Some Cuneiform Texts from the Haldar Collection.  
Two Old Babylonian Contracts

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It was brought to my attention some time ago that a small number of cuneiform texts were housed in a private collection in Uppsala, Sweden.¹ The texts had previously been part of the collection belonging to docent Alfred Ossian Haldar. In this article two Old Babylonian documents, their known history and their cultural setting are presented and commented on.

A brief history of the Haldar collection

Born in 1907, Haldar was active as a researcher in oriental languages and cultures from the 1940s well into the 1970s. He received his doctoral degree in 1945 for his dissertation on prophetic traditions, Associations of Cult Prophets among the Ancient Semites,² taking into account not only cuneiform evidence, but also the Hebrew scriptures and early Arabic sources. Though his interest may have lain in the Near East as a whole, Assyriology remained one of his passions. Beside numerous contributions to scholarly journals and textbooks on the subjects of Near Eastern archaeology and religions, he authored several monographs, among others: Who were the Amorites?³ Haldar passed away in 1986.

The history of parts of Haldar’s collection can be established with some degree of certainty. The five texts which now make up the remainder of Haldar’s collection are the remains of a much larger collection. Between the years 1961 and 1981 Haldar sold or donated – among other things – inscribed objects and cuneiform tablets to The Museum of Mediterranean and Near Eastern Antiquities (Medelhavsmuseet) in Stockholm⁴ and to the Danish National Museum.⁵ At least one of the texts

¹ I thank Professor Olof Pedersén for drawing this collection to my attention and for reading this article through various stages of its production, and for making important comments on matters of formality. Heartfelt thanks also go to the owner of the collection for allowing me to publish the texts. Abbreviations follow the system of Archiv für Orientforschung with the addition of MMB for Medelhavsmuseets Bulletin, Stockholm 1961–. Dates are sometimes given in abbreviated form: Si 4 means that a text is dated to the fourth regnal year of king Samsuiluna of Babylon; RS is used for year in the reign of king Rim-Sin of Larsa. A colon after a text number means that in the primary publication no indication is given as to where the reverse begins. Signs with unknown reading are given in upper-case letters, or, if unintelligible, as X.
² Published under the same title, Uppsala 1945.
³ Who were the Amorites? Monographs on the Ancient Near East, Leiden 1971.
⁵ C. Halvgaard & C. Johansen RA 98 (2004) p. 2. This article saw the publishing of nine Ur III texts which had entered the museum’s collections by means of Haldar in 1981. In all, Haldar donated 24 texts, along with other objects, to the Danish National Museum.
had been acquired by Haldar during a visiting fellowship at Yale. It is very probable that Haldar acquired several other texts during his time at Yale. But exactly when the other texts entered into Haldar’s possession, and from where they originated has proven to be worthy of some detective work.

The two Old Babylonian contracts under scrutiny here were both originally published by Theophilus Goldridge Pinches in 1917 in *The Proceedings of the Society of Biblical Archaeology* volume 39. The texts were by then part of a British collection: the “Relph Collection”. Reginald A. Smith, once Curator of the Department of Antiquities at The British Museum, alluded to the Relph Collection in at least two different periodicals. Scholarly literature contains a few other references to Mr. Relph or to his collection. It seems that he had partaken in the excavation of an Anglo-Saxon cemetery in Howletts, Kent. At least, a later article on another Anglo-Saxon cemetery contains a reference to him.

Pinches does not report much on the collection save that all tablets had been “acquired by purchase.” As pertains to the collector, Pinches referred to the owner at a point in his tripartite article on the collection. Concerning the text labelled no. 18, he notes: “The envelope was opened by Dr. Relph on September 8th, 1916”. Thanks to Pinches’ subscript to the second part of his article, we know that this “Dr. Relph” was in fact, Dr. Arthur E. Relph, Member of the Royal College of Surgeons (M.R.C.S.), “Lecturer upon Dental Surgery at University College Hospital Medical School”. In 1936 the upcoming sale of the Relph Collection at the hands of Sotheby’s was announced. The auction was scheduled to take place on June 9–10 the same year. How the cuneiform texts once part of the Relph Collection fell into Haldar’s hands is at present not known.

The texts published in hand copy, transliteration into latin characters, and commented on by Pinches – eight in all – were internally numbered in a sequence seemingly based on chronological considerations. At least, the text sequence 17 through 24 are all from the Old Babylonian period (ca. 2000–1595 BCE, following the middle chronology). The title of Pinches’ article leads one to believe that these

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6 A. Haldar *BiOr* 10 (1953) p. 13: “In my private collection is another sample of the same inscription, which I obtained in 1949 through the kindness of Professor F. J. Stephens”. Haldar is describing an inscription of Enmetena, ruler of the Sumerian city state Lagaš, ca. 2400 BCE, edited by E. Sollberger *CIRPL*, Ent. 45–73 (exemplar 70 in the index on p. xiii).
7 R. A. Smith *Man, A Monthly Record of Anthropological Science* 18 (1918) p. 187, a discussion of prehistoric British flint tools from a named site. The second reference to the collection of Mr. Relph by Smith can be found in *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs*, volume 57 no. 328 (Jul. 1930) pp. 3–5, 8–10. A bronze-gilt buckle is illustrated on pl. II (G), and stated in the notes as coming from Howletts, Kent, and dating to the late sixth century (CE). The note was accompanied by a parenthesis giving the name “Mr. A. E. Relph”.
8 S. Chadwick *Medieval Archaeology* 2 (1958) p. 38: “Some doubt will always remain about the accuracy of the grave-groupings of the Howletts cemetery; as yet unpublished, they are based on rough notes by Mr. A. E. Relph”. Excavations at the Howletts cemetery were carried out between 1913 and 1918, see J. M. Cook, *Early Anglo-Saxon Buckets: a Corpus of Copper Alloy- and Iron-Bound, Stave-Built Vessels*, Oxford 2004, p. 67.
11 T. G. Pinches *PSBA* 39 (1917) p. 72.
12 A. C. R. Carter *The Burlington Magazine for Connoisseurs* vol. 68 no. 399, pp. xxi–xxiv. Neither clay tablets nor flint objects were mentioned in this connection.
13 “Some Texts of the Relph Collection, with Notes on Babylonian Chronology and Genesis XIV”.

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were not the only cuneiform texts in the Relph Collection. Logic dictates that there were at least 16 more. The texts with which we will be preoccupied here carried the numbers 17 and 23 in the Relph Collection and in Pinches’ original publication. The latter text (Haldar 2/Relph 23) still sports a round label with the number ‘23’. Collation of the texts have added little to Pinches’ excellent hand copies.

Written contracts

Cuneiform writing was the culmination of a long process leading toward a fixed system of recording transactions. Though assyriologists may disagree as to the nature and steps of this process, few would argue against there being a long history behind the first true written texts, which appear around 3200 BCE on sites in southern Iraq and south-western Iran.14

The script was continually refined and adapted to the spoken languages of the area. The majority of texts written up until the Old Babylonian period were in the Sumerian language. Even when Sumerian ceased being a spoken language around the turn of the second millennium BCE, texts continued being written to a large extent in Sumerian. Legal texts were no exception. Two law-collections known from Mesopotamia, one from late Sumerian times, and one from the early Old Babylonian period, were written in Sumerian.15

Documentation for legally binding agreements was as important then as it is today. Contracts and receipts in the form of inscribed clay tablets were stored in family archives as proof of a family’s right to the plot of land or the estate concerned. The same was valid for other types of documents with legal implications such as contracts of adoption, leases for fields, renting of oxen for plowing, deposition of goods for safe-keeping, or silver-lending activities. In the Old Babylonian period, King Hammurapi of Babylon (ruled ca. 1792–1750 BCE) gave several examples in his laws of cases in which it was necessary to have a written receipt for, or witnesses to, an agreement involving shifting ownership of property.16

Sealings

One finds a wide-spread use of a special type of seal characteristic of the Mesopotamian cultural sphere – the cylinder seal, even before the earliest literate times. Many but not all seals had writing on them to identify the owner. The seals were often quite small and were made of stone, but other materials were also used. As opposed to stamp seals (which were in use before and after the heyday of cylinder seals) the motifs and writing on cylinder seals were carved around the body of a cylinder-

15 An overview and translations of early Near Easterns laws are given by M. Roth, Law Collections from Mesopotamia and Asia Minor.
16 As is summarized in Codex Hammurapi §7: “If a man bought or received for safekeeping either silver, gold, a manservant, a womanservant, an ox, a sheep, an ass or whatever it may be, from the hands of another man or from a manservant without witnesses or a written receipt, that man is a thief; he shall be killed.”

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shaped piece of stone which, when rolled over moist clay, left behind a continuous impression. The use of cylinder seals spread throughout the Near East, and they were subject to differences in local styles and iconographic preferences which changed with time.\textsuperscript{17} Seals could be reused and have their original identifying inscriptions replaced by a new one, but they could also remain unchanged by the new owner.\textsuperscript{18}

In legal transactions either the witnesses or the primary parties themselves sealed the tablet. This could be done before or after the tablet was inscribed with the text reporting the transaction. Sometimes there was also a clay envelope, made to encase the tablet, and then seals could be rolled exclusively on the envelope. Instead of using seals, there are examples from different periods and places in Mesopotamia of persons impressing their fingernails or the hem of their robe into the clay.\textsuperscript{19} In cases or areas where private persons had no seal of their own an ad-hoc seal could be made on the spot from less expensive materials.\textsuperscript{20} Sometimes sons could seal a document using their father’s seal,\textsuperscript{21} and colleagues could borrow each other’s seals.\textsuperscript{22} It is therefore not fully understood how ownership of a seal ties in with the usage of it. It is clearly not to be considered as corresponding fully to a modern-day personal signature.\textsuperscript{23} In legal disputes over property, testimony of witnesses carried greater weight than the sealed document in itself. One must therefore imagine a more flexible conceptual framework for the use and legal weight of seals.

The two texts here examined were written and sealed only a few years apart, near the end of the Old Babylonian period in two cities in Southern Mesopotamia. Apart from the information we may get about the buying and selling of goods and services or the division of estates we also get information about the people witnessing the transactions who may well turn up in other documents from about the same time. As we shall see, the ceremonials which accompanied the agreement can be of some help in locating the document in time and space. For as is sometimes the case, these two documents lack an archaeological context.

\textit{Text no. 1: a contract recording the sale of a prebend.}

The first text is a contract of a most interesting kind. It stems from the city of Ur, in the south of present day Iraq. In the contract a son and his mother sell a prebend duty as courtyard sweeper in the sacred precinct of the city; a duty most probably inherited by the boy from his father. The courtyard ought to have been situated near the

\textsuperscript{17} An introduction to the history and character of cylinder seals, their spatial diffusion and iconography can be found with D. Collon \textit{First Impressions, passim.}
\textsuperscript{18} See some examples listed by J. D. Muhly \textit{JAOS} 101 (1981) p. 401.
\textsuperscript{19} J. Renger \textit{BiMes} 6 pp. 76ff.
\textsuperscript{20} In the Old Babylonian Diyala-area, private persons seemingly did not have the right to seal documents or even to own a seal. There, tablets were sealed beforehand by a royal emissary and the parties involved had their names carved on an ad-hoc seal. The matter is discussed by J. D. Muhly \textit{JAOS} 101 (1981) p. 401.
\textsuperscript{21} See below, commentary to text 2.
\textsuperscript{22} An example of this practice is given by D. Charpin \textit{BiOr} 38 (1981) col. 533.
\textsuperscript{23} J. Renger \textit{BiMes} 6 p. 79.
main temple in Ur – the Ekišnuĝal\textsuperscript{24} – devoted to the cult of the moon-god, Nanna in Sumerian, Sîn (or Su’en) in Akkadian. The position as courtyard sweeper is defined as limited in time to the first 12 days of the month of Abum, corresponding to the second half of July. Since minted currencies of coins were not yet invented, the price for the prebend duty was measured out in silver of a predetermined weight; 2 sheqels, or approximately 16.5 g. The two parties in the transaction swore an oath together, solemnly promising not to dispute the agreement.

A formula at the end of the text gives the name of the year in which the transaction took place. Such formulae had been used for several hundreds of years. The year got its name from a significant event in the kingdom during the previous year.\textsuperscript{25} Since at times there were several parallel dynasties based in different cities, a wealth of year names are known. This specific tablet bears a date belonging to an upstart

\textsuperscript{24} For the name and history of the Ekišnuĝal, see A. R. George MC 5 p. 114, no. 653. Exactly where in the sacred precinct the E₂-mah courtyard was situated is uncertain. For an attempt at a localization of different installations belonging to the main temple, see D. Charpin Clergé pp. 325–340, esp. pp. 333ff.

\textsuperscript{25} For an overview of the material and its problems, see D. Charpin OBO 160/4 pp. 45ff.
king from the South – Rīm-Sīn II – whose claim to power was short-lived. He reigned for about 1 ½ years during the early third of the reign of his contemporary Samsuiluna of Babylon (reigned ca. 1749–1712), whose father Ḫammurapi had established control of the South some 15 years earlier.  

The fact that we have several contracts of this type shows that it was not altogether uncommon to sell less important duties in the temple. A private archive from Old Babylonian Nippur has yielded about two dozen contracts of this type. In most of those documents, the person acquiring duties in the temple was one and the same person. Exactly what benefits the prebend entailed are not known. It is probable that, besides piety and the status that could come from actually working on the private domains of the deity, some more mundane advantages like partaking in the considerable amounts of food destined for the god’s table may have played a part. Also, the potential for networking and rubbing shoulders with celebrities and learned folk must not be underestimated. But in the end, people would for some reason actually pay to do menial work. And at that, as in this case, in the middle of the hottest season, with temperatures at mid-day averaging just short of a staggering 50°C.

Haldar 1 (Ex-Relph 17)

Transliteration

Obv.  1  mu l–kam u₄ 12–kam kisal-luḥ₂ÈZU / kisal-maḥ₄ bala gub-ba iti NE.NE-ĝar iti dub saḡ
  r₅ "ki? ₂ÈZU / kisal-ì Ḫa₄ A-li-tim ama-ni
  5  'A-pil-₄Ašnan(še.tir) dumu Lu₄-diģir-ra
      in-si-s₂₅
      2 gin₃ ku₃-babbar sa₁₀₄ til-la-ni-še₅
      in-na-an-la₂
      inim ġal₂⁺la in-na-an-gub-bu

Rev.  1  ɪgi A-₄aḥ-kal-la es₈₄-a-ab-du
  1Lu₃-Nanna(šeš.ki) gudu₄
  1 'A-pil-₄a kisal-luḥ
  5  'U₄-se₂-li dumu Ku₃²Nin-gal

26 A study on the chronological difficulties of this king has been carried out by M. Stol Studies pp. 53ff.
27 For the general nature of prebend duties in ancient Mesopotamia, see the overview with references by G. van Driel RIA 10:7/8 (2005) pp. 518–524 ("Pfründe").
28 See A. Goetze JCS 18 (1964) pp. 102–113 with a list of similar documents from other archives, 102².
Seals
3. A-pil-[a]-ušna / dumu Lu₂-di-[r]a. (?) – Rev. between list of witnesses and date. Large seal, ca. 2.5 cm high.

Translation
Obv. 1–6 Apil-Ašnan, son of Lu-dištir, bought a 12–day per year turn of duty for the beginning of the month of Abum the position as courtyard sweeper in the great courtyard of the temple of Šin from Q̃īštī-Ea, the son of Lipit-Ea, and from Alittum, his mother.

7–11 He paid them the full price, 2 silver sheqels. The seller shall be responsible for future claims. Unto a distant day the agreement shall not be overturned. They swore by the name of Rīm-Sin, the king.

Rev. 1–7 Witnessed: Ah-kalla, the esabdū-official, Lu-Nanna, the gudū-priest Apilša, the courtyard sweeper, Lu-Amar-Sīnaka, the courtyard sweeper, Uselli son of Ku-Šingal, Ipqu-er-šetim son of Šillī-Emah, Ellu-mû-šu, the courtyard sweeper.

8–10 Month of Šabātum, being the 23rd day. Year (a) of Rīm-Sin II.

Seals
3. Apil-Ašnan / son of Lu-dištir?

Commentary
Seal 3. The impression is very light and little can be added to Pinches’s description. It would be unusual for the buyer in a contract like this to have sealed the document. Reading uncertain.

Obv. 2 The contract implies a division of the months into three 10–day periods which is obvious from another text from Ur.²⁹ The underlying structure of the Sumerian expression iti dub saq is perhaps to be understood as a periphrastic genitive with a locative: iti(-ak) dub saq(-bi-a), “on the first tablet of the month”, referring perhaps to prevalent book-keeping practices.

²⁹ See the discussion D. Charpin Clergé 209f.

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Rev. 1 Formerly read as $ab-(a-)ab-du(\cdot)$, but reading $es_{\text{s}}sa_{\text{s}}ab-du$ now makes reading of the first sign as $es_{\text{s}}$ certain.\(^{30}\) More about Ah-kalla and his family, D. Charpin Clergé pp. 242f.

Rev. 5 Uselli, from Akkadian $sullû(m)$, “to petition”, demands a direct object, so the name must be a hypocoristicon for a theophorous name. The name of the father indicates that this person may be identical with Sîn-uselli, son of a high official in the temple of Enki in Ur.\(^{31}\)

Rev. 6 The attestations for $ip-qu_{\text{2}}$-DN in Old Babylonian Ur texts by far outnumber names spelled $i-pi_{\text{2}}$-iq-DN in the same corpus. Also, this name is spelled $ip-qu_{\text{2}}$-$er$-$se$-$tim$ in the only phonetic rendering of the name from Ur, H. H. Figulla UET 5 607 rev. 25. The verb $epēqu(m)$ in Akkadian appears only in personal names, see D. O. Edzard RIA 9 (1998–2001), p. 107, §3.1, with references.

Rev. 7 The name Ellu-mû$-$šu probably represents a parallel to an epithet – at least in late sources – ascribed to the moon-god,\(^{32}\) ellum $mê$, “pure of powers”. The adjective in this type of construction is normally in the accusative and is not bound by the number or gender of the noun it is attached to. The adjective ellum here conforms to the number of the one signified by the epithet. Both main nouns mü being formally plural, would take an adjective in the corresponding number: ellūtu(m)-mü$-$šu, as would have to be the case if one followed the attempted interpretations of J. J. Stamm MVAeG 44 p. 123\(^1\): “Rein sind seine Ordnungen” or “Rein ist sein Wasser”\(^{33}\).

Rev. 9f. This year formula has so far evaded interpretation. Fuller writings show it to be an abbreviation for: mu Rīm-Sîn lugal Uri$_{\text{s}}$-ma E$_{\text{2}}$-mud-kur-ra-ke$_{\text{4}}$ ki edin KU/ŠE$_{\text{3}}$ bi$_{\text{2}}$-in-ĝar-ra. All instances lack the ergative marker -e after lugal; and the extended genitive marker -k(e$_{\text{4}}$) after the name of the temple can hardly be taken as part of the royal titulature: “King of Ur (and the) Emudkura”. The verb ġar could be taken in relation to KU/ŠE, which share the reading dur$_{\text{2}}$ – in the few instances in which the sign is featured in the formula – to form the intransitive compound verb dur$_{\text{2}}$ - ġar. This as opposed to ġar taken by itself, being essentially transitive.\(^{34}\) A tentative translation could thus be: “Year, Rīm-Sîn, the king, took (his) seat in Ur, by the Emudkura, the KI.EDIN”\(^{35}\). In fact, Rīm-Sîn is only mentioned as having been “raised to the kingship of Larsa” in an inscription of Samsuiluna which was probably composed more than ten years after the Rīm-Sîn interlude.\(^{36}\) Otherwise, the place of origin of Samsuiluna’s enemy is not expressly referred to. What the “place of (?) / on (?) the steppe”, the KI.EDIN, should be taken to imply, is un-


\(^{33}\) The construction – sometimes called $damaqum \text{ īnim}$ – has been discussed by several able scholars. For the most recent analysis and an overview of previous literature, see E. Cohen BSOAS 71 (2008) pp. 49f.

\(^{34}\) M.-L. Thomsen The Sumerian Language pp. 305f.

\(^{35}\) For other attestations and interpretations of this date and for information on the temple Emudkura, see the references collected by D. Charpin OBO 160/4 pp. 338f.f.

\(^{36}\) See translation and discussion by M. Stol Studies p. 52f.
known. The Edin was likely the stretch of land between irrigated areas or river banks. It could also be an epithet of Emudkura, or, less likely, of Ur.

Text no. 2: a division of inheritance.
The city where the second text was originally drawn up is probably Larsa, around 30 km North-West of Ur in Southern Mesopotamia. Larsa had for quite some time been the home of a royal dynasty before the advent of the dynasty of Babylon under Hammurapi, and his annexation of the city and the other cities of the South. Larsa was the home of the sun-god Šamaš, the god of justice, and his court. Larsa was largely deserted around Samsuiluna’s 10th regnal year. This fact supplies us with a fairly certain date for the composition of the tablet: somewhere between 1749–1740 BCE.

The contracts concerning the division of paternal estates from Old Babylonian Mesopotamia amount to around 200. Most recipients of an inheritance were men – either as sons of the deceased male head of a household, or as brothers of certain types of female religious functionaries. The division of the estate could take place over a longer period of time and could involve several stages of divisions where we are often left with only part of the procedures. In some places, a larger share was allotted to the oldest brother. Brothers could also in unison opt not to divide some types of inheritances. Sometimes a brother would buy another brother out of the inheritance for monetary compensation. But brothers could for different reasons also choose not to partition the estate. Some inheritance documents feature references to the drawing of lots to decide who received which parcel of land or what piece of furniture from the estate of the parents. This was perhaps in order to minimize the risk of disagreement over the partition.

Due to pure chance, the document here studied can be connected with the activities of a well-off family in Larsa. This document gives information on the 4th known generation of the family of Sin-nûr-mâtim and his descendants, his great-grandson Lipit-Ea being the person concerned in this document. It deals with the division of a paternal estate between a number of children, though only Lipit-Ea is named. Entered in list form are a number of doors along with landed property in the region of Larsa and beyond which Lipit-Ea is said to have shared with his

37 D. Charpin BiOr 38 (1981) col. 533 left the question open, pointing to Ur and Larsa as places mentioned in the different texts seemingly related to the present text. Below in the notes to the text we will argue for a Larsa origin, at least for this text.  
39 Documentation from major Southern cities as Uruk, Ur and Larsa ceases by the end of Samsuiluna’s 11th regnal year, D. Charpin OBO 160/4 pp. 342, 411.  
43 Lipit-Ea and his siblings were in fact heirs to one of the more well-known personas in late OB Larsa history: Balagunamhe. The exact relationship between Lipit-Ea and Eridu-îûîwir (appearing here on the obv. lines 16–18) is debatable. See references to previous literature on the family of Balagunamhe with G. Kalla AOAT 296, pp. 133 and 163: Larsa: Familie 2, with family tree op. cit. p. 148.

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brothers. The other beneficiaries ought surely to have had similar documents drawn up. Maybe there was even a main tablet, where all the shares of the siblings were listed together, and the exact placements of their fields and gardens in relation to each other were documented. The qualities of the different types of land parcels mentioned in the document largely remain enigmatic.

**Haldar 2 (Ex-Relph 23)**


**Transliteration**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Obv.</th>
<th>Rev.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[x sar e₃, du₂-a ? ... ]</td>
<td>1'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[...] &quot;X&quot; [...]</td>
<td>1'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[...] ši tu šila a-di ḫa-la &quot;X&quot; [...]</td>
<td>1'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[...] iš-tu šı-gi₃-zi z₂₄-ḡar-ra &quot;X&quot; [...]</td>
<td>1'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[...] ı₃′ ı₃′ šeš₄ mi-[ri₂-za ...]</td>
<td>5'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[...] ı₃′ ı₃′ mi-ri₂-[za ...]</td>
<td>5'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[x gin₂, igi₃.gable, 6 še šu-tum ka₃ &quot;AN&quot; [...]]</td>
<td>1&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[x saᵢᵢ r ši-ki-tum 4 ? gi₃, gin₂ sar ki-šub-ba [...]</td>
<td>1&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[...] Larsa(ud.unug) &quot;1 sar 8 gi₃, ki-šub-ba [...]</td>
<td>1&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[x s]ar ši-[k]-i-it-tum 2½ sar ki-šub-ba &quot;X&quot; [...]</td>
<td>10'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4' sar ki-šub-ba &quot;ka₃&quot; &quot;I-nana(muš₂) Zabalam,(za.muš₃.unug)&quot; [...]]</td>
<td>10'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 sar ši-ki-i-šum 2 sar ki-šub-ba ša₃, &quot;X&quot;[(x)]&quot; [...]]</td>
<td>10'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6'½, sar ki-šub-ba ša₃, G₃₄-nun-edin-na [(x)]</td>
<td>10'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60(1 ša-ši) sar ı₃′ši₃, li-wi-tum an-ta</td>
<td>15'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60(1 šu-ši) sar ı₃′ši₃, li-wi-tum ki-ta uš ki-ta</td>
<td>15'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1' iku ı₃′ši₃, ha-za-nu-un ša₃ Larsa(ud.unug)&quot;</td>
<td>20'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 iku ı₃′ši₃, i-ta Eridu(nun)&quot;li-wi-ir ša₃ Bad₃-tibira&quot;</td>
<td>20'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>73 sar ı₃′ši₃, ša₃ a₃li₃-tal₃-nu₃-tum-ma i-ta Eridu(nun)&quot;li-wi-ir</td>
<td>20'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 iku &quot;ur-ba-tum i-ta Eridu(nun)&quot;li-wi-ir uru X-na-nu an-ta</td>
<td>20'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 ı₃′ildag₂₃, G₃₄-nun-edin-na ša₃ lu₂ unug erin₂</td>
<td>20'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20' ha-la Li-pi₃₂-ta,E₃-a</td>
<td>20'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ša₀ i-na mi-it-gur-it-šu₃ nu₃</td>
<td>20'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>it-ti alḫ₁-šu₂ i-zi-zu</td>
<td>20'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note,** however, that the term *alḫu₂,* “brothers,” could also cover “nephews” and “cousins,” M. Stol *OBO* 160/4 p. 695"^{377}.

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Seals

Translation

Obv. 1'-5' [x m² of house in good repair ... from the street to the share [of ...], [x] oiled picket door(s) [...] [x] picket door(s) [...]}
6' [...] (and) 0.35m² ... the gate of [DN]?
7'-12' [XX36] m² house plot, 90 m² uncultivated plot [in ...], [x] garden, region upstream(?), Larsa, 40.8 m² uncultivated plot [...], [XX36] m² house plot, 90 m² uncultivated plot [...], 144 m² uncultivated plot, by the gate of Istār of Zabalam [...], 36 m² house plot, 72 m², uncultivated plot in [...], 240 m² uncultivated plot in Ganunedina.
13'-19' 2160 m² garden, region upstream(?), 2160 m² garden, region downstream(?), longer side(?), 36000 m² garlic garden in Larsa, 3600 m² garden, next to (the property of) Eridu-liwwir in Badtibira, 2628 m² garden in the township of Idi-ilumma next to (the property of) Eridu-liwwir in Badtibira, 36000 m² shrubbery, next to (the property of) Eridu-liwwir in upper X-nana, 10 poplars (in) Ganunedina in (the territory of) the leader of Uruk's workers.
20'-24' The inheritance of Lipit-Ea, which he divided with his brothers in mutual agreement. The inheritance which they divided they shall not alter. [They swore] by the names of Nanna, Šamaš, Marduk and Samsuiluna.

Rev. 1'-16 Witnessed: Sín-šemi, son of Sín-imguranni, Sín-imguranni, son of Ea-illī, Iššu-ibniššu, the surveyor, Ilī-tūram, son of Ibbi-Šakan, Ninurta-illatsu, son of Šallurnu, Bēššu, son of Bun-gurum, Šillī-ī, son of Sīn-asārēd, Isqi-ilšu, son of Mār-Amurrim, Tarībhum, brother of Sīn-ilumā, Pū-Šaša, son of Šumi-abīya, Šaniq-pī-Šamaš, son of Imta-gar-Šamaš, Etel-pī-Eštar, son of Sīn-Šakan, Šamaš-bani, his brother, Puzur-Nazi the builder [[x']], Abu-waqr, his son (?') [[x']] and Awīl-Šamaš, son of Sīn-[x-x].

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1. Ilšu-[ib][nšu] / son of Apil-[…] / servant of Nin[…].
2. [Sil][i]-[i][mum] / [son of] Sin-ašarê[d] / servant of Nin\(\gamma\)-si\(\lambda\)na.
5. Bēlšunu / son of Bun-ĝūr[u]m / servant of EN-\(\alpha\)x/ and […].

Commentary
The tablet is probably not missing more than one or two lines at the top of the obverse, and two or three at the bottom of the reverse. At the top of the obverse ought to have been some general reference to a house to which the inventory later mentioned would have belonged. At the bottom of the obverse, a date made up of month, day and a year formula of Samsuiluna is expected.

Seal 5 At the lower left end of the reverse, a fourth line beginning with \(u_{3}\) looks like it belonged to the seal of Bēlšunu.

Obv. 2'-3' These two lines seem to refer to the division of the main estate; perhaps the family estate. Unfortunately the beginning and end of each line at the top of the tablet are damaged, so the readings remain tentative. For za₃-ĝar-ra = ašīrūtum as ‘chapel’, see references with K. van der Toorn 40 CRAI p. 69f.⁴

Obv. 4'-5' For the mi-ri₂-za type of door, see G. T. Ferwerda TLB/SLB 5 pp. 24f., note to no. 12, line 1.⁵ “Oiled picket door” qualified as gu-la, “big”, appears in C.-F. Jean TCL 11 172 obv. 9.

Obv. 6', 10' Signs transliterated as ka₂ here and in line 6' were read by Pinches PSBA 39 (1917) pp. 89f. as šubat, implying a reading DAG. This is much closer to the truth than the rendering by B. Groneberg & M. Stol Rêp. 3 p. 256 who read bīt, i.e. E₂. The sign clearly has two verticals to the right, and is slightly higher and slightly wider than copied by Pinches, giving a more quadrangular shape than in Pinches’s copy. E₂ seems therefore out of the question. In line 10’ a reading ka₂ referring to the area near the gate of Inana/Ištar of Zabalam was opted for. It is hard to tell whether this gate should be a North-Eastern gate in the city wall or a gate placed in the vicinity of the temple of said goddess, known to have existed in Larsa in the Old Babylonian period; see for example references with J. Renger HSAO p. 146 and D. Charpin Clergé 258¹.

⁴ Using Old Babylonian inheritance documents K. Reiter calculated the price of household appliances, including doors. On average a door would be equal to 1.5 sheqels of silver; a mi-ri₂-za door somewhat cheaper: 1 sheqel. This can be compared to the price of a cow at 7.5 sheqels of silver, a sheep or goat at 2 sheqels and a swine at 1 sheqel of silver. 40 CRAI, p. 269. G. Kalla, RIA 9 (1998–2001), p. 41 (“Nachlaḥ. B. Altbabylonisch”), stated that the mi-ri₂-za doors were actually the most expensive ones, ranging in price between \(\frac{1}{4}\) sheqel and 2 sheqels of silver. G. T. Ferwerda, loc. cit. gave the value of a mi-ri₂-za door as between \(\frac{1}{2}\) and 2 \(\frac{1}{4}\) sheqels of silver.
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Obv. 7’ ši-ki-tum here and ši-ki-ittum in lines obv. 9’, 11’ are in all probability just variant writings for the same type of property.\(^46\) It is significant that in every case it precedes references to ki-šub-ba land and that in obv. 11’ the parcel qualified as šikittum is not very large. The ki.šub.ba-land could then be taken as belonging to the šikittum parcels, and was probably adjacent to these, as they could be considered to be too small to merit separate mention. M. Stol has suggested that some references to a barn and a second floor taken together were summed up as šikittum.\(^47\) In no way do our passages here contradict such a suggestion. Maybe, then, the instances where šikittum and ki-šub-ba appear together are they to be taken as “barn” and “barnyard”. Unfortunately we are not able to see exactly where these parcels were situated, as the text is broken at the critical points.

Obv. 12’ No traces remain of a place determinative after the name Ĝ₂-nun-edin-na here or in line 19’. Correct B. Groneberg & M. Stol Rép. 3 p. 78, s.v., accordingly.

Obv. 13’–14’ Tentative. I have no suggestions as to the understanding of these lines.

Obv. 15’ There is no compelling reason to take ḫaxannum in this line as a rare Old Babylonian reference to the civic official translated as “prefect”, by Pinches.\(^48\) Instead, what is meant here is most likely a handsome-sized garden plot assigned for growing garlic.\(^49\)

Obv. 16f’. As D. Charpin, BiDr 38 (1981) col. 546, correctly points out, the family’s properties in Badtibira and Idi-ilumma are known from elsewhere.

Obv. 17’ Pinches left out a horizontal wedge to the left of what he interpreted as IB. I take the middle vertical to be slightly displaced toward the right, but otherwise conforming to the shape of a MA. The reference to the name of the township Idi-ilumma should be added to B. Groneberg & M. Stol Rép. 3 p. 106, and the reference to Idi-Uraš for this text should be stricken. The entry should read Idi-ilumma, as this is the way it is written both here and in F. R. Kraus AbB 4, 122:6.

Obv. 18’ The first sign in the name of the town X-na-nu is clear enough but does not make any sense to me. Correct thus B. Groneberg & M. Stol Rép. 3 p. 270 (not \(^{2}x\) x-na-nu, but \(^{2}x\)X-na-nu). We could be dealing with a town named after a tribal unit, like Sippar-Amnānum, but the lack of mimiation – otherwise consistently present in the document – is disturbing.

Obv. 19’ The order of the last three signs is problematic. erin₂ in this context has been taken as “worker” or “team-worker” in general, for which meaning, see P. Steinkeller N.A.B.U. 1990/12 with fn. 5. Two documents mention the movement of, and disbursements for workers under Urukean leadership, M. Stol Studies p. 51f. (Stol talks of soldiers, but also of the delivery of harmless tools in the same context.)

\(^{46}\) CAD Š/2 has all the lines booked p. 430 sub ši-kitu A, c) 2’.

\(^{47}\) M. Stol OBO 160/4 pp. 686f.,\(^3\)\(^1\)\(^2\). Cf. however op. cit. p. 691\(^3\)\(^4\) for an example of a large residential house qualified as šikittum.

\(^{48}\) T. G. Pinches PSBA 39 (1917) p. 91f. The ḫaxannum was appointed by the king and in charge of the city’s guards, A. L. Oppenheim JESHO 10 (1967) p. 7.

\(^{49}\) For references to garlic in ancient Mesopotamia, see references with M. Stol OBO 160/4 pp. 856f.,\(^1\)^\(^5\)^\(^7\).

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The texts referred to by Stol were both dated to Rîm-Sîn II, year (b), and one of them came from the Relph collection.

*Obv. 20'-22'* Collation shows a small, mangled sign to the right of ŠU in line 21'. Circumstances pretty much demand the form to be in the plural since we are dealing with a number of persons greater than two. A parallel formulation, but with other clauses of contention, is found in C.-F. Jean *TCL* 11 218 rev. 2, ša i-na mi-it-gur-ti-šu-nu i-zi-zu (Si 7). Cf. *op.cit.* no. 200 rev. 3–5 (Si 4), referring to the drawing of lots. Both texts stem from Larsa and feature oaths parallel to our document.

*Obv. 24'* Beside the texts mentioned in the preceding note, the oath formula parallels other Larsa documents from Samsuiluna’s reign: S. I. Feigin *YOS* 12 73 (Si 3), 156 (Si 5), 214 (Si 7), 278 (Si 7), 290 (Si 8a), 353 (Si 11); C.-F. Jean *TCL* 11 198 (Si 3). Note that the same order of gods and king appears also in a Larsa text from Ḥamurapi’s times, C.-F. Jean *TCL* 11 174 (Ḫ 40a).

*Rev. 1* The same PN with a homonymous father appears as witness also in M. Anbar RA 69 (1975) p. 122, no. 8:24, from Larsa (Si 3). The seal of Šin-šemi, *loc. cit.*, seal c, is damaged.

*Rev. 3* Ilšu-ibnišu the surveyor was probably called as witness due to his partaking in the measuring of the different parcels of the document. Whether as a field or a house surveyor. For more texts featuring the *abi ašlim*, see list with M. Anbar & M. Stol RA 85 (1991) p. 36, note to l. 12.

*Rev. 6* A Bu-un-gu-rum, mušen-du₃, “bird-catcher” from Larsa is entered in the index of PNN, D. E. Faust *YOS* 8 p. 9. But the copy of the relevant text, no. 3, has in line 17 instead of GU a sign with an extra horizontal, similar to the LUM in the line above. The name does not feature in M. P. Streck *AOAT* 271, but looks Amorite. The name ought to consist of “offspring” *bunum/binum* with a noun or nominalized adjective containing the radicals g or q and r. A middle-weak root *gwr > gūr* exists in West Semitic dialects with the meaning cub of canine animals or lions.³⁰ A reading Bun-gūrum with the interpretation, “the son, a lion cub”, could be considered.⁵¹

*Rev. 8* Isqi-ilšu thankfully for us used his father’s seal when sealing this tablet, giving us the names of three generations in that family. Māri-Amurrim’s name is spelled out phonetically on his seal: *ma-rî-, T. G. Pinches PSBA 39 (1917) pl. xi, no. 3. Māri-Amurrim’s father was named Waraya (Wa-ra-a-a). Māri-Amurrim also appears as a witness in the Larsa text *YOS* 8 152:30, dated to year 58 of Rîm-Sîn of Larsa. In S. I. Feigin *YOS* 12 312 (Si 8), another son of Māri-Amurrim, Amurrum-ibbišu sealed the document, like here, using his father’s seal (only the first two lines of the seal are preserved). One or more persons named Waraya can be found in several contracts dating to the period before Babylon’s dominion over Larsa.


⁵¹ For *bunum* as variant of *binum* in Amorite names, see M. P. Streck, *op. cit.* p. 168 §2.35, and note 1, and especially p. 170 §2.38.
Rev. 10 Reading Šumi-abîya seems justified when looking at the number of cases with different writings recorded in the OB Ur tablets, H. Figulla UET V pp. 61f. See further J. J. Stamm Die akkadische Namengebung p. 303. mu-ad-da-ĝu₁₀ would then be a “learned” writing of the same type as �示-ša₂-ti for Šamaš-muballit, which is the likely reading of the name in M. Anbar & M. Stol RA 85 (1991) p. 47, no. 20, seal d, from Ur (RS 2).

Rev. 14 Puzur-Nazi’s presence as builder in the document may be due to the fact that the main estate was to be, or had already been, partitioned between the beneficiaries to the estate.

The references to Larsa and environs in the text are in themselves not evidence enough to place the document firmly in Larsa. However, when considering the prosopographical connections to Larsa texts, and the similarities in the oath accompanying the division of the estate, it is very likely that this text also should have come from Larsa. As to the date of composition, it is perhaps safest to envision it as having been composed before the rise to power of Rîm-Sîn II, around 1742 BCE, thus in harmony with the dated oath formulae from Samsuiluna’s regnal years 3–7. At any rate, it is probable, with the usual reservations, that the text was composed before the city of Larsa was abandoned a few years later in the reign of Samsuiluna, as remarked above. Against a date before Rîm-Sîn II one must hold the questionable reference to lu₂ unug erin₂, which could indicate a date shortly after Samsuiluna’s reconquest of the Babylonian South, i.e. after 1740 BCE.

Concluding remarks
It is hoped that this brief article has managed to show how much information two texts which have already been published once can still add to our knowledge about the times in which they were written. Also, they may be indicative of how much work still has to be done and how imperfect our knowledge of the period they represent in fact is. The search for parallels in lexical matters or the study of prosopography is an ongoing task nowhere near completion. But for each and every document studied we are brought closer and closer to the people whose daily lives, beliefs, joys and hardships these texts are persistent reminders of.

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