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Model Texts and Exercises from the Temple School of Nippur: BE 19

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# Model Texts and Exercises from the Temple School of Nippur: BE 19

By Niek Veldhuis (Berkeley) and Hermann Hilprecht † (Philadelphia)

The Archives of the University of Pennsylvania Museum keep a folder with a title page plus twenty plates designed for a volume by Hermann Hilprecht, entitled *Model Texts and Exercises from the Temple School of Nippur*, dated 1908. The forty tablets on these plates are described and identified in a hand written catalogue. In addition, the folder contains five additional text copies of a similar nature intended for “Temple Library Vol. XV.” Most of these texts remain unpublished to the present day; some have been communicated in transliteration only.

Although Hilprecht’s idea of a Nippur “Temple School” has long been discredited and we now know that scribal education took place in private homes rather than in religious institutions,<sup>1</sup> his line drawings are rightly famous for their accuracy and beauty, and are, after almost a century, still well worth publishing. The selection of texts chosen by Hilprecht for copying is quite remarkable. In addition to well-known examples of ordinary school texts the collection contains a significant number of surprises and novelties that add to our knowledge of the history of the lexical tradition, in particular the sign lists. Syllabary A (or S<sup>a</sup>), a text so far not attested in Old Babylonian Nippur, is represented by no less than six lentils – perhaps all from the same locus (Nos. 7-12). The structure and use of Syllable Alphabet B (SA B) – a very elementary list known in hundreds of exemplars – is elucidated by the Index to SA B, a lexical compilation previously unknown (No. 1). A Kassite extract from Syllabary B (S<sup>b</sup>) expands our knowledge of the history and development of this sign list (No. 36). The inclusion of a large Neo Babylonian exercise tablet that is filled with several columns repeating the sign A, as well as an indistinct clump of clay inscribed with random wedges, demonstrates that Hilprecht was not only interested in the contents of these tablets, but also in their use as tools in the training of students.

Equally remarkable is the selection of tablet types. The most frequent type in Old Babylonian Nippur is the so-called teacher-pupil exercise (type II) which has a model text by the teacher in the left column, to be copied by the pupil in the columns to the right. It is likely that the term “model texts” in the title of the prospected volume in fact referred to such exercises, but in the plates preserved no example of a teacher-pupil exercise is included. Instead, the great majority of tablets are lentils, a type that is much less frequently attested in Nippur (in a ratio of about 1:10). It is likely that Hilprecht intended to publish teacher-pupil (or type II) exercises on plates that are now lost, or that were possibly never realized.

<sup>1</sup>) See most recently Tanret 2002 and Robson 2001.

In the present article the copies and the physical descriptions of the tablets are all Hermann Hilprecht’s. Niek Veldhuis provided transliterations, bibliography and discussion.

## 1 BE 19

During four expeditions at Nippur at the end of the nineteenth century a team of the University of Pennsylvania had unearthed a very rich collection of cuneiform tablets from a variety of periods and of all possible genres. Hilprecht planned to publish the texts in more than 30 volumes in the series *Babylonian Expedition, Cuneiform Texts*. Numerous high-quality volumes appeared in this series between 1893 and 1914, but the scheme was thwarted by the Hilprecht – Peters controversy, which resulted in Hilprecht’s early resignation in 1910.<sup>2</sup> One of the volumes that was announced but never saw the light of day was BE 19: *Exercises and Copies from the Temple School of Nippur*, later renamed *Model Texts and Exercises from the Temple School of Nippur*.<sup>3</sup>

The folder with Hilprecht’s copies includes a front page of BE 19, dated 1908, which mentions “Thirty Plates of Autograph Texts and Fifteen Plates of Phototype Illustrations.” Of these, twenty plates of hand copies, numbered 0 to 4, 4b, 5, 7-16 and 25-27 are preserved. The plates 13 and 14 are unfinished, leaving open space for one additional text each. Around 1908 Hilprecht was caught up in the controversy spurred by his *Explorations of the Bible Lands* and this may have been the main reason why the work on BE 19 was never finished. The hand-written catalogue was prepared in Constantinople, now Istanbul, as becomes clear in particular from some unfinished entries. All tablets now in Istanbul (the majority) are minutely described in the style known from Hilprecht’s publications:

<sup>2</sup>) See Robson 2002 with further literature.

<sup>3</sup>) The two titles are found on the back flaps of BE VI/1 (1906) and BE 31 (1914) respectively.

No. 1: *Lense-shaped clay tablet, unbaked, blackish, cracked. Obv nearly flat, Rev very convex (damaged). 4 lines of numbers (on 2 columns, first 4, second 2 lines?). Diam: 8 cm; thick.: 3 cm. M. I. O. Ni 2265. IV Exp., Tablet Hill (= no. 28 below)*

Several entries, however, simply say “in Philadelphia,” “in Hailer,” or “in Philadelphia or Hailer.” Hilprecht had a summer house called Bit Shulmi in Hailer bei Meerholz, Hessen-Nassau in the neighborhood of Frankfurt (Germany).<sup>4</sup> With one exception, all tablets that were supposedly in Hailer while Hilprecht wrote his notes are now in the Frau Hilprecht Collection in Jena.

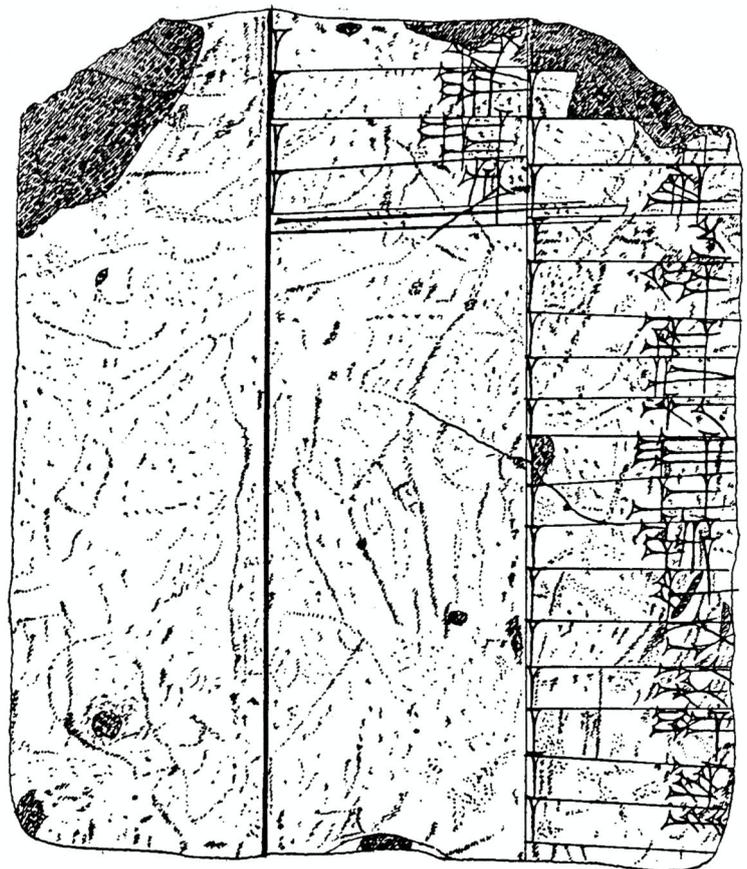
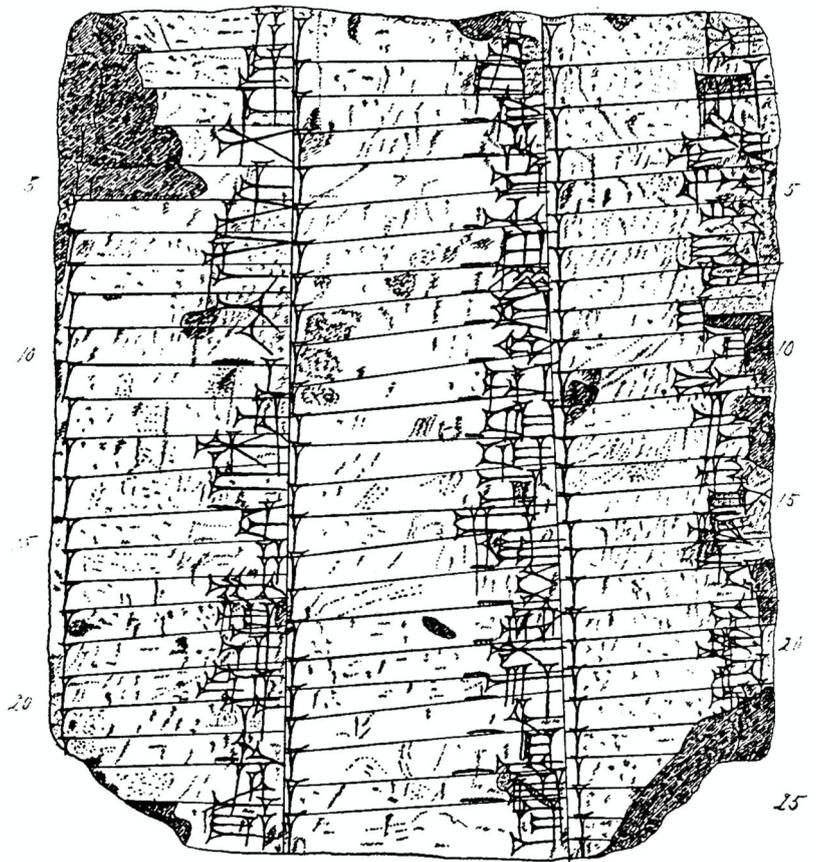
## 2 “Temple Library Vol XV”

The folder further contains text copies of five lexical fragments designated “Temple Library Volume XV.” This is somewhat enigmatic, since BE 15 is Clay’s *Documents from the Temple Archives of Nippur, dated in the Reigns of Cassite Rulers, with incomplete dates* (1906). None of the titles announced on the back flaps of BE volumes is a clear candidate for holding these particular fragments, though they could have been meant for the same volume 19 discussed above. Hilprecht left no descriptions or catalogue entries for “Temple Library Vol XV,” but three out of five fragments may be identified with pieces now in Istanbul. The five fragments come from different periods and represent unrelated lexical compositions. They are presented at the end of this article (Nos. 41-45).

## 3 Catalogue

The following catalogue groups together texts of similar contents. The catalogue begins with the Old Babylonian exercises (Nos. 1-32), continues with Kassite exercises (Nos. 33-36), a Neo Babylonian exercise (No. 37)

<sup>4</sup>) The correspondence between Hilprecht and D. E. Smith for the years 1907/1908 is kept in the Columbia University Rare Book and Manuscript Library. Catalogued under D. E. Smith professional correspondence (personal communication Eleanor Robson). For this correspondence see further Robson 2002.



No. 1: Ni 137.



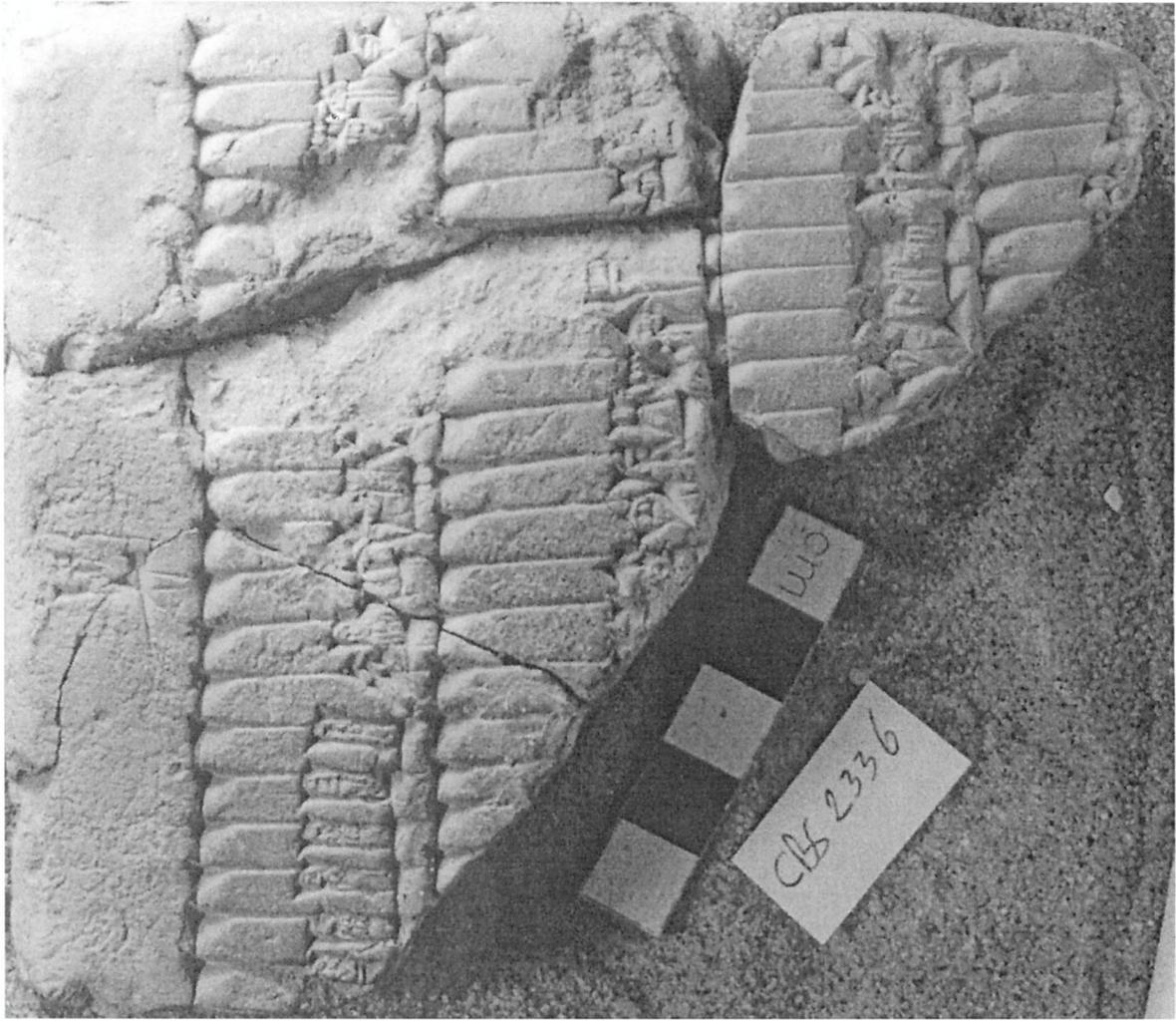


Photo 2: CBS 2336+N 4638 reverse (© Niek Veldhuis).

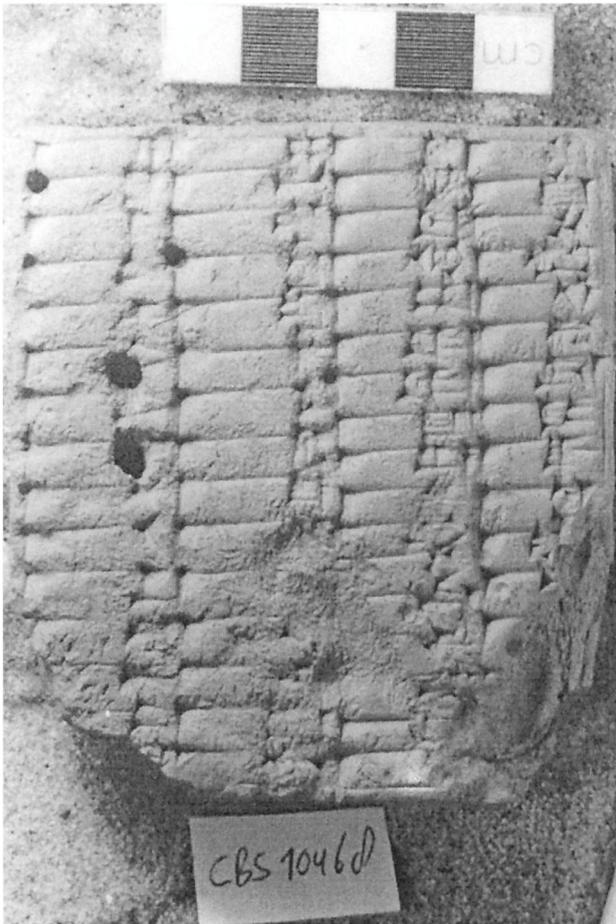


Photo 3: CBS 10468 obv. (© Niek Veldhuis).

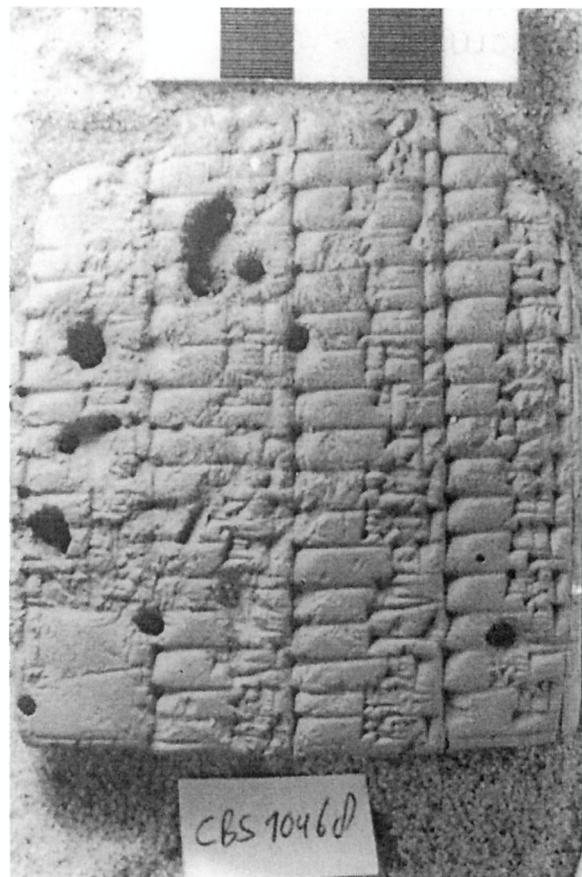


Photo 4: CBS 10468 rev. (© Niek Veldhuis).



Photo 5: CBS 15418 obv.  
(© Niek Veldhuis).



Photo 6: CBS 15418 rev.  
(© Niek Veldhuis).

and 6), and CBS 15099. CBS 15418 and CBS 15099 are regular “Type II” tablets with an extract from the Index to SA B on the reverse.<sup>6</sup> CBS 2336+ and CBS 10468 are almost square with four or five columns on each side, similar in format to Ni 137. They do not fit into the typology of Old Babylonian school tablets.

Several signs in Ni 137 are rather badly written and a few entries are broken. With the help of the duplicates and SA B the list may be fully restored. The line in SA B where the sign in question is introduced is indicated between brackets.

<sup>6</sup>) The obverse of CBS 15418 has an extract from the list of trees and wooden objects (Veldhuis 1997, 313 Ni II-220).

	Col. I	Col. II	Col. III	Col. IV	Col. V
1	𒀭 a (1)	𒀭 kug (54)	𒀭 nin (123)	[𒀭 ra] (237)	𒀭 ki
2	𒀭 ku (3)	𒀭 kisal (55)	𒀭 e <sub>2</sub> (124)	𒀭 [ša] (243)	𒀭 lugal
3	𒀭 me (5)	𒀭 di (58)	𒀭 kur (124)	𒀭 [šu] (247)	𒀭 ezen
4	𒀭 pap (8)	𒀭 ha (60)	𒀭 mah (125)	𒀭 [ğir <sub>3</sub> ] (249)	𒀭 sur
5	𒀭 maš (10)	𒀭 ma (60)	𒀭 na (126)	𒀭 ru (252)	
6	𒀭 du <sub>3</sub> (11)	𒀭 ti	𒀭 zi (130)	𒀭 gam (254)	
7	𒀭 ni (12)	𒀭 lu (70)	𒀭 da (135)	𒀭 gul (256)	
8	𒀭 aš (13)	𒀭 šum <sub>2</sub> (80)	𒀭 tur (136)	𒀭 ka (259)	
9	𒀭 bad (14)	𒀭 zu (84)	𒀭 gal (138)	𒀭 tuku	
10	𒀭 u (15)	𒀭 ul (86)	𒀭 si <sub>4</sub> (140)	𒀭 gu! (269)	
11	𒀭 bar (15)	𒀭 ab (87)	𒀭 bu (147)	𒀭 aga	
12	𒀭 hu (16)	𒀭 kuš <sub>2</sub> (88)	𒀭 tur <sub>3</sub> (148)	𒀭 ur (278)	
13	𒀭 an (17)	𒀭 sağ (92)	𒀭 nu (151)	𒀭 un (279)	
14	𒀭 tab (18)	𒀭 sukkal <sup>1</sup> (94)	𒀭 gi (154)	𒀭 pi	
15	𒀭 ba (19)	𒀭 kal (96)	𒀭 ga (156)	𒀭 gud (β1)	
16	𒀭 za (20)	𒀭 lum (108)	𒀭 nam (158)	𒀭 gaz (β7)	
17	𒀭 mu (26)	𒀭 hi (111)	𒀭 pa (161)	𒀭 ne (β9)	
18	𒀭 la (36)	𒀭 bi (112)	𒀭 ud (161)	𒀭 LAGAB×GU	
19	𒀭 si (40)	𒀭 hal	𒀭 du (161)	𒀭 šeš	
20	𒀭 um (43)	𒀭 nun (115)	𒀭 sa <sub>6</sub> (182)		
21	𒀭 la <sub>2</sub> (48)	𒀭 igi (121)	𒀭 uš (186)		
22	𒀭 kud (50)	𒀭 en (121)	𒀭 gi <sub>4</sub> (192)		
23	𒀭 ġar (52)	𒀭 kid (121)	𒀭 [apin] (215)		
24	𒀭 e (53)	𒀭 še <sub>3</sub> ! (121)	𒀭 [dim <sub>2</sub> ] (218)		
25			𒀭 [ta] (221)		
26			𒀭 [uh <sub>3</sub> ] (222)		
27			𒀭 [iri]		

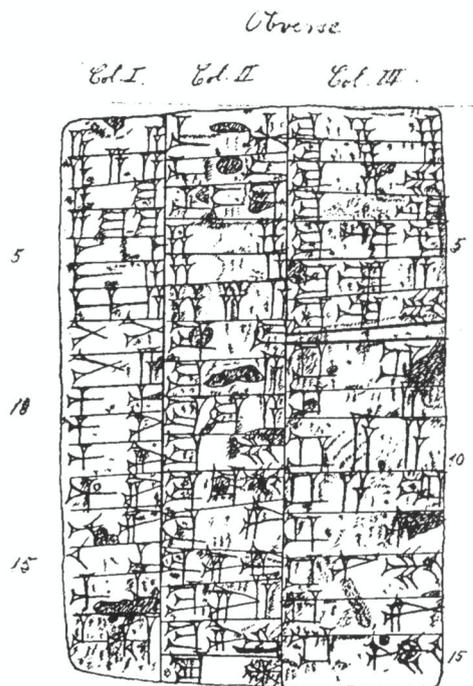
The broken section iii23-iv4 may be restored from CBS 10468 rev i7-15. There are slight differences between the duplicates; the most important is that our text ends with SUR (v4), while CBS 10468 and CBS 2336+ continue for several more columns. However, due to breaks and illegible entries it is impossible to reconstruct a running text.

The comparison with SA B yields a couple of problems. In several places the edition of SA B needs correction: line 8 is to be read pap-pap (rather than kur-kur) and in 151ff. read ni<sub>g</sub>-nu (instead of ni<sub>g</sub>-BAD), etc. At other places the Index refers to a variant recension: SA B 13 reads tab-ni, but several tablets have aš-ni instead, corresponding to the entry AŠ in the Index i8; in 135 some sources have igi-ni-du-a; others igi-ni-da-a, corresponding to DA in Index iii7. At a few places the Index is at variance: TI (ii6); HAL (ii19); IRI (iii27); and AGA (iv11). Compared to SA B our text has swapped the positions of GI and GI<sub>4</sub> (iii14 and 22), but CBS 10468 has GI in the right position.

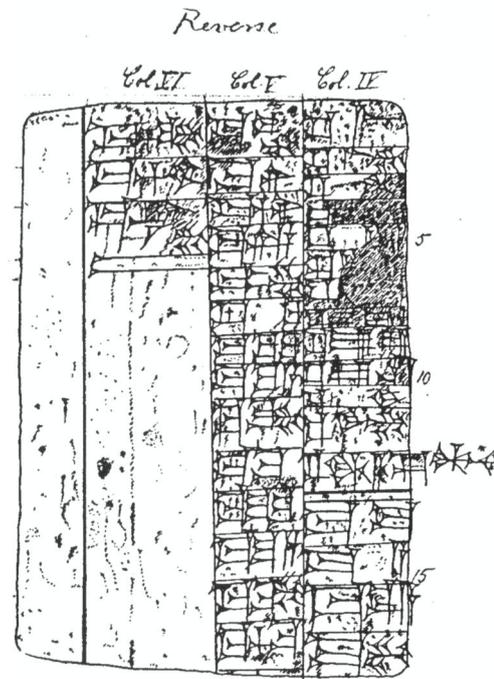
2. "Ni V"

Tablet: SA B

Small tablet (7.3×5×1.8 cm) with the first 82 lines of Syllable Alphabet B (see the edition in Çig, *et al.* 1959). The tablet number (Ni V) looks suspect, but no better information is available to me and the tablet is treated here as Ni 5. Equally suspect is the fact that the tablet may not be identified with any of the pieces catalogued in Çig, *et al.* 1959, so that it may not or no longer be present in the Istanbul Nippur collection.



No. 2: Ni V.

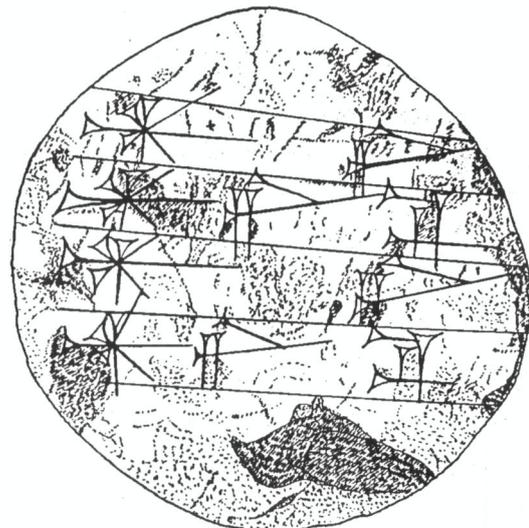


No. 2: Ni V.

3. Ni 12

Lentil: SA B

First expedition; Tablet Hill. Diameter 7 cm; thickness 3.2 cm. Used for the edition of SA B in Çig, *et al.* 1959, 18. (See also Falkowitz 1984, 37).



No. 3: Ni 12.

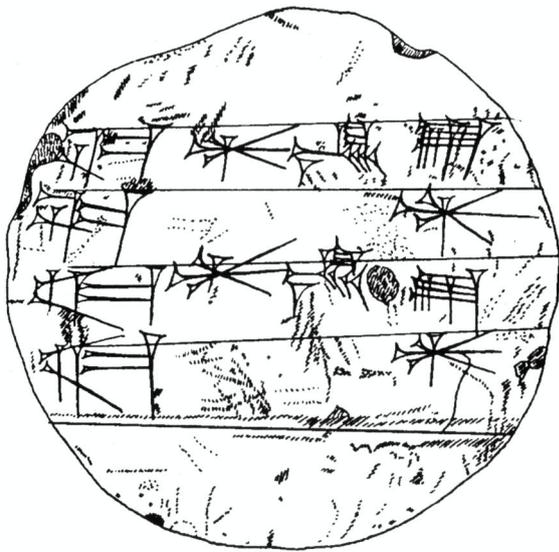
4. Ni 775

Lentil: SA B (no copy)

Third expedition. Diameter 7.6 cm; thickness 2.8 cm. Third expedition. See Ni 1825 (no. 5).

5. Ni 1825 Lentil: SA B

Third expedition. Diameter 7 cm; thickness 2.5 cm. The reverse (not copied) has four horizontal lines and numerous nail marks. Catalogued in Çig, *et al.* 1959, p. 19; corresponding to SA B, secondary recension 75-76 (Çig, *et al.* 1959, 76). According to Hilprecht's notes Ni 775 duplicates this text.

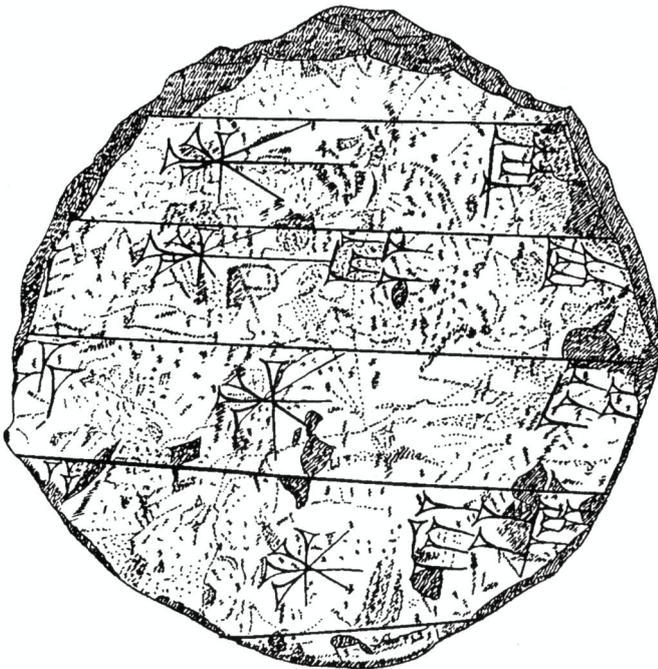


No. 5: Ni 1825.

6. Ni 1869

Lentil: SA B

Third expedition. Diameter 8.8 cm; thickness 3.4 cm. Catalogued in Çig, *et al.* 1959, p. 19. The text corresponds to lines 257-258 of SA B (Çig, *et al.* 1959, 74).



No. 6: Ni 1869.

### 3.2 Syllabary A (Nos. 7-12)

Surprisingly, the set of Hilprecht copies contains no less than 6 lentils with extracts from Syllabary A ( $S^a$ ), a text not attested so far in Old Babylonian Nippur. Syllabary A, not to be confused with Syllable Alphabet A, is best known from first millennium exemplars, where it functioned as the most important elementary sign list (Gesche 2001, 69).  $S^a$  was known to exist in Old Babylonian copies, in particular from

Northern Babylonia (Tanret 2002, 51-60), where it replaces the Nippur sign list Proto-Ea.  $S^a$  and Proto-Ea are probably independent developments from a common origin.

Four of the  $S^a$  lentils published here probably come from the same find spot; they have almost adjacent museum numbers (Ni 765; 766; 769; and 771) and were found during the third expedition in the “North-West section of Tablet Hill” (with the exception of Ni 765, for which no find spot is recorded in Hilprecht’s catalogue). The relation of this group to Ni 169 (first expedition) and Ni 172 (second expedition) may no longer be established.

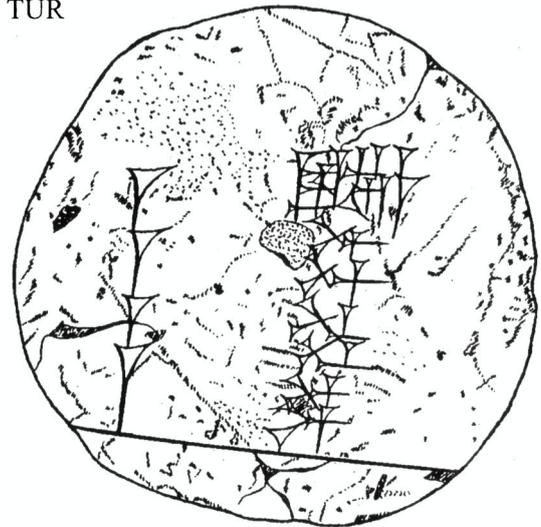
The attestation of  $S^a$  in Old Babylonian Nippur should be compared to the rare Nippur occurrences of Syllable Alphabet A (see Farber 1999, 123:  $N_2$ - $N_4$ ) and other irregularities in the distribution of lexical texts. Here is a teacher at work who had his own ideas about elementary teaching, confirming the conclusion of Robson 2001 that even within the city of Nippur the curriculum was not uniform.

7. Ni 169

Lentil:  $S^a$ 

Second expedition, Tablet Hill. Both obverse and reverse very convex. Diameter 7 cm; thickness 2.6 cm.

¶ SAG,  
¶ TUR  
¶ TUR  
¶ TUR



No. 7: Ni 169.

This corresponds to  $S^a$  335-338 (MSL 3, 37). The form of the TUR signs is rather irregular; perhaps an attempt was made to emulate older paleography. Note the absence of the initial vertical, and the two small verticals in the second half of the sign.

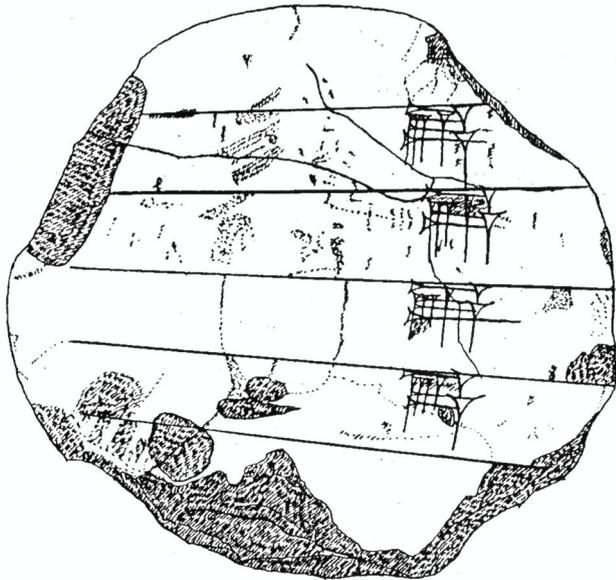
8. Ni 172

Lentil:  $S^a$ 

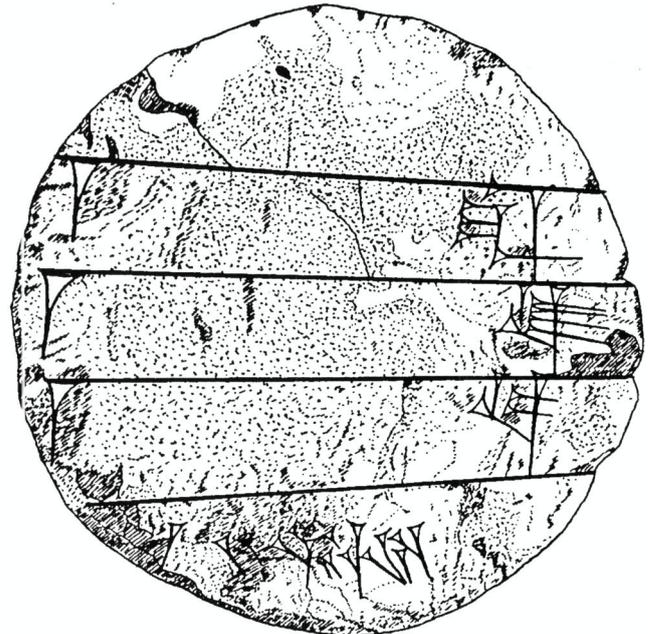
First expedition; Tablet Hill. Diameter 7.7 cm; thickness 2 cm. The reverse has nail marks and insufficiently erased cuneiform signs and single wedges.

The lentil has the sign KAL repeated four times, corresponding to S<sup>a</sup> 180-183 (MSL 3, 26-27). The absence of "item" signs is irregular.

¶ RA  
 ¶ KI  
 ¶ DI  
 S<sup>a</sup> 198-200 (MSL 3, 28).



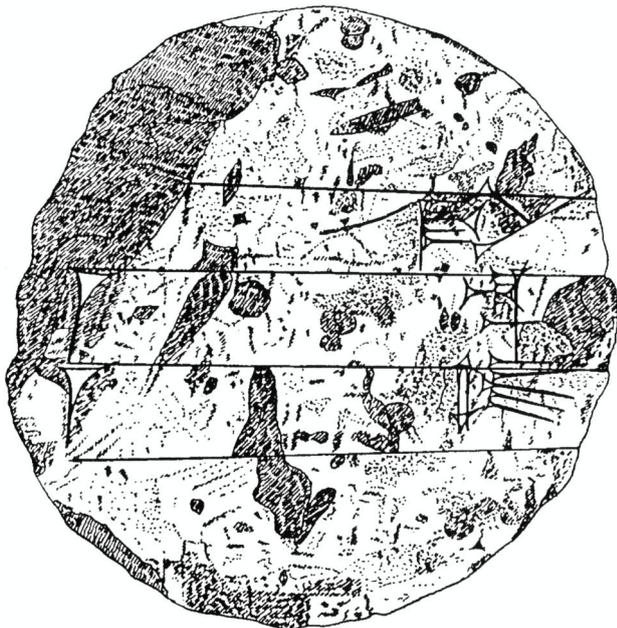
No. 8: Ni 172.



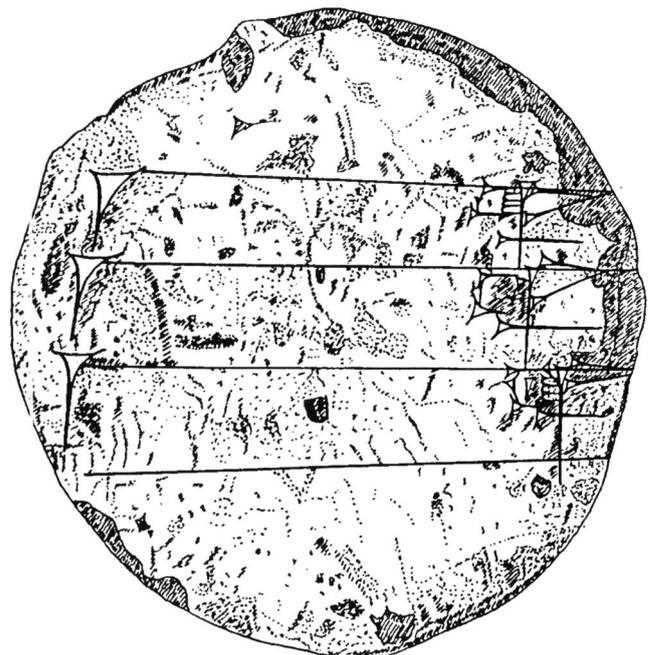
No. 10: Ni 766.

9. Ni 765 Lentil: S<sup>a</sup>  
 Third expedition. Diameter 8.3 cm; thickness 3 cm.  
 ¶ GAR<sub>3</sub>  
 ¶ DAR  
 ¶ ZUM  
 S<sup>a</sup> 235-237 (MSL 3, 30).

11. Ni 769 Lentil: S<sup>a</sup>  
 Third expedition, N. W. section of Tablet Hill. Diameter 8.2 cm; thickness 2.2 cm. The reverse contains numerous nail marks.  
 ¶ PIRIĜ  
 ¶ PIRIĜ  
 ¶ ĜIR<sub>3</sub>  
 S<sup>a</sup> 223-225 (MSL 3, 29).



No. 9: Ni 765.



No. 11: Ni 769.

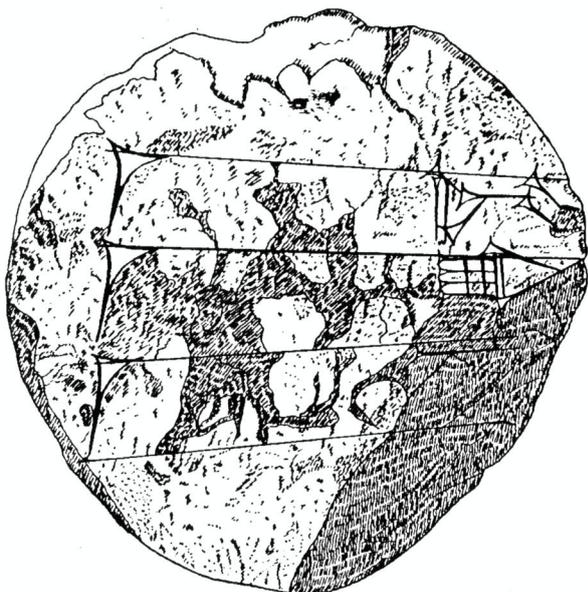
10. Ni 766 Lentil: S<sup>a</sup>  
 Third expedition, N. W. section of Tablet Hill. Diameter 8.2 cm; thickness 2.2 cm.

## 12. Ni 771

Lentil: S<sup>a</sup>

Third expedition, N. W. corner of Tablet Hill.  
Diameter 7.5 cm; thickness 2.3 cm.

¶ gu  
¶ ga  
¶ [ub]



No. 12: Ni 771.

The text as reconstructed here corresponds to S<sup>a</sup> 184-186 (MSL 3, 27). The tablet was previously published in transliteration in Çig, *et al.* 1959, p. 11 where it was interpreted as a TU-TA-TI exercise (reading gu, ga, [gi]). This seems less likely, since the only time TU-TA-TI is attested on a lentil (CBS 5959) it is a non-standard version of the exercise and the tablet has unusual features (same exercise on obverse and reverse), suggesting that this is an exceptional case on several accounts (CBS 5959 = PBS 11/2 63; see Falkowitz 1984, p. 25).

## 3.3 Lists of Names (Nos. 13-17)

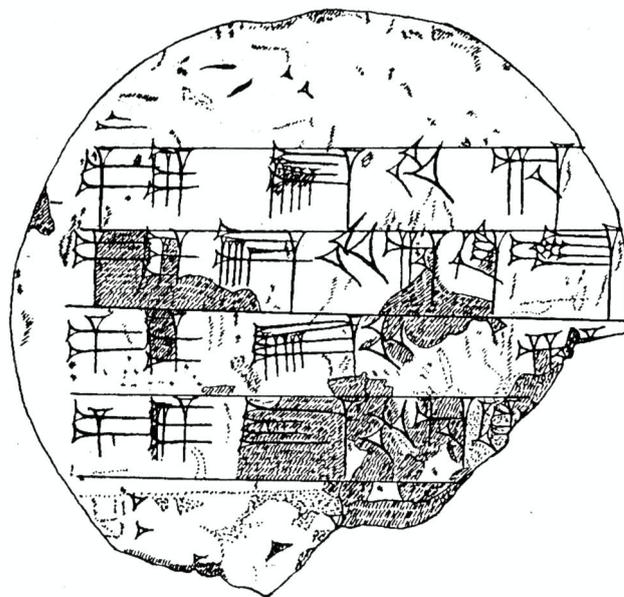
Lists of names are very common among Old Babylonian lentils. Most names are known from other duplicates.

## 13. CBS 10786

Lentil: Personal Names(?)

“In Philadelphia or Hailer,” according to Hilprecht’s notes. The text was published in transliteration by Falkowitz 1984, 29.

sipad e<sub>2</sub>-kur-re  
sipad e<sub>2</sub>-kur-re ki-ağ<sub>2</sub>



No. 13: CBS 10786.

## 14. HS 1488

Lentil: Personal Names

Hilprecht’s notes only say “in Hailer.” A photograph of this piece appeared in Hilprecht 1903, p. 58.<sup>7</sup> It was published in hand copy by Kramer in TMHS NF IV 54. The names correspond to PBS 11/1 62 nos. 192-193.

ha-la <sup>a</sup>ba-u<sub>2</sub>  
ha-la <sup>a</sup>ama-ra-a-zu



No. 14: HS 1488.

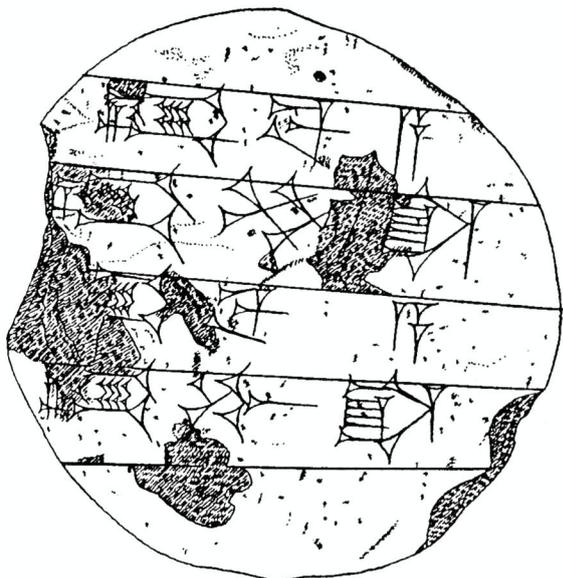
<sup>7</sup>) This illustration is not included in the English version Hilprecht 1904.

**15. Ni 369**                      Lentil: Personal Names

First expedition; Tablet Hill. Diameter 7.5 cm; thickness 2.7 cm. The text was first published from a cast in the University of Pennsylvania Museum in PBS 11/1 18; the cast has the museum number CBS 9782.

kas<sub>3</sub>-pa<sub>2</sub>-a  
kas<sub>3</sub>-pu-ša

The second name is well known from Ur III sources; see Hilgert 2002, 105.



No. 15: Ni 369.

**16. Ni 969**                      Lentil: Personal Names

Third expedition, N. W. of Tablet Hill. Diameter 7.8 cm; thickness 2.4 cm.

<sup>d</sup>na-na-a-a zi-<sup>gu</sup><sub>10</sub>  
<sup>d</sup>na-na-a-a zi-a



No. 16: Ni 969.

**17. Ni 1826**                      Lentil: Personal Names

Third expedition. Diameter 9.8 cm; thickness 2.9 cm.

lu<sub>2</sub>-<sup>d</sup>nin-ka-si  
lu<sub>2</sub>-<sup>d</sup>nin-ma-da

This corresponds to Chiera, PBS 11/3 names 37-38 and 157-158.

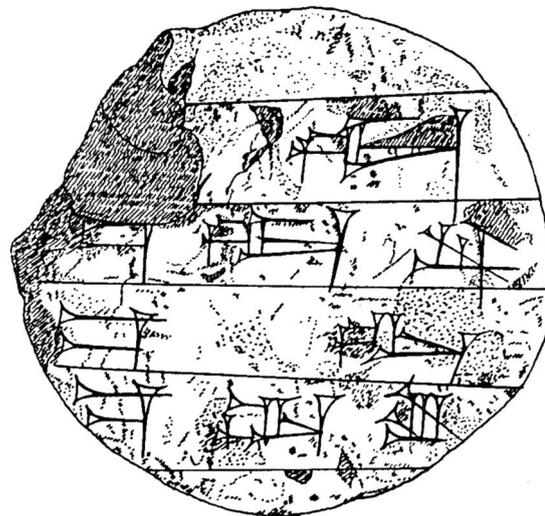


No. 17: Ni 1826.

**3.4 Old Babylonian Word Lists (Nos. 18-26)**

The lists in this category are usually well known, although one of the lentils may have a previously unattested pair of lines from a broken section of Proto-Kagal (no. 26).

**18. Ni 1829**                      Lentil: wooden objects



No. 18: Ni 1829.

Third expedition; Diameter 7.2 cm; thickness 3.1 cm.

$\dot{g}isal$   
 $\dot{g}isal-šub$

This corresponds to lines 477 and 479 of the Nippur list of trees and wooden objects (Veldhuis 1997, p. 324 Ni IV-26).

19. Ni 773                      Lentil: list of domestic animals  
Third expedition, N. W. section of Tablet Hill.  
Diameter 7.9 cm; thickness 2.3 cm.

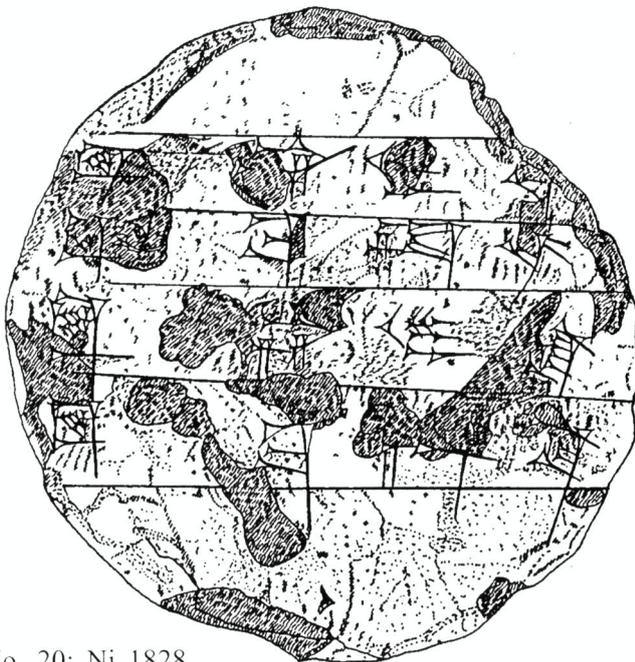
udu gag šub-ba  
udu gan šub-ba

This corresponds to the Nippur version of the list of domestic animals, lines 27 and 29 (MSL 8/1, 83).



No. 19: Ni 773.

20. Ni 1828                      Lentil: place names



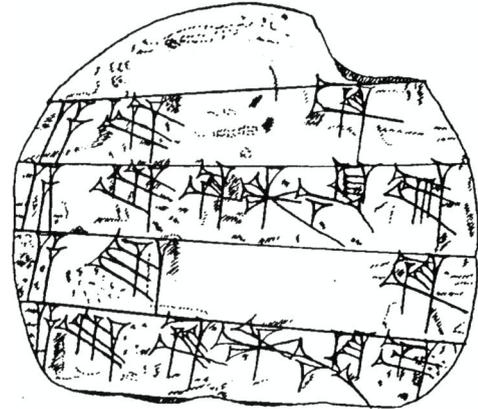
No. 20: Ni 1828.

Third expedition, N. W. section of Tablet Hill.  
Diameter 8.6 cm; thickness 2.2 cm.

zar-bi-lum<sup>ki</sup>  
zar-ba-ad<sup>ki</sup>

This corresponds to the Nippur version of the list of place names 258-259 (see MSL 11, 104), with spelling variants.

21. Ni 1855                      Lentil: field names  
Fourth expedition, Tablet Hill. Diameter 6.3 cm;  
thickness 2.1 cm.



No. 21: Ni 1855.

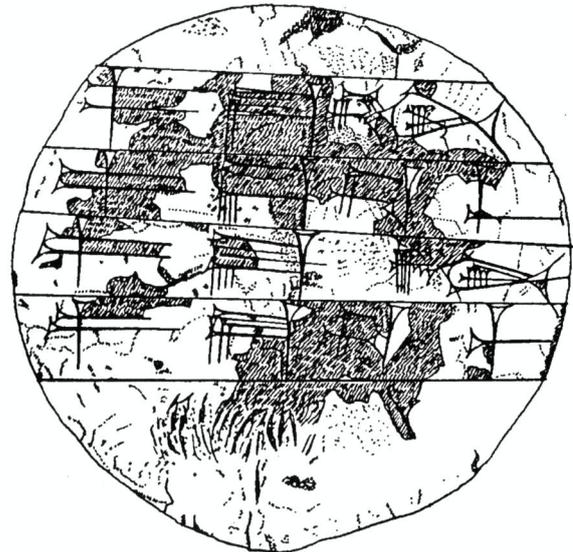
a-šag<sub>4</sub> du<sub>6</sub>  
a-šag<sub>4</sub> du<sub>6</sub> <sup>d</sup>Su'en

This corresponds to the Nippur list of field names 145-146 (MSL 11, 101).

22. Ni 1824                      Lentil: O. B. Proto-Lú  
Third expedition, N. W. corner of Tablet Hill.  
Diameter 7.2 cm; thickness 2.5 cm.

ugula e<sub>2</sub>-uzu  
ugula e<sub>2</sub>-uš-bar

This corresponds to Old Babylonian Proto-Lu<sub>2</sub> 152-153 (MSL 12, 38).

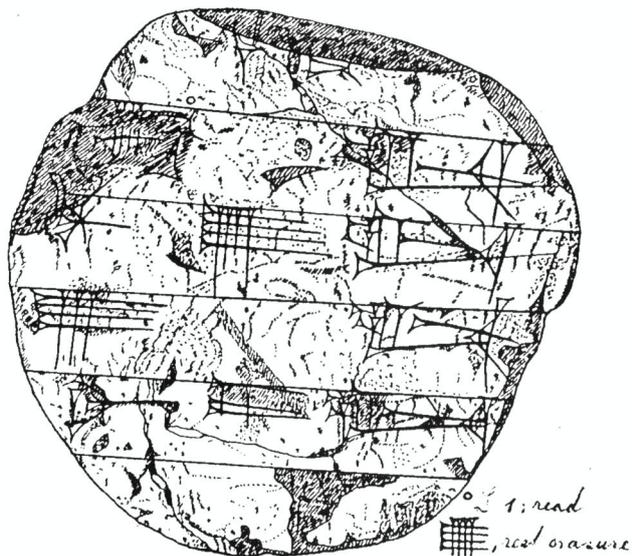


No. 22: Ni 1824.

23. Ni 761                      Lentil: O. B. Proto-Lú  
Third expedition. Diameter 7.5 cm; thickness 2.2 cm.

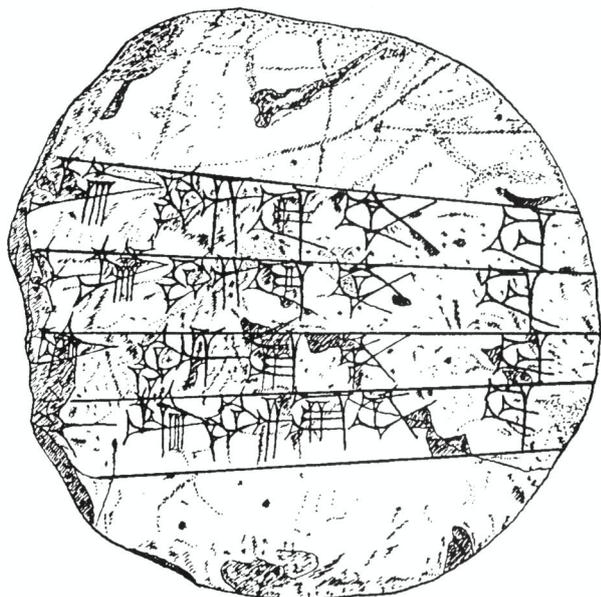
u<sub>2</sub>-hub  
SAL u<sub>2</sub>-hub

This corresponds to MSL 12, 52 542-543. For the spelling with HUB (HUB<sub>3</sub>×UD) instead of HUB<sub>2</sub> see the notes to line 542 (MSL 12, 72).



No. 23: Ni 761.

24. HS 1392                      Lentil: Old Babylonian Lú  
“In Hailer,” according to Hilprecht’s notes. Professor Manfred Krebernik identified the lentil in the Jena collection.



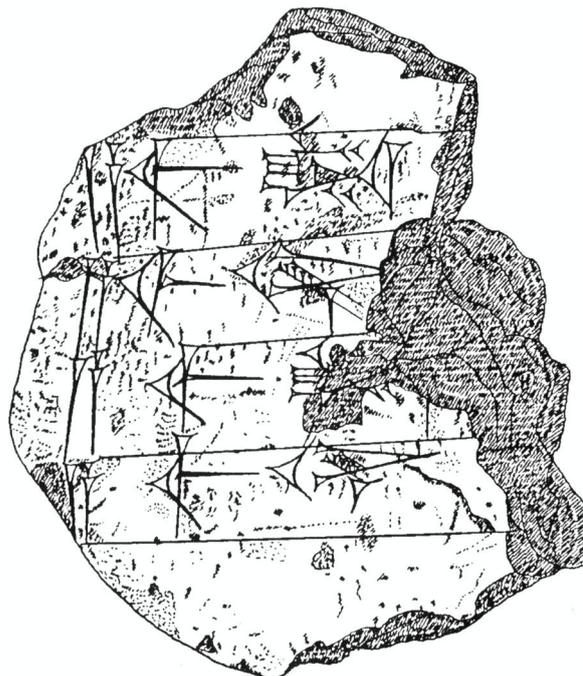
No. 24: HS 1392.

lu<sub>3</sub> ni<sub>2</sub> su-ub-ba  
MUNUS lu<sub>3</sub> ni<sub>2</sub> su-ub-ba

This corresponds to MSL 12, 158 29-30 and 177-178 32-33.

25. Ni 776                      Lentil: Proto-Kagal  
Third expedition. Diameter 8.9 cm; thickness 2.3 cm.

er<sub>2</sub> balaġ-[ġa<sub>2</sub>]  
er<sub>2</sub> ub<sub>3</sub> (AB<sub>2</sub>×KAR<sub>2</sub>)-[a]  
Proto-Kagal 361-362 (MSL 13, 77).

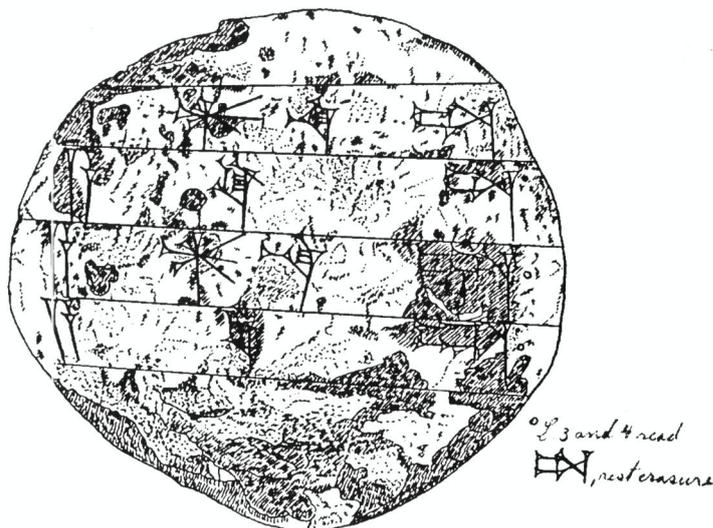


No. 25: Ni 776.

26. Ni 1827                      Lentil: Proto-Kagal?  
Third expedition. Diameter 7.2 cm; thickness 3.2 cm.

a an-na-ta  
a ki-ta

This may well belong in a broken passage in the A section of Proto-Kagal (MSL 13, 73-80).



No. 26: Ni 1827.

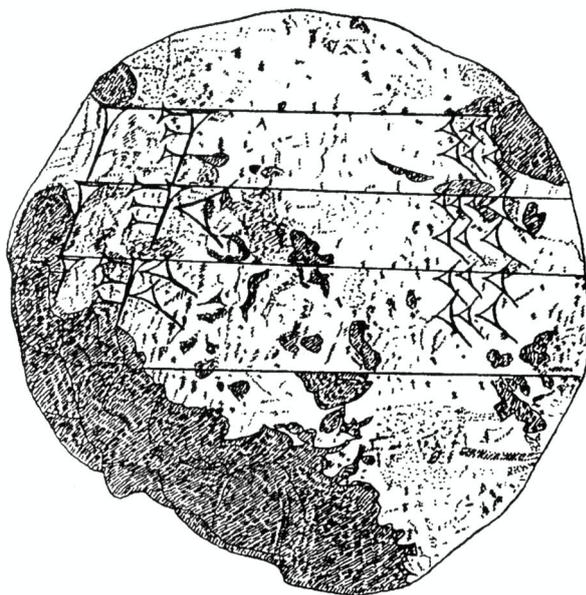
### 3.5 Mathematics and Metrology (Nos. 27-28)

27. Ni 763 Lentil: metrology  
Third expedition, N. W. of Tablet Hill. Diameter 7.5 cm; thickness 2.1 cm.

Three-line section from the standard list of capacities.

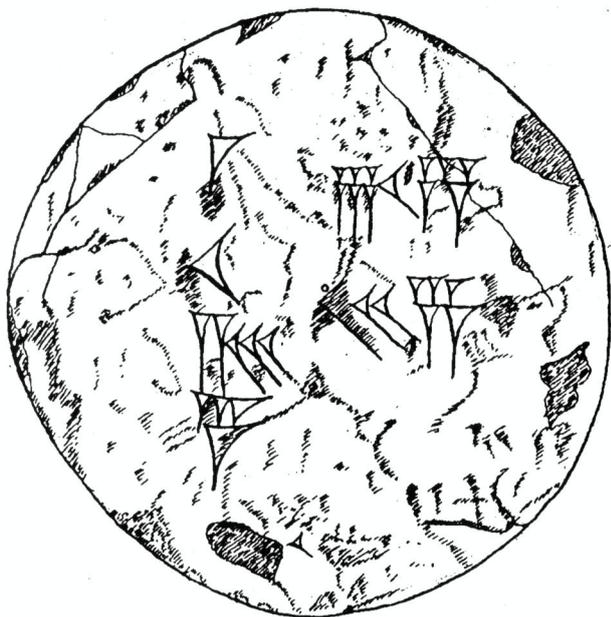
0.1.3 še  
0.1.4 še  
0.1.5 še

Many exemplars of the Nippur list of capacities are known, but no edition presently exists.



No. 27: Ni 763.

28. Ni 2265 Lentil: computation



No. 28: Ni 2265.

Fourth expedition; Tablet Hill. Diameter 8 cm; thickness 3 cm.

Lentils with computations are well known, in particular from Ur (see Robson 1999, 245-277). To my knowledge this is the only such computation found on a lentil from Nippur.

1	6.15
10	
	25
2.30	
4	

In tablets like these the second column usually contains intermediate results. There are various possible relationships between the numbers on the tablet ( $2.30 \times 4 = 10$ ;  $6.15 \times 4 = 25$ ;  $10 \times 2.30 = 25$ ;  $2.30^2 = 6.15$ ), but the computation as a whole remains unclear.

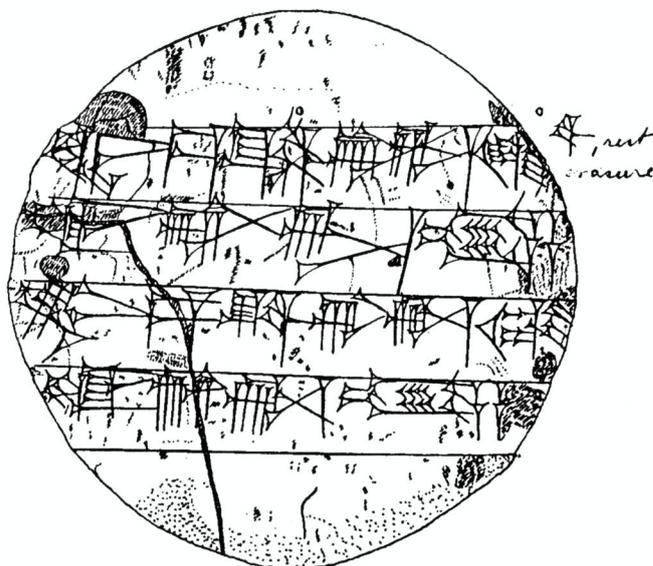
### 3.6 Proverbs (Nos. 29-30)

29. Ni 24 Lentil: SP 2.61

First expedition; Tablet Hill. Diameter 7.3 cm; thickness 2.7 cm. The tablet was first published in cuneiform type by Scheil in RT 19 (1897), p. 55 no. 12 and later by Gordon 1959 Plate 76 in a copy by S. N. Kramer (see also Falkowitz 1984, 37). The publication numbers in Scheil's article represent museum numbers, so that there is a discrepancy here between "12" in Scheil's account as against "Ni 24" in Hilprecht's and Gordon's. It is not impossible that two duplicating lentils were found and that both numbers are correct.

ka<sub>5</sub> ġeštug<sub>2</sub>-bi al-gig  
ġiri<sub>3</sub>-bi al-gaz-za

A fox with bad ears – his feet are crushed.



No. 29: Ni 24.

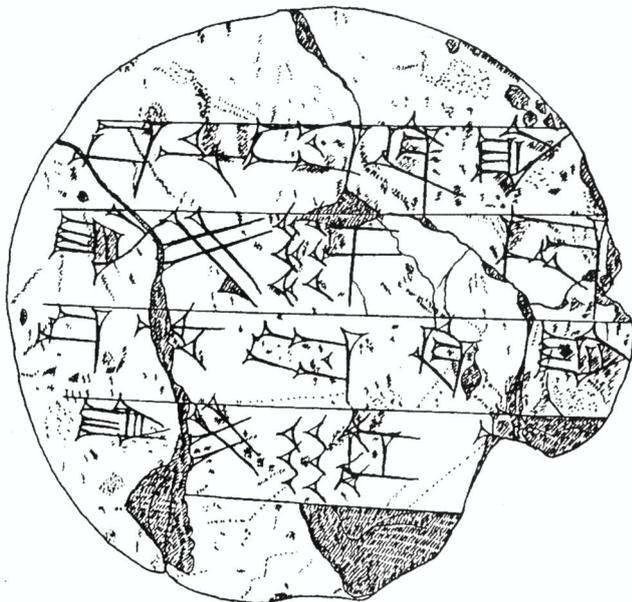
This is the only exemplar of SP 2.61 that reads al-gaz-za in the second line, rather than al-guz-e (“his feet are limp”). (See Alster 1997, 57 where our lentil is source FF).

30. Ni 324 Lentil: SP 2.69

First expedition; Tablet Hill. Diameter 8.2 cm; thickness 2.5 cm. This tablet was first published in cuneiform type by Scheil in RT 19, 58 no. 324.

ġa<sub>2</sub>-nu unug<sup>ki</sup>-ga  
ga-raš<sup>sar</sup>-gin,

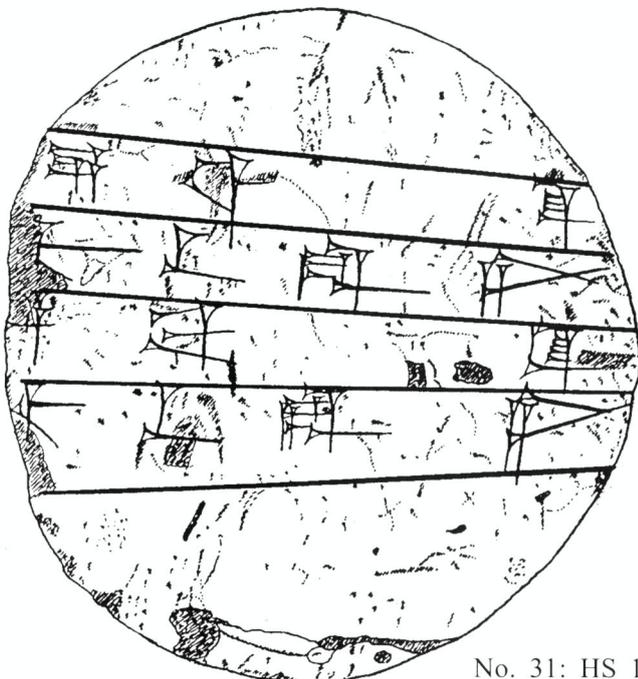
This brief exercise is taken from the middle of SP 2.69, which is one of the longer fable-like proverbs. In Alster 1997, 59 this text was not used.



No. 30: Ni 324.

3.7 Literary (Nos. 31-32)

31. HS 1395 Lentil: literary?



No. 31: HS 1395.

Hilprecht’s notes say “in Hailer oder Philadelphia.” Professor Manfred Krebernik identified the piece in the Jena collection.

eg<sub>2</sub>-zu-še<sub>3</sub>  
igī bar-ra-ni  
“when he looks at your dike”

This looks like a line from a literary text or proverb, but I am unable to identify it. According to Prof. Krebernik’s collation the second sign in line 1 is ZU, not BA.

32. Ni 1372 Lentil: Lipit-Eštar B

Third expedition. Diameter 7.3 cm; thickness 3 cm.

[<sup>d</sup>utu-g]in, du  
[še-er]-zi kalam-ma

This corresponds to line 3 of Lipit-Eštar B, one of the hymns frequently attested on lentils; see Vanstiphout 1978 and Tinney 1999.



No. 32: Ni 1372.

3.8 Kassite Exercises (Nos. 33-36)

Kassite exercise tablets usually combine a line from a literary or sub-literary text on the obverse with a lexical extract on the reverse. Two tablet types are known: cushion-shaped and round (lentil), discussed in detail in Veldhuis 2000. The most surprising find in this group is the extract from an early version of Syllabary B (S<sup>b</sup>) on the reverse of Ni 1043 (number 36).

33. Lentil: god list

“In Hailer” according to Hilprechts notes; but the piece is not to be found at present in the Jena collection (personal communication Prof. Krebernik), so that its museum number and present location remain unknown.

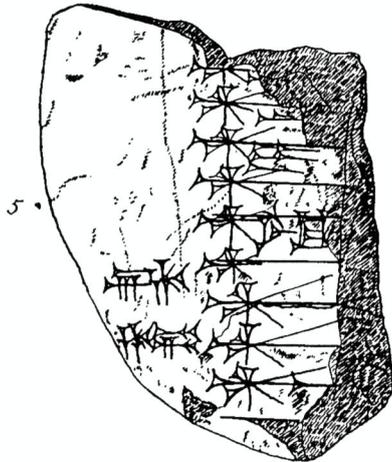
The copy indicates that the direction of the writing on the reverse is at an angle of about 90° to the direction of the writing on the obverse. This is typical

for Kassite lentils (see Veldhuis 2000). Two god lists are known from exercise texts from this period: An = *Anum* and the Weidner god list. I have been unable to place the present text in either compilation.

Obverse	Reverse	
1 <sup>d</sup> r <sub>x</sub> ¹ [...]	1 <sup>d</sup> di-il-ba K[A×X]	
2 <sup>d</sup> r <sub>x</sub> ¹-[...]	2 <sup>d</sup> di-pa GU[D]	
3 <sup>d</sup> i-[...]	3 <sup>d</sup> da-pa GU[D]	
4 <sup>d</sup> nin-[...]	4 <sup>d</sup> ha-mi-iš P[A]	
5 sa-ha <sup>d</sup> [...]	5 <sup>d</sup> r <sub>x</sub> ¹ (may be PA again)	
6 ha-ni-eš <sup>d</sup> [...]	6 <sup>d</sup> [...]	
7 <sup>d</sup> r <sub>x</sub> ¹[...]	7 <sup>d</sup> nun[-...]	
	8 illegible glosses <sup>d</sup> [...]	

The glossed entries may be identified tentatively. Obv. 5 sa-ha may represent šahan(<sup>d</sup>KUR), as in An = *Anum* VI 239 and 244. Alternatively, we may read ir'-ha for irhan(<sup>d</sup>MUŠ), as in An = *Anum* I 275.<sup>8</sup> Obv. 6 has one of the writings for haniš, perhaps <sup>d</sup>BAD. Reverse 1 di-il-ba represents dilib<sub>x</sub>, usually written dilib<sub>3</sub>(KA×ŠID or SAĜ×ŠID); the present sign may be KĀ×UN (see An = *Anum* III 264?). The glosses di-pa and da-pa (rev. 2-3) represent dipar and dapar, both written <sup>d</sup>GUD (An = *Anum* VI 203-204). Rev. 4 ha-mi-iš represents haniš<sub>3</sub>(PA).

Obverse



Reverse



No. 33.

<sup>8</sup>) Note, however, that the main text of An = *Anum* has sa-ha-an <sup>d</sup>MUŠ, read ir-ha-an <sup>d</sup>MUŠ by the editor.

### 34. HS 1781

Kassite exercise: Ur<sub>5</sub>-ra I/II

No description by Hilprecht of this piece survives. It was first published by Scheil (RT 19 1897, p. 62 no. 4), who may have seen the tablet while it was still in Istanbul. Scheil's edition was used in MSL 5, 49 as V<sub>8</sub>. A photograph of this tablet with the HS museum number is now kept in the University of Pennsylvania Museum in the Lieberman photo collection. See also Veldhuis 2000, 84.



No. 34: HS 1781.

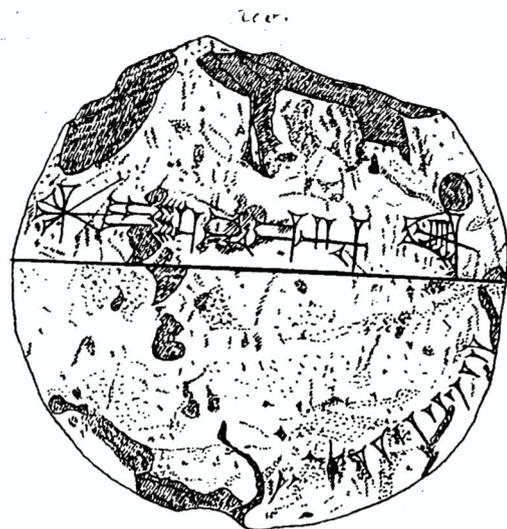
### 35. Ni 292

Lentil: literary/god list

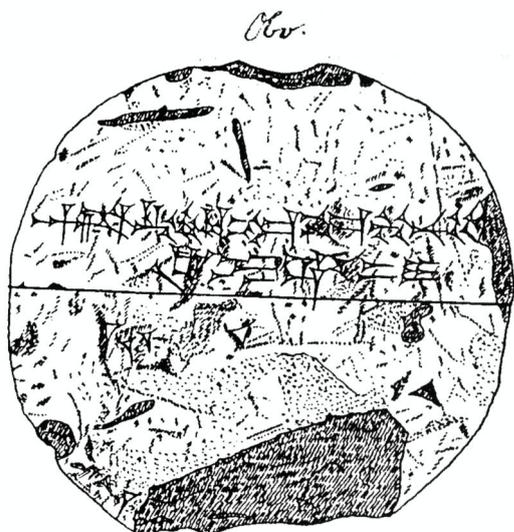
Second expedition, Tablet Hill. Diameter 6.7 cm; thickness 2 cm.

This is a typical Kassite lentil. The reverse has <sup>d</sup>i-šar-ne-ri-su, which is line 80 in the Weidner god list (Cavigneaux 1981, 87). The obverse reads: an-ta-ḡal<sub>2</sub>-le-ne-ne mu<sup>2</sup>-til-l[e] their exalted one ... x he<sub>2</sub>-e-x-i

It is tempting to read the second line me<sup>1</sup>-teš<sub>2</sub> he<sub>2</sub>-e-i-i; but without collation that reading remains highly uncertain.



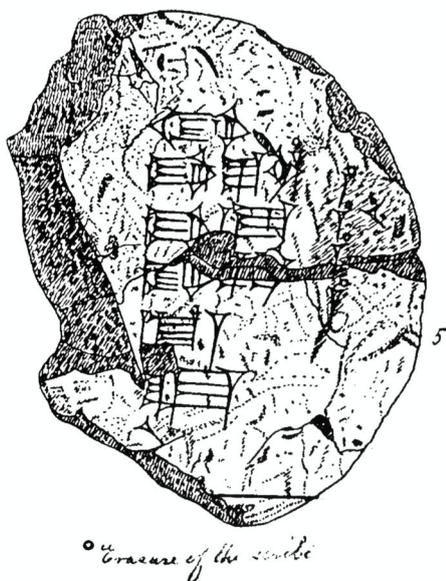
No. 35: Ni 292.



No. 35: Ni 292.

36. Ni 1043 Lentil: S<sup>b</sup>  
 Third expedition. Diameter 7.1 cm; thickness 2 cm.  
 Hilprecht: "Obv. nearly flat; uninscribed and rubbed off. Rev. very convex bears 7 lines of writing, below which is drawn a line."

- [ ] U.GA (utu<sub>2</sub>)
- [ ] EDIN
- [ ] IL<sub>2</sub>
- [ ] SANGA<sub>2</sub>
- [ ] TUN<sub>3</sub>
- [ ] MIR
- [ ] PAP



No. 36: Ni 1043.

This corresponds remarkably well to the order of signs in S<sup>b</sup> A 87-103, with the difference that the lentil lists every sign only once. Two similar lentils are known, one from Nippur and one unprovenanced exemplar; in all three cases the S<sup>b</sup> exercise includes signs only and is found on the reverse. N 3783 has a short version of S<sup>b</sup> A 181-198 (Veldhuis 2000 fig. 11; not identified there); AUCT V 221<sup>9</sup> has the final two lines of S<sup>b</sup> A, followed by the first five lines of S<sup>b</sup> B. These tablets demonstrate that versions of S<sup>b</sup> existed in

<sup>9</sup>) I wish to thank Marcel Sigrist for generously giving me access to the lexical texts in AUCT V before the volume was published.

the Kassite period. Several short versions of S<sup>b</sup> are known from Assur<sup>10</sup> and Nineveh,<sup>11</sup> all of them using earlier Babylonian sign forms. The evidence suggests that S<sup>b</sup> was created in the Kassite period at the latest and originally existed as a one-column (signs only) exercise which was standardized only in the first millennium. Since the lexical corpus of Emar and Ugarit derives from late Old Babylonian sources, the absence of S<sup>b</sup> in these regions may confirm that the composition is of Kassite origin.

### 3.9 Neo Babylonian Exercise (No. 37)

37. Ni 1059+1060+1061+1062

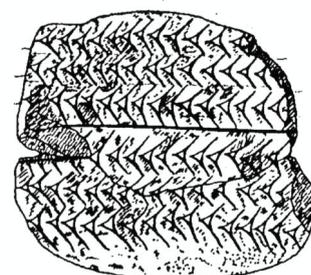
Third expedition, W. of Shatt en-Nil. Measurements: 17.2×13.8×3.7 cm.

This tablet contains an exercise in writing the sign A, one of the most elementary exercises in the Neo Babylonian school. The reverse, which continues the same exercise, was not copied. For comparable texts see CBS 10517 in Tinney 1998, 42 (photograph) and Gesche 2001, 59 with note 245.

### 3.10 Unidentified and unclassified (Nos. 38-40)

38. U-exercise

There are no notes by Hilprecht on this fragment; its present location and museum number remain unknown. In his *Bél Tempel*, Hilprecht schematically illustrated some very elementary cuneiform exercises (Hilprecht 1903). Illustration 38 on page 57 may well have been inspired on our present tablet (identical with Hilprecht 1904, 112 figure 41). A similar piece is UM 29-15-846, published in photograph in Tinney 1998, 42. The date of the tablet published here is unknown.



No. 38.

<sup>10</sup>) VAT 13595 and VAT 9822, both published in transliteration in MSL 3 (p. 95, Z<sub>A1</sub> and Z<sub>A2</sub>).

<sup>11</sup>) CT 5, 8.

*Obverse*

*° Erasure of scribe + † Mistake of scribe.  
On Reverse the same excess contained*

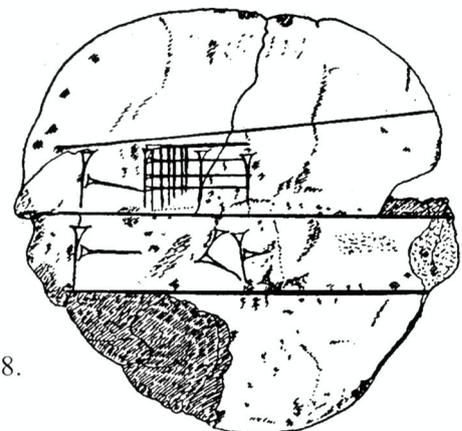
No. 37: Ni 1059+1060+1061+1062.

39. Ni 298

Lentil: contents unclear

Second expedition, Tablet Hill. Diameter 6 cm;  
thickness 1.3 cm.

ME.KID  
ME.KU<sub>6</sub>

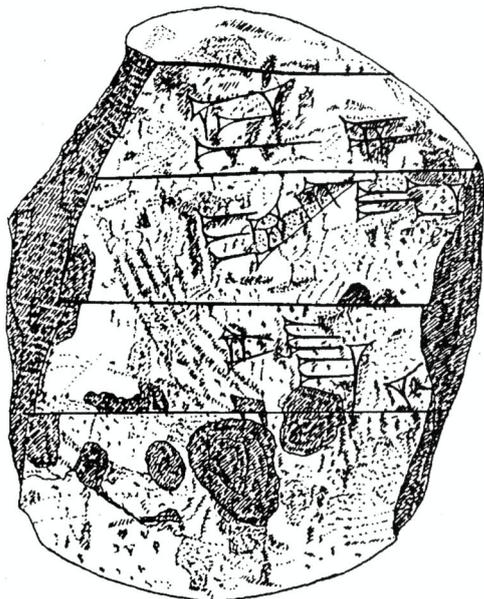


No. 39: Ni 298.

40. Ni 1867                      Lentil: unidentified  
Third expedition.

The obverse (not copied) has three erased lines of writing; Hilprecht identified the traces as god names. The reverse has three partially broken lines in rather bad writing. This may be another example of a Kassite lentil.

[...]-ma-ni  
[...] lugal-ra  
[...] NI x x



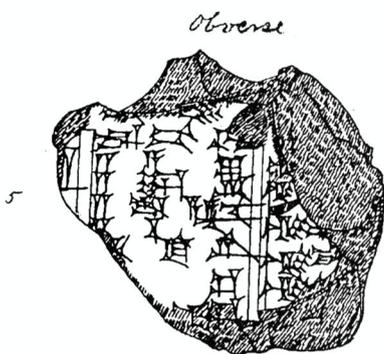
No. 40: Ni 1867.

3.11 “Temple Library Volume XV” (Nos. 41-45)

The few preserved plates for “Temple Library Volume XV” contain a rather mixed bag of lexical texts, ranging from an Old Babylonian copy of ED Lu A to a first millennium extract of Ur<sub>5</sub>-ra 2.

41.                                      Tablet fragment: Ur<sub>5</sub>-ra 2

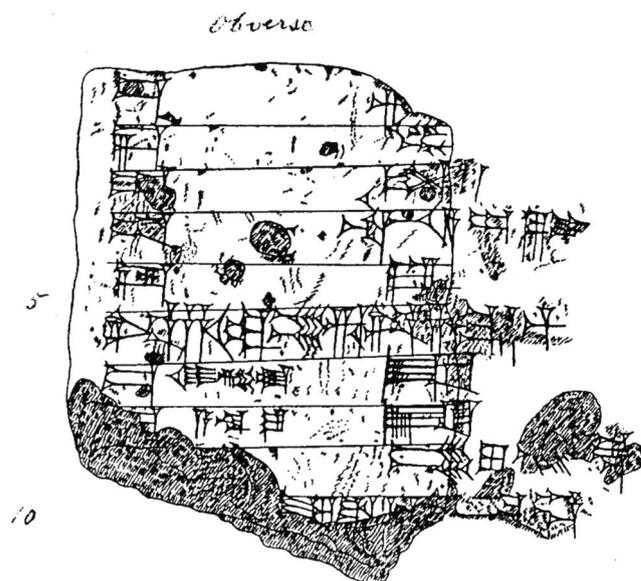
The museum number and present location of this fragment are unknown. The tablet is a first millennium school text with an extract from ur<sub>5</sub>-ra 2 31-38 in column 1.



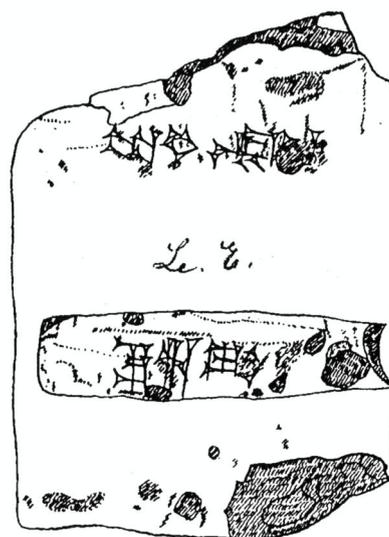
No. 41.

42. Ni 1142                              Tablet: sign list

Unknown series; the tablet was published in transliteration by M. Civil in MSL SS1, 95. Note that in the drawing the inscription on the bottom edge is inserted into the unscripted area on the reverse. The bottom edge was not used by Civil (read e-ri-gal<sub>2</sub>). The sign forms in this texts were used by Steinkeller in his discussion of the paleography of ŠEN and ALAL (Steinkeller 1981, 249).



Reverse



No. 42: Ni 1142.

43. Ni 1600 (or Ni 2528)                      Prism: ED Lu A

Fragment of a six-sided prism with ED Lu A. The text was published in transliteration in MSL 12, 9 text Y = Ni 1600+ Ni 2528. Which of these two fragments is represented in Hilprecht’s copy is unknown. CBS

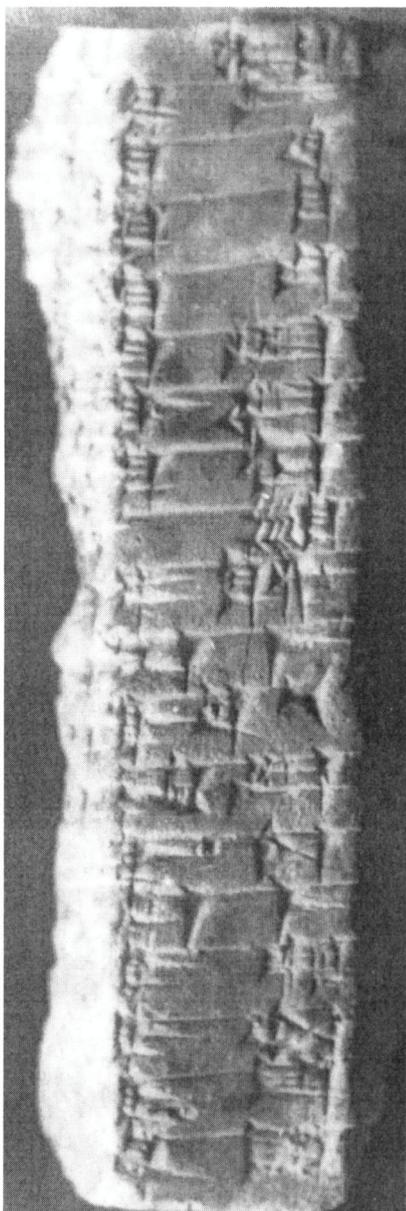
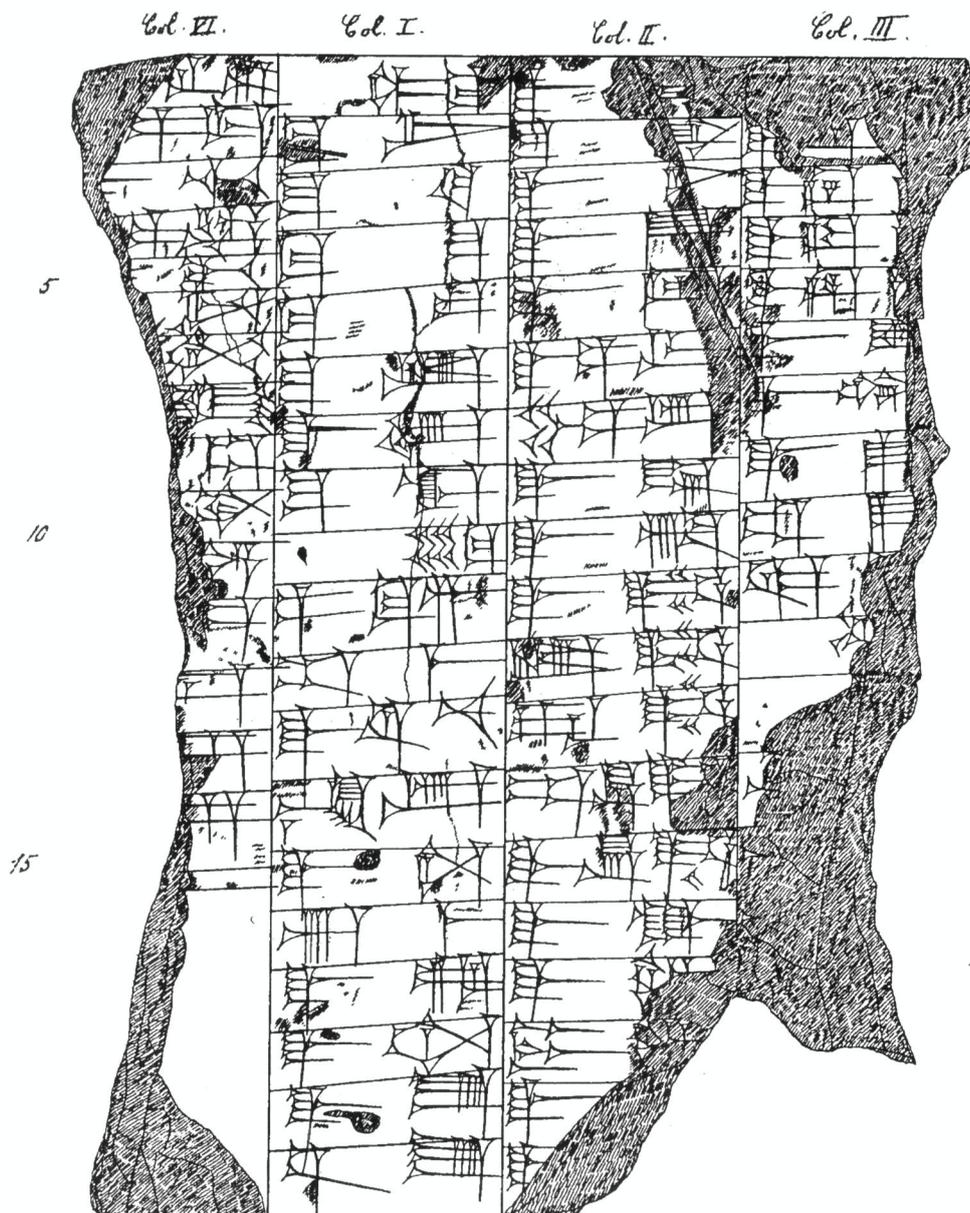


Photo 7: Ni 1600 (or Ni 2528)  
(© University of Pennsylvania Museum,  
Philadelphia, Neg. # G8-5393).



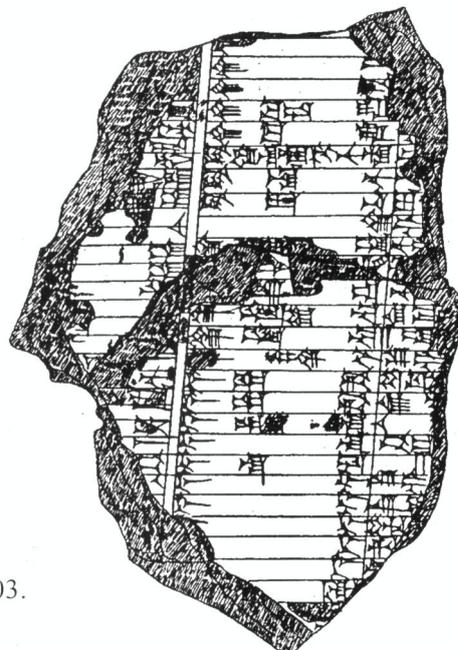
No. 43: Ni 1600 (or Ni 2528).

7845 (SLT 113), used in MSL 12 as text W is part of the same prism. Two different photographs of the piece were published by Hilprecht in Hilprecht 1903, 61 and Hilprecht 1904, 114 respectively. The photographic archives of the University of Pennsylvania Museum hold further field photographs of the text (Photo 7).

**44.** Ni 2403 (= Ni 429)  
Second campaign.

Tablet: Izi

This text was published by Scheil in RA 13, 135-136 and was used in MSL 13, 211 as source B. Hilprecht and Scheil both knew this tablet as N(i) 429, but the present museum number, according to MSL, is Ni 2403.



No. 44: Ni 2403.

45. Neo-Babylonian school tablet

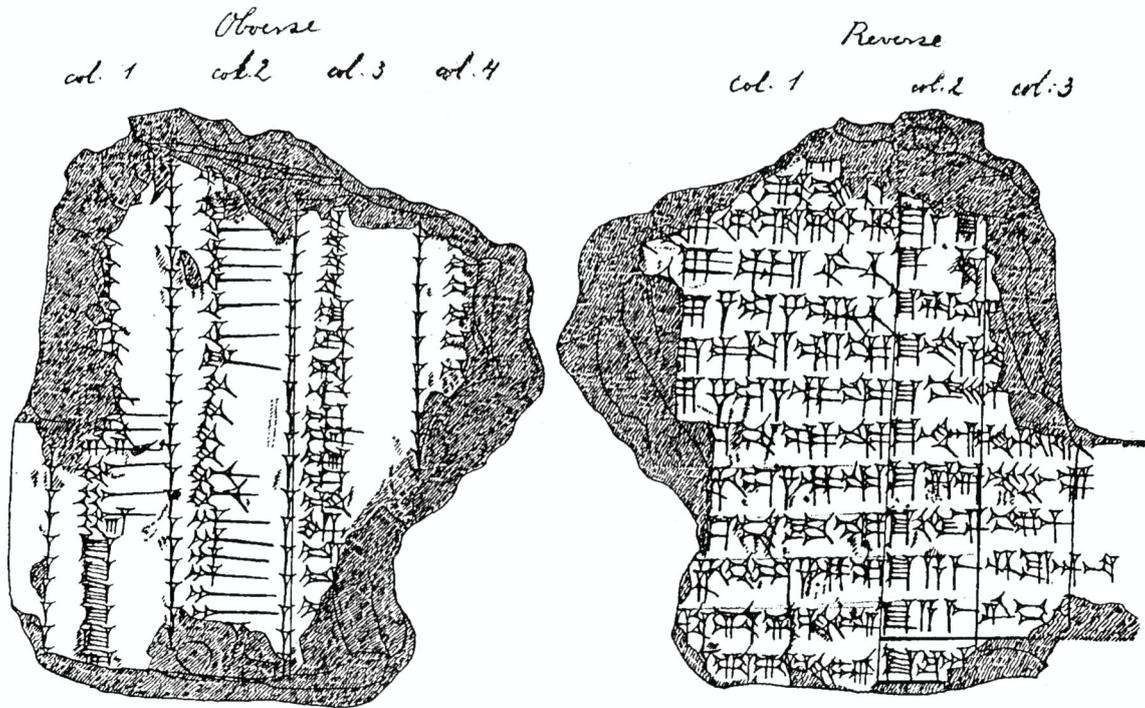
The museum number and present location of this tablet are unknown. The format of this exercise corresponds to Gesche's type 1b, with a standardized list on the obverse (in this case S<sup>a</sup>) and non-standard lists on the reverse. The first column on the reverse has a bilingual list of clothing (tug<sub>2</sub>):

- 1' tug<sub>2</sub>-niġ<sub>2</sub>-mu<sub>4</sub> = [...]
- tug<sub>2</sub>-sig = [...]
- tug<sub>2</sub>-saġ-du = ša<sub>2</sub>-[...]
- tug<sub>2</sub>-mu-a = mu-[...]
- 5' tug<sub>2</sub>-ib<sub>2</sub>-eš = 'x<sup>1</sup>-[...]
- tug<sub>2</sub>-šir-a = am-hu<sup>2</sup>-x x
- tug<sub>2</sub>-kal-kal = mu-bu-u<sub>2</sub>
- tug<sub>2</sub>-kur-ra = KA.BAR
- tug<sub>2</sub>-niġ<sub>2</sub>?(A)-la<sub>2</sub> = hu<sup>2</sup>-su-an-na
- 10' tug<sub>2</sub>-niġ<sub>2</sub>?(A)-la<sub>2</sub> = ni-bi-[hu]
- tug<sub>2</sub>-ba-an = [...]

Several of the Sumerian entries are well known from the lexical tradition (tug<sub>2</sub>-niġ<sub>2</sub>-mu<sub>4</sub>; tug<sub>2</sub>-ib<sub>2</sub>-eš; tug<sub>2</sub>-kal-kal) but there is no relation to the standard TUG<sub>2</sub> section in ur<sub>5</sub>-ra 19 (MSL 10, 125ff.). In 7' one expects *kubbû*, as the regular Akkadian equivalent of tug<sub>2</sub>-kal-kal. Lines 9/10' probably correspond to regular tug<sub>2</sub>-ib<sub>2</sub>-la<sub>2</sub> (*hušannu* and *nēbehu*). Lists like this one are described in Gesche 2001, 146.

The second column on the reverse has an exercise in Akkadian verbal forms in the style well known from this period (see Gesche 2001, 103-123):

- lu-šap-šal-šu<sub>2</sub>
- lu-ša<sub>2</sub>-ap-ša<sub>2</sub>-al-šu<sub>2</sub>
- lu-šap-šaq-ka
- lu-ša<sub>2</sub>-ap-ša<sub>2</sub>-aq-ka
- etc.



No. 45.

4 Concordance of Museum Numbers

Museum Number	Text Number	Description
CBS 2336+N 4638	Photos 1 and 2	Index to SA B
CBS 10468	Photos 3 and 4	Index to SA B
CBS 10786	13	Lentil: Personal Names(?)
CBS 15418	Photos 5 and 6	Index to SA B (rev.)
HS 1392	24	Lentil: O. B. Lú
HS 1395	31	Lentil: literary?
HS 1488	14	Lentil: Personal Names
HS 1781	34	Kassite exercise: Ur <sub>5</sub> -ra I/II
"Ni V"	2	Tablet: SA B
Ni 12	3	Lentil: SA B

Museum Number	Text Number	Description
Ni 24	29	Lentil: SP 2.61
Ni 137	1	Tablet: Index to SA B
Ni 169	7	Lentil: S <sup>a</sup>
Ni 172	8	Lentil: S <sup>a</sup>
Ni 292	35	Lentil: literary/god list
Ni 298	39	Lentil: contents unclear
Ni 324	30	Lentil: SP 2.69
Ni 369	15	Lentil: Personal Names
Ni 429	See Ni 2403	
Ni 761	23	Lentil: O. B. Proto-Lú
Ni 763	27	Lentil: metrology
Ni 765	9	Lentil: S <sup>a</sup>
Ni 766	10	Lentil: S <sup>a</sup>
Ni 769	11	Lentil: S <sup>a</sup>
Ni 771	12	Lentil: S <sup>a</sup>
Ni 773	19	Lentil: list of domestic animals
Ni 775	4	Lentil: SA B (no copy)
Ni 776	25	Lentil: Proto-Kagal
Ni 969	16	Lentil: Personal Names
Ni 1043	36	Lentil: S <sup>b</sup>
Ni 1059+1060+1061+1062	37	
Ni 1142	42	Tablet: sign list
Ni 1372	32	Lentil: Lipit-Eštar B
Ni 1600 (or Ni 2528)	43, Photo 7	Prism: ED Lu A
Ni 1824	22	Lentil: O. B. Proto-Lú
Ni 1825	5	Lentil: SA B
Ni 1826	17	Lentil: Personal Names
Ni 1827	26	Lentil: Proto-Kagal?
Ni 1828	20	Lentil: place names
Ni 1829	18	Lentil: wooden objects
Ni 1855	21	Lentil: field names
Ni 1867	40	Lentil: unidentified
Ni 1869	6	Lentil: SA B
Ni 2265	28	Lentil: computation
Ni 2403 (= Ni 429)	44	Tablet: Izi
Ni 2528	see Ni 1600	
Unknown	33	Lentil: god list
Unknown	38	U-exercise
Unknown	41	Tablet fragment: Ur <sub>3</sub> -ra 2
Unknown	45	Neo-Babylonian exercise

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