An Early Achaemenid Administrative Text from Uruk

Cornelia Wunsch
Tübingen and London

§1. I take this opportunity to make known an Achaemenid record from Uruk (dated 23.vii.2 Cyr, 27.10.537 B.C., entered in CDLI as P235704) in the collection of Catherine Oliviero of Banning, CA.

§2. For the name of the slave cf. Tallqvist, NN p. 248 no. 80.

At the beginning perhaps [ina ka-rel-e “from the storehouse”?

Or restore the personal name [mni]-qu-du at the beginning? But the involvement of a third person does not seem very likely. ki-i possibly written over an incomplete erasure.

§3. Translation
Ša-istar-ṭubbu, the slave of Šillaya, (2) son of Amēl-Nanaya, (5) spoke (2a) to Nidinti-Bēl, (3) the chief administrator of the Eanna temple, son of Nabû-rukin-zi an of the Dabibī family, (4) and to Nabû-ṣu-du, the royal supervisor of the Eanna temple, (5a) as follows:
"In the months Siman and Duzu of the 2nd year (6) [of Cyrus, King of Babylon and the Lands ([late May until early July 537 B.C.])], 20 kur ([about 3600 litres]) of..."
§4. Commentary

Statement of a slave before the two highest-ranking administrative officials at the main temple of Uruk (šatammu and ša-rēš-šarri bēl-piṣitti) concerning the whereabouts of 20 kur of barley from the area of Piqūdu. The barley is owed to the temple. The slave had assisted his master’s son in collecting. In the record he declares to have handed it over to his master’s son.

§4.1. The administrators and witnesses are well known from other texts of the same period.

§4.2. The šatammu Nidinti-Bēl is attested from year 6 Cyrus to 6 Cambyses (San Nicolo, Prosopographie, p. 17); the ša-rēš-šarri bēl-piṣitti Nabû-aha-iddin from 17 Nabonidus to 4 Cambyses (ibid., pp. 19-20)


§4.4. The master of the protagonist, Šilla-ya, son of Amêl-Nanaya also appears e.g. in TCL 13, 227: 17 (where he is involved in official commodity deliveries from the Sealand during the time of Nabonidus) and TBER 112: 24 (a list without date).

§4.5. The area KUR pi-qu-du where the barley comes from is well attested, at least from Neo-Assyrian sources, cf. R. Zadok, RGTC 8, p. 251 s.v. Puqūdu. This Aramaic tribe is known to have dwelt during the reign of Sargon II in the marshes of the river Uqû on the border of Elam. Later sources attest to their activities in the vicinity of Uruk (Frame, Babylonia 689-627, pp. 44-45), and a large number of Puqudians are known to have been dedicated to IŞtar of Uruk (BIN 2 132, quoted Babylonia 689-627, p. 46).