

## Abhandlung

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# Sealed Bullae and Livestock Management at Irisaġrig in the Early Old Babylonian Period

<https://doi.org/10.1515/za-2023-0013>

**Abstract:** This article offers a detailed study of the organization of livestock management at Irisaġrig in post-Ur III times. Three clusters of texts will be discussed, which focus on the activities of a small group of officials who oversaw the collection and disbursement of small cattle for religious and secular purposes. It is argued that the central urban organization on whose behalf these administrators operated was the local palace. The analysis of the archival records reveals a strong royal presence in the city and suggests that Irisaġrig was an important center of the newly established kingdom of Malġûm.<sup>1</sup>

## 1 Introduction

The fall of Ur at the hands of a joint Elamite and Šimaškian army in the twenty-fourth year of Ibbi-Suen's reign marked the end of the Third Dynasty of Ur, whose five kings had ruled over southern Mesopotamia for more than a century (2110–2003 BCE). However, the failure of the Ur III experiment in state-building and political centralization, inaugurated by Ur-Namma, the founder of the dynasty, had taken place much earlier. While the slow decline of the Ur III kingdom had already begun in the last years of Šu-Suen, it was only during the reign of Ibbi-Suen that the political situation started to deteriorate swiftly. In the early years of his rule, strategic peripheral centers like Ešnunna, Simurrum, and Susa managed to gain independence from Ur or were lost to the Šimaškians of Yabrat I. By the end of Ibbi-Suen's fifth regnal year, major provinces had broken away from the kingdom and administrative record keeping in institutional contexts had ceased completely in cities and royal

centers, the sole exceptions being Nippur and the former political capital Ur.<sup>2</sup>

This period witnessed the rise of new dynasties and the establishment of independent kingdoms in regions that had previously been in the orbit of the Ur III territorial state.<sup>3</sup> Once text production resumed, scribes coined year names celebrating the pious deeds and military undertakings of the new rulers; these began to be used to date administrative and legal documents, rapidly spreading throughout the cities and towns that had come under these new rulers' control.<sup>4</sup>

Unfortunately, due to the paucity of written sources, very little is known of the history of northern and southern Babylonia during the long transitional phase from the third to the second millennium BCE, when Ibbi-Suen continued to exert control over Ur and its hinterland until Kindattu conquered the city, while Išbi-Erra and his successors were consolidating their power and expanding the

**Article note:** Palmiro Notizia, with a contribution by Ammar M. al-Tae

1 Text abbreviations follow those of BDTNS = Database of Neo-Sumerian Texts (<http://bdtns.filol.csic.es>) and/or CDLI = Cuneiform Digital Library Initiative (<http://cdli.ucla.edu>); other abbreviations after RLA.

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2 For a summary of these events, see Michalowski (2011, 170–185). On the conquest of Susa by the Šimaškians, see also De Graef (2015) and Notizia (2022, 247–248).

3 On the rise of independent kingdoms at Ešnunna, Simurrum, and Lullubum in the early years of Ibbi-Suen, and on the transition from the Ur III to the *sukkalmah* period at Susa, see most recently De Graef (2022).

4 This is the case, for instance, of a handful of tablets excavated at Nippur that bear year formulae tied to the early reign of Išbi-Erra, first ruler of the Isin dynasty, who had taken hold of the holy city sometime around the eighth year of Ibbi-Suen. These texts are: 5 NT 77 (Išbi-Erra 4) and 5 NT 656 (Išbi-Erra 6), for which see Zettler (1992, 92–93 n. 33). See also Van De Mieroop (1986), texts nos. 1 (Išbi-Erra 5–6) and 2 (Išbi-Erra 17).

territory of the Isin kingdom.<sup>5</sup> Besides the Ur texts dating to Ibbi-Suen years 8 to 23 (ca. 820 cuneiform tablets), a few royal inscriptions, and some later literary compositions, the most relevant source of information on the political events and economic life of the period is the so-called Isin Craft Archive (Van De Mierop 1987), which constitutes the largest published corpus of archival documents covering these years.<sup>6</sup> Luckily, two recent advances have considerably expanded our knowledge of this phase of Mesopotamian history: the discovery of a number of royal inscriptions at a site identified with the ancient city of Malgûm<sup>7</sup> (Jawad [e. a.] 2020; Al-Hussainy [e. a.] 2023)—the capital of a small independent kingdom of the Early Old Babylonian period—and the almost concurrent publication of a large body of administrative texts from Iriṣaḡrig bearing year formulae attributed to the early rulers of Malgûm (Sigrist/Ozaki 2019).<sup>8</sup>

The aim of this study is to describe the organization of livestock management in the city of Iriṣaḡrig as it is documented in post-Ur III records, the majority of which are concerned with the administrative monitoring of the flow of incoming and outgoing sheep and goats. In particular, I will analyze three clusters of texts focusing on the activities of a small group of officials who oversaw and authorized these transactions on behalf of Iriṣaḡrig's central urban organization.

Although these texts have received some scholarly attention very recently (Colonna d'Istria 2020; Ozaki [e. a.] 2021), they are discussed at length for the first time here. As only a few years seem to separate the end of Ur's control of Iriṣaḡrig and its subsequent takeover by Nûr-Eštar, first king of the Malgûm dynasty (Ozaki [e. a.] 2021, 35), these newly published records offer a unique opportunity to explore the fate of the city during the final two decades of the third mil-

lennium BCE, and shed light on the history of central and northern Babylonia in the post-Ur III period.

## 2 Tablet-shaped Bullae and Caprines at Iriṣaḡrig: The Livestock-for-slaughter Dossier

The livestock-for-slaughter dossier is the largest of the three groups of texts documenting the daily administration of small cattle at Iriṣaḡrig in post-Ur III times, when the city was under the rule of the kings of Malgûm (Table 1).<sup>9</sup> The dossier comprises forty texts dealing with the expenditure of caprines for cultic and secular purposes.<sup>10</sup> More precisely, the documents detail the transfer of sheep and goats to such institutions as the Kitchen, the Women's Quarters, and the House of the Queen, and show their use in divination and as sacrificial animals destined for the cult, or as a source of meat gifted to visitors and foreign guests.

To keep track of all these transactions, records were drafted by scribes attached to what can be described as the "livestock agency" of Iriṣaḡrig, which operated on behalf of an unnamed central urban organization most likely to be identified with the local palace. During the period covered by the dossier, the official in charge of the disbursements of small cattle was the overseer Bēli-ilī, who held this position for no less than thirteen years, serving under Šu-Kakka and at least one other early king of the Malgûm dynasty.

Judging from the very few photographs available for this group of documents, all the tablets on which the texts were written were left unruled, and their whole surfaces covered with repeated impressions of a single seal per tablet.<sup>11</sup> Two sealing officials authorized transactions:

5 See Charpin (2004, 57–74) for an overview of the history of southern Babylonia under Isin's rule. On the political situation in northern Babylonia and the lower Diyala region in the post-Ur III period, see de Boer (2014, 157–189).

6 Apart from the fifty-five letters edited by Whiting (1987), the vast majority of the over 1000 tablets and 250 clay sealings found at Ešnuna during the excavations of the Šu-Suen temple and the Palace of the Rulers (Reichel 2016–17, 33)—which no doubt comprise numerous post-Ur III texts—remain largely unpublished.

7 For the reading of this toponym as "Malgûm" instead of "Malgium", see Al-Hussainy [e. a.] 2023, with further literature.

8 Molina (2013), Viano (2019), and Steinkeller (2022) on the possible location of Iriṣaḡrig. All the Iriṣaḡrig tablets stem from illicit excavations that most likely occurred in the mid-1990s. While the vast majority of these tablets found their way into private collections, others were fortunately confiscated by the Iraqi authorities and sent primarily to the Iraq Museum in Baghdad.

9 Adra 123 is cited courtesy of Bertrand Lafont and David Owen. BDTNS nos. 196799 (IM number unknown) and 212198 were kindly brought to my attention by Manuel Molina; transliterations and photographs of these tablets will be available in a forthcoming update of the BDTNS database. According to the information kindly provided by Iraqi colleagues, the tablets of the Adra collection and those published in CUSAS 40 have all been returned to the Iraq Museum in Baghdad; however, at the time this article is being finalized (June 2023), they have not yet received new IM numbers and remain therefore inaccessible to us for photographing and collation.

10 For the use of the term "caprines" to refer to sheep and goats, see Grossman/Paulette (2020, 1 n. 1).

11 Since the vast majority of the post-Ur III tablets from Iriṣaḡrig have been studied under less than ideal circumstances and published mostly in transliteration only, future photographic documentation

**Table 1:** The livestock-for-slaughter dossier in numbers

Edition	Year of edition	Number of texts	Collection(s)
Nisaba 15/2	2013	3	Anonymous private collections (2); Adra collection (1 = Adra 118)
CUSAS 40	2019	29	Anonymous private collection
Ozaki [e. a.] 2021 (ZA 111)	2021	2	Anonymous private collection
Al-Humneri 2021, 190 no. 2	2021	1	Iraq Museum
Appendix (IM 208449)	2023	1	Iraq Museum
Unpublished		4	Iraq Museum (1 = BDTNS 196799); Adra collection (1 = Adra 123); anonymous private collections (2 = BDTNS nos. 172764 and 212198)
Total: 40 texts			

Lubalasa, whose seal is found on two tablets, and Matili, who sealed twenty-one documents out of forty; for the seventeen other texts, either the seal legend is illegible or no information was provided by the tablets' editors (Table 1Suppl).<sup>12</sup> As we observe no deformation of the impressed cuneiform signs due to the rolling of the seal, it appears that the tablets of the livestock-for-slaughter dossier were sealed before any text was written on them; arguably, in this context, the combination of tablet and sealing fulfilled the function of a letterhead, which allowed for easy identification of the highest authority of a particular administrative office.<sup>13</sup>

The tablets of the livestock-for-slaughter dossier, whose dates generally include the year, month, and day, can be divided into two categories on the basis of their dimensions—which are seldom recorded—and the number of lines they feature: (a) small, almost square tablets, which usually contain less than ten lines of text (e. g., IM 208449, measuring 58 × 45 × 13 mm) and deal with the daily disbursement of a few animals to one or two destinations; or (b) large, rectangular tablets reaching even more than 100 mm in length, on which the text, always arranged in one column, can exceed thirty lines, with multiple expenditures for up to four different days (not necessarily consecutive).<sup>14</sup>

coupled with direct inspection of the material will no doubt yield improvements in the reading of texts and allow to formulate more accurate observations on the tablets' layout and diplomatics.

<sup>12</sup> See below for the list of supplementary materials to this article.

<sup>13</sup> Tsouparopoulou (2015, 83, with further literature) on the practice of pre-sealing cuneiform tablets in Ur III times.

<sup>14</sup> BDTNS 172764 (86 × 50 mm); Nisaba 15/2, 986 (102 × 57 mm); Nisaba 15/2, 1027 (107 × 54 mm). Along with IM 208499 and Al-Humneri 2021, 190 no. 2 (40 × 35 × 20 mm), these are the only tablets of the livestock-for-slaughter dossier whose measurements are known.

The most striking feature and main peculiarity of these administrative documents, however, is that they were drawn up not on standard clay tablets, but rather on what may be called “tablet-shaped bullae.”<sup>15</sup> Right at the center of the left edge of what, at first glance, appear to be ordinary cuneiform tablets, two small holes are present. Traces of these holes—and of the tiny protrusion created by the string that originally passed through them—are clearly visible in the available photographs. Although their presence was almost always overlooked by the editors of the texts, it is reasonable to assume that all the tablets of the livestock-for-slaughter dossier—irrespective of their dimensions—featured such holes. The tablet-shaped bullae from post-Ur III Irišaḡrig were formed by pressing wet clay around a looped string in which, most likely, a knot had been previously made; only after a tablet was fixed on the string could its seal and inscription be applied (cf. Rositani 2019, 14–18). The looped string emerged from the tablet at two adjacent points (Figure 1), and it is possible that the other end of the string's loop allowed the bulla to be hung. When these bullae were suspended from the

<sup>15</sup> The term “bulla” is used here to denote pierced clay objects of different shapes—often sealed and/or inscribed—that were fixed on a string passing through them. Depending on their specific function and use, other names have been used by scholars to designate these objects, like “tag,” “label,” “docket,” “*étiquette*,” etc. This type of administrative device was particularly widespread in the Early Old Babylonian period, while it was more rarely used in Ur III times, when “bullae” served almost exclusively as archival labels. On the Ur III bullae from Umma and Puzriš-Dagān, see, e. g. Laurito [e. a.] (2008) and Tsouparopoulou (2015, 60–64, 72). For the use of bullae in the Old Babylonian period, see Al-Mutawalli [e. a.] (2019, 21–25), Rositani (2019, 11–20), and Charpin (2021). Dercksen (2015) deals with some examples of Old Assyrian tablets displaying holes on their edges.

string passing through them, what we call the “left edge” became their upper side; more importantly, the cuneiform signs inscribed on them appeared vertically oriented with respect to the reader, forming parallel columns of text progressing from right to left.



Nisaba 15/2, 1027 (left-edge holes); photograph courtesy of BDTNS



Text no. 1 (IM 208449) (left-edge holes)

**Figure 1:** Detail of the left edges of Nisaba 15/2, 1027 and text no. 1 (IM 208449)

Since the tablet-shaped bullae from Irisaḡrig document daily or multi-day transactions usually involving several live and slaughtered caprines expended for various purposes, it can be excluded that they were physically attached to a specific animal—as was probably the case with the so-called “animal tags” (Rositani 2019)—or used as labels to identify tablet containers for the storage of day-to-day records.<sup>16</sup>

What function did the strings serve, then, and how were tablet-shaped bullae used by the Irisaḡrig administrators? First, the strings may certainly have enhanced the portability of the clay tablets. Provided with a sort of handle, an individual tablet or a bundle of related tablets could be more easily moved from one room to another within the building(s) in which they were kept, and reach the place where they would be examined by the accountants. Furthermore, bullae equipped with strings, having been taken out of archival rooms for consultation, could be hung on some type of support—possibly (clay) pegs fixed

<sup>16</sup> Tablet-shaped bullae concerning live and dead animals are frequently found in early second-millennium archives from southern Babylonia and Mari. To the examples provided by Charpin (2021), one may add bullae nos. 24–30 published by Van De Mieroop (1986), which originate from Nippur and date to the reign of Iddin-Dagan of Isin.

in the walls<sup>17</sup>—thus facilitating their temporary storage.<sup>18</sup> Grouped chronologically or thematically, the bullae could also be tied together by their handles and subsequently put back in their previous storage location, either directly on shelves and in clay niches, or in leather bags inside reed baskets and wooden containers.<sup>19</sup>

### 3 The Livestock-for-slaughter Dossier in Detail: Caprines for Gods, Royals, and Guests

In the following, I will offer a thorough analysis of the livestock-for-slaughter dossier from post-Ur III Irisaḡrig. First, I will discuss the various institutions to which live and slaughtered sheep and goats were regularly supplied, which included the Kitchen, the Meat House, the Women’s Quarters, and the House of the Queen. I will then illustrate the use of animals as offerings to the gods, at the major cultic events and rites celebrated in the city, and for divinatory purposes. The allocation of caprines as gifts for foreign guests and elite individuals will also be considered. Special attention will be devoted to the officials who attended to these transactions, authorized the disbursements of small cattle, and ran the livestock agency on behalf of the central urban organization.

<sup>17</sup> Since there is no evidence in the archaeological record for such use of pegs, my proposal is merely speculative.

<sup>18</sup> Cf. Dercksen (2015, 49): “A number of tablets display two holes in one of the vertical edges, suggesting that these tablets had been stored suspended from a rope.” In contrast, Michel (2018, 63 n. 16) prefers to correlate such holes with the manufacturing of these tablets or their filing.

<sup>19</sup> A slightly different interpretation of the function of comparable groups of bullae has recently been proposed by Charpin (2021). According to this scholar, the main purpose of the strings—regardless of the position and number of the holes—was to allow for the creation of chains of bullae tied together and arranged in chronological order to facilitate the checking of the records and the drafting of monthly accounts. A similar conclusion was reached by Al-Mutawalli [e. a.] (2019, 23–25) while working on tablet-shaped bullae from the Šara temple of Umma, which however feature string holes in the middle of their right and left edges. Although I do not see any strong reason to assume that a different number and position of holes imply a different use of bullae with similar content, this possibility cannot be excluded.

### 3.1 Destination and use of sheep and goats

**Table 2:** Caprines attested in the livestock-for-slaughter dossier and their destinations

Type of animal (sheep and goats)	Translation	Kitchen	Meat House	Women's Quarters	House of the Queen	Extispicy	Divine recipients and rites	Human recipients
udu	“sheep”	●		●		●	●	●
udu ba-uš <sub>2</sub>	“slaughtered sheep”	●						
udu niga ba-uš <sub>2</sub>	“slaughtered fattened sheep”		●					
udu sagg <sub>10</sub>	“first-quality sheep”						●	
udu-nita <sub>2</sub>	“ram”					●	●	
udu A.LUM	“long-fleeced sheep”			●			●	
udu A.LUM sagg <sub>10</sub>	“first-quality long-fleeced sheep”						●	
GUKKAL sagg <sub>10</sub>	“first-quality fat-tailed sheep”						●	
u <sub>8</sub>	“ewe”	●						
u <sub>8</sub> ḥur-saḡ	“wild ewe”						●	
sila <sub>4</sub>	“male lamb”			●		●	●	
sila <sub>4</sub> -babbar	“white male lamb”					●		
sila <sub>4</sub> ur <sub>4</sub> /AŠ.UR <sub>4</sub>	“male lamb plucked (for the first time)”					●		
maš <sub>2</sub> -gal	“buck”	●		●	●		●	●
maš <sub>2</sub> -gal ba-uš <sub>2</sub>	“(slaughtered) buck”		●					
maš <sub>2</sub> -gal sagg <sub>10</sub> <sup>17</sup>	“first-quality buck”	●						
ud <sub>5</sub>	“nanny goat”						●	●
maš <sub>2</sub>	“male kid”						●	

#### 3.1.1 The Kitchen and the Meat House

The term  $e_2$ -muḥaldim, “kitchen,” designates the name of the institution responsible for preparing and supplying daily meals to permanent staff and occasional visitors.<sup>20</sup>

The physical location and layout of this facility in post-Ur III Irišaḡrig are unknown, but one may assume that it was

part of a larger building complex that most likely also contained the “Meat House” ( $e_2$ -uzu).<sup>21</sup> This was the name of the establishment where meat was processed, preserved, and stored for later consumption.<sup>22</sup> The Meat Houses of

<sup>20</sup> See Allred (2006) for the role of the  $e_2$ -muḥaldim in provisioning food to resident administrative officials, royal personnel, military officers, messengers, and foreign guests in Ur III times. In the Ur III sources from Irišaḡrig, the term  $e_2$ -muḥaldim is not attested, but several “kitchen administrators” (muḥaldim) do occur in the texts (Owen 2013, 104–105).

<sup>21</sup> Compare the case of Puzriš-Dagān, where three establishments concerned with food production and meat processing operated: the Kitchen ( $e_2$ -muḥaldim), the Cattle Slaughterhouse ( $e_2$ -gu<sub>4</sub>-gaz), and the Meat House ( $e_2$ -uzu). Since the terms  $e_2$ -muḥaldim and  $e_2$ -gu<sub>4</sub>-gaz were apparently used interchangeably in the Ur III sources (Steinkeller 2008, 190), it is possible that the Cattle Slaughterhouse and the Meat House (only poorly documented at Puzriš-Dagān and elsewhere) were just subunits of a larger industrial catering enterprise called the “Kitchen.”

<sup>22</sup> One text from Puzriš-Dagān (AUCT 1, 288) recording large quanti-

the Ur III period regularly employed workers called  $lu_2-u_2u$ , “butchers,” who, among other duties, took care of the preparation of dry-cured (*muddulum*) and sun-dried ( $u_2u-UD$ ) meat (Such-Gutiérrez 2021). A group of “kitchen administrators of the Meat House” ( $mu\dot{h}aldim\ e_2-u_2u-me$ ) is also documented in five messenger texts from Irisaġrig, dated to the years Ibbi-Suen 1–2, in which their assigned task was “to split meat (carcasses)” ( $u_4\ u_2u\ dar-e\ im-e-re-\dot{s}a-a$ ) destined for a large banquet associated with the presentation of royal sacrifices ( $sizkur_2\ lugal$ ).<sup>23</sup> In post-Ur III Irisaġrig, only pre-slaughtered ( $ba-u\ \dot{s}_2/ug_7$ ) sheep and goats were sent to the Meat House, while both live and dead animals could be delivered to the Kitchen (Table 2).<sup>24</sup> Evidence from Early Old Babylonian Nippur, however, shows that live sheep were regularly supplied to the local  $e_2-u_2u$  alongside “roasted/grilled mutton” ( $udu\ al-\dot{s}e\ \dot{g}_6/\dot{s}e\ \dot{g}_6-\dot{g}a_2$ )—that is, meat already cooked (elsewhere).<sup>25</sup> A much later text from Uruk, dating to the reign of Rīm-Anum (SANER 2, no. 27) shows that even “collected” ( $des-de_5-ga$ ) animals, presumably having died of natural causes but still edible, could be transferred to a Meat House for further processing. Finally, two correlated records from Nippur (Ni 2426 and Ni 2436), dated to the second month of the twenty-first year of Rīm-Sîn of Larsa, shed some light on the role of Meat Houses as disbursing institutions, and detail the use of meat for an important cultic event, namely the festival of the god Ninurta (Huber Vulliet 2010).<sup>26</sup>

ties of lard ( $i_3-\dot{s}a\ \dot{h}_2$ ) and tallow ( $i_3-u\ du$ ), labeled as “(animal) fat of the Meat House” ( $i_3\ e_2-u_2u$ ), reveals that in Ur III times these establishments were also involved in the rendering of fat from pigs and sheep.

**23** Ibbi-Suen 1: CUSAS 40, 774 and CUSAS 40, 1375; Ibbi-Suen 2: Nisaba 15/2, 729; Nisaba 15/2, 1076; and CUSAS 40, 588. Connected with this event is the arrival of a royal emissary ( $ra_2-gaba\ lu_2-ki\ \dot{g}_2-g_4-a\ lugal$ ), a cupbearer ( $sagi$ ), two cattle slaughterers ( $gu_4-gaz$ ), and two butchers ( $lu_2-u_2u$ ) in the city—all mentioned in the same texts. In this regard, note that one of the messenger texts from the year Ibbi-Suen 2 (Nisaba 15/2, 729) also lists a brewer who received food provisions “when he came for the royal beer-drinking” ( $u_4\ ka\ \dot{s}\ na\ \dot{g}\ lugal-\dot{s}e_3\ im-\dot{g}en-na-a$ ).

**24** This observation is based on a rather limited number of attestations of the term  $e_2-u_2u$  in the livestock-for-slaughter dossier: while the  $e_2-mu\ \dot{h}aldim$  is mentioned twelve times (in eleven texts), the  $e_2-u_2u$  occurs only in two records. Note additionally that the Kitchen and the Meat House are never listed together in the same text.

**25** See tablets nos. 24–31 published by Van De Mierop (1986). These texts, in which animals and cooked meat are described as “regular consignments” ( $sa_2-du_{11}$  / *sattukku*) of Enlil, Ninlil, and Ninšubur, document how processed food and live sheep originally presented as offerings to the gods were redistributed to the Meat House.

**26** See Durand (1987, 75–77) for the function of the  $e_2-u_2u$  and the distribution of meat in the texts from the royal palace of Mari.

### 3.1.2 The Women’s Quarters and the House of the Queen

In the post-Ur III sources from Irisaġrig, the term  $e_2-mi_2$  (also spelled  $a_2-mi_2$ )<sup>27</sup> almost certainly identifies an area of the local palace where royal women and their servants resided.<sup>28</sup> Who these royal women were—whether the wife and concubines of a Malgûm king, or of one of his sons who had been installed there to rule the city on behalf of his father;<sup>29</sup> as one may certainly speculate—cannot be determined. In this connection, it is interesting to note that another expression,  $e_2-NIN$ , which occurs just twice in the livestock-for-slaughter dossier as the end destination of goats (Al-Hummeri 2021, 190 no. 2; CUSAS 40, 2014), may perhaps be associated with the Women’s Quarters (although the two terms never appear together in the same text). In fact, one wonders if  $e_2-NIN$  may refer here to a subsector of the Women’s Quarters specifically intended to host the queen of Malgûm when she visited the city (and thus to be read  $e_2-eri\ \dot{s}$ , “House of the Queen”), and not to a separate institution.<sup>30</sup>

One last observation regards consignments exclusively of live animals to the Women’s Quarters—and, by extension, to the  $e_2-NIN/e_2-eri\ \dot{s}$  (Table 2): must we assume that, perhaps because of its (presumed) secluded nature, the

<sup>27</sup> For the third and early second millennium reading and variant spellings of the term for “Women’s Quarters”, see Attinger (2021, 168 n. 280).

<sup>28</sup> For the  $e_2-mi_2$  as a sector of the palace in Ur III times, see the texts from Ur UET 3, 1566 (Ibbi-Suen 5, month name not preserved) and UET 3, 1718 (Ibbi-Suen 6, month ix), in which garments and linen thread are withdrawn “for the Women’s Quarters (located) inside the Palace” ( $a_2-mi_2\ \dot{s}a_3\ e_2-gal-\dot{s}e_3$ ). The Sumerogram  $e_2-mi_2(-me\ \dot{s}/-e-n)$  was also consistently used in Old Babylonian texts from Isin (BIN 10, 95 and BIN 10, 97), Larsa (see for instance AbB 4, 70; CUSAS 15, 66; Iraq 74, 161–162 no. 6; OECT 15, 27; and YOS 5, 167), Mari (Ziegler 1999, 16), and Uruk (Charpin 2004, 252 and n. 1292) to designate the female sector of a royal palace. See also the Uruk tablets SANER 2, no. 7 and VS 13, 49, in which a Larsa official qualified as  $\dot{s}a\ e_2-mi_2$  ( $\dot{s}a\ ri-im-^aEN.ZU$ ), “of the Women’s Quarters (of Rīm-Sîn),” receives flour rations from Rīm-Anum’s *bīt asīrī*.

<sup>29</sup> In my view, it is unlikely that the palace of an appointed governor could have included any Women’s Quarters. Nevertheless, this possibility cannot be ruled out.

<sup>30</sup> That the (temporary) residence of the Ur III queens could be termed as  $e_2-eri\ \dot{s}$  is demonstrated by two records from Umma, MVN 18, 508 (Šu-Suen 1, month not preserved) and MVN 16, 796 (Šu-Suen 4, month vii). In these texts, the place where queen Abī-simti stayed during her frequent visits to the shrine of Inana of Zabalam is called  $e_2-eri\ \dot{s}$  (Dahl 2007, 39 and n. 160). Of course, there is no way of knowing for certain whether  $e_2-eri\ \dot{s}$  in this case designated a complex of rooms inside a palace or an independent structure.

$e_2$ - $m_{i_2}$  relied on its own cooking installations (and personnel), and did not depend on the  $e_2$ - $m_{u\dot{h}aldim}$  for food preparation?<sup>31</sup>

### 3.1.3 Extispicy

A certain number of animals were regularly expended for divinatory purposes throughout the year. For extispicy, the only animals considered suitable were sheep. Quite expect-

edly, “male lambs plucked for the first time” (i. e., lambs of less than one year of age) and “white lambs”—the latter being the omen animals par excellence—are mentioned in our texts exclusively in connection with divinatory procedures (Table 2). In one instance (CUSAS 40, 2031; Šu-Kakka ‘5’; month viii, day 25), the omen being sought in the sacrificial animal’s entrails pertained specifically to royal matters ( $udu\ ki\dot{g}_2-gi_4-a\ lugal$ ).<sup>32</sup>

### 3.1.4 Divine recipients and rites

**Table 3:** Deities of the livestock-for-slaughter dossier arranged according to number of attestations

Ninḡursaḡ	6× (6 texts)	Ulmašītum	3× (3 texts)
Enki	5× (4 texts)	Ĝeštīnana	2× (2 texts)
Inana	5× (5 texts)	Nanaya	2× (2 texts)
*Nisaba	5× (5 texts)	* $d_p a_{4/5}-\dot{s}u-gi_4-tum$	2× (2 texts)
Anunītum	4× (4 texts)	Utu	2× (2 texts)
Ašgi	4× (4 texts)	*Bēletum	1×
* $db\ e-la-at-bi-ri$	4× (4 texts)	*Dagān	1×
Enlil	4× (4 texts)	Damkina	1×
Nergal	4× (4 texts)	Dumuzi	1×
PAP.NAGAR	4× (4 texts)	* $de_2-IGI-X$	1×
Damgalnuna	3× (3 texts)	Nanše	1×
Iškur	3× (3 texts)	*Nergal of Ereš	1×
* <i>malkum</i>	3× (3 texts)	Ninegal	1×
Martu/Amurru	3× (3 texts)	*Ninlil $d[ ]-x-ti?$	1×
Nanna	3× (3 texts)	Ninsumun	1×
*Ninḡešzida	3× (3 texts)	*Ninurta	1×
Ninisina	3× (2 texts)	Suen	1×

The asterisk (\*) marks divine recipients not attested in Ur III texts from Irišaḡrig; theonyms used as elements of personal names are not included.

<sup>31</sup> Compare the case of the Ur III “Taboo House” ( $e_2-u\dot{z}-ga$ ), a term that has recently been interpreted as “royal harem” by Sharlach (2017, 96–99). This institution, frequently associated with royal women and elite individuals, received large quantities of animals, employed its own (royal) cooks, and was involved in meat preparation (Tsouparopoulou 2012, 157; Such-Gutiérrez 2021). Note that the “House of the Queen” of Irišaḡrig was also supplied with beer (ZA 111, 36 no. 106 rev. 16; Šu-Kakka ‘6’, month xii, day 6). Moreover, a huge consignment of barley for the queen ( $sa_2-du_{11}\ eri\dot{s}$ ) is attested in CUSAS 40, 1637 ( $m_{u\ u\dot{s}_2-sa[ ]}d[ ]$ , month ii; year formula not listed by Ozaki [e. a.] 2021).

<sup>32</sup> An unnamed diviner ( $ma\dot{s}_2-\dot{s}u-gid_2-gid_2$ ) appears in two post-Ur III records from Irišaḡrig: he is mentioned in the account of barley, flour, and beer ZA 111, 36 no. 106 (Šu-Kakka ‘6’, month xii, day 6), and receives a long-fleeced sheep in another text of the livestock-for-slaughter dossier (CUSAS 40, 1992; Šu-Kakka ‘7’, month x, day 29).

**Table 4:** Deities attested in the post-Ur III year formulae of the Malgûm kings

Iškur	6×	UYF 5, 6, 9, 15, 16, 17, 18, 20, 22, 24
Enlil	3×	ŠK ‘5’, ‘6’; IS ‘1’; UYF 24
Martu/Amurru	2×	UYF 1, 2, 31
Ninġursaġ	2×	UYF 4, 10
Anum	1×	UYF 3
Damgalnuna	1×	ŠK ‘7’
Damkina	1×	ŠA ‘4’
Enki	1×	CUSAS 40, 1623
Inana	1×	UYF 7
Mama	1×	NEŠ ‘2’, ‘3’
Nanna	1×	UYF 26
Suen	1×	UYF 8

NEŠ = Nūr-Eštar; ŠA = Šu-Amurru; ŠK = Šu-Kakka; UYF = unidentified year formula. The classification of the year formulae follows Ozaki [e. a.] 2021.

In the livestock-for-slaughter dossier from post-Ur III Irisaġrig, the vast majority of animals expenditures concern caprines presented as offerings to gods or consumed during major religious events and other cultic occasions.<sup>33</sup> Unsurprisingly, the pantheon of Irisaġrig in the Early Old Babylonian period and the festivals and rites celebrated in the city do not seem to differ in any significant way from those documented in the Ur III sources—at least as far as one may assess from the small sample of texts at our disposal.

One of the best-attested divine recipients of offerings in the livestock-for-slaughter dossier is the mother goddess Ninġursaġ (also worshipped as Bēletum, “Lady (of the Gods)”), whose main temple was located at Keš (modern Tulūl al-Baġarāt), the nonurban sacred precinct of Irisaġrig (Lippolis/Viano 2016).<sup>34</sup> A *sizkur* rite for Ninġursaġ, in which the gods Enki and Utu were also offered sacrifices, is known from the text CUSAS 40, 2026 (Unidentified Year Formula [henceforth UYF] 25, month iii, day 23). The mother

goddess frequently ranks first in the long lists of deities receiving offerings for the celebrations of the New Crescent (Nisaba 15/2, 1027; year name uncertain, month ix, day not preserved) or for sacrifices undertaken under the direct sponsorship of the king (Adra 123; UYF 10, month ix, day 18), while other gods belonging to her circle, like Ašġi and PAP. NAGAR, also feature prominently in the records.

Also ranking high in the local pantheon was the healing goddess Ninisina, who appears twice in a text of the dossier (ZA 111, 36 no. 113; UYF 28, month vii, day 10) in which sheep and goats are disbursed to various divinities for sacrifices related to the monthly *ešeš* celebrations of the Full Moon ( $e\check{s}_3 - e\check{s}_3 e_2 u_4 - 15$ ).<sup>35</sup> Interestingly, CUSAS 40, 1982 (UYF 10, month vi, day 5) reports that on one occasion, Ninisina visited the palace ( $^d n i n - i s i n_2 s i e_2 - g a l - l a k u_4 - r a$ , lit. “Ninisina entered the palace”): it seems reasonable to assume that the statue of the goddess was brought to the palace from her temple for the performance of a healing rite on a sick member of the royal entourage (see Sallaberger 1993/I, 152–154). Archival records dating to the Ur III period unequivocally show that the temple of Ninisina at Irisaġrig was built (or renovated) in the last year of Šu-Suen’s reign, between the fourth and ninth months.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>33</sup> Gods receiving particular cultic attention in post-Ur III Irisaġrig are also known from CUSAS 40, 1647 (UYF 11, month ii, day 29) and CUSAS 40, 2043 (UYF 1, month iii, day 30), which report offerings of barley flour (*dabin*) and emmer flour (*zi<sub>3</sub>-sig<sub>15</sub>*) for the rites (*sizkur<sub>2</sub>*) of Utu and of his son Šakkan. Apparently, the *sizkur* of the pastoral god Šakkan also involved daily offerings of beer for the whole year, as documented in CUSAS 40, 1503 (Amar-Suena 8, months 1–12), an Ur III text from Irisaġrig.

<sup>34</sup> As demonstrated by CUSAS 40, 1677 (Ištaran-asu ‘1’, month iv, day 30), the name of Ninġursaġ’s divine residence at Keš was  $e_2 - m a h$ , “Exalted House”; cf. George 1993, 119 no. 713.

<sup>35</sup> On this text, see also note 51 below.

<sup>36</sup> See CUSAS 40, 650 (Šu-Suen 9, month iv); Nisaba 15/2, 502 (Šu-Suen 9, month iv); Nisaba 15/2, 503 (Šu-Suen 9, month iv); Nisaba 15/2, 521 (Šu-Suen 9, month ix); Nisaba 15/2, 522 (Šu-Suen 9, month ix); CUSAS 40, 930 (Šu-Suen 9, month not indicated).



Closely related to the palatial organization and the royal family is another goddess, Ninegal, “Lady of the Palace,” who receives offerings alongside Ninisina and other female deities in the abovementioned ZA 111, 36 no. 113 (UYF 28, month vii, day 10). In Ur III times, one of Ninegal’s temples is known to have been situated in the nearby settlement of Anzagar, where sanctuaries or shrines of Ninġursaġ, PAp. NAGAR, Nergal, Allātum, and Inana were also present (Steinkeller 2022, 8 n. 33). However, one cannot exclude that in post-Ur III Irisaġrig, Ninegal was among the personal gods of the Malġum dynasty who were worshipped within the local palace, as was the case in Old Babylonian Mari and elsewhere (Behrens/Klein 1998–2001; Durand 2008, 209–210, 256), and that sacrifices were presented to her in a chapel located in a sacred area of the palatial complex.<sup>37</sup>

As expected, the texts of the livestock-for-slaughter dossier provide ample evidence for the involvement of the kings of Malġum in the religious life of post-Ur III Irisaġrig. The strong focus on the institution of kingship is also attested by the veneration of the *malkum*, a collective name for the deified royal ancestors, to whom offerings were presented in the sixth and eleventh months of the year.<sup>38</sup>

One notable religious innovation in post-Ur III Irisaġrig is the introduction of the cult of the “Lady of the *b*.” (𒂗𒀭𒂗𒀭𒀭𒀭), another name under which the goddess Išġara was venerated.<sup>39</sup> Offerings were presented to this deity

<sup>37</sup> Cf. Sallaberger 1993/I, 220–223. A similar assumption can be made with regard to all the deities mentioned in the livestock-for-slaughter dossier whose names are not preceded by the term *e<sub>2</sub>*, “temple.” Regardless of the cultic occasion that called for sacrifices, the place where these gods received their offerings might have been located in an area of Irisaġrig’s royal palace, in which they temporarily resided during the celebrations. In this respect, compare the text BDTNS 212198 (UYF 18, month vii, day not preserved), in which offerings are presented in the *z<sub>2</sub>-ġ<sub>2</sub>-l<sub>2</sub>-a<sub>2</sub>*, a “holy room (within a palace or temple)” (Attinger 2021, 1147).

<sup>38</sup> The interpretation of the word *malkum* follows Krebernik (1987–1990, 306) and Sharlach (2002, 92 n. 6). See also BIN 9, 440, a tablet from the Isin Craft Archive dated to the twentieth year of Išbi-Erra, which reports the manufacture of several chairs (thrones?) for the “mortuary chapel of the spirits of all the dead kings” (rev. 31: *ki-a-na-ġ<sub>2</sub>-ma-a-lku-um lugal-lugal-e-ne*). This interpretation of *malkum* raises the obvious questions as to who these royal ancestors were and, more importantly, where they originally came from, as the earliest attestations of the toponym Malġum date to the Ur III period.

<sup>39</sup> This goddess is attested only once in the Ur III period, in the Puzriš-Dagān text CT 32, pl. 50 BM 103409 obv. 25, with the spelling 𒂗𒀭𒂗𒀭𒀭𒀭 (RU). How the divine names 𒂗𒀭𒂗𒀭𒀭𒀭 (RU) and 𒂗𒀭𒂗𒀭𒀭𒀭 attested in Ur III and post-Ur III texts are to be interpreted and transcribed, whether Bēlet-biri(m), “Lady of Divination” (Steinkeller 2005, 15 n. 6) or Bēlet-biri, “Lady of Oracular Responses,” and if the deity behind these names should be rather identified with the Bēlet-bēri (“Lady of the Wells”) of Mari (Durand 2008, 220–222;

during the New Moon observances (e<sub>3</sub>-e<sub>3</sub> e<sub>2</sub> u<sub>4</sub>-s a k a r) and on the occasion of sacrifices to the gods promoted by the king (š a<sub>3</sub>-ġ e ġ u r u<sub>7</sub>-a l u ġ a l, “according to the king’s heart’s desire”). Further proof of the importance accorded to 𒂗𒀭𒂗𒀭𒀭𒀭’s cult at Irisaġrig in the post-Ur III period is the fact that her temple—otherwise undocumented in third-millennium textual sources—receives the largest individual consignment of sacrificial animals in the entire dossier (CUSAS 40, 2027; UYF 16, month ii, day 16).<sup>40</sup>

Among the novelties of Irisaġrig’s cultic landscape in post-Ur III times is the worship of Nergal of Ereš. The netherworld god Nergal must have enjoyed great popularity in this part of Babylonia: he was the patron deity of the nearby city of Maškan-šāpir and his cult appears already to have been strong in Ur III Irisaġrig, where his temple is attested as early as the year Amar-Suena 9 (Nisaba 15/2, 177).<sup>41</sup> At post-Ur III Irisaġrig, Nergal of Ereš received offerings during the New Moon observances alongside many other deities, including the local manifestation of the netherworld god (Nisaba 15/2, 1027; year name uncertain, month ix, day not preserved). If the existence of a cult of Nergal of Ereš at Irisaġrig in post-Ur III times can be taken as proof of the city’s inclusion among Irisaġrig’s territorial dependencies, this fact would provide an important piece of information on the general location of Ereš and on the extent of the kingdom of Malġum.<sup>42</sup>

Colonna d’Istria 2021, 42 and 44), remains an open question that cannot be addressed in the context of the present study.

<sup>40</sup> Aside from that of 𒂗𒀭𒂗𒀭𒀭𒀭, temples are only rarely referred to in the texts of the livestock-for-slaughter dossier. We know that the temple of Enki was allocated a buck in the context of the New Moon festival (Nisaba 15/2, 1027; year name uncertain, month ix, day not preserved), while another buck was delivered for the “exorcistic ritual (to purify) the sanctuary of Inana” (𒀭 u l u<sup>1</sup> d u b<sub>2</sub> e<sub>2</sub> 𒀭 i n a n a; Nisaba 15/2, 986, UYF 10, month xi, day 5). Note that both institutions are already attested in Ur III Irisaġrig (e<sub>2</sub> 𒀭 e n -k i: CUSAS 40, 183 rev. 2 [Amar-Suena 8, month iii], Nisaba 15/2, 1070 obv. 4 [undated]; e<sub>2</sub> 𒀭 i n a n a: CUSAS 40, 233 [Ibbi-Suen 1, month vii]). Outside the very specific occasions mentioned above, the sheep and goats expended in the texts of the livestock-for-slaughter dossier do not appear to be provided in order to support one temple’s regular needs in terms of sacrificial animals. Finally, it remains unclear what the expression š a<sub>3</sub> e<sub>2</sub>-a-š e<sub>3</sub>, “(one animal) for the inner part of the sanctuary” (Nisaba 15/2, 376; UYF 29, month and day not preserved), refers to: does this entry identify an offering to be made within the temple cella of the city’s patron deity (Ninġursaġ)?

<sup>41</sup> See also the month e z e m -<sup>4</sup> n e r ġ a l, “Festival of Nergal,” attested in the archive of Si.A-a, a chief shepherd and moneylender who seemingly operated in Irisaġrig and its surrounding region (Garfinkle 2012, 38–39).

<sup>42</sup> Ereš was possibly localized either in the area north of Nippur or in southern Babylonia (Steinkeller 2003, 624–631). The city of Ereš was also the main cult center of Nisaba, another deity well attested in

Other gods not attested in the Ur III sources from Irišaḡrig feature among the recipients of sacrificial animals in the post-Ur III livestock-for-slaughter dossier. They generally belong to the traditional Sumero-Akkadian pantheon (e. g., Ningēšzida, Ninurta, and Nisaba), and include the god Dagān, who appears in conjunction with Martu/Amurru (Adra 123; UYF 10, month ix, day 18). Significantly, the god Martu/Amurru, who is only sporadically mentioned in the offering lists documenting religious activities sponsored by the kings of the Third Dynasty of Ur and by members of the royal family (Sharlach 2002, 96–98), is known from Irišaḡrig texts dating to both the Ur III and the post-Ur III periods, and his name also features in two year formulae (and  $us_2$ -s-a years) attributed to the kings of Malgûm.<sup>43</sup>

While the texts from post-Ur III Irišaḡrig testify to an unsurprising continuity in religious beliefs and practices, one cannot help but notice that some of the major divine figures occurring in the livestock-for-slaughter dossier also occupied relevant positions in the pantheon of Malgûm, the city of the new overlords.<sup>44</sup> This is the case, for instance, of Enki/Ea and his spouse Damgalnuna/Damkina, the main tutelary gods of Malgûm. Reverence and devotion toward this divine couple are documented at Irišaḡrig from the Ur III period;<sup>45</sup> in the post-Ur III period, however, these deities appear even more frequently—individually or together—in the offering sections of the texts of the livestock-for-slaughter dossier.<sup>46</sup>

post-Ur III Irišaḡrig texts. As regards the extent of the Irišaḡrig province in Ur III times, see Steinkeller (2022, 7–8). Note here that a brick carrying a royal inscription of Imgur-Sîn of Malgûm was apparently found at Jemdet Nasr (Ozaki [e. a.] 2021, 33).

**43** These year names are: (1)  $mu_{\text{g}}^{\text{g}}u-z a^{\text{d}}m a r-t u b a-d i m_2$  (UYF 1), “Year when the throne of Martu was fashioned”; (2)  $mu_{\text{u}}^{\text{u}}\text{-}š u-n i r^{\text{d}}m a r-t u b a-d i m_2$  (UYF 31), “Year when the emblem of Martu was fashioned.” Indirect evidence for the existence of a shrine dedicated to Martu/Amurru at Irišaḡrig in Ur III times is provided by the temple treasure inventory CRRAI 63, 346 no. 4 (Šu-Suen 5, month xii), which details the god’s belongings ( $n i \text{g}_2-g u r_{11}^{\text{d}}m a r-t u$ ).

**44** Note, however, that there are significant discrepancies between the livestock-for-slaughter dossier (Table 3) and the year formulae (Table 4) in terms of the number of attestations and assortment of gods. In the latter, the storm god Iškur/Adad is most frequently mentioned, followed by Enlil.

**45** For the temple(s) of Damgalnuna/Damkina at Irišaḡrig, see CUSAS 40, 1492 (Šu-Suen 7, month i) obv. 2 and Nisaba 15/2, 1070 (undated) rev. 6. The consignment of food, beverages, and other goods to Enki and Damgalnuna ( $s a_2-d u_{11}^{\text{d}}e n-k i^{\text{d}}d a m-g a l-n u n-n a$ ) at Puzriš-Dagān, documented in the text JRDH 71, 205 (Ibbi-Suen 1, month 11) obv. v 12, should be interpreted as a provincial contribution intended to support the state sanctuaries rather than the local cult.

**46** As the theonym Damgalnuna/Damkina follows the divine name Enki on one occasion (Nisaba 15/2, 1027 obv. 11–12), the editors of the

By far, the best-attested deity of the post-Ur III texts from Irišaḡrig is Inana/Eštar, who was also venerated in her martial form Anunītum, and with the title Ulmašitum;<sup>47</sup> both manifestations of the goddess are also documented in Ur III records from Irišaḡrig.<sup>48</sup> All these forms of Inana/Eštar, plus a third one, namely the “Lady of the Ayakkum” (i. e., Eštar of Uruk), appear in some recently published brick inscriptions of Takil-ilissu of Malgûm, which reveal that the goddess was held in great esteem in the kingdom (Wilcke 2017; Al-Hussainy [e. a.] 2023). Finally, the prominence of Inana/Eštar and of the divine couple Enki/Ea–Damgalnuna/Damkina in post-Ur III Irišaḡrig is further demonstrated by the text CUSAS 40, 2075 (no year name, month iii, day 25), which informs us that three gates of the city (a bulla) bore the names of these very deities.

The last group of expenditures discussed in this section concerns those rites that (apparently) did not involve the participation of specific gods, but nevertheless required offerings of sacrificial animals. One of these rites, the “*sizkur* of the emblem” ( $s i z k u r_2 \text{ } \check{s} u-n i r-r a$ ), was performed in the framework of the monthly festival of the New Moon ( $e \check{s}_3-e \check{s}_3 e_2 u_4-s a k a r$ ).<sup>49</sup> On the basis of Ur III parallels (Sallaberger 1993/I, 222), the  $s i z k u r_2 \text{ } \check{e} s k i r i_6$  may instead denote an early-spring rite that took place in an intramural “garden/orchard” belonging to the palace.<sup>50</sup>

Archibab database propose to emend  $^{\text{d}}E N.Z U$  to  $^{\text{d}}e n-k i$  in ZA 111, 36 no. 113 obv. 10 (see <https://www.archibab.fr/T25404>).

**47** A lustration ceremony of Inana ( $a-t u_5^{\text{d}}i n a n a$ ) on the eleventh month of the year is known from the text CUSAS 40, 300 (UYF 21, month xi, day 24).

**48** See, e. g., Nisaba 15/2, 1068 (undated), in which bread and beer are issued to various individuals, including the NIN priestess of Ulmašitum (on the titles NIN vs.  $e r e \check{s}-d i \check{g} i r$ , see Huber Vulliet 2019, 108–109), for the banquet ( $\check{g} e \check{s} b u n_6$ ) of Anunītum; and Nisaba 15/2, 141 (Amar-Suena 8, no month name), which records the return of garments originally intended for deities, among whom feature “the two Anunītum” ( $a n-n u-n i-t u m m i n-a-b i$ ), i. e. Anunītum and Ulmašitum. On Ur III royal wives’ particular devotion to various forms of Inana/Eštar, see Sharlach (2017, 268–276). Considering the strong ties between royal women and Inana/Eštar, one cannot exclude that the goddess’ hypostases were venerated in the women’s wing of the Irišaḡrig palace. On the worship of Anunītum and Ulmašitum in the royal palace of Ur; see Sallaberger (1993/I, 198–201).

**49** Nisaba 15/2, 1027 (year name uncertain, month ix, day not preserved). See also ZA 111, 37 no. 135 (Šu-Amurru ‘I’, month vii) obv. 1–2:  $1 m a \check{s}_2-g a l i g i \check{s} u-n i r$ , “one buck, (to be sacrificed) in front of the emblem.” The fashioning of divine emblems for the gods Iškur/Adad and Martu/Amurru is celebrated in two still unattributed year formulae of the kings of Malgûm (UYF 15–18, and 31).

**50** CUSAS 40, 2014 (UYF 20, month xii). See also Nisaba 15/2, 403 (Šu-Suen 7, month iii), an Ur III text from Irišaḡrig, in which various foodstuffs are disbursed for the “rite in the garden/orchard” ( $s i z k u r_2$

As evidenced by its name and timing, the offering for the “threshing floor” (ki-su<sub>7</sub>), presented in the third month of the year (CUSAS 40, 1994; Šu-Kakka ‘1’, month iii, day not preserved), was clearly related to the agricultural cycle, and more precisely to the celebrations for the newly harvested grain. Lastly, a building rite is documented in BDTNS 212198 (UYF 18, month vii, day not preserved), in which several animals are disbursed for the “sizkur of the (city) wall” (sizkur<sub>2</sub> bad<sub>3</sub>-da).

### 3.1.5 Human recipients

In the texts of the livestock-for-slaughter dossier, animals are handed out as gifts to various individuals. They include an unnamed cult priest of the goddess Inana,<sup>51</sup> a diviner, a courier, a soldier, and other recipients, identified only by their names, who might have belonged to local elite groups.<sup>52</sup> Royal sons also feature among the beneficiaries of caprines (Adra 123; UYF 10, month ix, day 18), either because they visited the city of Irišaḡrig on the occasion of a major cultic event—perhaps to attend the presentation of sacrifices according to “the king’s heart’s desire” (i. e., sponsored directly by the king), mentioned in the same text—or because they resided there permanently.<sup>53</sup> Most importantly, one text (CUSAS 40, 2033; UYF 10, month vii, day 28) records the disbursement of a buck to an envoy of Abda-El, a prominent Amorite leader, who is also known to have been in contact with Išbi-Erra of Isin, and whose family was related to the rulers of Ešnunna through dynastic marriages

(de Boer 2014, 175–176).<sup>54</sup> This document is of crucial importance to the reconstruction of the political history of the post-Ur III period, as it demonstrates that the early kings of Malgûm maintained diplomatic relations with a powerful chieftain of the Amorite tribes active in northern Babylonia and the Diyala region.<sup>55</sup>

### 3.2 The ḡiri<sub>3</sub> officials

More than thirty different individuals bearing Sumerian and Akkadian personal names performed the function of ḡiri<sub>3</sub> in the livestock-for-slaughter dossier, supervising administrative transfers of sheep and goats to their final destination and vouching for the correctness of the operations (Table 5).<sup>56</sup>

However, not all transactions required their presence; in particular, those regarding major cultic events that involved offerings for a multitude of deities and ceremonies, like the lunar ešeš festivals, do not normally feature such supervisors.<sup>57</sup> A clear pattern cannot be easily discerned, but the presence or absence of ḡiri<sub>3</sub> officials does not seem to be correlated with the nature of the transaction: namely, their presence does not appear to depend on whether the animals were to be consumed outside of the disbursing institution (i. e., the central urban organization within which—and on whose behalf—the livestock agency operated), which may have required a supervisor responsible for the transfer, or they were intended for internal consumption.

š<sub>a</sub><sub>3</sub> ḡ<sub>3</sub>kir<sub>i</sub><sub>6</sub>); in this case, however, the offerings were presented in May–June.

51 ZA 111, 36 no. 113 obv. 7. The cultic functionary (gud<sub>4</sub> inana) appears among many deities in a section of the text dealing with the ešeš celebrations of the Full Moon. Strangely enough, for some of the gods, the cult priest, and an individual called Ubār-Eštar (probably another temple official), there is no indication of the number or type of animals they received, although it is clear from the context that on such occasion they should have been given some. A gud<sub>4</sub> priest of Inana, by the name of Dadaya, is also attested at Ur III Irišaḡrig (CUSAS 40, 1289; Ibbi-Suen 1). Third-millennium gud<sub>4</sub> priests specialized in the ritual preparation and presentation of sacrifices to gods in temples (Sallaberger 2019).

52 Tempting as it may be to assume, it seems unlikely that the Idin-Dagān mentioned in Adra 123 (UYF 10, month ix, day 18)—with no title attached to his name—is identical to the third king of the Isin dynasty, who ruled from 1976 to 1956 BCE.

53 In the livestock-for-slaughter dossier, each human beneficiary appears to have received only one (live) animal; therefore it is fair to assume that the sons of the Malgûm king mentioned in Adra 123 were only two in number.

54 Abda-El, who might have borne the title of *rabiān amurrim*, belonged to the same generation as Nūr-aḡum of Ešnunna (Whiting 1987, 27). Although the year formula of CUSAS 40, 2033 cannot yet be precisely assigned to any of the Malgûm rulers, its date must necessarily be placed before Abda-El’s death. According to the information contained in the letter AS 22 no. 11, the Amorite leader died during the reign of Bilalama of Ešnunna.

55 Compare the text BDTNS 172764 (Šu-Kakka ‘7’, month viii, day 11), in which a group of unnamed Amorites (mar-tu-‘m e<sup>l</sup>) are attested as the recipients of one buck.

56 It remains unclear whether the individuals designated as ḡiri<sub>3</sub> were also responsible for the physical collection and distribution of the animals.

57 The transfer of animals to the Women’s Quarters and the Kitchen usually required a ḡiri<sub>3</sub> official, but on two such occasions, no names are recorded in the corresponding entry. On the other hand, the Meat House is never associated with such officials. It is assumed here that ḡiri<sub>3</sub> officials supervised all the transactions preceding their name in the text, if no other anthroponym immediately follows (cf. CUSAS 40, 300; CUSAS 40, 1984; Nisaba 15/2, 376).

Table 5: List of ḡir<sub>3</sub> officials and their area of responsibility

List of ḡir <sub>3</sub> officials		Occurrences	Kitchen	Women's Quarters	House of the Queen	Extispicy	Divine recipients and rites	Human recipients	Uncertain
1	*a-al-[la(-ḡu <sub>10</sub> )]	1×				●			
2	*a-da-lal <sub>3</sub>	4× (4 texts)					●●●		●
3	*a-ḡi-(ma)	1×					●		
4	*a-ḡu-wa-qar	2× (1 text)		●					●
5	a-pil-ki-in	1×				●			
6	aḡ-dam-i <sub>3</sub> -li <sub>2</sub>	3× (3 texts)					●●	●	
	aḡ <sup>2</sup> -dam <sup>2</sup> -[i <sub>3</sub> -li <sub>2</sub> ] <sup>58</sup>	1×							●
7	<sup>d</sup> an-nu-NE-mi-tum	2× (2 texts)		●			●		
8	ar-qum-e-la-ak	1×			●				
9	diḡir-gal	1×						●	
10	BAD <sub>3</sub> -mu-ti	1×		●					
11	*e <sub>2</sub> -a-ḡe <sub>2</sub> -ḡal <sub>2</sub>	1×					●		
12	e <sub>2</sub> -a-ri-zi-zi <sup>?</sup>	1×						●	
13	i-di <sub>3</sub> -ki-ib-ri	1×						●	
14	*i-ṣar-ki- <sup>d</sup> UTU	2× (2 texts)		●			●		
15	<sup>d</sup> i-ṣum-ba-ni	2× (2 texts)	●						●
16	* <sup>d</sup> an-i <sub>3</sub> -li <sub>2</sub>	1×					●		
17	li-bur- <sup>d</sup> eš <sub>18</sub> -tar <sub>2</sub>	1×						●	
18	*lu <sub>2</sub> - <sup>d</sup> iḡ-alim	3× (3 texts)	●●						●
19	lu <sub>2</sub> - <sup>d</sup> iḡ-gal-la	5× (5 texts)	●	●			●●●●		●●
	lu <sub>2</sub> - <sup>d</sup> i[ḡ-alim/gal-la] <sup>59</sup>	1×	●						
	lu <sub>2</sub> -[ <sup>d</sup> iḡ-alim/ <sup>d</sup> iḡ-gal-la]	1×	●						
20	*na-ak-ri-da-an <sup>60</sup>	1×							●
21	*nu-ur <sub>2</sub> -e <sub>2</sub> -a	3× (1 text)		●●●					
22	<sup>d</sup> nu-ur <sub>2</sub> -eš <sub>4</sub> -tar <sub>2</sub> -ni- <sup>f</sup> ṣu <sup>1</sup>	1×		●					
23	<sup>d</sup> nu-ur <sub>2</sub> -eš <sub>18</sub> -tar <sub>2</sub> -pa-li-[iḡ/il <sub>(2)</sub> ]	1×		●					
24	*puzur <sub>4</sub> -e <sub>2</sub> -a	2× (2 texts)		●				●	
25	* <sup>d</sup> EN.ZU-a-bu-ṣu	3× (3 texts)	●					●	●

58 Editors read ḡu-r-sa-ḡ<sup>2</sup>-[ ].59 Read as lu<sub>2</sub>-diḡir-r[a<sup>2</sup>] by the editors of the text.60 Compare the personal name na-ak-ri<sub>2</sub>-da-an attested in Nisaba 15/2, 753 rev. 2 (Ibbi-Suen 4, month iv, day 15).

Tab. 5 (continued)

List of ḡir i <sub>3</sub> officials		Occurrences	Kitchen	Women's Quarters	House of the Queen	Extispicy	Divine recipients and rites	Human recipients	Uncertain
26	* <sup>d</sup> EN.ZU-ILLAT-SU <sub>2</sub>	1×					●●		●
27	ša-lim-SA.TU	3× (2 texts)		●●					●
28	šu- <sup>d</sup> dam-ki-na	2× (2 texts)	●				●		
29	* <sup>d</sup> šul-gi-i <sub>3</sub> -li <sub>2</sub>	2× (2 texts)		●●					
30	<sup>d</sup> šul-gi-li-ti-iš/teš <sub>2</sub>	13× (12 texts)		●		●●●●●●●●●●●●●●			
	<sup>d</sup> šul-gi-li'(PI)-ti-[iš]	1×					●		
	<sup>d</sup> šul-gi-[li-ti-iš/teš <sub>2</sub> ]	1×					●		
31	ur- <sup>d</sup> ma-[mi]	1×	●						
32	um-[ ]	1×					●		
33	wa-ra-za	7× (7 texts)	●●	●●	●				●●

None of the names of the officials acting as ḡir i<sub>3</sub> is followed by a patronymic, and the titles and professional designations of these individuals are never mentioned. Remarkably, two of them bear basilophoric names celebrating the Ur III king Šulgi (i. e., *Šulgi-ili*, “Šulgi-is-my-god,” and *Šulgi-lidiš*, “May-Šulgi-be-renewed”). Since anthroponyms featuring the names of Šulgi, Amar-Suena, and Šu-Suen are not uncommon in the onomastics of the Early Old Babylonian kingdoms of southern Mesopotamia<sup>61</sup>—a testament to the veneration still enjoyed by these divine kings, long after their death—the occurrence of such personal names in post-Ur III sources from Irišaḡrig does not necessarily imply that the bearer’s career as administrator had begun in Ur III times.<sup>62</sup> In this regard, it is important to note that while *Šulgi-ili* is well attested as a personal name at Ur III Irišaḡrig and elsewhere in the kingdom, *Šulgi-lidiš* and, more broadly, the name type “Royal Name”-*lidiš* is com-

pletely undocumented in the available sources. Of course, one cannot exclude that these officials, named after the first deified king of Ur, had previously been on duty in Malḡūm—whose Ur III archives have not yet been found—when the city was still under Ur III rule, and only later moved to Irišaḡrig. On the contrary, this was most likely the case. As far as the other supervisors of the transactions are concerned, similar observations may be made. Although a certain number of personal names (marked with an \* in Table 5) are attested also in Ur III documents from Irišaḡrig, none of their bearers can be securely identified with any of the individuals who performed the ḡir i<sub>3</sub> function in the post-Ur III texts. In addition, one should note that the majority of the other ḡir i<sub>3</sub> officials’ names (eighteen out of thirty-three names) are not otherwise documented in the Irišaḡrig administrative records. This fact may suggest that, in the wake of the takeover by the kings of Malḡūm, administrative staff and officials were relocated to Irišaḡrig to run the city on behalf of its new overlords.<sup>63</sup>

<sup>61</sup> De Boer (2018–2019, 24–25); cf. also the personal name *Lu-Šulgira* attested in post-Ur III Ešnuna (Reichel 2001, 51–52 n. 11). See Hilgert (2002) on the Akkadian basilophoric names attested in Ur III texts.

<sup>62</sup> On the other hand, it seems fair to assume that, in Early Old Babylonian Isin, the personal names composed with the elements Šulgi, Amar-Suena, and Šu-Suen occurring in texts dating to the first two decades of Išbi-Erra’s reign (i. e., *Šulgi-ili*, *Tarām-Šulgi*, *Dan-Amar-Suena*, and *Šu-Suen-abī*; de Boer 2018–2019, 41) were most likely borne by people who were born or already active under the kings of Ur.

<sup>63</sup> Although unlikely, another possibility would be that all the individuals acting as ḡir i<sub>3</sub> officials who do not appear in the Ur III texts from Irišaḡrig served in branches of the provincial administration that are not covered by the extant documentation. Regardless of their city of origin, the presence of two supervising officials bearing the basilophoric names *Nūr-Eštar-nišu* and *Nūr-Eštar-pāli*[*h/pāli*] can only be explained by assuming that the latter had changed their birth names

If we look at the area of responsibility of Šulgi-lidiš, the best-attested of the ḡiri<sub>3</sub> officials, we may note that he was almost exclusively involved in supervising deliveries of small cattle for divinatory purposes, and only in one case for the Women's Quarters. The second best-attested supervisors, Lu-Iggala and Warassa, instead focused on divine and human recipients, but also the Women's Quarters, the House of the Queen, and the Kitchen.<sup>64</sup> All the remaining individuals who fulfilled the role of ḡiri<sub>3</sub> officials in at least two records are invariably associated with sheep and goats destined for both religious and secular uses.<sup>65</sup> No trace of specialization can thus be detected, either in the tasks assigned or in the type of animals involved in the transactions.<sup>66</sup>

### 3.3 The overseer Bēli-ilī

The forty texts comprising the livestock-for-slaughter dossier mention a certain Bēli-ilī as the official in charge of the disbursements of small cattle for cultic and secular purposes. He appears to have held the prominent position of overseer of the disbursal office, as evidenced by the expression *ki be-li<sub>2</sub>-i<sub>3</sub>-li<sub>2</sub> (nu-banda<sub>3</sub>)-ta ba-zi*, “It was deducted from Bēli-ilī’s account,” which appears at the end of every document right before the date.<sup>67</sup> His period of tenure lasted no less than thirteen years, spanning the reigns of the early kings of the Malgûm dynasty.<sup>68</sup>

If the administrative system governing the management of small cattle at Irisaḡrig in post-Ur III times was organized in the same fashion as the livestock enterprise operating in the royal center of Puzriš-Dagān under the

kings of Ur,<sup>69</sup> one might assume that Bēli-ilī was also one of the chief receiving officials of the agency that dealt with the collection and distribution of sheep and goats for the central urban organization, on whose behalf the texts documenting the daily administration of livestock were produced.

Not much can be said about the sources of the animals and the places where they were temporarily kept before their final allocation. No doubt, animals were brought in primarily from sheepfolds situated both within the city and in its hinterland, which were regularly supplied with caprines of various breeds by local shepherds; however, occasional donations by elite individuals and other institutional contributors cannot be excluded. The presence of sheep and goats labeled as “slaughtered (for human consumption)” (*ba-u š<sub>2</sub>/u g<sub>7</sub>*)<sup>70</sup> may indicate that these animals had been pre-processed before being administratively transferred to the disbursal office, from which they were later dispatched only to the Kitchen (*e<sub>2</sub>-mu ḡaldim*) and the Meat House (*e<sub>2</sub>-uzu*) for food preparation and meat storage/conservation.<sup>71</sup> Finally, the single reference to a slaughtered barley-fed sheep in CUSAS 40, 2026 suggests that this particular animal originated from a fattening facility.

As is the case of many of the ḡiri<sub>3</sub> officials discussed above, the personal name Bēli-ilī is unattested in Irisaḡrig documents dated to the Ur III period, and no suitable candidate for a possible identification can be found elsewhere in the textual record.<sup>72</sup> Based on the currently known administrative sources, it cannot be established with certainty whether his city of origin was Malgûm or Irisaḡrig.

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and adopted new ones praising the deified king Nūr-Eštar, first ruler of the Malgûm dynasty.

64 Lu-Iggala is mentioned as ḡiri<sub>3</sub> official also in the account of barley, flour, and beer ZA 111, 36 no. 106 (Šu-Kakka ‘6’, month xii, day 6) rev. 13.

65 With the exception of Nūr-Ea and Šalim-šadûm, who were only involved in transfers of animals to the Women's Quarters.

66 Note that up to four different ḡiri<sub>3</sub> officials could independently supervise different animal deliveries intended for the same use in the same daily record (see BDTNS 212198). Occasionally, supervisors could be “released” from their duties for unspecified reasons (Nisaba 15/2, 1027 rev.14: ḡiri<sub>3</sub> duḡ-ḡa).

67 Bēli-ilī's title is only attested in text ZA 111, 36 no. 113 (UYF 28, month vii, day 10).

68 Twelve texts mentioning Bēli-ilī are securely dated to the reign of Šu-Kakka (Table 1Suppl). For the attribution of the fragmentary date formula of CUSAS 40, 1623 to the reign of Nūr-Eštar, Šu-Kakka, or Nabī-Enlil, see below, § 3.4.1. The possibility that those year formulae of the livestock-for-slaughter dossier that remain unidentified all come to be attributed to Šu-Kakka's reign cannot be ruled out.

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69 For an outline of the functioning of the Puzriš-Dagān collection-and-redistribution center, see Tsouparopoulou (2013a).

70 The term *ba-u š<sub>2</sub>/u g<sub>7</sub>* cannot refer here to animals who had died of natural causes (i. e., fatal injuries, disease, or predation), since most such animals would hardly have been considered fit for human consumption by their institutional owners (Stępień 1996, 77–78). Note that in the livestock-for-slaughter dossier, dead animals are never destined for sacrifices.

71 One should not exclude the possibility that sheep and goats were personally slaughtered by shepherds and delivered upon request to their institutional collectors, alongside carcasses and skins of animals who had accidentally died under their care (Stępień 1996, 199). On the involvement of herdsmen in the preparation and supply of sun-dried meat in the pre-Ur III period, see Such-Gutiérrez (2021).

72 For instance, at least one Bēli-ilī operated at Puzriš-Dagān fulfilling a partially comparable role in livestock management, but his period of activity ended around the year Šu-Suen 5 (Sigrist 1992, 320–321; Tsouparopoulou 2013b, 180 Figure 1).

### 3.4 The secretary Lubalasaga, the scribe Mati-ilī, and CUSAS 40, 1623

As mentioned above (§ 2), the tablets of the livestock-for-slaughter dossier were sealed before the text of the documents was inscribed on them. Two sealing officials appear in the dossier: Lubalasaga and Mati-ilī. The seal of the first one is of the “royal servant” type and is dedicated to king Nūr-Eštar. Its legend can be reconstructed as follows: (i)  $nu-ur_2-e\check{s}_{18}-tar_2 / nita\ kala-ga / ki-a\check{g}_2$   $\check{e}n-lil_2-la_2$  (ii)  $lu_2-bala-sa_6-ga / sugal_7\ zi-da / ara\ d_2-zu$ , “Nūr-Eštar, mighty male, beloved of Enlil; Lubalasaga, faithful secretary, your servant.” This seal was rolled on two tablets dated to the same month of Šu-Kakka year ‘5’.<sup>73</sup> From the same year comes another tablet that might have been sealed by Lubasaga. According to its editors, the seal inscription on CUSAS 40, 2031 (Šu-Kakka ‘5’, month vii, day 25) is illegible, but the presence of the clause  $ki\ šib\ lu_2-bala-sa_6-ga$ , “sealed tablet of Lubalasaga,” in the text suggests that the latter was most likely the sealer of this document. The dedication in his seal and the title he held might indicate that Lubalasaga was a palace official who, as a representative ( $suga\ l_7$ ) of some high functionary of the Malgûm kingdom—possibly of the king himself—directed the whole livestock agency in Irisaḡrig.

The best-attested sealing official, however, is a certain Mati-ilī. Impressions of his seal appear on twenty-one of the forty tablets that constitute the livestock-for-slaughter dossier, with the highest number of attestations in UYF 10 (7×) and a total of six texts securely dated to the reign of Šu-Kakka (Table 1Suppl).

Mati-ilī’s seal inscription is a very simple one, featuring only two lines recording the seal owner’s name and his patronymic ( $dumu\ baba$ , “son of Baba”). As for the iconographical elements carved onto the seal, they depict a typical audience scene in which the seal owner is standing in front of a seated figure and a supporting goddess is positioned behind him with both hands raised in a gesture of salutation.<sup>74</sup> In this type of scene, the primary figure is assumed to be a human, most commonly the king, though in a few cases it can be a deity (Mayr 2005, 55; Tsouparopoulou 2015, 28). In Mati-ilī’s seal, the main figure is portrayed as wearing a flounced garment and holding a cup in his right hand; more importantly, he or she is seated on a piece of furniture covered with a cloth that can undoubtedly be

identified as a royal throne (Mayr 2005, 61). All these features are usually associated with the representation of kings on Ur III seals, as must have been true also for Mati-ilī’s seal.<sup>75</sup> In Ur III times, a scene showing an audience with the king was usually reserved for the seals of high-ranking officials, which however never feature a legend of the most ordinary type, as in Mati-ilī’s case (Mayr 2005, 96; Tsouparopoulou 2015, 28). If this is valid also for a seal that must have been carved at the beginning of Malgûm’s domination, as one might reasonably assume, then the collected evidence would support the idea that Mati-ilī was an important functionary of Irisaḡrig in post-Ur III times, who may have served under Lubalasaga’s authority, sealing documents of the livestock-for-slaughter dossier on his behalf.

What is truly remarkable about this individual’s career, however, is that he was apparently already active as a sealing official during the preceding Ur III period (Ozaki [e. a.] 2021, 29–30). At that time, Mati-ilī owned another seal, whose impressions are attested on two administrative tablets from the Irisaḡrig archives (Nisaba 32, 135, Šu-Suen 6 and CUSAS 40, 555, Ibbi-Suen 2, month i). Unlike his later seal, here the scene shows the worshipper being presented to a figure (not preserved) by a goddess who stands before him, grasping his wrist.<sup>76</sup> This is arguably one of the most common scenes to appear on Ur III seals, and has been associated with the seals of scribes who were at an intermediate stage in their careers (Mayr 2005, 95–97).

In the three-line legend of his Ur III seal, only Mati-ilī’s father, Baba, is identified as a “scribe” ( $dub-sar$ ). There is no way of knowing for certain whether the lack of a title after Mati-ilī’s name should be taken as an indication that he had not yet completed his scribal training by the time his seal was in use (between Šu-Suen 6 and Ibbi-Suen 2), or, more simply, that he had not (yet) replaced his seal with a new one acknowledging his educational achievements in the legend inscription.<sup>77</sup> Be that as it may, neither he nor his father are ever documented with the  $dub-sar$  title—or any other managerial title, for that matter—in any of the Ur III texts from Irisaḡrig.

Mati-ilī’s area of responsibility is difficult to determine on the basis of only two attestations of his seal. He rolled it on the surface of a fragmentary tablet whose text records an obligation perhaps concerning a three-year-old animal

<sup>73</sup> CUSAS 40, 1990 and ZA 111, 36 no. 103 – Šu-Kakka ‘5’, month vi.

<sup>74</sup> See the photographs of the tablets BDTNS 172764 and Nisaba 15/2, 1027 (BDTNS 193289). Quite unexpectedly, a monkey appears as a filling motif between the presentee and the seated figure.

<sup>75</sup> Although the type of headdress (either “royal” or “horned”) worn by the main figure is unfortunately not visible in the available photographs, the identification with the king is virtually certain.

<sup>76</sup> The scene is visible on the reverse of Nisaba 32, 135 (see the photograph available on the BDTNS database).

<sup>77</sup> For Ur III seals in which the  $dub-sar$  title is omitted or appears only after the patronymic, see Mayr (2005, 28–29, 97).

most likely received by the same Mati-ilī (Nisaba 32, 135)—content that seems quite coherent with his involvement in the management of livestock in post-Ur III Irisaḡrig. However, his seal appears also on CUSAS 40, 555, which is dated only two years before the latest known Ur III tablet written at Irisaḡrig (Ozaki [e. a.] 2021, 30 n. 9). The text deals with an expenditure of bread for workers stationed at the weir of a canal, but it remains unclear whether Mati-ilī was the recipient of the bread supply on behalf of the workers or he merely authorized the disbursement.<sup>78</sup> In either case, this task seems totally unrelated to his later assignment in the livestock agency.

Mati-ilī's high degree of adaptability as a local administrator in a time of political upheaval is certainly noteworthy, but this is not the only known case of an official whose career spanned the transitional phase from the Ur III to the Early Old Babylonian period. Textual evidence from Ešnunna shows that a certain Abī-Lulu served for several years, perhaps uninterruptedly: first as an administrator of the temple dedicated to the divine Šu-Suen, and subsequently as a palace official under the independent rulers Šu-iliya (son of Itūriya, the last Ur III governor) and Nūr-aḫum.<sup>79</sup> Still, just as in Mati-ilī's case, it appears that his function within the administrative apparatus changed slightly. While the Ur III texts retrieved in the temple cella present him as the issuing party in transactions relating to commodities (mainly foodstuffs and clothing) supplied to temple personnel or provided as offerings to deities, post-Ur III texts found in the area of the so-called Palace Chapel, portray him in a wider variety of tasks, from the disbursal of copper items, reed mats, and wool and the allotment of garments to female millers, to the reception of goods belonging to the palatial organization.<sup>80</sup>

In summary, the information gathered confirms that Mati-ilī enjoyed a long career as an administrator at Irisaḡrig. Judging from the title of “scribe” held by his father, he probably belonged to a family of literate individuals who used to render their services to the local administration. By the year Šu-Suen 6, he was already an experienced func-

tionary—as the introduction scene depicted on his seal suggests—but his administrative role cannot be defined more precisely due to the paucity of textual sources bearing on him. He continued his activities at least until Ibbi-Suen's first regnal year, slightly before Irisaḡrig gained independence from Ur. His career does not seem to have been affected by the dynastic change, but quite the contrary: he survived the end of Ur III rule without any noticeable downgrade. He not only retained his old position, but was integrated into the ranks of the administrative staff as an important authorizing official of the livestock agency, which was run by the royal secretary Lubalasaga, his superior. This new assignment might also have implied a career advancement for Mati-ilī, as is also evident from the scene showing an audience with a (Malgūm) king on his seal, which he had carved once he obtained his new position.

### 3.4.1 The year formula of CUSAS 40, 1623

The correct dating of CUSAS 40, 1623 is of key importance in establishing the relative length of Bēli-ilī's and Mati-ilī's term of office, and the temporal coverage of the livestock-for-slaughter dossier. According to Ozaki [e. a.] (2021, 29), the fragmentary year formula occurring in this text refers to the year Šu-Suen 2 (m u <sup>a</sup>[š u -<sup>a</sup>EN].ZU lu gal ma<sub>2</sub> da ra<sub>3</sub>-ab zu' <sup>a</sup>en-ki-ra m u-[n]a-dim<sub>2</sub>, “Year when king Šu-Suen fashioned the boat (called) ‘Ibex of the Abzu’ for Enki”). Such an identification would leave a decade-long gap between the earliest text of the livestock-for-slaughter dossier and the remaining tablets, featuring post-Ur III year names, which would be hardly understandable from an archival perspective unless we appeal to the “chance of discovery” explanation. Furthermore, if CUSAS 40, 1623 were indeed dated to Šu-Suen 2, how would one explain the isolated attestation of the short version of Mati-ilī's seal, which is otherwise known only from much later texts? And why would he use a different seal between the years Šu-Suen 6 and Ibbi-Suen 2? If we take a new look at the fragmentary year formula of CUSAS 40, 1623 and compare it to the known variants of Šu-Suen 2, we cannot help but notice that (1) the verb di m<sub>2</sub> (“to fashion”) is used in place of the far more common du<sub>8</sub> (“to caulk”), and (2) the name of the god Enki is followed by the dative marker {ra} (cross-referenced in the verbal stem). While di m<sub>2</sub> is otherwise documented in fewer than ten Ur III texts, no other example of a dative case attached to the god Enki is known to me. In all the extant attestations of the year name Šu-Suen 2, the “boat (called) ‘Ibex of the Abzu’” and “Enki” are always bound in a genitive construction, regardless of the verb chosen. The only possible solution to explain all of the above particularities

<sup>78</sup> Note that Mati-ilī's name does not appear in the body of the text.

<sup>79</sup> Members of Abī-Lulu's family continued to be employed in the palace administration of Ešnunna in the role of field surveyors (*šassuk-kum*) and with the title of “scribe of DUR.ŠUB.BA” (*dub-sar DUR.ŠUB.BA*) until the reign of Ur-Ninḡešzida (Reichel 2016–17, 45–47). Another good example of two local officials surviving dynastic change comes from Nippur: here Saḡ-Enlila, last chief administrator of the Inana temple under Ur III rule, and his brother Lubalasaga appear in tablets dated to the early years of Išbi-Erra; on Saḡ-Enlila and Lubalasaga, see most recently Cohen 2020, 27, with previous literature.

<sup>80</sup> Reichel 2008, 140 Table 7.1. 143 Table 7.2. 151 Figure 7.14.



is to assume that the dating formula of CUSAS 40, 1623 does not refer to the year Šu-Suen 2, and that the ZU in  $^d[ ]ZU$  is a scribal (or reading) error for another sign. The most suitable candidates for the broken name, in my view, are the rulers Nūr-Eštar and Šu-Kakka—and, less likely, the latter's son Nabi-Enlil.<sup>81</sup> After all, the god Enki/Ea is known to have occupied a prominent position in the pantheon of Malgûm. Therefore, a year name commemorating the fashioning of a cultic barge for this deity would not be surprising.<sup>82</sup> Moreover, by modeling its wording, almost verbatim, on that of a well-known Šu-Suen year, the unidentified Malgûm ruler may also have tried to place himself in the tradition inaugurated by his most illustrious Ur III predecessor.<sup>83</sup> Hence, I propose to read the royal name in the year formula of CUSAS 40, 1623 either as (1)  $^d[nu-ur_2-eš_{18}-t]ar_2!$ , (2)  $^d[šukak-k]a_3!$  or, less likely, as (3)  $^d[na-bi_2-dēn-l]il_2!$ .

## 4 The Axe-shaped Bullae Dossier: A Glimpse into the Activities of Shepherds and Herd Managers

Apart from the texts of the livestock-for-slaughter dossier, two related groups of documents from post-Ur III Irišaḡrig also concern the management of live and dead sheep and goats: the axe-shaped bullae dossier (Table 3Suppl) and a small group of isolated tablets (§ 5).

The largest group of clay bullae from the first dossier was published in 2012, when Rudi Mayr offered a detailed study of the sealings attested on nine such objects housed in the cuneiform collections of Cornell University. The remain-

ing eleven bullae have appeared more recently, in CUSAS 40 and in a NABU note by Laurent Colonna d'Istria (2020). These bullae differ from the tablet-shaped bullae discussed above in that they appear as tongue- or axe-like clay objects, with two string holes located at the upper and lower corners of the left edge, corresponding to the upper edge of the suspended bulla. Differently from other, similarly shaped Old Babylonian bullae, they do not feature any exit hole on their right edge.

The axe-shaped bullae, all bearing month and year dates only, deal almost exclusively with dead or slaughtered (ba-uš<sub>2</sub>/ug<sub>7</sub>) small cattle, predominantly female sheep and goats, with a considerable presence of young animals. The time and cause of death were occasionally specified. Mayr 2012, 420 no. 5 (Šu-Amurru '2', month v), for instance, reports that one nanny goat was killed by a lion (ur-maḡ-e in-gaz) and was then returned to the central administration. Two other texts, dating to months vii and viii, state that ewes and female lambs died "after the plucking" (egir zu<sub>2</sub>-si-ka). Since this is not the standard period for the plucking of wool—which usually took place in springtime, in months x to xii (ca. January to March) (Sallaberger 2014, 110)—this expression may indicate that these animals had not died of natural causes, but rather that their fleece had been removed before they were intentionally slaughtered by their shepherds (cf. Waetzoldt 1972, 11). Dead animals usually range in number between one and five. Larger numbers of animals are attested only in CUSAS 40, 1628 (UYF 26, month i) and CUSAS 40, 2008 (Šu-Amurru '3', month ii), the latter however concerning only live sheep. Live animals are also mentioned in Mayr 2012, 418 no. 2 (Šu-Amurru '1', month iv) and Mayr 2012, 418 no. 3 (Šu-Amurru '1', month iv), the only bullae indicating the precise destination of dead and live caprines. In the first text, four ewes are said to have been "brought in for the Kitchen"; in the second, one adult sheep was "taken over" (i<sub>3</sub>-da b<sub>5</sub>) by a certain Ibbi-Suen.

Eleven different providers of sheep and goats appear in the dossier, never followed by any type of title or professional designation. Five of them (Šu-Dumuzi, Abiya, Namaya, and Gimil-Adad) served under both Nabi-Enlil and his son Šu-Amurru, whose reigns mark the chronological boundaries of the dossier.

As noted by Mayr (2012), the surfaces of the bullae are covered with multiple partial impressions of up to five different seals. Mayr was able to identify eleven officials, mostly scribes or other kinds of administrators (but also a fuller) whose seals were applied on the axe-shaped bullae seemingly after the text was drafted. Some of the seal legends are of the simplest type, recording only the name, title, and occasionally the patronymic of the owner.

<sup>81</sup> In this connection, note the similarity with the year formulae Šu-Kakka '7' (mu  $^d[šukak-ka_3 lugal-e URU? za-gin_3 ku_3-sig_{17} dam-gal-nun-na-ra mu-na-dim_2]$ ) and UYF 15 (mu  $^d[šunirgal ug 4-ba  $^d[iškur-ra mu-na-dim_2]$ ]. Any later dating of CUSAS 40, 1623 is probably to be excluded also for palaeographic reasons. While the few tablets of the livestock-for-slaughter dossier for which photographs are available feature a clear Ur III writing style, IM 227149 and the axe-shaped bullae dated to the reign of Šu-Amurru already display a mature Old Babylonian script. Unfortunately, a proper palaeographic study of the Early Old Babylonian epigraphic material from Irišaḡrig is impossible due to the lack of a sufficient number of photographs or copies of the cuneiform texts.$

<sup>82</sup> One may also compare here the fashioning of the barge of the god Tišpak, patron deity of Ešnunna, commemorated in the early Old Babylonian year formulae OIP 43 nos. 46, 83, 89, and 101.

<sup>83</sup> Another post-Ur III reference to the building or caulking of a professional boat is found in the year name Šu-ilišu 8 (mu  $^d[šui_3-i_2-šulugal-e ma_2-gur_8 maḡ nin-urta-ra mu-na-an-du_8/mu-na-dim_2]$ ; see de Boer 2021, 11).

There also survive more elaborate inscriptions of the “royal servant” or “royal gift” type mentioning the kings Nabi-Enlil and/or Šu-Amurru; these latter legends no doubt belonged to the seals of higher-ranking officials.

Despite the absence of any keyword clarifying the precise nature of the transactions documented in the axe-shaped bullae dossier, these administrative texts can be safely described as receipt records. The source of the animals were the named providers, who may reasonably be identified with herd managers acting as intermediaries between the central organization and the local shepherds. Live and slaughtered animals regularly delivered to them by their subordinates were handed over in turn to different sectors or departments of the central organization, and these transfers required the production of sealed documents. In this respect, the presence of multiple administrators rolling their seals on individual bullae might be indicative of the various (unspecified) destinations not so much of the animals, but rather of their valuable byproducts (i. e., wool and goat hair, skins, meat, fat, sinew, hooves, tails, and horns), such as craft and leather workshops, textile mills, cooking facilities, etc. Additionally, the fact that so many sealing officials were required to supervise individual transactions involving only modest numbers of animals may well reflect the tight administrative control exercised by the central authorities over the shepherds’ activities.

## 5 Other Post-Ur III texts from Irisağrig Concerning the Management of Small Cattle

Fewer than ten tablets originating from the post-Ur III administrative archives of Irisağrig are likewise concerned with the management of small cattle (Table 6), but they belong neither to the livestock-for-slaughter dossier nor to the axe-shaped bullae dossier.<sup>84</sup> The dates of four of these texts, however, partially overlap with those attested in the latter dossier, as they refer to the year formulae ‘1’ of kings Nabi-Enlil and Šu-Amurru. Their content and formulary are similar and resemble those of the axe-shaped bullae,

<sup>84</sup> One of the reviewers of this article suggested that ZA 111, 37 nos. 126, 128, and 135, and CUSAS 40, 1939 could be identified as axe-shaped bullae on the basis of their content and the position of the date on the reverse of the tablets. However, if this were true, it would imply that the editors of the texts missed to notice both the peculiar shape of the objects and their sealings—which, of course, is possible, but unlikely in my opinion.

although only IM 227149 presents a seal impression (see Appendix for the edition of this text). Unlike the bullae, the officials to whom the animals were transferred are more frequently mentioned in these texts, and more details are provided about the source and destination of the caprines, which comprise sheep coming from the *mašdaria* contribution and as diplomatic gifts, or animals expended for cultic purposes. However, prosopographical links between these miscellaneous tablets and the two larger dossiers dealing with livestock management are only tenuous.<sup>85</sup> All of these texts are to be considered as remnants of one or more lost dossiers focusing on caprines, in which a number of local officials identified only by their personal names were involved, who most often acted as recipients of live animals. We may assume that these accounts were drafted by scribes working for the same organization that produced and kept the administrative records of the two major dossiers for the purpose of carefully monitoring the transfer of incoming and outgoing sheep and goats.<sup>86</sup>

## 6 Conclusions

In the present article, I have offered a detailed study of a dossier of forty inscribed bullae bearing year formulae attributed to the early rulers of the post-Ur III independent kingdom of Malgûm, whose capital has recently been identified with the site of Tulûl al-Fāj, located ca. 20 km north of Maškan-šāpir (modern Tell Abu Duwari). These documents, all dealing with the daily management of caprines, originate from one or more administrative archives illegally excavated in the city of Irisağrig, which had fallen under Malgûm’s control shortly after having claimed independence from the Ur III kingdom. In order to provide the fullest possible picture of the animal management system of post-Ur III Irisağrig, I have also examined several other recently published bullae and cuneiform tablets belonging to the same archive(s). Besides the group of forty texts that I have labeled as “livestock-for-slaughter dossier,” two other

<sup>85</sup> For example, chances are that two individuals appearing in ZA 111, 37 no. 126 and ZA 111, 37 no. 135—Šu-Dumuzi and Ĥudda—are to be identified with the homonymous providers of animals attested in the axe-shaped bullae dossier, who were active in almost the same years.

<sup>86</sup> Two more documents, CUSAS 40, 1629 (date not preserved) and CUSAS 40, 1960 (mu u<sub>2</sub>-sa ka<sub>2</sub> en-lil<sub>2</sub>, iti diri), are classified in the Archibab database as originating from Irisağrig. However, the attribution of these texts to the post-Ur III administrative archives of the city is questionable; cf. the remarks on CUSAS 40, 1960 in the BDTNS database, where it is suggested that the tablet comes instead from the Nippur region.

**Table 6:** Miscellaneous texts dealing with the management of small cattle

Text	Date	Content/Remarks
ZA 111, 37 no. 126	Nabi-Enlil '1', month x	Two unplucked sheep from the <i>mašdaria</i> -contribution of the tenth month taken over (i <sub>3</sub> -d a b <sub>5</sub> ) by Šu-Dumuzi.
ZA 111, 37 no. 128	Nabi-Enlil '1', month xii	One nanny goat taken over (i <sub>3</sub> -d a b <sub>5</sub> ) by Iddin-Suen; one dead buck from Zibi(!)-Adad.
IM 227149	Šu-Amurru '1', month v	Delivery (m u -k u <sub>x</sub> ) of nine sheep and one buck as a diplomatic gift from <sup>?</sup> the son of Sarium; taken over (i <sub>3</sub> -d a b <sub>5</sub> ) by Ḫullati, who also sealed the document.
ZA 111, 37 no. 135	Šu-Amurru '1', month vii	One buck (to be sacrificed) in front of the emblem, one nanny goat ..., from Ḫudda <sup>?</sup> .
CUSAS 40, 2054	UYF 1, month vi	Classified in the Archibab database as " <i>compte d'ovins</i> ." The sealing official (k i š i b) is Ḫazimum. Figures in line 1 may not refer to animals. Restoration of line 2 as k i ḏš[u l -g] i -/[l i -t e š <sub>2</sub> ] is doubtful.
CUSAS 40, 1996	UYF 3, month iii	Three individuals providing/receiving one sheep each; the name of the official who took over (i <sub>3</sub> -d a b <sub>5</sub> ) the animals is lost.
CUSAS 40, 1639	UYF 4, month iv	Delivery (m u -k u <sub>x</sub> ) of two dead male kids by Adallal.
CUSAS 40, 1939	m u u s <sub>2</sub> -s a b a d <sub>3</sub> [ḏ d a m -k i -n a(?) ] m u u s <sub>2</sub> -s a -b i, <sup>87</sup> no month name	One ewe and one sheep provided by Iddin-Ištarān. Seal illegible. Classified in the Archibab database as originating from Iriṣaḡrig. Attribution probable.

clusters of texts concerning the management of sheep and goats have been considered, for a total of sixty-eight documents focusing on livestock administration. These texts constitute ca. 45% of the 151 post-Ur III tablets and bullae identified so far as coming from Iriṣaḡrig, primarily on the basis of their year formulae and month names.

The administrative records of the two major dossiers—the livestock-for-slaughter dossier and the axe-shaped bullae dossier—and other related texts were drafted by scribes working for an agency that oversaw the incoming and outgoing movement of sheep and goats. This livestock agency served the everyday needs of the city's central organization—which I propose to identify with the local palace of Iriṣaḡrig—by collecting and delivering sacrificial animals to the cult and the temples; supplying sheep and goats for divinatory purposes; provisioning such institutions as

the Kitchen, the Meat House, the Women's Quarters, and the House of the Queen; and catering for elite individuals and foreign emissaries.<sup>88</sup> The fulfillment of such tasks was among the main concerns of third- and second-millennium royal administrations, which reinforces the hypothesis that a palatial organization was behind the livestock agency.<sup>89</sup> Furthermore, the administration of a craft workshop for

<sup>88</sup> Virtually nothing is known about the organization of animal husbandry at Iriṣaḡrig in post-Ur III times, and not enough evidence is available to determine the involvement of the palace in this activity. In this regard, the most informative text is perhaps ZA 111, 36 no. 106 (Šu-Kakka '6', month xii, day 6), which records, among other things, the allocation of small amounts of barley for feeding dogs, birds, and marsh pigs.

<sup>89</sup> Compare, for instance, the livestock enterprise operating at the Ur III royal center of Puzriš-Dagān (Tsouparopoulou 2013a), or the activities documented in the dossier of the diviner Asqūdum from the royal archives of Mari (Lafont 1984). Importantly, all the texts of the Mari dossier are written on tablet-shaped bullae, and their content almost exactly matches that of the Iriṣaḡrig livestock-for-slaughter dossier. Another second-millennium palatial organization engaged in the management of sheep and goats destined for cultic purposes—includ-

<sup>87</sup> Compare the year formulae of Colonna d'Istria 2020, no. 12; Mayr 2012, 421 no. 7; and Mayr 2012, 422 no. 9. The correct reading b a d<sub>3</sub> instead of i r i in these year names was suggested by Colonna d'Istria (2020, 18. 22; cf. Ozaki [e. a.] 2022, 33).

the production of luxury items and the daily supply of large quantities of foodstuffs (mainly beer and bread) destined for palace inhabitants and guests, all activities well documented in other Iriṣaḡriḡ dossiers unrelated to livestock management (Table 4Suppl), are also typical of Mesopotamian palatial economies.<sup>90</sup> Chances are then that all the known post-Ur III archival records from Iriṣaḡriḡ originate from one or more rooms within the palace's administrative sector, perhaps from the same area in which the archive of the Ur III governor was found by looters.<sup>91</sup>

The livestock agency operating within the palace employed several individuals, almost invariably identified only by their names, who acted as providers of live and slaughtered animals, supervisors of the transactions, and officials in charge of disbursements.<sup>92</sup> They all served under the authority of higher-ranking functionaries who headed the livestock agency of Iriṣaḡriḡ on behalf of the kings of Malḡûm, authorizing with their (royal) seals the expenditure and reception of small cattle to be used for cultic and secular purposes. Some members of the local administrative staff, like *Mati-ilī*, who had been serving at Iriṣaḡriḡ for years and whose careers had not been affected by the end of the Ur III rule, were integrated into the ranks of the new administration in prominent positions. Others, like *Beli-ilī* and most of the *ḡiri<sub>3</sub>* officials—whose names are not documented in the Ur III archival records from Iriṣaḡriḡ—were possibly relocated to this city from Malḡûm.

The records dealing with livestock management and, more broadly, with all the activities documented in the remaining post-Ur III texts from Iriṣaḡriḡ focus exclusively on the local palace and the operations falling within its administrative purview, as mentioned above.<sup>93</sup> Consequently, although these texts are indeed very informative about Iriṣaḡriḡ's pantheon and cultic calendar, they do not reveal much of its political, social, or economic life in the time of Malḡûm's domination. For instance, they do not offer any specific information on how and by whom the city was administered, whether by a royal representative appointed as governor or perhaps by one of the king's sons installed as viceroy. However, some clues, like the presence of a House of the Queen, the performance of extispicy rituals related to the king, and the visit paid by two princes during major cultic events sponsored by the ruler of Malḡûm himself, point to a strong royal presence—or at least a strong royal interest—in the city. As for the status of Iriṣaḡriḡ in the post-Ur III period, the mention of an emissary of the Amorite leader *Abda-El* being gifted with an animal by the palatial economy further demonstrates that, at that time, the city was an important center of the Malḡûm kingdom and a vital hub of the diplomatic network connecting southern and northern Babylonia to the Diyala region.

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ing extispicy—is the provincial administrative center of the Sealand I kingdom recently discussed by Boivin (2016).

<sup>90</sup> On the main economic activities of Mesopotamian palatial organizations, see Sallaberger (2013).

<sup>91</sup> For an overview of the Ur III archival records from Iriṣaḡriḡ, see Sallaberger (2021).

<sup>92</sup> The general lack of titles, professional designations, and patronymics after the names of the officials involved in the management of livestock is striking, and suggests a rather small administrative apparatus with limited contacts with other organizations; in this context, the use of labels to identify individuals—and distinguish homonyms—was completely unnecessary.

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<sup>93</sup> In the post-Ur III texts from Iriṣaḡriḡ, the term *e<sub>2</sub>-gal* appears only in relation to offerings made to the healing goddess *Ninisina* when she visited the palace (*<sup>d</sup>nin-isin<sub>2</sub>si e<sub>2</sub>-gal-la ku<sub>4</sub>-ra*). This is not at all surprising, since there was no functional necessity to record the name of the central organization in administrative texts produced by its scribes.

## Appendix: Two Unpublished Tablets from the Collections of the Iraq Museum, Baghdad

by Ammar al-Tae

### No. 1 (IM 208449)

UYF '15', month vi, day 17

58 × 45 × 13 mm



obv.

1 1 udu kiĝ<sub>2</sub>-gi<sub>4</sub>-a  
2 ĝiri<sub>3</sub> dšul-gi-li-teš<sub>2</sub>  
3 ki be-li<sub>2</sub>-i<sub>3</sub>-li<sub>2</sub>-ta  
4 ba-zi

rev.

1 iti ezem-dnin-a-zu  
2 — u<sub>4</sub> 17-kam  
3 mu šu-nir gal / ug 4-ba dīškur-ra /  
mu-na-dim<sub>2</sub>

Seal

1 ma-at-i<sub>3</sub>-li<sub>2</sub>  
2 dumu ba-ba

IM 208449 is one of the hundreds of cuneiform tablets originating from illegal excavations that were confiscated by the Iraqi authorities in the early 2000s. As indicated by its inventory number, this tablet entered the Iraq Museum's collections in 2008 (cf. Ismael/Abdulrahman 2019, 126).

Obv. 1: For the interpretation of udu kiĝ<sub>2</sub>-gi<sub>4</sub>-a, literally “sheep of the (oracular) message,” as an animal



1 sheep suitable for extispicy,  
via Šulgi-lidiš,  
from Bēli-ilī's account)  
was expended.

Month: Festival of Ninazu,  
day 17.

Year: He (i. e., the king) fashioned a great emblem (decorated with) four lions for Iškur.

(Seal:) Mati-ilī,  
son of Baba

destined for divinatory purposes, see Heimpel (1993, 131–133).

Rev. 3: The four “lions” decorating the emblem commissioned by the king of Malĝûm are probably to be identified with the winged beasts traditionally associated with the Babylonian storm god Iškur/Adad (Schwemer 2007, 138; 2008, 32–33).

**No. 2 (IM 227149)**

Šu-Amurru '1', month 5

76 × 45 × 15 mm



obv.

1 9 udu  
 1 1 maš<sub>2</sub>-gal  
 2 niḡ<sub>2</sub>-šu-taka<sub>4</sub>-a  
 3 dumu sa-ri-um  
 4 mu-ku<sub>x</sub>(DU)

rev.

1 ḥu-ul-la-ti  
 2 i<sub>3</sub>-dab<sub>5</sub>  
 3 iti ki-siki-<sup>d</sup>nin-a-zu  
 4 mu du-nu-um<sup>ki</sup> / ša<sub>3</sub> gu<sub>2</sub> i<sub>7</sub>-idigna /  
 ba-ḥulu

Seal

1 ḥu-ul-[la-ti]  
 2 [...]

According to the information provided by the authorities of the Iraq Museum of Baghdad, the confiscated tablet IM 227149 entered the museum's collections in 2010.

Obv. 2-3: On the term niḡ<sub>2</sub>-šu-taka<sub>4</sub>-a, see, e.g., Ferwerda (1985, 9–10) and Whiting (1987, 113–117), with previous literature. It remains unclear whether the “son of Sarium” mentioned in this text was the person who brought the animals as a diplomatic gift, or if the sheep and goats received by Ḥullati were intended to be gifted to him.

Rev. 4: The full form of this year name (mu bad<sub>3</sub> du-nu-um<sup>ki</sup> ša<sub>3</sub> gu<sub>2</sub> i<sub>7</sub>-idigna ba-ḥulu) is attested only in Mayr 2012, 418 no. 2 (Ozaki [e. a.] 2021, 32). As testi-



9 sheep,  
 1 buck,  
 as a diplomatic gift  
 (from?//for?) the son of Sarium;  
 delivery.

Ḥullati  
 took them.  
 Month: Wool-place of Ninazu.  
 Year: (The fortress of) Dunnum on the bank of the Tigris  
 was destroyed.

(Seal:) Ḥullati, [...]

fied by another year formula (mu bad<sub>3</sub> gibil du(-un)-nu-um<sup>(ki)</sup> mu-d u<sub>3</sub>) (Colonna d'Istria 2020, 20), the fortress of Dunnum was later rebuilt by the same Šu-Amurru.

**Acknowledgments:** We wish to express our gratitude to the Authorities of the Iraq Museum and of the Iraqi State Board of Antiquities and Heritage for permission to study and publish IM 208449 and IM 227149.

We are also grateful to Walther Sallaberger, Laurent Colonna d'Istria, and an anonymous reviewer, whose comments and useful suggestions helped to considerably improve the focus, clarity, and organization of this article.

**Supplemental Material:** This article contains supplementary material (<https://doi.org/10.1515/za-2023-0013>).

Table 1Suppl: Dates of the livestock-for-slaughter dossier

Table 2Suppl: The livestock-for-slaughter dossier: Texts and their contents

Table 3Suppl: The axe-shaped bullae dossier: Texts and their contents

Table 4Suppl: Other dossiers of cuneiform tablets from post-Ur III Irisağrig

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