

Ur III Tablets in the Wheaton College Archaeology Museum

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§1. Introduction

The Wheaton College Archaeology Museum holds nine tablets from the Ur III period. As is the case with many Ur III collections, the provenience of the tablets is not well documented. The available records about the tablets' arrival at the Wheaton Archaeology Museum indicate that they were received from private collections in the 1950s and 60s. At the same time, there is no documentation regarding the origins of these tablets prior to their receipt by the museum. Some evidence suggests that three or four of these tablets likely originated from Umma, modern Jokha, whereas the remaining tablets came from Puzrish-Dagan, modern Drehem.

§2. The Texts

§2.1. Wheaton 001

Contents: Receipt for livestock
 Measurements: 29 × 44 × 19mm
 Provenience: Puzrish-Dagan
 Date: Šulgi 47 iv

§2.1.1. Transliteration and Translation

Obverse

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. 23 ab ₂ | 23 cows, |
| 2. 4 gu ₄ | 4 oxen, |
| 3. 1232 u ₈ | 1232 ewes, |
| 4. 105 [┐] udu [┐] | 105 rams, |
| 5. 4 sila ₄ ga | 4 suckling lambs, |
| 6. [x] [┐] e ₂ [┐] -udu- [┐] niga ² [┐] | ... grain-fed sheep house ² ; |
- rest broken

Reverse

beginning broken

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. [┐] sa ₂ ² -du ₁₁ ² [┐] [...] | ...; |
| blank space | |
| 2. iti ki-siki-d [┐] nin-a- [┐] zu [┐] | month: "kisiki of Ninazu," |
| 3. mu ki-maš ^{ki} u ₃ hu- [┐] ur ₅ [┐] - [┐] ti ^{ki} ba-hul | year: "Kimaš and Hurti were destroyed"; |

Left Edge

- | | |
|--|------------------------------|
| 1. 27 gu ₈ [┐] 1341 [┐] [udu] | (total:) 27 oxen 1341 sheep. |
|--|------------------------------|

§2.1.2. Commentary

§2.1.2.1. This tablet, which is a receipt for livestock, is broken and a few lines are missing; the numbers, however, appear to be complete. Thus, 23 ab₂ and 4 gu₂ are correctly tallied on the left edge of the tablet, as 27 gu₄; we may confidently reconstruct the tally of sheep to have been 1200+[141 udu]. Note that in numerous Ur III accounts, the sign udu contrasts with u8 and may therefore contextually be translated as "ram," otherwise but rarely written udu-nita₍₂₎.

§2.2. Wheaton 002

Contents: Receipt for regular offering to Šara
 Measurements: 43 × 44 × 17mm
 Provenience: Umma
 Date: Amar-Suen 6 i-iv

§2.2.1. Transliteration and Translation

Obverse

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------|
| 1. 9 še gur | 9 gur barley, |
| 2. sa ₂ -du ₁₁ d [┐] šara ₂ šu-palil ₂ | regular offering for Šara ..., |
| 3. gu ₂ - [┐] edin-na [┐] -ta | from (the) Gu-edina (field), |
| 4. ki e ₂ -gal-e-si-<ta> | from Egalesi |
| 5. hu-la šu ba-ti | Hala received; |

Reverse

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. iti še-sag ₁₁ -ku ₅ -ta iti nesag-še ₃ | from the month: "Harvest" to the month: "First-fruit offering," |
|--|---|

blank space

- | | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| 2. mu us ₂ -sa ša-aš-ru ^{ki} ba-hul | year after: "Šašru was destroyed." |
|---|------------------------------------|

Seal

- | | |
|---|-------------------|
| 1. hu-la | Hala, |
| 2. dumu lugal-e ₂ -mah | son of Lugalemah, |
| 3. lu ₂ lunga d [┐] šara ₂ | brewer of Šara. |

§2.2.2. Commentary

§2.2.2.1. This tablet is a receipt of barley for a regular offering to Šara, the tutelary deity of Umma. The barley

was given by Egalesi, who was a well-known functionary at Umma (Dahl 2007: 101, 126).

§2.2.2.2. The sealing on this tablet is that of Hala, who received the barley from Egalesi. Hala's seal is horizontally impressed on the reverse of the tablet and twice horizontally impressed over the obverse of the tablet. It is possible from these three impressions to read all of the registers of the sealing: Hala, the son of Lugalemah, the brewer of Šara. This particular seal was identified and drawn by Mayr (Mayr 1997: no. 179 = CDLI S002415) and the tablet, and envelope on which the sealing was found, were published as *SAT* 2, 307. It is noteworthy that both the tablet presented here and that published by Sigrist, which also bears Hala's sealing, record regular offerings (sa₂-du₁₁) of barley (še) to Šara from Egalesi. As for the iconography of the seal, Mayr drew a deity in a contest with a lion next to three cuneiform registers. The present tablet preserves a second figure, with legs astride, that may represent another participant in the contest (figure 1).

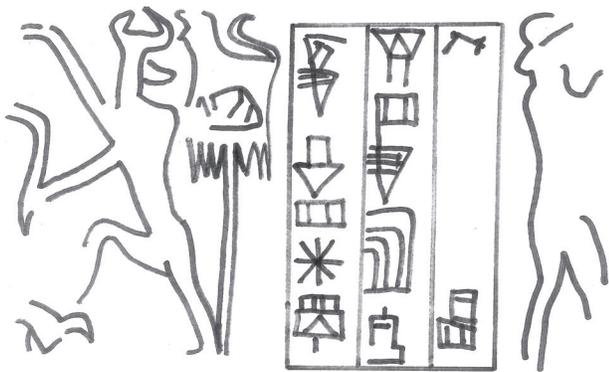


Figure 1: Composite drawing of Hala's sealing, based on Mayr 1997: 179, and Wheaton 2

§2.2.2.3. For šu-igi-še₃-du (read above as šu-palil₂), Molina has noted that it may be connected to šu-igi-du = *mahra*, an adverb meaning “before, earlier” (Molina 2005: comment on text 277).

§2.3. Wheaton 003

Contents: Receipt for slaughtered livestock
Measurements: 26 × 23 × 15mm
Provenience: Puzrish-Dagan
Date: Šulgi 47a v 8

§2.3.1. Transliteration and Translation

Obverse

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------|
| 1. 1 eme ₆ | 1 jenny, |
| 2. 1 maš ₂ -gal a-dara ₄ | 1 full-grown mountain goat, |

- | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| 3. 1 munu ₅ aš ₂ -gar ₃ a-dara ₄ | 1 young female mountain goat, |
| 4. ba-uš ₂ u ₄ 8-kam | slaughtered, 8 th day; |

Reverse

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. ki lu ₂ -dingir- ^Γ ra ^Γ -ta | from Lu-dingira |
| 2. ur-nigar ^{8ar} | did Ur-nigar |
| 3. ^Γ šu ^Γ ba-ti | receive; |
| 4. iti ezem- ^{d} nin-a-zu | month: “Festival of Nimazu,” |
| 5. mu us ₂ -sa ki-maš ^{ki} hu-ur ₅ -ti ^{ki} ba-hul | year after: “Kimaš (and) Hurti were destroyed.” |

§2.3.2. Commentary

§2.3.2.1. This tablet is a receipt for slaughtered livestock. These livestock are from Lu-dingira, the son of Arad-hula. Lu-dingira was active from the end of Šulgi's reign and into the reign of Amar-Suen (e.g. *ASJ* 19, 201 no. 4, dated to AS 6, or Hilgert 1998: 455-457; note also Hilgert 1998: 431-432, dated to Šulgi 46-47). According to a tablet from Puzrish-Dagan dated to the same *day* as our no. 3, Ur-nigar also received slaughtered livestock from En-dingirmu of the Tummal bureau (*Hirose* 73).

§2.3.2.2. The maš₂ a dara₄ is likely to be identified with a hybrid of a goat and bezoar (Steinkeller 1995: 54).

§2.3.2.3. The slaughtered livestock recorded on this receipt were accepted by Ur-nigar. In the Puzrish-Dagan texts, Lu-dingira's dealings with slaughtered livestock were restricted to his disbursements to Ur-nigar, or later on Šulgi-irimu (Hilgert & Reichelt 2001: 68 and n. 216). Additional activities of Ur-nigar may be found in Hilgert & Reichelt 2001: 533, and Hilgert 1998: 431-432.

§2.4. Wheaton 004

Contents: Receipt for a garment
Measurements: 27 × 24 × 14mm
Provenience: Umma
Date: Šu-Suen 1 ix

§2.4.1. Transliteration and Translation

Obverse

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------|
| 1. 1 tug ₂ nig ₂ -lam ₂ saga | 1 n.-garment, fine quality, |
| 2. dug ^{kur} -ku-du ₃ | (for ³ the) k-vessel |
| 3. d ^{šul} -gi-a-a-mu | of Šulgi-ayamu; |

Reverse

blank space

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------|
| 1. iti ^d li ₉ -si ₄ | month: “Lisi,” |
| 2. mu us ₂ -sa d ^š u-d ^{suen} lugal | year after: “Šu-Suen is king.” |

§2.4.2. Commentary

§2.4.2.1. The month, and the divine name ^dli₉-si₄, are distinctive to the tablets from Umma.

§2.4.2.2. This tablet is a receipt for a high quality garment, tug₂ nig₂-lam₂ saga (see *CAD* L 58 lamahuššu), associated in some way with a vessel described as kur-ku-du₃. This dug kur-ku-du₃ is well-attested in the tablets from Umma and Girsu (described by Steinkeller 1992: 53-54, as a large vessel, frequently storing 100 liters), but its relationship with the counted garment is not obvious in this syntactically difficult text. The text may rather represent a short memo produced in advance of creating a complete account.

§2.4.2.3. Šulgi-ayamu is a well-known official, especially at Puzrish-Dagan during the reigns of Šulgi and Amar-Suen (for instance Hilgert & Reichelt 2001: 38-56). During the reign of Šu-Suen, however, a CDLI search shows that a Šulgi-ayamu is only attested in Umma texts. The present tablet is consistent with this pattern.

§2.5. Wheaton 005

Contents: Receipt for slaughtered livestock
Measurements: 24 × 22 × 12mm
Provenience: Puzrish-Dagan
Date: Šulgi 45 i 3

§2.5.1. Transliteration and Translation

Obverse

- | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. 1 udu | <i>1 ram,</i> |
| 2. 1 u ₈ | <i>1 ewe,</i> |
| 3. ba-uš ₂ | <i>slaughtered,</i> |
| 4. u ₄ 3-kam | <i>3rd day;</i> |

Reverse

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. ki na-lu ₅ | <i>from Nalu;</i> |
| 2. iti maš-da ₃ -gu ₇ | <i>month: "Gazelle feast,"</i> |
| 3. mu us ₂ - ^r sa ^r si-mu-ru- um ^{ki} lu-lu-bu ^{ki} a-ra ₂ | <i>year after: "Simurru (and) Lullubu for the 9th time were destroyed."</i> |
| 10 la ₂ 1-kam-aš ba- ^h ul | |

§2.5.2. Commentary

§2.5.2.1. This tablet is a receipt for slaughtered livestock from Nalu. For the activities of Nalu at the end of Šulgi's reign, see Hilgert 1998: 15-16. For Nalu's conduct during Amar-Suen's reign, see Hilgert & Reichelt 2001: 64-65 and pp. 299-313.

§2.6. Wheaton 006

Contents: Transfer of Livestock
Measurements: 34 × 29 × 15mm
Provenience: Puzrish-Dagan
Date: Amar-Suen 3 ix 4

§2.6.1. Transliteration and Translation

Obverse

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. 4 udu niga 1 maš ₂ -gal | <i>4 sheep, barley-fed; 1 mature goat,</i> |
| 2. 1 sila ₄ | <i>1 lamb,</i> |
| 3. u ₄ 4-kam | <i>4th day;</i> |
| 4. ki ^r ab ² -ba ² -sa ₆ ² -ga ² ^r -ta | <i>from Abba-saga(?)</i> |

Reverse

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. en-dingir-mu i ₃ -dab ₅ | <i>did En-dingirmu accept; blank space</i> |
| 2. iti ezem-mah _h | <i>month: "Great festival,"</i> |
| 3. mu ^d gu-za ša ₃ ^h ul ₂ -la ^d en-lil ₂ -la ₂ ba-dim ₂ | <i>year: "The throne, joy of Enlil, was fashioned."</i> |

§2.6.2. Commentary

§2.6.2.1. This tablet is a transfer of livestock. It is legible except for the personal name indicating the individual who effected the transfer, whose name is effaced. En-dingirmu was an expending official from the bureau of Tummal at Puzrish-Dagan, and Abba-saga, tentatively read in line 4, was one of his well-known associates (Hilgert & Reichelt 2001: 65).

§2.7. Wheaton 007

Contents: Receipt for wool
Measurements: 48 × 43 × 22mm
Provenience: Umma(?)
Date: Šu-Suen 7

§2.7.1. Transliteration and Translation

Obverse

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. 22 gu ₂ 4 ⁵ / ₆ ma-na siki | <i>22 talents 4⁵/₆ mina tan GI wool</i> |
| 2. 3 gu ₂ 28 ¹ / ₃ ma-na siki | <i>3 talents 28¹/₃ mina wool gukkal offfat-tailed sheep,</i> |
| 3. 3 ma-na siki udu ba-uš ₂ | <i>3 mina wool of slaughtered sheep;</i> |
| 4. nam-en-na | <i>'lordship';</i> |

Reverse

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. ki kas ₄ -ta | <i>from Kas</i> |
| 2. gu-du-du | <i>did Gududu</i> |
| 3. šu ba-ti | <i>receive;</i> |
| <i>blank space</i> | |
| 4. mu ^d šu- ^d suen lugal | <i>year: "Šu-Suen, king of Ur, the land of Zabšali destroyed."</i> |
| uri ₅ ^{ki} -ma-ke ₄ ma-da | |
| za-ab-ša-li ^{ki} mu- ^h ul | |

§2.7.2. Commentary

§2.7.2.1. This is a receipt for various types of wool. The first two wool sorts were presumably sheered wool. Siki GI (possibly reading sig₁₇) may have been a tan or yellow-colored wool (see Waetzoldt 1972: 6; Steinkeller

1995: 57) whereas siki gukkal may have been taken from the fat-tailed sheep, that are common in Ur III texts (see Sallaberger 2014: 104 and n. 46). The last type of wool documented in this receipt is so-called ‘dead wool.’ ‘Dead wool’ was taken from slaughtered sheep and was likely considered to be a less luxurious quality (for additional wool types, see Steinkeller 1995: 57).

§2.7.2.2. Van de Mieroop 1993: 168 suggested that “the nam-en-na may refer to the herd which he [i.e., a shepherd] agrees to supervise for another owner.” At the same time, the designation is not entirely clear and it may be, in a receipt for wool such as this, that nam-en-na, literally ‘lordship,’ is a quality designation (Waetzoldt 1972: 31-32), or as implied by *AnOr* 7, 264, a designation of a particular breed. The term in any case appears almost exclusively in the context of secondary products from herded animals, including those referring to hides of goats and by-products of large cattle.

§2.7.2.3. Several individuals named Gududu are known, nearly all of them documented at Umma (see Dahl 2007: 82 and n. 298). For this reason, it may be that this tablet originated from Umma.

§2.8. Wheaton 008

Contents: Receipt for wool
Measurements: 48 × 43 × 22mm
Provenience: Umma?
Date: Šu-Suen 7

§2.8.1. Transliteration and Translation

Obverse

- | | |
|---|-----------------------|
| 1. 2 udu | 2 sheep, |
| 2. 1 sila ₄ | 1 lamb. |
| 3. ba-uš ₂ | slaughtered, |
| 4. u ₄ 10-kam | 10 th day; |
| 5. ki be-li ₂ -i ₃ -li ₂ -ta | from Bēli-ili |

Reverse

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. ^d šul-gi-iri-mu | did Šulgi-irimu |
| 2. šu ba-ti | receive; |
| 3. iti u ₅ -bi ₂ -gu ₇ | month: “Ubi feast,” |
| blank space | |
| 4. mu us ₂ -sa si-ma-num ₂ ^{ki} ba-ḫul | year after: “Simanum was destroyed”; |

Left edge

- | | |
|------|-------------|
| 1. 3 | (total:) 3. |
|------|-------------|

§2.8.2. Commentary

§2.8.2.1. This is a receipt for slaughtered livestock, which Bēli-ili provided to Šulgi-irimu. Šulgi-irimu is quite well attested in Drehem beginning in Šulgi 42 v through the end of the reign of Šu-Suen; he frequently received slaughtered livestock (for instance Hilgert & Reichelt 2001: 64-65, 67; CDLI registers over 900 such accounts combining Šulgi-irimu and ba-uš₂).

§2.9. Wheaton 009

Contents: Receipt for wool
Measurements: 42 × 39 × 14mm
Provenience: Umma
Date: Amar-Suen 7 viii

§2.9.1. Transliteration and Translation

Obverse

- | | |
|---|----------------------------|
| 1. 150 guruš u ₄ 1-še ₃ | 150 male laborer workdays, |
| 2. ^r še iri-sag-rig ₇ ^{ki} -ta | grain from Irisagrig(?) |
| 3. zi-ga | lifted; |
| 4. ugula a-la-a | foreman: Alaya, |

Reverse

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| 1. kišib ₃ ur-mes | under seal of by Ur-mes; |
| blank space | |
| 2. iti šu-eš-ša | month: “Šu’ēša,” |
| 3. mu ḫu-uh ₂ -nu-ri ^{ki} ba-ḫul | year: “Ḫuḫnuri was destroyed.” |

Seal

- | | |
|---|-----------------|
| 1. ^r ur ¹ -mes | Ur-mes, |
| 2. dub-sar | scribe, |
| 3. dumu ur-d ^r suen ¹ | son of Ur-Suen. |

§2.9.2. Commentary

§2.9.2.1. This is a receipt for 150 days worth of work removing grain from Irisagrig under the supervision of a certain Alaya.

§2.9.2.2. The tablet was horizontally sealed with Ur-mes’s seal, leaving a well-defined impression on its reverse. An impression, seemingly of the same seal with the same orientation, is also faintly visible on the lower portion of the obverse. The sealing can be correlated with that drawn by Mayr (Mayr 1997: no. 802 = CDLI S000476, with currently four impressed tablet witnesses, including this one; the envelope of *CTMMA* 1, 23, demonstrates that our Ur-mes was a šabra in the Drehem administration, thus an official of some note).

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