{II} ^{id}u.gur-^lda¹-a-nu
- 10 a-šú¹ du-numun ma-^{hi}-ir
- rev. ^lmu-^rkin¹-nu^{id} ag-úš-tin^{it}
^lsag lugal ^{id}en-di-nu-a¹-e-pu-us
^lsag lugal ^{id}ag-en-dingir^{mes}
 a-šú šá¹ ir-^dag¹ ba-šá-a a-šú

- 15 šá¹ ^{id}u.gur-tin^{it} se-pir-ri
 u^l umbisag^{id} utu-mu-ùru a-šú šá¹
¹šil-la-a a¹ šu-^ltu¹-ú
 u.e. tin.tir^{ki} i[t]i.¹du⁶ ud.17.kam
 mu.sag.nam.sag^{sic}.lugal
- 20 ^{id}u.gur-lugal-ùru
 lugal tin.tir^{ki}
 le. e-lat¹ $\frac{1}{2}$ ma.^rna¹
 ṣám¹ zú.lum.ma
 x x x

“One and a half minas of silver, owed to Pāni-Bēl-adaggal, steward of the courtier Bēl-šarru-ušur, for work on the Pal(a)gu canal. He (PBA) has been paid at the house of the courtier Bēl-šarru-ušur by Nergal-dān, son of Mukīn-zēri, from the silver which is at the disposal of Nergal-dān, son of Mukīn-zēri, and (of) the palace scribe.

“Witnesses: Nabû-mītu-uballīṭ, the courtier; Bēl-dinū²a-epuš, the courtier; Nabû-bēl-ilī, son of Arad-Nabû; Iqīšaya, son of Nergal-uballīṭ, the alphabet scribe; and the scribe: Šamaš-šumu-ušur, son of Šillaya of the Šutū family.

“Babylon, 17th day of Tašritu, accession year of Nergal-šarru-ušur, king of Babylon.

“This is in addition to half a mina (of silver), the price of the dates . . . (*one word illegible*).”

The interpretation of this text must focus on the two protagonists—Bēl-šarru-ušur and Nergal-dān, who are known from other sources,⁵ and on the office of the “palace scribe,” *tupšar ekalli*. A list of attestations of named holders of this title is given in Table 1.

Royal officials designated as “palace scribe” (*tupšar ekalli*) are mentioned in several archives from both northern and from southern Babylonia. In the Eanna archive, not surprisingly, they appear most often as agents of the crown.⁶ The attestations

5. Among the other men mentioned in the text, only the witness in line 11, the *ša rēši* Nabû mītu-uballīṭ, can be identified with certainty in another text: YOS 19, 288, Nabonidus 3.

6. YOS 3, 132: a palace scribe sends men to measure (royal) fields and assess the harvest; it is explicitly stated that the fields of Eanna not be included. NCBT 53: sheep delivered to a palace scribe. YOS 17, 207: a certain Ubār-Nabû, (royal) official (*ša-rēši*) and messenger of a palace scribe, receives silver. Similarly, in Sack, CD 16, unnamed messengers of the *šakin mati*

Table 1

Šamaš-ibni	Nabopolassar 7/III/14	NBC 4514 (Eanna archive)
Arad-Nabû	Nebuchadnezzar 15/IV/6	Sack, <i>CD</i> 16 ⁷ (Eanna archive)
Arad-Nabû	Nebuchadnezzar 18/II/13	<i>JCS</i> 54, 117 YBC 3926 (Eanna archive)
Šamaš-šarru-ušur	Amil-Marduk 0/VII/15	PTS 2046 (Uruk; dossier of Šumu-ukī(n) ⁸)
Šamaš-šarru-ušur	Amil-Marduk 0/VII/20	<i>BIN</i> 2, 109 (Uruk; dossier of Šumu-ukī(n))
Madān-šarru-ušur	Nabonidus 14	BM 59098 (Ebabbar archive) ⁹
Madān-šarru-ušur	<Nabonidus 15–Cyrus 7> ¹⁰	<i>CT</i> 22, 242 (Ebabbar archive)

of named palace scribes listed above are unusual; more often these men remain unnamed, perhaps because their names, like those of high officials, are either well-known or deemed irrelevant since the official title is sufficient for the purpose of identification. They have high social standing,¹¹

and most often act through agents, only important tasks warranting their personal presence.¹² They are occasionally involved in legal matters,¹³ and Eanna officials turn to them for pertinent information.¹⁴ One letter from the Ebabbar archive shows a *tuṣšar ekalli* inspecting the staff of the royal resident (*qīpu*) in Ebabbar.¹⁵ The same man is known to have paid a barley tithe to the temple, similarly to other royal officials.¹⁶

Sometimes these officials are either responsible for, or owners of, large estates. On one occasion, the palace scribe Šamaš-šarru-ušur was owed substantial amounts of barley, apparently the yields or rents of fields in Ḫurrabatu, by the well-known entrepreneur Šumu-ukīn.¹⁷ The business relationship

and the palace scribe Arad-Nabû are being issued silver too. A palace scribe is also mentioned in *TCL* 9, 76:33 (collated) in a damaged context.

7. Sack's reading of the name as Mušēzib-Bēl is wrong. Beaulieu, in his discussion of Arad-Nabû in YBC 3926, notes the *sepīru ša mār šarri* of that name known from Nebuchadnezzar's so-called *Hofkalender* ("Ea-dayyān, Governor of the Sealand, and Other Dignitaries of the Neo-Babylonian Empire," *JCS* 54 [2002], 118⁵⁷), but adds that this probably is another individual. The name is very common. An additional reference to Arad-Nabû (without title) can probably be found in YBC 4146, see below.

8. The text was identified by B. Janković.

9. The text reads as follows (transliteration of C. Waerzeggers): 4 gur 4 pi še.bar eš-ru-ú, šá¹⁴ di.kud-lugal-ūru,¹⁶ dub.sar á.gal, a-na é.babbar.ra it-[ta-din], [...] 'x x' [...] (rest of obv. and beginning of rev. lost) rev. 1': 'mu'.14.kam¹⁴ ag-i, lugal tin.tir¹⁴ (followed by the drawing of a symbol, resembling those discussed by Jursa in Zawadzki and Jursa, "Šamaš-tirri-kušur, a smith manufacturing weapons in the Ebabbar temple at Sippar," *WZKM* 91 [2001] 360²³ and 362²⁶). Bongenaar, *Ebabbar*, 106 suggests (on the basis of *CT* 22, 242) that the palace scribe Madān-šarru-ušur be identified with a courtier of that name attested more often in the Ebabbar archive. This is possible, but not absolutely certain, given the small degree of variation in the onomasticon of royal officials. A tithe paid by the *courtier* Madān-šarru-ušur is attested in *CT* 55, 349.

10. The date is based on the identification of the addressee Marduk-šumu-iddin with the *šangū Sippar* of that name: Bongenaar, *Ebabbar*, 29.106.

11. NBC 4514: a palace scribe appears as witness in a contract dealing with temple affairs. He heads the witness list and thus takes precedence over the men named after him. These are the *qīpu* of Eanna, the *šākin tēmi* of Uruk, and the *šatammu* of Eanna, the highest-ranking officials based at Uruk at the time. The text is cited here with the permission of L. Pearce who will publish it in a forthcoming *YOS* volume.

12. *JCS* 54, 117 (YBC 3926): the palace scribe Arad-Nabû personally delivers large amounts of silver from the palace to the temple. This official is probably to be identified with the Arad-Nabû mentioned in YBC 4146. This is a contract dealing with the financing of the manufacture of bricks intended as a contribution of Eanna to Nebuchadnezzar's palace building project in Babylon. Arad-Nabû is the only protagonist in this text who is not identified with a patronymic: he must have been well known.

13. *YOS* 3, 109: a palace scribe has talked to the *šākin tēmi* regarding the affairs of Nabû-bēlšunu and has brought them to a conclusion. *TCL* 9, 107: a palace scribe requests the handing-over of a certain man's property. Contrary to Ebeling, *NBU*, p. 265, and Kümmel, *Familie*, 121, Nabû-šumu-ukīn, son of Nabû-aḫḫē-šullim, in *TCL* 9, 107: 9f. is not to be identified with the palace scribe mentioned in line 11 of that letter. The passage reads: "(regarding) Nabû-šumu-ukīn, son of Nabû-aḫḫē-šullim: the palace scribe has sent (him) to you (*il-tap'-rak'-ka*), saying: ..."

14. *TCL* 9, 93: a messenger is sent by the <*šatammu*> to a palace scribe to make inquiries.

15. *CT* 22, 242.

16. BM 59098 (above note 9).

17. *BIN* 2, 109. See F. Joannès, *Textes économiques de la Babylonie récente*, Études assyriologiques cahier no. 5 (Paris, Éditions Recherche sur les Civilisations, 1982), 130–41. On the

of these two parties is clarified by an undated administrative text dealing with the division of barley between Šumu-ukin and an unnamed palace scribe.¹⁸ The barley is the yield of fields cultivated by plough teams under the supervision of Šumu-ukin. From this one can deduce that the land in question was the palace scribe's estate, or was at least managed by him.

An "estate of the palace scribe," *bit tuṣṣar ekalli*, is attested in the Ebabbar archive. It is mentioned in three tithe lists¹⁹ and has to be added to the list of estates of important state officials subject to paying tithes to the Ebabbar.²⁰ Similarly, evidence from the Nūr-Sin-archive proves the existence of a *bit tuṣṣar ekalli* on land belonging to Ezida.²¹

Finally, there is a "canal of the palace scribe," *nār-tuṣṣar-ekalli*, which is attested in a Murašū text.²² This is reminiscent of other canals named after high officials: *nār-sîn-māgir*, *nār-mašenni*.

Cumulatively it seems that the title more likely refers to a high royal official possibly equal in rank

with men like the treasurer (*rab kāširi*) or the *šakin ṭemi*, and not to ordinary scribes working for the palace. Such men are referred to as *tuṣṣarū ša ekalli* in the letter TCL 9, 98 from the Eanna archive:²³ this seems to be a simple designation for palace clerks and not a formal title like *tuṣṣar ekalli*.²⁴

The background for the appearance of the palace scribe in the present text cannot be ascertained with certainty. I would assume that the business relationship between the agricultural entrepreneur Šumu-ukin (who was well connected with the royal administration) and the palace scribe Šamaš-šarru-ušur discussed earlier may have been similar to that of the anonymous palace scribe and Nergal-dān. At the least it can be demonstrated that Nergal-dān was a businessman involved in similar activities as Šumu-ukin, albeit on a much smaller scale.

Nergal-dān, son of Mukin-zēri of the Sin-lcqe-unninni family, is one of the main protagonists of the dossier to which this text belongs. Other family members attested are his sons Šamaš-aḫu-iddin and Šamaš-rē²ūšunu, his brother Bēl-lē²i and his nephews Nādin and Gimillu, sons of Bēl-lē²i.²⁵ They are mentioned in Eanna texts and private contracts—the remnant of their archive—which were in all likelihood found intermixed with the Eanna temple archive during the large-scale illicit excavations at Uruk at the beginning of the past century. These men had manifold connections to

early phase of Šumu-ukin's career. PTS 2046 concerns the same affair. Šumu-ukin will be re-studied by B. Janković in a forthcoming contribution based on unpublished material.

18. NBC 4569.

19. BM 42607 (M. Jursa, *NABU* 1998/70), 62436 and 101262.

20. See M. Jursa, *Der Tempelzehnt in Babylonien vom siebenten bis zum dritten Jahrhundert v. Chr.*, *Alter Orient und Altes Testament* 254 (Münster: Ugarit Verlag, 1998), 93–97: Bit-mār-šarri, Bit-mukil-appāti, Bit-Nabū-na²id (in a text from the accession year of Nabonidus), Bit-rab-mungi, Bit-rab-qannāte, Bit-šar-bābili, and M. Jursa, *NABU* 1998/70: Bit-rab-kāri, Bit-rab-urāte, Bit-mār-ekalli. *Dar.* 198 mentions a sprawling ¹⁰⁰Bit-tuṣṣar-ckalli, parts of which near the Nār-šarri and the villages Gilūšu and Bir-ili were cultivated by ploughmen of the Ebabbar: M. Jursa, *Die Landwirtschaft in Sippar in neubabylonischer Zeit*, *Archiv für Orientforschung*, Beiheft 25 (Wien: Institut für Orientalistik, 1995), 212a. Barley from the Bit-tuṣṣar-ekalli is also mentioned in BM 64077, Darius 2/VIII/5.

21. C. Wunsch, *Die Urkunden des babylonischen Geschäftsmannes Iddin-Marduk*, *Cuneiform Monographs* 3 (Groningen: Styx, 1993), No. 214 (M. Jursa, Review of Wunsch, *Iddin-Marduk*, *Afo* 42/43 [1995/96], 261a). The unpublished text HSM 1890.4.5 shows a slave of Iddin-Marduk/Nūr-Sin cultivating a date garden in the field(s) of the palace scribe (*ina a.šā* ¹⁰⁰umbisag égal); the dates he has to pay as rent are referred to as *nigga lugal man šú*: this is certainly a mistake for *nigga* ⁴ag ... "property of Nabū, the lord of the universe."

22. *RGTC* 8, 387.

23. The ¹⁰⁰umbisag^{me} *šā égal* request the Eanna pay barley owed to the royal administration.

24. Yet another type of scribe is represented by the "scribes of the kings:" these were notaries responsible (i.a.?) for drafting sale contracts for real estate. See H. D. Baker and C. Wunsch, "Neo-Babylonian Notaries and Their Use of Seals," in *Seals and Seal Impressions. Proceedings of the XVI^e Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale, Part II*, eds. W. W. Hallo and I. J. Winter (Bethesda: CDL, 2001), 200.

25. See Frame, *Fs. Dion* III, 103–33. In addition to the texts mentioned by Frame, Nergal-dān is a protagonist in the following tablets: *SAKF* 135+145 and 160 (see below), Sack, *CD* 98 (= Jursa, *NABU* 1998/124), *YBC* 3869, *YOS* 19, 31, 67 and 312, possibly also *VS* 20, 68. For Šamaš-aḫu-iddin see also Sack, *CD* 76, *GC* 1, 343, *YOS* 6, 91, 102, 104, 132, 162 and 197, *YOS* 19, 68, 73, 56, 312 and *CTMMA* 3, 103. The alleged family name ... a ¹mu-⁴utu given in the edition of *CTMMA* 3, 103 is incorrect. The passage must in fact be read *šā mu.an.na* ¹l¹ gín "for 1 shekel per year." The text is closely related to *YOS* 19, 68.

Eanna. Nergal-dān was a member of the inner circle of the temple community by virtue of the fact that he owned a prebend of butcher's service before Urka²itu jointly with his brother Bēl-lē²i,²⁶ Bēl-lē²i's son Gimillu was a prebendary baker,²⁷ and both Bēl-lē²i and his other son Nādin had business contacts with the temple.²⁸ Nergal-dān's son Šamaš-aḫu-iddin acted for the temple on several occasions and is once attested as "messenger of the *bēl-piqitti* of Eanna."²⁹

Most of the private texts concern rather small-scale transactions, probably with an entrepreneurial background. The majority of the documents are debt notes for dates, barley and/or silver.³⁰ According to these texts, some of the family's activities were aimed at the commercial exploitation of the agricultural production in the hinterland of Uruk. Nergal-dān rented a field there,³¹ and he, Gimillu and Nādin dealt in *kasia* (*cuscuta*?) selling it to individuals³² and maybe also to the temple.³³ Šamaš-aḫu-iddin was also

owed bricks³⁴ and wooden beams,³⁵ which may suggest an involvement in construction work. He certainly sold textiles³⁶ and maybe also had them manufactured.³⁷ The two branches of the family shared business interests, which, however, led to problems. Nergal-dān and his nephew Nādin had entered into a formal partnership by the fifth year of Nabonidus at the latest.³⁸ It was probably in connection with this partnership that Nergal-dān had to stand surety for the payment of a debt owed by his nephew one year later.³⁹ The partnership was still functioning the following year, according to an unpublished text,⁴⁰ but must have run into difficulties a little later, probably after the death of Nergal-dān. A series of surety agreements from the eighth and tenth year of Nabonidus documents attempts by Šamaš-aḫu-iddin to collect debts owed to him by his cousins Nādin and Gimillu.⁴¹

Among the tablets from the archive, those most closely connected to the present text are two texts now housed in the Museo Archeologico in Florence and published (inadequately) about fifty years ago by Oberhuber in *SAKF*. In October 2003, I collated these tablets with the kind permission of the curator, M. Cristina Guidotti, and joined *SAKF* 135 to 145. In the following editions, new readings resulting from collation are not marked explicitly.

26. *NBDMich.* 62. See P.-A. Beaulieu, *The Pantheon of Uruk During the Neo-Babylonian Period*, Cuneiform Monographs 23 (Leiden/Boston: Brill/Styx, 2003), 261. Cf. also PTS 2061, published by Frame, *Fs. Dion* III, 101–33, a contract from the Eanna archive involving Nergal-dān and one of the highest officials of Eanna.

27. *AnOr* 8, 22.

28. *GC* 1, 95: Bēl-lē²i buys wool from the temple; *BIN* 1, 104: Nādin owes the temple 200 kor of dates as a compensation for the same amount of *kasia* which he must have failed to deliver. He also appears as a witness in BM 114468.

29. *YOS* 6, 119. Cf. *GC* 1, 343, *YOS* 6, 162, *YOS* 19, 56 and the small dossier *YOS* 6, 102, 132, 197 and Sack, *CD* 76 (lastly M. Jursa, *NABU* 1996/99) which shows Šamaš-aḫu-iddin collecting outstanding debts owed to the temple.

30. Nergal-dān and his relatives appear both as creditors (e.g., *YOS* 19, 31), and as debtors (e.g., *YOS* 6, 164). Note *SpTU* 2, 56 (Amil-Marduk 0/VII/28), in which Nergal-dān's nephew Nādin appears as one of six men owing more than two minas of silver. The text, which probably has a business partnership as background, is unusual in that it was excavated during the German campaigns of 1970/71 but has clear prosopographic links to the Eanna material found at the beginning of the twentieth century.

31. Sack, *CD* 98 = *NABU* 1998/124.

32. *YOS* 6, 105. As concerns Nergal-dān, there is an unpublished tablet fragment in the Florentine Museo Archeologico numbered 94028, dated Nabonidus 3/V/22, in which Nergal-dān is owed one "measure" (1st *mi-iš-ḫa-ta*) of *kasia*. The debtor's name is lost.

33. The background of *BIN* 1, 104 (above note) could be a sale.

34. *YOS* 6, 104 and *YOS* 19, 73.

35. *BIN* 2, 123.

36. *YOS* 6, 91.

37. This is suggested by *YOS* 19, 68 and *CTMMA* 3, 103, wherein Šamaš-aḫu-iddin hires a fuller for a certain period of time.

38. *YOS* 19, 67, Nabonidus 5/X/5. In this text they receive silver for a business venture from a certain Šamaš-bār.

39. *YOS* 6, 48, Nabonidus 6/III/27.

40. PTS 3056 (Nabonidus 7/VIII/2; *non vidi*), according to Frame, *Fs. Dion* III, 103. This text includes a reference to another son of Nergal-dān, Šamaš-rē²ūšunu.

41. *JCS* 9, 25 (Nabonidus 8/IV/17), *YOS* 6, 119 (Nabonidus 8/VI/4), *TCL* 12, 96 (Nabonidus 10/VIII/20), *YOS* 6, 153 (Nabonidus 10/IX/22). See J. W. Snyder, "Babylonian Suretyship Litigation: a Case History," *JCS* 9 (1955) 25–28, and Frame, *Fs. Dion* III, 104. *YOS* 19, 312, also from the tenth year of Nabonidus, concerns the settlement of accounts between Šamaš-aḫu-iddin and the son of another debtor of his father.

SAKF 135+145

[the new museum numbers, not given by Oberhuber, are 93970 and 93980]

- 1 *ina* 10 ma.na kù.babbar
 šá^{ld}en-lugal-ùru^{lú}sag lugal
a-na ¹re-mut a-šú šá¹re-<mut>².¹du¹
^{ld}u.gur-da-an [a-šú šá¹du-numun]
 5 [^{ld}u¹ag¹-[e]n¹šú-nu a-šú¹ š[á¹numun²-
 si.s]á²
a-na kaskal^{ll} *id-din-nu*
ina lib-bi šá 1 ma.na kù.babbar še.bar
a-ki-i ki.lam šá¹iti.x¹
 [š]e.bar *ina* tin.tir^{ki}
 10 ¹i-na-áš-ši
 rev. *i-di* u gi-mir-ri
ina ka-¹re¹-šú-nu ú-tar-u²
^{lú}mu-kin-nu^{ld}ag-šeš^{me}-mu
 a-šú šá¹GĪŠ xx [x x]
 15 a^{ld}en []
^{lú}umbisag^{ld}a[g²-x x a-šú šá]
 [l]i-ši-ru tin.[tir^{ki}]
 iti.sig₄ ud.1.kam mu.2.kam
 lú-^damar.utu lugal tin.tir^{ki}
 20 šá 15 gín kù.babbar *mi-reš-t[ú]*
 l.e. [u]l-tu [ka-r]e-šú-nu
^{ld}u.gur-[d]a-an
i-na-áš-ši

“Of the 10 minas of silver which the courtier Bēl-šarru-ušur has given to Rēmūt, son of Rēmūt²-Šamaš, Nergal-dān, [son of Mukīn-zēri], and Nabû-bēlšunu, [son of Zēru²]-lišir, for a business venture, thereof he (BŠU) shall receive in Babylon barley for 1 mina of silver, according to the price of month [...]. (The debtors) shall repay the wages (for porters) and the transport costs from their common account. (Witnesses). Babylon, first day of Simānu, year 2 of Amil-Marduk, king of Babylon. Nergal-dān shall take trade goods for 15 shekels of silver from their common account.”

SAKF 160

[museum number 93995]

- 1 3 ma.na 55 gín kù.babbar šá^{ld}en-lugal-ùru^{lú}sag lugal *ina* muḫ-ḫi^{ld}u.gur-da-an
 a-šú šá¹du-numun u^{ld}ag-en-šú-nu
 a-šú šá¹li-ši-ru *a-na* mi-reš-ti
 5 *i-nam-di-nu* šal-šú šá¹mi-reš-ti-šú^{ld}ag-en-šú-nu ú-za-a²-az-ma
ina iti.ab *i-na-áš-ši*
 1 ma.na 18½ gín kù.babbar
 u ur₅.ra-šú *ina* muḫ-ḫi ma-né-e 12 gín
 kù.babbar
 10 2 gín kù.babbar *ina* ka-re-e-šú-nu
 lo.e. *nu-up-tu₄* *i-nu-up-pu-u²*
 (witnesses; l. 14: ¹šu-la-a)
 19 urubād-šá^{garimé}-da-ku-ri
 20 iti.apin ud.26.kam
 mu.sag.nam.lugal.la
^{ld}u.gur-lugal-ùru lugal tin.tir^{ki}

“3 minas, 55 shekels of silver, owed to the courtier Bēl-šarru-ušur by Nergal-dān, son of Mukīn-zēri, and Nabû-bēlšunu, son of Liširu: they shall use (it) for trade goods. Nabû-bēlšunu shall take a third of his trade goods as his share in the month of Tebētu, (that is, goods worth) 1 mina, 18½ shekels of silver, and its interest, 12 shekels per mina. From their common account, they shall pay 2 shekels of silver as an additional payment. (Witnesses) Dūru-ša-Bīt-Dakūri, 26th day of Araḫ-samnu, accession year of Nergal-šarru-ušur, king of Babylon.”

According to the two Florentine documents, Bēl-šarru-ušur had supplied several Urukian entrepreneurs, among them Nergal-dān, with silver to be used for trade ventures.⁴² The objective, or

42. Note that according to the unpublished tablet YBC 3869 Nergal-dān and Nabû-bēlšunu entered into a business partnership with another royal official in the first year of Neriglissar.

at least one of the objectives, of the business partnership is mentioned explicitly only in *SAKF* 135+: to supply barley to the capital, Babylon. The new text published above adds a new aspect in that it demonstrates that Nergal-dān and Bēl-šarru-ušur cooperated not only in trade, but apparently also in agricultural production: this is the most plausible interpretation for their joint

responsibility for the work on the Pal(a)gu canal.⁴³

43. The word *palgu*, “canal,” is apparently used here as a designation of a specific watercourse. The same canal may be meant in FLP 1531 (Eanna archive, Nebuchadnezzar 16/VI/13), where bricks are to be transported from the Girû-district (*ul-tu^{garim}gi-ru-ú*) to the opening (*ká*) of the *pa-al-gu*. This text was also written in Babylon.