



**A Neo-Sumerian Field Plan at the
Museum of Suleymania**

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خريطة حقل من العصر السومري الحديث في متحف السليمانية

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Abstract:

The text here presented belong to the small collection acquired, in the recent years, by Süleymaniah museum, located in Kurdistan, Iraq, which includes an unpublished tablet dating from the third dynasty of Ur. The tablet has suffered significant damage. It is a Field Plan used in agriculture for a family in the Category of Land Tenure.

Keywords: cuneiform, tablet, Sumerian, field, plan.

INTRODUCTION

One of the remarkable types of cuneiform tablets is the field plan which provides information about gardening or agricultural fields in Mesopotamia. It could be used for dealing with boundaries, areas, and yields of fields (Gruber, Roaf, 2016, 35-52). The importance of field plans goes back to the wide representation both in terms of diachronic and synchronic points of view in terms of the presence in various periods and locations in Mesopotamia (Friberg, 2007, 137-146). From Sumerian period to the Neo-Babylonian period (Dalley, 2021, 22-43), diverse indications of geographical names on the tablets could also be considered as the beneficial source for determining certain titlature and different uses of land, soil variations, and aquatic requirements(Friberg, 2007, 137-146).

Edition of the Text:

Description: **Clay tablet**

Sulaymaniyah Museum: **T- 37369 SM**

Date: **x.**

Provenience: **Garšana?**

Measurement: **56x49x19 mm**

Obverse

1. ^{ĝi}š₆ kiri₆ i₃-li₂-an-dul₃ nu-banda₃
2. lu₂-id-da-šum?
3. ša₃ ^{ĝi}š₆ kiri₆ ME-^dKA-<DI>/ i₃-ĝal₂
4. [x-x]-e₂ dam-gar₃-še₃
5. [x-x-x] -dam
6. [xxxx]

Rev.

1. up [xxxx]
2. bottom 3 ½ ninda 4 kuš₃ saĝ
3. left [xxx] ninda
4. right [xx] 16 ninda

“The orchard of Ili-andul, the overseer (who is) the man (under) Iddašum; (the orchard in question) lies in the garden of (= owned by or belonging to) Simat-Ištaran(?) from x-x-e the merchant, [x-x-x]-dam, [x-x-x]. [x-x-x], 21 rods 4 cubits front, [x-x-x] rods, 48 rods”.

Commentary:

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It appears that in recent times, the lower edge of the first half and the upper edge of the second half have been intentionally flattened in order to create the illusion that both halves originated from the same tablet.

The field detailed on the reverse has a regular shape, apparently named $\hat{g}i\check{s}kiri_6 i_3-li_2-an-dul_3$.

obv.1: The name of **$i_3-li_2-an-dul_3$** , is attested in several Ur III documents, this name with the title of **nu-banda₃** occurs only in text from Drehem, RA 049, 86 02, P127827 Šu-Suen.02.10.29. Additionally, appears elsewhere in early old Babylonian texts followed by the sign of li_2 at the end ($i_3-li_2-an-dul_3-li_2$), SANTAG 09, 071 (P503036), SANTAG 09, 167 (P503129), RA 074, 112 61 (P493030). Although, he appears only once in the seal impression from old Assyrian period in Kanish: KBullae 329 kt r/k 18 (P502890).

obv.2: **$lu_2-id-da-šum?$** : This name, the reading of which is uncertain, seems hitherto unattested. It could also be interpreted here as $a_2-da-šum$ or $id-da-a$ is attested in several Ur III texts from Drehem: Krušina-Černý Ladislav J. (1957) ArOr 25, 562 24.

obv. 3: $ša_3 \hat{g}i\check{s}kiri_6 ME-^dKA-<DI>$: This garden called $kiri_6$ Simat- dIštaran is once attested in P324336 Owen and Mayr, CUSAS 03, 1354, 03-04 (IS1 Garšana VI): **120 pa $\hat{g}i\check{s}HAR$, $\hat{g}i\check{s}kiri_6$ Simat- $^dIštaran \hat{G}ar-ša-an-na^{ki}$, Šu-eš₁₈-tar₂ lu₂ ki \hat{g} ₂-gi₄-[a lugal] in-ku₅**.

“120 branches of HAR tree, at the garden of Simat-Ištaran at Ġarszana, Šueštar cut down.”

obv. 4-5-6: Unfortunately, these lines follow a break of the tablet.

Conclusion:

The limited information it provided led to the conclusion that the tablet recorded the field plan for a property in historical times using techno-functional Sumerian administrative notation during the early 21st century.

This study has successfully identified a rare, Late Ur III cuneiform tablet from the ancient Near East as a house plan or estate map.

Acknowledgements:

We extend our gratitude to the trustees of the Süleymaniah Museum for granting permission to publish this document.

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Abbreviations:

AAICAB: Grégoire, J.-P., Archives Administratives et Inscriptions Cunéiformes Ashmolean Museum, Bodleian Collection, Oxford (Librairie Orientaliste Paul Geuthner 1996.

ArOr: Archiv Orientalni (Prague)

CUSAS 3 : Cornell University Studies in Assyriology and Sumerology (Bethesda, 2007ff.)

RA: Revue d'Assyriologie et d'Archéologie Orientale (Paris 1886 ff.)

SANTAG : Karl Hecker und Walter Sommerfeld, eds., Arbeiten und Untersuchungen zur Keilschriftkunde

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Fig. 1: SM: 37369 obverse



Fig. 2: SM: 37369 Reverse



Fig. 3: Copy Obv. by Ari KAMIL

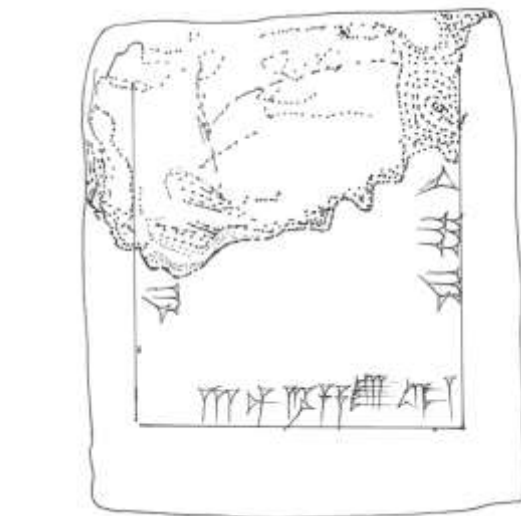


Fig. 4: copy Rev. by Ari KAMIL

(Photo by Museum)