

Six Ur III Tablets from the Hulin Collection in Oxford
 Christopher Metcalf
 Balliol College, University of Oxford

§1 Introduction

§1.1 The following six tablets from the time of the Ur III dynasty were acquired by the late Peter Hulin, lecturer in Assyriology at the University of Oxford. I am grateful to Linda Hulin for permission to publish the tablets here. It is not known how they were acquired, but their provenience can in most cases be established from their content. The first five tablets record transactions, the sixth is perhaps an *aide-mémoire* or exercise text.

§2. Transliterations, translations and commentary

§2.1. No. 1 = PH 14

Provenience: Drehem
 Size: 28 × 16 × 14mm
 Date: Amar-Suen 3 ix 8

obv.

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1) 2(diš) ab ₂ | Two cows |
| 2) e ₂ -muḫaldim | (for) the kitchen |
| 3) u ₄ 8(diš)-kam | on the eighth day |
| 4) ki in-ta-e ₃ -a-ta | out of (the account of) Inta'ea |

rev.

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1) ba-zi | were booked. |
| <i>blank line</i> | |
| 2) iti ezem-maḫ | Month: "great festival." |
| 3) mu ^d gu-za ^d en-lil ₂ -la ₂
ba-dim ₂ | Year: "the throne of Enlil was built." |

left edge

- | | |
|---|--------------|
| 1) 2(diš) gu ₄ [?] (erased) | Two bovines. |
|---|--------------|

§2.1a. As Maeda (1989: 73) has observed, Inta'ea was initially responsible for providing livestock to the kitchen from (at least) AS 3 ix 1. See more recently Allred (2006: 49-50). This receipt—produced only a week later—comes from the earliest phase of his long career, a summary of which is given by Sigrist (1992: 295-301).

§2.2. No. 2 = PH 18

Provenience: Drehem
 Size: 40mm × 35mm × 18mm
 Date: Šu-Suen 7 ix 23

obv.

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1) 1(diš) udu šimaški | A Shimashkian breeding sheep |
| geš-du ₃ u ₂ | fed on grass |
| 2) ri-ba-ga-da | (for) Ribagada |
| 3) ša ₃ mu-ku _x (DU)-
ra-ta | from the delivery |
| 4) u ₄ 2(u) 3(diš)-kam | on the 23 rd day |
| 5) ki in-ta-e ₃ -a-ta ba-zi | was booked out of (the account of) Inta'ea |

rev.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) giri ₃ nu-ur ₂ - ^d suen
dub-sar | via Nur-Suen the scribe. |
| 2) iti ezem ^d šu- ^d suen | Month: "festival of Šu-Suen." |
| 3) mu ^d šu- ^d suen lugal
uri ₅ ^{ki} -ma-ke ₄
ma-da za-ab-ša-li ^{ki}
mu-ḫul | Year: "Šu-Suen, king of Ur, destroyed the land of Zabšali." |

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|---------------|------------|
| 1) 1(diš) udu | One sheep. |
|---------------|------------|

§2.2a. Michalowski (2006: 52-53) has attempted a brief portrait of Ribagada. He was at this point a maškim, apparently of Amorite origin, having attained the final stage of his career as a courier. One can never be sure how many individuals lurk behind a name. Yet Ribagada is attested only in two dozen or so documents, the majority of which are dated. The name itself seems unusual. On this basis I assume – like Michalowski – that at least a large part of the attestations refer to a single individual, and thus I venture the following outline. Ribagada is attested first as a ra₂-gaba (rider) in SAT 2, 724 obv. iv 37 (AS 2 ix, Drehem), and subsequently in the same function in AUCT 1, 426 rev. 1 (AS 6 xi 3,

Drehem) and *CT* 32, 10 BM 103412 obv. i 16 (AS 6 xi 27), a monthly account into which the previous receipt was entered.

§2.2b. In *PDT* 1, 464 obv. 1-2 (SS 1 ix 6, Drehem) Ribagada the rider then “enters the office of gala” (nam-gala-še₃ i₃-in-ku₄-ra-a). Michalowski (2006: 53-54) has demonstrated (a) that this office can only have been held temporarily, and (b) that it was often taken up by individuals described as Amorites. The latter observation agrees perfectly with a recently published text, *BPOA* 7, 2423 obv. 1-3 (AS 6, Umma), in which Ribagada is referred to as Amorite (2 guruš u₄ 12-še₃ ki-su₇ ri-ba-ga-da mar-tu gub-ba ša₃ buru₁₄, “two workers for twelve days, standing on the threshing floor [of] Ribagada [of] Martu, during harvest”).

§2.2c. Ribagada is then known as a ra₂-gaba maškim in *SAT* 3, 1186 rev. ii 74 (SS 1 xii, Drehem), *BIN* 3, 559 rev. 1 (SS 2 ix 23, Drehem), and as a maškim in *PDT* 1, 543 obv. 9 (SS 1 viii, Drehem)—one month before his last attestation as ra₂-gaba—, a title he continues to hold in several documents until at least *PDT* 1, 454 rev. 1 (SS 7 xi 29, Drehem). *BPOA* 7, 2821 obv. 6 (SS 7 iv 4, Drehem) lists one Ribagada among a group of šu-i (bathers); these are known to have served as couriers (e.g. for royal gifts: see Sallaberger 1993: 16-17). The final dated attestation occurs in *NATN* 940 (IS 2 vi), from Nippur, where a few goods are dispensed from an account of Ribagada.

§2.3. *No. 3 = PH 17*

Provenience: Drehem

Size: 44 × 38 × 23mm

Date: Šu-Suen 6 vii

obv.

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1) 1(diš) sila ₄ niga | 1 fattened lamb, |
| 2) 3(diš) sila ₄ ga | 3 milk-lambs |
| 3) ur-šu i ₃ -dab ₅ | Uršu has taken over. |
| 4) 3(diš) sila ₄ ga | 3 milk-lambs |
| 5) uri ₅ ^{ki} -ki-du ₁₀
i ₃ -dab ₅ | Uri-kidu has taken over. |
| 6) sa ₂ -du ₁₁ lugal | The sa ₂ -du ₁₁ offering of the king |
| 7) ki a-ḥu-we-er-ta | was booked out of (the ac- |

rev.

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------|
| 1) ba-zi | count of) Aḥu-wer. |
| <i>blank line</i> | |
| 2) iti a ₂ -ki-ti | Month: “festival of Akiti.” |
| 3) mu dšu-dsuen lugal | Year: “Šu-Suen king of Ur |
| uri ₅ ^{ki} -ma-ke ₄ na-ru ₂ | erected the great stele for |

-a maḥ den-lil₂ Enlil and Ninlil.”
^dnin-lil₂-ra mu-
 ne-ru₂

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- | | |
|---------------|--------------|
| 1) 7(diš) udu | Seven sheep. |
|---------------|--------------|

§2.3a. Uršu and Uri-kidu are both muḥaldim (cooks): they appear together in this function in *AnOr* 7, 107 (SS 9 x 4) from Drehem, and are otherwise well attested. Sigrist (1992: 317-318) briefly characterises Aḥu-wer, a minor Drehem bureaucrat.

§2.4. *No. 4 = PH 4*

Provenience: Drehem?

Size: 49 × 39 × 19mm

Date: Šulgi 46 - 47 xii 3

obv.

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------|
| 1) 2(diš) sila ₄ šeš-da-da | 2 lambs, Šeš-dada, temple |
| sanga | administrator, |
| 2) 2(diš) sila ₄ ensi ₂ | 2 lambs, the governor of |
| nibru ^{ki} | Nippur, |
| 3) 2(diš) sila ₄ zabar-dab ₅ | 2 lambs, the zabardab, |
| 4) 1(diš) sila ₄ lu ₂ - ^d nanna | 1 lamb, Lu-Nanna. |
| 5) 1(diš) maš ₂ zī-ge | 1 goat, Zige, the captain, |
| nu-banda ₃ | |
| 6) 1(diš) maš ₂ me-a-NE | 1 goat, MeaNE, the captain, |
| nu-banda ₃ | |
| 7) 1(diš) gu ₄ niga 1(u) | 1 fattened ox, 9 sheep, |
| la ₂ 1(aš ^{tená}) udu | |
| 8) 1(diš) maš ₂ gal | 1 large goat, one goat, |
| 1(diš) maš ₂ | |
| 9) dšul-gi-ḥa-ma-ti | Šulgi-hamati |

rev.

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------|
| 1) 1(diš) x [...]-gal ₂ | 1 ... |
| 2) 1(diš) x-[-...]-mes ² | 1 ... |
| [x]-x- ^r ka ^r | |
| 3) 1(diš) sila ₄ it-ra-aq- | 1 lamb, Itraq-ili, |
| i ₃ -li ₂ | |
| 4) 1(diš) sila ₄ na-da | 1 lamb, Nada. |
| <i>blank line</i> | |
| 5) mu-ku _x (DU) | Delivery. |
| 6) iti še-KIN-ku ₅ | Month: “harvest.” |
| 7) mu ki-maš ^{ki} u ₃ ḥu- | Year: “Kimaš and Ḥurti were |
| ur ₅ -ti ^{ki} ba-ḥul | destroyed.” |

left edge

- | | |
|------------------------------|----------------|
| 1) u ₄ 3(diš)-kam | The third day. |
|------------------------------|----------------|

§2.4a. A delivery for an unspecified cult by various officials. Rev. 2 is perhaps [ur]-mes² despite the strong horizontal stroke, as three faint vertical strokes are visible inside the box.

§2.4b. Itraq-ili (rev. 3) is referred to as a lu₂ ma-ri₂^{ki}, a

man from Mari, in the almost contemporaneous receipt *PDT* 1, 161 rev.1 (SH 47 iv 25, Drehem). There are a few other attestations of Itraq-ili holding various offices between SH 43 and AS 4. See *MAD* 3 s.v. *TRK*? for further attestations and Owen 1992 on Syrians in Ur III documents. *AHW* offers two interpretations: “er ist lang, mein Gott” (*AHW* s.v. *arākum*) and “es (das Neugeborene) wurde blau, mein Gott!” (*AHW* s.v. *tarāqum*). The reading it-, not a₂-, seems guaranteed by i-ta₂-ra-aq-i₃-li₂ (*UET* 3, 1780; IS 1 xii). Hilgert (2002: 193) hesitantly places the name under *trq*, “grüngelb, blau werden”; see his note 54 (and *ibid.* 185 note 12). *CDA* s.v. *tarāqum(a/a)* suggests “to take pity, relent” (“OAKk, jB”), which would produce the acceptable meaning “my god has relented.”

§2.5. No. 5 = PH 23

Provenience: Umma

Size: 59 × 43 × 23mm

Date: nn iv

obv.

- 1) [n] 1(diš) tug₂ guz-za [n and] 1 unit of good
^{sa}g₁₀ guz-za textile,
- 2) 1(diš) tug₂ tab-ba 1 unit of good double-
^{sa}g₁₀ threaded textile,
- 3) 1(diš) tug₂ bar-dul₅ 1 unit of good bar-dul₅
^{sa}g₁₀ textile,
- 4) 3(diš) tug₂ bar-dul₅ 3 units of bar-dul₅ gu₂-
^{gu}₂-[TAR²] TAR² textiles,
- 5) 5(diš) tug₂ gu₂-e₃ 5 units of gu₂-e₃ tex-
 [...] tiles [of good quality?]
- 6) 5(diš) tug₂ gu₂-e₃ 5 units of gu₂-e₃ textiles of
^{DU} regular quality,
- 7) 2(u) la₂ 3(aš^{tená}) 17 units of guz-za tex-
 tug₂ guz-za DU tiles of regular quality,
- 8) 1(diš) tug₂ ha¹- one unit of soft textile,
 bu-um
- 9) 4(diš) tug₂ x x gal 4 units of ... textile,

rev.

- 1) 6(diš) tug₂ aktum gi 6 units of native aktum tex-
 tiles,
- 2) 7(diš) tug₂ elam 7 units of Elamite textiles,
- 3) 5(diš) tug₂ bar-si 5 units of bar-si gu₂-e₃ tex-
 gu₂-e₃ tiles,
- 4) 6(diš) gada gal sag₁₀ 6 units of good linen,
- 5) 8(diš) gada ša₃-ga- 8 units of ša₃-ga-du₃ linen,
 du₃
- 6) 3(diš) gada sag three units of top linen,
- 7) ki gal₅-la₂-gal-ta from (the account of) the galla
 gal
- 8) dingir-ra-ke₄ were received
- 9) šu ba-ti by Dingira.
- 10) iti ezem-nesag₂ Month: “first fruits festival.”

§2.5a. Most textiles listed here are well-attested. tug₂ aktum gi (rev. 1) is presumably “native aktum textile” (gi in the sense of gi₇ in dumu-gi₇, eme-gi₇, etc.), as opposed to the Elamite textiles in the following line. The alternative is “yellow aktum” (GI = sig₁₇).

§2.5b. The office of the galla-gal (rev. 7) is attested in Umma (see Dahl and Hebenstreit 2007: 45), this text seems to contain the only instance of someone receiving goods from his account.

§2.5c. Dingira (rev. 8) appears in over a dozen dated receipts from Umma, most of which resemble this tablet. They suggest that Dingira was active in the later reign of Šulgi and that he worked particularly with garments: *MVN* 15, 42 obv. 4 (SH 33 vi), *ASJ* 19, 212 34 obv. 3 (SH 33 xii), *JCS* 2, 185 NBC 3056 obv. 5 (SH 36 v), *TCNU* 604 rev. 1 (SH 37 iv), *SANTAG* 6, 31 obv. 6 (SS 37 v), *CDLJ* 2002/1, no. 14 obv. 3 (SH 39 vii), *Nisaba* 9, 205 obv. 3 (SH 44), *SACT* 2, 147 rev. 1 (SH 44 xi), *YOS* 4, 292 obv. 9 (SH 46), *MVN* 20, 142 obv. 9 (SH 46 v), *BPOA* 1, 731 rev. 1 (SS 47 v), *BPOA* 1, 876 rev. 3 (SS 47 vi), *AnOr* 7, 280 rev. 3 (SH 47 x). Two slightly later texts also from Umma mention a man named Dingira weighing textiles, *Princeton* 1, 301 rev. 4 (AS 7 viii) and *BPOA* 1, 598 rev. 7 (SS 2 vii).

§2.6. No. 6 = PH 24

Provenience: unknown

Size: 94 × 51 × 23mm

Date: unknown

obv.

- 1) 3(diš) gu₄ niga¹[...] 3 fattened oxen ...
- 2) 1(diš) anše libir 1 “old” donkey, 44 ...
^{4(u) 4(diš)} [x]
- 3) 1(u) 5(diš) maš₂ 15 goats, 4 ban 1 1/2 sila,
 4 (ban₂) 1(diš)
 1/2(diš) sila₃
- 4) 1(ban₂) 7(diš) sila₃ 1 ban 7 sila of cheese,
 ga-HAR
- 5) im 1(diš)-kam of the 1st tablet.
- 6) 6(diš) gu₄ 6 oxen,
- 7) 4(u) 7(diš) anše libir¹ 47 “old” donkeys,
- 8) 1(diš) udu 1 sheep,
- 9) 2(u) 4(aš) še gur 24 gur of barley,
- 10) im 2(diš)-kam of the 2nd tablet.
- 11) 2(geš₂) 3(aš) 1(barig) 123 gur, 1 barig 4 ban,
 4(ban₂) 5(diš) 5 2/3 sila,
 2/3(diš) sila₃ še gur¹
- 12) im 3(diš)-kam of the 3rd tablet.
- 13) 1(u) še gur 10 gur of barley,

rev.

- 1) im 4(diš)-kam of the 4th tablet.
- 2) 1(u) 9(diš) gin₂ 19 shekels of silver,
ku₃-babbar
- 3) im 5(diš)-kam of the 5th tablet.
- 4) 1(geš'u) 4(geš₂) 845 mixed sheep and goats,
5(diš) udu maš₂
hi-a
- 5) im 6(diš)-kam of the 6th tablet.
- 6) 1(geš₂) 4(u) 4(diš) 104 oxen, 1 1/3 mana, 3 1/3
gu₄ 1(diš) 1/3(diš) shekels, 18 grains of silver,
ma-na 3(diš)
1/3(diš) gin₂ 1(u)
8(diš) še ku₃-
babbar
- 7) n(ban₂) 2(diš) sila₃ n ban two sila of ghee, 2 barig
i₃-nun 2(barig) 2 ban, 1 sila of cheese,
2(ban₂) 1(disz)
sila₃ ga-ĤAR
- 8) n kuš gu₄ 2(u) 26² oxen hides, 26 oxen
6(diš) ad₃ gu₄ carcasses,
- 9) ᵀim ᵀ 7(diš)-[kam] of the 7th tablet.
- 10) x 1(u) udu im 10 sheep, [the 8th tablet].
[8(diš)-kam]
- 11) 1(geš₂) 2(u) udu 80 sheep, [of the 9th tablet.]
ᵀim ᵀ [9(diš)-kam]
- 12) 1(diš) anše ᵀlibir ᵀ 1 "old" donkey ... ,
- 13) im ᵀ 1(u) ᵀ-[kam] of the 10th tablet.
- 14) pisan šu-er₃-[ra-ta²] [From²] the basket of Šu-
Erra(?)
- 15) i-din-ᵀer₃-ᵀ [ra Iddin-Erra [received²].
šu ba-ti²]

left edge

- 1) 8(aš) ᵀše ᵀ [gur] ᵀim ᵀ 8 gur of barley, of the 11th
1(u) 1(diš)-kam tablet.

§2.6a. This document is unusual in that it appears to consist of little more than a series of references to eleven other tablets. It was presumably employed in the administration of an archive. The reading pisan followed by two personal names in rev. 14 and 15 would indicate that the eleven tablets cited belonged to a tablet-basket. It is known from archive labels that such baskets were attributed to particular officials (see e.g. *ASJ* 8, 68 rev. iii 1 and the identical label in *Nik* 2, 162 rev. 8 and 165 rev. 5 [Foxvog 1986: 63-64]).

§2.6b. Now the pisan dub-ba label *AR RIM* 4 30 (SS 7 xii, Drehem) records that an individual named Iddin-Erra collected his accounts over a twelve month period. A dub-sar of this name is attested in *AUCT* 2, 381 obv. 15 (year name missing, Drehem). Is our tablet perhaps the *aide-mémoire* of a scribe called Iddin-Erra as he made a record of his accounts? Šu-Erra and Iddin-Erra are not uncommon names, but here they may refer to two scribes in the later reign of Šu-Suen. The Iddin-Erra of the pisan dub-ba label dates from SS 7 xii; around this time, a dub-sar called Šu-Erra is attested in *Syracuse* 203 rev. 4 (SS 9 i 6), *AUCT* 3, 197 rev. 10 (SS 9 ix 25, Drehem), *BIN* 3, 462 rev. 4 (SS 9 xi 14, Drehem), *AUCT* 3, 196 rev. 3 (SS 9 xi 17, Drehem), *CST* 455 rev. 9 (SS 9 xii 14, Drehem) as well as in a few other documents from the reign of Šu-Suen but of uncertain date; *CUSAS* 3, 1013 rev. 8 (SS 8 ix, Garshana) mentions a Šu-Erra dub-sar maškim. There is only one other text of the Ur III period in which two bureaucrats called Šu-Erra and Iddin-Erra appear together, as far as I can see, namely *Princeton* 2, 141 obv. i 6 and 15 (SS 9, Drehem) which also falls into this period of time.

§2.6c. Further, according to the recent orthographic study of Veldhuis (2008: 224-225) the presence of the sign ad₃ (LU×BAD) in our text (rev. 8) would of itself demand a date in or after SS 4 (if from Drehem) or SS 8 (Umma). This does at least not impede an attempt to date the tablet to the later reign of Šu-Suen.

§2.6d. In terms of form, too, the coarse appearance of the tablet (which seems to be of unusually generous size) and the absence of a date might point in the direction of an *aide-mémoire* or exercise of some kind. The rather erratic writing (gu₄ is not written consistently: compare obv. 1 and 6 with rev. 6 and 8; libir squeezed into obv. 7; the eleventh im noted on the left edge) gives the impression of having been quickly jotted down.

§2.6e. With all due hesitation I would like to think of this tablet as a briefly noted inventory or writing practice, perhaps by two scribes in the time of Šu-Suen, as this interpretation seems the most likely to agree with both content and form.

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