

Cuneiform Tablets at the Groningen Institute for Semitics

by **Niek Veldhuis** – University of California at Berkeley

The Department of Middle and Near Eastern Languages and Cultures of the Groningen University (formerly the Groningen Institute of Semitics) owns 23 cuneiform objects and one sealed tag. One of the brick fragments has a known provenance (GIS 21). All other objects were bought on the antiquities market by De Liagre Böhl. When Böhl moved from Groningen to Leiden he left a small part of his collection behind. In the catalogue of the Böhl collection at the Netherlands Institute for the Study of the Near East (NINO) these items are marked with ‘Groningen’. In 1997 it was decided that the collection needed preservatory measures. A few older photographs demonstrate that some of the tablets have been deteriorating. All tablets were cleaned and desalinated and some later additions in wax were removed. This resulted in increased legibility of some of the pieces.¹ Two of the Groningen tablets have been published previously (GIS 9 and GIS 12).

The following contribution is primarily meant to make the material available.² Where the original Böhl catalogue number is known this is indicated (LB). Provenance, where indicated, is always based on internal evidence, except for the Kassite brick fragment GIS 21. The administrative tablets are transcribed and an attempt is made to identify the archive to which the tablet belongs with reference to the most important literature. The tablets are presented in hand copy, with photographs of the seals. The royal inscriptions (bricks, nails, and cones) are all known from multiple published exemplars and are catalogued only. The exception is the unidentified brick fragment GIS 23 for which a

¹ The work was executed by Gert van Oortmerssen of the Archaeological Laboratory (LCM) of the University of Groningen and financed by the Department of Arts and Letters of the same university.

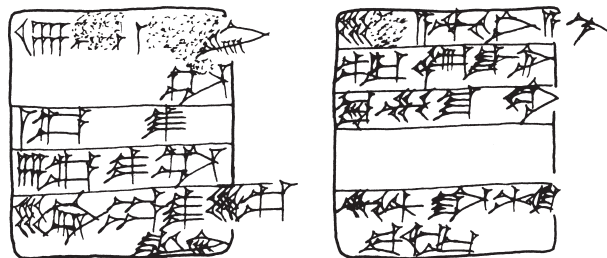
² Piecemeal work on the publication of these tablets extended from 1994 to the end of 2001. In various stages of this process I received help from Walther Sallaberger, Hans Neumann, Bob Englund, Remco de Maaijer, and Tonia Sharlach; to all of whom my sincere thanks. Responsibility for all errors remains mine.

photograph is provided. All photographs were made by Gert van Oortmerssen and are published here with his kind permission.³

1 Complete Gudea clay cone with inscription D.O. Edzard, RIME 3/1 Gudea 37 (= Steible Gudea 48). The cone disappeared about 10 years ago; its present whereabouts are unknown.

2 = LB 297 Damaged cone with inscription Edzard, RIME 3/1 Urbau 4 (= Steible Urbaba 7). The text is inscribed in two columns.

3 = LB 277 Ġirsu: Š 34/09/..



GIS 3 (tablet).



GIS 3 (case) reverse.



GIS 3 (case) right edge.

Barley rations for garden workers received by ur-dun. Tablet (A) with case (B). Seal legend: ur-dun / dumu lugal-^{gis}gi[gir]. For this ur-dun see CBTBM II 19348a (identical seal) and 18004 (both tablets Š 33; barley for a-bal du₃-a-kud).⁴

³ © University of Groningen, Department of Archaeology; Laboratory for Conservation and Material Science LCM / Gert van Oortmerssen.

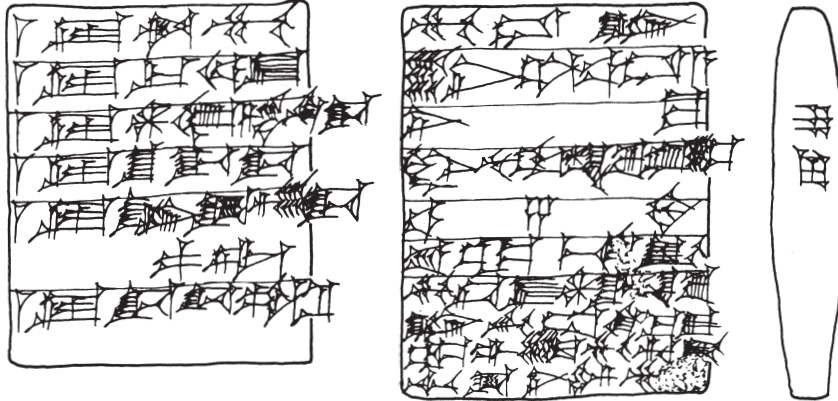
⁴ Reference courtesy Walther Sallaberger, München.

- 1 18 ĝuruš 0.1.0 še lugal-ta
- 2 1 ĝuruš 0.0.4
- 3 8 ĝuruš 0.0.3-ta
- 4 še-bi 4.2.4 še gur lugal
- 5 še-ba a-bal du₃-a-kud
- 6 ugula ur-dun šandan (var. B: kišib ur-dun šandan)
- 7 iti mu-šu-du₇
- 8 blank
- 9 mu an-ša-an^{ki} ba-ḫul

In line 5 the sign BA (in še-ba) is broken on the tablet, but preserved on the case.

4 Drehem: ŠS 05/12/05

Receipt of animals by in-ta-e₃-a from officials. For in-ta-e₃-a see W.Sallaberger, OBO 160/3, 264–270, with previous literature.



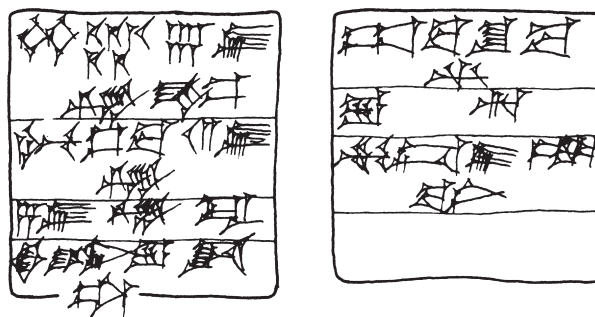
GIS 4.

- 1 1 sila₄ ir₁₁-ĝu₁₀
- 2 1 sila₄ ur-nigin₃
- 3 1 sila₄ ^dšul-gi-na-da
- 4 1 sila₄ šu-da-da
- 5 1 sila₄ lugal-a₂-zid-da šabra
- 6 1 sila₄ da-da ensi₂
- 7 mu-DU lugal
- 8 in-ta-e₃-a
- 9 i₃-dab₅
- 10 ĝiri₃ nu-ur₂-^dsu'en dub-sar
- 11 ud 5-kam

12 itie zem-me-ki-ĝal₂
 13 mu-us₂-sa ^dš_u-^dsu'en lugal uri₅^{ki}-ma-ke₄ bad₃ mar-tu mu-ri-iq ti-id-
 ni-im mu-[du₃]
 L.E. 6 udu

5 Umma: ŠS 05/05/..

Receipt of reed bundles by ab-ba from lugal-iti-da. For the terminology see H. Waetzoldt, BSA 6 (1992) 125–145. Tablet (A) with case (B). The legend of the seal impressed on the envelope is illegible.



GIS 5 (tablet).



GIS 5 (case) upper edge.



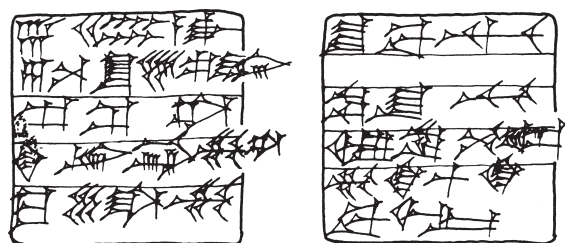
GIS 5 (case) right edge.

1 2.57.00 sa gi izi
 2 gu kilib-ba 12 sa gi (var B: gu kilib-ba sa 12-ta)
 3 5 sa gi-šid
 4 ki lugal-iti-da-ta
 5 ab-ba šu ba-ti
 6 iti ri
 7 mu-us₂-sa bad₃ ba-du₃

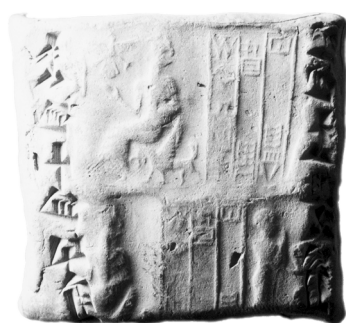
6 = LB 275 Ĝirsu: Š 46/04-05/..

Receipt of flour by ku-li-ĝu₁₀ from lu₂-bi-ĝu₁₀. Tablet (A) with case (B). Seal legend ku-li / dub-sar / dumu ki-aĝ₂-ĝu₁₀.

The seal is identical with C. Fischer, BaM 28 (1996) 178 no.38. For gur si-ta see T. Gomi, MVN 12 p.34 n.74.



GIS 6 (tablet).



GIS 6 (case) reverse.



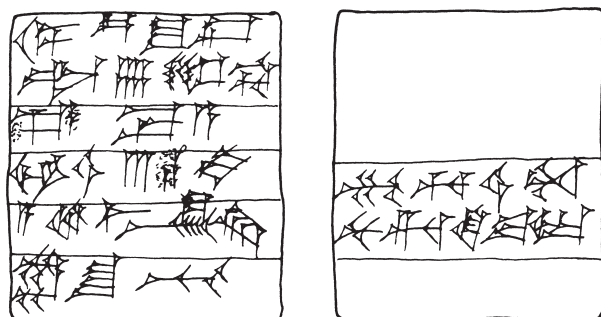
GIS 6 (case) bottom edge.

A
 1 448.2.45 sila₃ dabin gur lugal
 2 gur si-ta
 3 ki lu-bi-ĝu₁₀-ta
 4 ku-li-ĝu₁₀
 5 šu ba-ti
 6 blank
 7 iti šu-numun
 8 u₃ iti munu₄-gu₇
 9 mu ki-maš^{ki} ba-ḫul

B
 448.2.45 sila₃
 gur si-t[a dabi]n gur lugal
 ZID₂-[
 ki l[u₂-bi]-ĝu₁₀-ta
 kišib ku-li dumu ki-aĝ₂-ĝu₁₀
 iti šu-numun iti munu₄-gu₇
 mu ki-maš^{ki} ba-ḫul

7 Umma: AS 07/06/03

Inspection of field workers. The field me-en-kar₂ and the overseer a-ma-a are known from other tablets, e.g. Sh. T. Kang SACT II, 56 and 57 (AS 07). The tablet is unbaked.

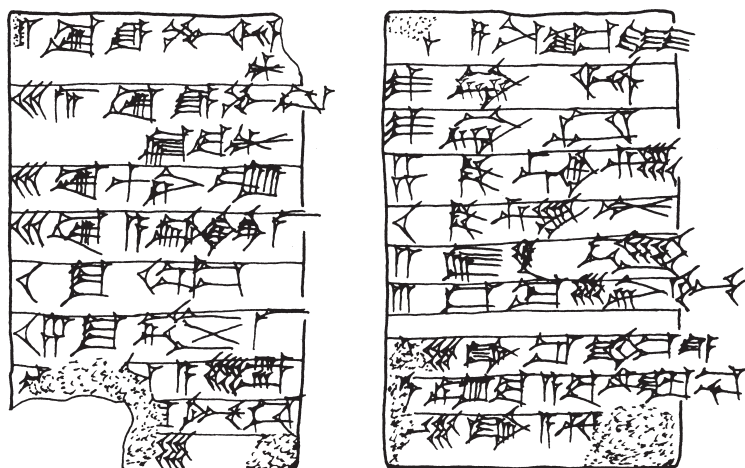


GIS 7.

- 1 10 la₂-¹/₂ ġuruš ħuġ-ġa₂ al 8 sar-ta
- 2 ugula a-ma-a
- 3 gurum₂ ud 3-kam
- 4 a-šag₄ me-en-kar₂
- 5 iti šu-numun
- 6 blank
- 7 mu ħu-uġ₂-nu-ri^{ki} ba-ħul

8 Umma[?]: undated

Expenditure of leather objects and food, presumably for travellers. Perhaps related to Umma messenger texts? The final note (šag₄ dub a-ba-d^šara₂) indicates that this is a summary tablet. In line 1 the word e₂-ba-an is partly erased, so that only the sign AN is preserved. Si-ne-e šabra appears in the Umma text BIN 5, 25, but whether this is the same person remains uncertain. [See now N. Koslova, Santag 6, text 1 with commentary.]



GIS 8.

1 2 ^{kuš}e-sir₂ sig₅ <<AN>>
 2 30 la₂-2 ^{kuš}e-sir₂ DU e₂-ba-an
 3 30 ^{kuš}maš-li₂-um
 4 30 ^{kuš}ummu₃
 5 10 ^{tug₂}saĝš_u
 6 15 ^{tug₂}ib₂-la₂
 7 0.0.'2' [x] 'sila₃' eša
 8 [... z]id₂ gu us₂
 9 [...] še [...]
 10 0.2.0.4 sila₃ zu₂-lum
 11 0.0.3 kaš sig₅
 12 0.0.3 kaš DU
 13 4 ku₆ kun-zid
 14 10 ku₆ gi-ḫal
 15 120 sa sum gaz
 16 180 ^{giš}peš₃ še-er-gu
 17 blank
 18 zig₃-ga si-ne-e
 19 šag₄ dub-ba a-ba-^dšara-gin₇
 20 zig₃-ga a-ḫu[?]-[...]

9 = LB 563 Ġirsu: AS 04/05-11/..

Large ten-column multiple-month account of the rest house (e₂ ka s₄) of Gu'abba, published by the author in ZA 91 (2001) 85-109.

10 Drehem: Š 47/05/25

Expenditure of doves by ^dšul-gi-i₃-li₂. Šulgi-simti archive. For this archive see most recently Sallaberger, OBO 160/3, 253-260 with Appendix 4; M. Hilgert, OIP 115 texts 16-135; and Von Dassow, JCS 52, 128.



GIS 10.

1 7 tu-gur₄ ^{mušen}
 2 ba-ug₇ e₂-gal-la ba-an-ku₄
 3 iti-ta ud 25 ba-ra-zal

- 4 zig₃-ga ^dšul-gi-i₃-li₂
 5 iti ezem-^dnin-a-zu
 6 mu-us₂-sa ki-maš^{ki} ba-ḫul

11 Drehem: AS 02/07/..

Receipt of dead animals by ur-nigin₃-ĝar from ^dšul-gi-a-a-
 ḡu₁₀. For the activities of these persons see T. Maeda, ASJ 11 (1989)
 89-90, and M. Sigrist, Drehem (Bethesda 1992) 332.



GIS 11.

- 1 1 udu niga
 2 1 maš₂ gal niga
 3 1 sila₄ niga
 4 4 udu
 5 1 maš₂ gal
 6 2 kir₁₁
 7 ba-ug₇
 8 ud l-kam
 9 ki ^dšul-gi-a-a-ḡu₁₀-ta
 10 ur-nigin₃-ĝar
 11 šu ba-ti
 12 iti ezem ^dšul-gi
 13 mu ^damar-^dsu'en lugal-e ur-bi₂-lum^{ki} mu-ḫul
 L.E. 10

12 = VAT 2267 Ĝirsu:../09/..

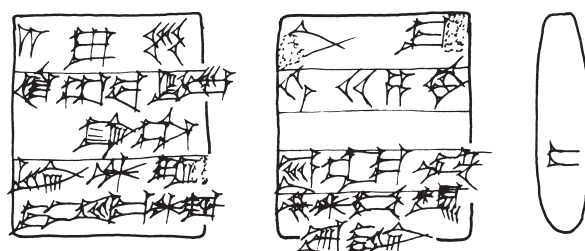
Daily rations of beer, published by G. Reisner as TUT 120 = VAT
 2267⁵ (edition G. Pettinato and H. Waetzoldt, Studi per il Vocabolario
 Sumerico I/1, 147). Collations Veldhuis, N.A.B.U. 1994/64. The tablet
 was acquired by the Vorderasiatisches Museum Berlin May 1896, and
 handed over to the antiquities dealer Dr. Lederer in exchange for Cap-

⁵ See now CDLI VAM: <http://early-cuneiform.humnet.ucla.edu/DL/VAM/UR3/HTML/P135693.HTM>.

padocian tablets on the 24th of June 1920. (Information from the accession records of the Vorderasiatisches Museum courtesy Dr. E. Klengel-Brandt). The old museum number 2267 is still present on the tablet.

13 Drehem: AS 01/09/24

Record of two sheep forwarded by ab-ba-sag₉-ga to lu₂-di-ĝir-ra. For this type of record see Sallaberger, OBO 160/3, 268–269.



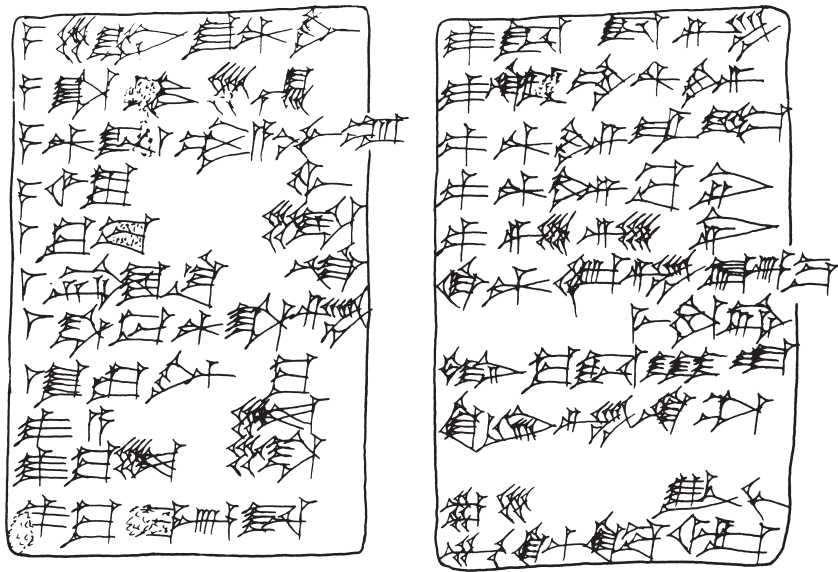
GIS 13.

- 1 2 udu niga
- 2 ki ab-ba-sag₉-ga-ta
- 3 lu₂-diĝir-ra dumu KA-^dšara₂
- 4 i₃-dab₅
- 5 ud 24-kam
- 6 itie zem maḥ
- 7 mu ^damar-^dsu'en lugal
- L.E. 2

14 Ĝirsu: Š 46/11/..

Barley rations. The tablet is sealed all over by ur-^dba-ba₆ / dub-sar / dumu na-mu. The seal is probably identical to the one on AAS 191 (without illustration). Another seal of this same individual was published by Fischer, ZA 82 (1992) 80 no. 18. Ur-^dba-ba₆ the son of na-mu appears in numerous barley ration texts (AAS 190–191; MVN 12, 104; 112; etc.). The list of recipients on the present tablet contains unusual (foreign) names. ^dDa-gan-a-bu-um (line 3) is known as lu₂ kiĝ₂-gi₄-a from Tutul (JCS 15, 196).

- 1 0.2.0 še lugal šu-^dIM
- 2 0.2.0 ša-tum-še-en
- 3 0.2.0 ^dda-gan-a-bu-um
- 4 0.2.0 u₃-pi



GIS 14.



GIS 14 obverse.



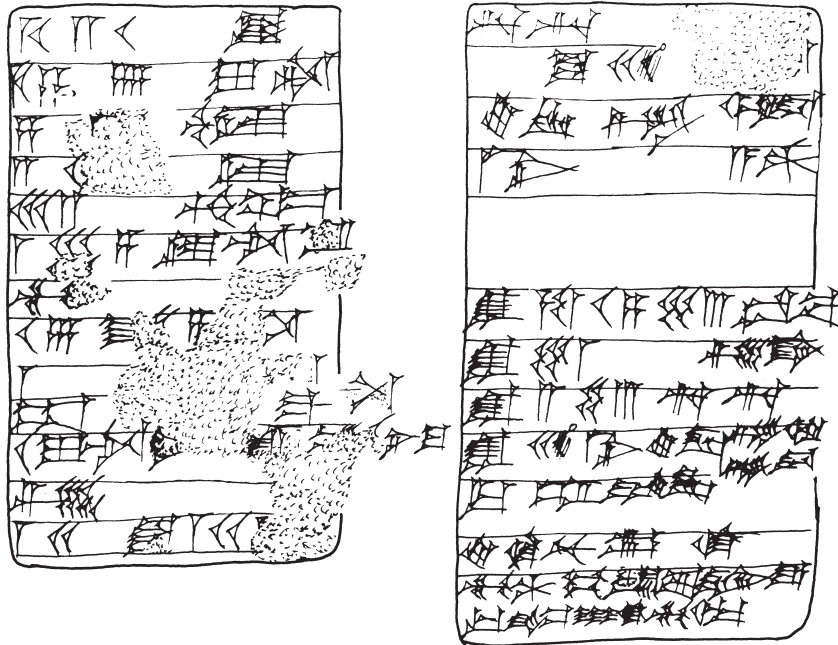
GIS 14 detail of reverse.

- 5 0.1.0 *ku-zu-li*
- 6 0.1.0 *šem-ki-na*
- 7 0.1.0 *ša-ma-an-ša-gi*
- 8 0.1.0 *šu-ri₂-im-ku*
- 9 0.0.3 *a-tu*
- 10 0.0.3 *ku-tu-li*
- 11 0.0.3 *ku-un-da*
- 12 0.0.3 *da-da-gi*
- 13 0.0.3 *na-ra-am*-^dIM

- 14 0.0.2 ^dIM-ra-bi₂
 15 0.0.2 ^dIM-ba-ni
 16 0.0.2 zi-zi-ni
 17 ki ^dšul-gi-kalam-ma-me-te-bi
 18 ġiri₃ ku-da-num₂ niġir
 19 ki lu₂-gi-na-ta
 20 iti še-sag₁₁-kud
 21 mu ki-maš^{ki} ba-ḫul

15 = LB 590 Ġirsu: AS 02/.../...

Shepherd's text; see D. Snell ASJ 8 (1986) 133–217. The tablet is fragile and had been reinforced by wax which rendered part of the text illegible. The wax insertions have been removed by Gert van Oortmersen.



GIS 15.

- 1 730 u₈
 2 848 udu nita₂
 3 240 'la₂ '[l] kir₁₁
 4 130 sila₄
 5 32 maš₂-saġ

6 '114' sila₄ nita₂ dirig
 7 mu-[DU]
 8 16 u₈ '24' [udu ni]ta₂
 9 1 [sil]a₄
 10 kurušda [i₃]-dab₅ {erased NITA₂}
 11 10 udu-nita₂ 'lugal-ra-gaba' i₃-dab₅
 12 zig₃-[ga]
 13 80 u₈ 8[3 udu-nita₂]
 14 ri-ri-[ga]
 15 ø u₈ 20 [udu-nita₂]
 16 šag₄-kug-ge-pad₃-da
 17 la₂-NI-am₃
 18 blank
 19 šu-niĝin₂ 2093 gub-ba
 20 šu-niĝin 51 zig₃-ga
 21 šu-niĝin 163 ri-ri-(ga)
 22 20 la₂-NI šag₄-kug-ge-pad₃-da
 23 ur-mes dumu šag₄-kug-ge
 24 šag₄ ki-nu-nir^{ki}
 25 mu^damar-^dsu'en lugal-e ur-bi₂-lum^{ki} mu-ḥul

The name lugal-ra-gaba in line 10 is restored from the parallel text MVN 11, 68 (Kinunir, AS 2).⁶ An old photograph of the obverse of GIS 15 demonstrates that the tablet has deteriorated recently. Although the picture is taken at an odd angle, so that very little is legible, it allows the following restorations: in line 4 nothing is missing in the break, so that in line 3 one must restore 239 to match the total in line 19. In line 13 one may recognize much of the UDU and the NITA₂ (written below the line) now lost.

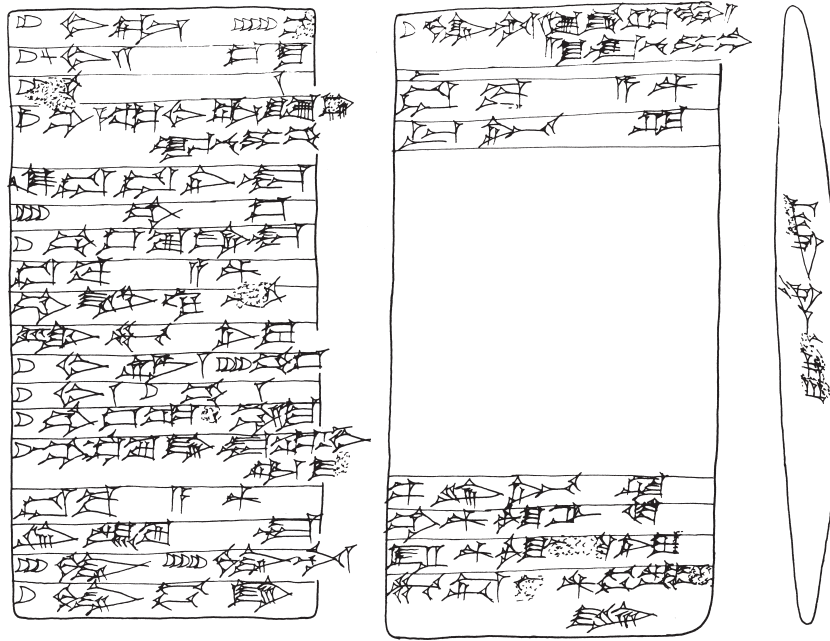
16 = LB 531 Ĝirsu AS 02/./..

Plow animal inspection record 'type B' from the household of ^dNinMAR.KI; see W. Heimpel, BSA 8, 71–120.⁷ In the transcription numbers written with the number stylus (round numbers) are indicated by °. Note the correction in line 3 where a cuneiform number sign is replaced by a round one. For the use of the two number systems see Heimpel, BSA 8, 86.

1 2° ab₂ mah₂ 5° gud
 2 1° ab₂-2 ĝiš-še₃

⁶ See Snell ASJ 8 (1986) 163, for collations of this tablet by Huehnergard.

⁷ A further additional tablet of this type was published by Grégoire, AAICAB I/2 (2000) Ashm. 1951–80 (AS 2; household of ^dSulgi).



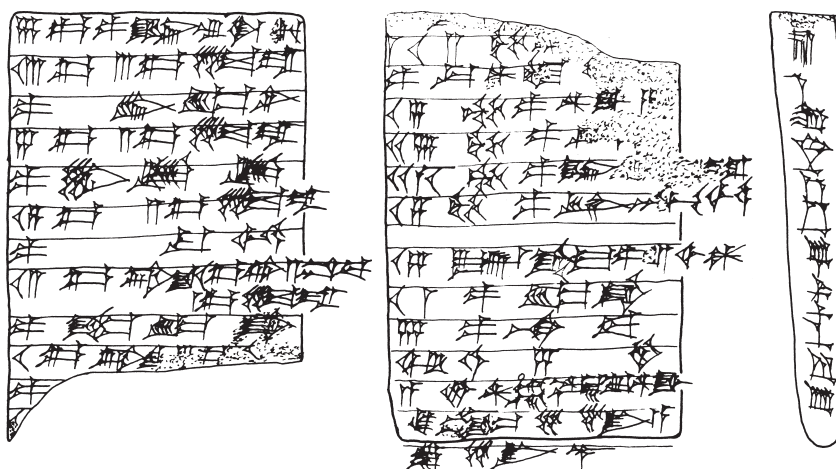
GIS 16.

- 3 2° gud-1
 4 1° (1 erased) gud-1 saĝ ab₂ maḥ₂-še₃ su-ga engar nu-banda₃ gud
 5 e₁₁-DU-ni engar
 6 4° gud ĝiš
 7 1° gud ĝiš su-ga engar
 8 gub-ba-am₃
 9 gud lugal-la-^rkam[?]
 10 piriĝ-ĝu₁₀ i₃-dab₅
 11 1° ab₂ maḥ₂ 4° gud ĝiš
 12 1° ab₂-1 1° gud-1
 13 1° gud ĝiš saĝ gud-2-še₃
 14 1° gud ĝiš su-ga engar saĝ ab₂ maḥ₂-še₃
 15 gub-ba-am₃
 16 lu₂-^dsu'en engar
 17 3° anše 5° dur₃
 18 1° anše amar ga
 19 1° dur₃-2 su-ga saĝ anše-2-⟨2⟩-še₃ engar nu-banda₃ gud
 20 gub-ba-am₃
 21 ur-gu-la
 blank space
 22 ugula lu₂-gu-la
 23 gud ^dnin-MAR.KI
 24 saĝĝa ^dnin-M[AR.K]i i₃-dab₅

25 mu-us₂-sa^d amar-^dsu'en lugal
L.E. lu₂-gu-la

17 Umma: AS 05/01/05

Inspection of workers. Lower half of the tablet is lost.



GIS 17.

1 6 ġuruš ugula lugal-ma₂-gur₈-re
2 13 ġuruš 3 ġuruš tu-ra
3 ugula lu₂-giri₁₇-zal
4 5 ġuruš 2 ġuruš tu-ra
5 ugula in-sag₉-sag₉
6 14 ġuruš 2 ġuruš tu-ra
7 ugula ur-sig₅
8 12 ġuruš lunga₃ 10 ġuruš kaš-a gub-ba 1 ġuruš tu-ra
9 ugula bi₂-dug₄-ga
10 10 ġuruš lunga₃ 6⁷¹ ġuruš ka[š-a gub-ba n ġuruš tu-ra]
11 ugula [...]
12 10 + n [ġuruš . . .]

rev.

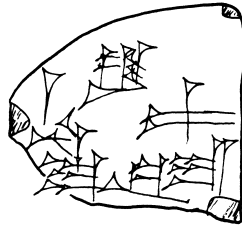
1' traces
2' 72 geme₂ [...]
3' ugula ur-^dnin-t[u ...]
4' 15 geme₂ ugula^dšara₂-za-[me]
5' 27 geme₂ ugula^rur¹- [^dsu'en]
6' 20 la₂-1 geme₂ ugula lugal-^re₂⁷¹-[mah]-e
7' 14 geme₂ ugula lu₂-bala-sig₅
8' blank

9' 15 UN₁IL₂ ugula SI' IGI' AN
 10' 11 ugula dug₄-ga
 11' 7 ugula na-ba
 12' gurum₂ ud 5-kam
 13' a-šag₄ ^damar-^dsu'en ^dšara₂ ki-aĝ₂ še gur_x (ŠE.KIN)-a
 14' iti še-sag₁₁-kud
 L.E. [mu-us₂]-sa en-unu₆-gal ^dinana ba-ḥuĝ

The reconstruction of the names of the supervisors of the female workers (rev. 3'-7') is based upon UTAMI 5 3297, where all of them appear in a very similar context. Unfortunately this latter tablet is badly broken.

18 = LB 648: Old Babylonian

Animal tag with three holes. See Waetzoldt, AoF 13 (1986) 7, with further references.



GIS 18.

1 1 u₈
 2 na-ga da
 3 da-di-ia

For Dadija see the similar tags Riftin 97 and BRM 3 60.

19 and 20 Uruk: Old Babylonian

Šîn-kāšid foundation cones. See Frayne, RIME 4 4.1.3 (pp. 444–447).

21 Middle Babylonian: Dur-Kurigalzu

Fragment of a brick with inscription. The text is identical to C.B.F. Walker, Brick Inscriptions p.55 (no.60). The following text is preserved:

- 1' [e₂ u]-ga l e₂
 2' [ki-a]ĝ-a-ni
 3' [e₂-la-l]a-bi
 4' [ḥu-mu-un-d]u₃

According to the Groningen records the fragment was found by Dr. A.H.J. Prins in April 1957, approximately 30 m. S.W. from the Ziggurat on the slope of tell 'Aqr Quf. It was presented to the Institute of Semitics by Dr. Prins at an unknown date.

22 = LB 857: Neo Babylonian

Fragment of a brick with Nebukadnezar II inscription. Identical to Walker, *Brick Inscriptions* p. 85 (no. 103).

23 Fragment of Brick Inscription of Untās-Napiriša

Cf. F. Malbran-Labat, *Les inscriptions royales de Suse* (Paris 1995) 64f. Nr. 24.

- 1' ...^dḥu-ban-nu-[um-me-en-na-ki]
 2' ...š]u-šu-un-k[a si-ia-an]
 3' ...]un tu₄[-ni-iḥ] (U.S.)

24 Achaemenian

Uninscribed tag with three different seal impressions. See photographs.

[Seal 1. A pseudo-cartouche between two falcons, above the winged disk. Cf. P. Bordreuil, *Syria* 65, 1988, 445.

Seal 2. Hunting a lion ; the archer at the left is in Persian dress, the lancer at the right in Median dress.

Cf. Moortgat, *Vorderasiatische Rollsiegel* (1940) Nr. 771 ; there the costumes are the other way round.

The seal 2 may be impressed also on a tag at the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris: L. Delaporte, *Catalogue des cylindres orientaux ... de la Bibliothèque Nationale* (1910) Pl. B, Nr. H. 890b; without any comment.

Seal 3. Hunt at a lion attacking an ibex. – U.S.]



GIS 24 obverse. Seal 1.



GIS 24 left edge. Seal 1.



GIS 24 reverse. Seal 2.



GIS 24 right edge. Seal 2.



GIS 24 upper edge. Seal 3.