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TWO UR III TEXTS IN THE DE LIAGRE BÖHL COLLECTION AT LEIDEN

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Abstract

In this article two Ur III administrative texts (tablet+envelope) are presented in transliteration and translation. They were scanned with an X-ray micro CT-scanner to reveal the contents of the tablets in their envelopes.

In April 2018, at the instigation of dr. Ngan-Tillard, two Ur III tablets from the De Liagre Böhl collection were scanned in their envelopes using an X-ray micro CT-scanner.¹⁾ The goal was to see whether we could read the tablet inside the envelope and whether the scan could inform us about the materiality of both the tablet and envelope, i.e. inclusions in the clay, folding techniques for the envelope, etc. Pending a full publication of the scanning results by Ngan-Tillard et al., the present authors now want to make the transliteration and translation of the tablets already available to the Assyriological community.²⁾ Both Ur III texts published hereunder are part of much larger archives. This is however not the place to study them in detail.

The De Liagre Böhl collection,³⁾ currently kept at the Netherlands Institute for the Ancient Near East (NINO) at Leiden, comprises ca. 3600 objects, of which almost 3300 are inscribed with cuneiform writing: tablets, bricks, cones etc.⁴⁾ The collection was started by prof. F.M.Th. De Liagre Böhl in the 1920's with the purchase of the collection of the Assyriologist Felix Peiser. In the 1930's De Liagre Böhl travelled to the Middle East and bought further tablets. In the Interbellum other purchases were made through well-known dealers like Gêjou in Paris. Eventually, the collection was sold to the NINO by De Liagre Böhl in 1951. Over the last decades, the collection has grown sporadically due to gifts of objects by private collectors.

The cuneiform texts in the collection give a good overview of Mesopotamian history and contain texts from the pre-Sargonic era up until the Hellenistic period (ca. 2400-200 BCE). Over the years, selections of texts have been published in copy in the series *Tabulae Cuneiformes a F.M.Th.*

¹⁾ The micro CT-scanner is owned by the Delft faculty of Civil Engineering and Geosciences. Our gratitude for using and operating the scanner goes to dr. K.H.A.A. Wolf and ing. W. Verwaal. For preliminary information: <http://www.nino-leiden.nl/message/seeing-through-clay-4000-year-old-tablets-in-hypermodern-ct-scanner> [accessed 5th of July 2018]. The idea was begun as an offshoot to the Leiden-Delft collaborative project "Scanning for Syria"; for more information: <https://www.tudelft.nl/en/ceg/research/stories-of-science/scanning-for-syria/> [accessed 5th of July 2018]

²⁾ We thank prof. dr. C. Waerzeggers, current director of the NINO, for her kind permission to publish these two tablets.

³⁾ See the website of the NINO for some pictures of important objects: <http://www.nino-leiden.nl/collections/de-liagre-bohl-collection> [accessed 5th of July 2018].

⁴⁾ For more information on De Liagre Böhl and his collection (in Dutch): C. van Zoest and S. Berntsen, 2014: "75 jaar NINO. Geschiedenis van het Instituut in hoofdlijnen", O. Kaper and J.G. Dercksen (eds.), *Waar de geschiedenis begon. Nederlandse onderzoekers in de ban van spijkerschrift, hiërogliefen en aardewerk*, NINO, Leiden, 15-18.

De Liagre Böhl collectae, Leidae conservatae (four volumes published until now), and elsewhere. However, many groups of texts remain unpublished, chiefly large numbers of Ur III and Neo-Babylonian texts. In order to facilitate their future study and publication, a catalogue is being prepared by dr. J.C. Fincke, which is due to be finished in the summer of 2019. After this, the De Liagre Böhl collection will be moved to the Dutch National Museum of Antiquities (Rijksmuseum van Oudheden) in Leiden.

LB 2640

Administrative tablet from Girsu, concerning the receipt of a quantity of sesame delivered by Lu-Ningirsu and received by his brother Ur-Abba.

Envelope

| | | |
|-----|--|--|
| 1 | 50.4.4.0 še-giš-i3 gur lugal ki lu ₂ - ^d nin-gir ₂ -su dumu ba-zi-ta | 15280 liters of sesame in the "gur" measure of the king. From Lu-Ningirsu, son of Bazi. |
| R.5 | kišib ur-ab-ba mu en-mah-gal-an-na en ^d nanna ba-hun | The seal of Ur-Abba (was impressed). The year: Enmahgalanna the En-priestess of Nanna was installed (Year Amar-Suen 4). |

Inner tablet

| | | |
|----|---|--|
| 1 | 36.4.1.0 še-giš- /i ₃ gur lugal a-ra ₂ 1-kam 14.0.3.0 gur a-ra ₂ 2-kam | 11050 liters of sesame in the "gur" measure of the king, the first time. 4230 liters, the second time. |
| 5 | ki lu ₂ - ^d nin-gir ₂ -su-/ta | From Lu-Ningirsu, |
| R. | a ₂ -geme ₂ -še ₃ ur-ab-ba šu ba-ti (empty space) mu en-mah-gal-an-na | for the labor of the female workers, Ur-Abba has received it. |
| 10 | en ^d nanna ba-hun | The year: Enmahgalanna the En-priestess of Nanna was installed (Year Amar-Suen 4). |

Seal inscription on the envelope:

| | |
|---------------|-------------|
| 1) ur-ab-ba | Ur-Abba |
| 2) dub-sar | Scribe |
| 3) dumu ba-zi | son of Bazi |

The seal shows an introduction scene of a protective goddess and supplicant before a seated deity.

LB 2720

Administrative tablet from southern Iraq concerning the receipt of barley by Aba-lugal-mugin. He used the seal of one Ur-Babi to authenticate the receipt.

Envelope

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| 1 | 3 še-gur lugal (empty space for seal impression) kišib a-ba-lugal-<mu>-gin ₇ | 900 liters of barley in the measure of the king, the seal of Aba-lugal-mugin (was impressed), |
| | mu ur-ba-bi iti še-kin-ku ₅ (empty space for seal impression) | (which is in the) name of Ur-Babi. Month XII. |
| 5 | mu ^{ha} -ar-š ^{ki} | The year: Ḫarši (was destroyed) (Year Šulgi 27). |

Inner Tablet

| | | |
|---|----------------|---|
| 1 | 3 še-gur lugal | 900 liters of barley in the measure of the king, |
|---|----------------|---|

| | |
|--|---|
| mu ur-ba-bi-še ₃ a-ba-lugal-mu-gin ₇ /mu-ni šu ba-ti R.5 iti še-kin-ku ₅ (empty space) mu ḥa-ar- /š ^{ki} ba-ḥul | in the name of Ur-Babi, Aba-lugal-mugin (is) his name, has received it. Month XII. The year: Ḥarši was destroyed (Year Šulgi 27). |
|--|---|

Seal inscription:

| | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| 1) ur-ba-bi 2) x x x x x 3) dingir(?) x x x x 4) arad ₂ ? .zu? | Ur-Babi his servant? |
|--|---------------------------------------|

The seal shows an introduction scene of a protective goddess and suppliant before a seated deity.
