ON THE THIRD DYNASTY OF UR
ON THE THIRD DYNASTY OF UR
STUDIES IN HONOR OF MARCEL SIGRIST

Edited by

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NEW UR III COURT RECORDS
CONCERNING SLAVERY

Manuel Molina (CSIC, Madrid)

Of the 86,666 texts catalogued in my database of Ur III tablets (bdtns.filol.csic.es), 30,715 have been transliterated, copied, or cataloged by Marcel Sigrist. In other words, Sigrist has put at our disposal more than one-third of this enormous corpus. Personally I owe him, among other things, for his encouragement and his outstanding contribution to the development of the Database of Neo-Sumerian Texts, a project conceived when we first met at the British Museum some years ago. It is therefore an honor and a pleasure to dedicate this edition of Ur III legal texts to him.

When A. Falkenstein published his monumental work Die neusumerischen Gerichtsurkunden (Munich: Verlag der Bayerischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1956–57), 193 out of the 225 texts he studied came from the site of Girsu, so his conclusions regarding judicial procedures largely depended on the textual material from that city. Since then, thousands of new Ur III tablets from various sites have been edited, and many others remain unpublished in museums and other collections all over the world. Specifically, the British Museum keeps an important collection of about six thousand documents from Umma; at least seventy of them are court records, thirty-five of which still remain unpublished. I present here ten of these documents concerning slavery as the first installment in a series that will include all of this small corpus.

The seventy court records, except one, were tagged at the British Museum as belonging to two different collections: 1913-4-16 and 1914-4-4. Here follows the list of these tablets, together with the accession number given to them by the museum:

| BM     | Date       | Origin  | Accession No. | No. | Description
|--------|------------|---------|---------------|-----|-------------
| 85441  | 1899-4-15  | 48/vi  | Unpublished   | no. 3 | (see CBT 3, BM 85441)
| 105339 | 1913-4-16  | AS6    | Unpublished   |      |             
| 105346 | 1913-4-16  | SS5/xi | Iraq 6 185 = NG 189 |      |             
| 105347 | 1913-4-16  | SS4/ix | AnOr 12 101 1 (“Orient 21 7”) = NG 62 |      |             
| 105369 | 1913-4-16  | AS2    | no. 5         |      |             
| 105377 | 1913-4-16  | AS4/xi | MCS 2 75      |      |             
| 105379 | 1913-4-16  | —      | AnOr 12 102 2 (“Orient 21 7”) = NG 60 |      |             
| 105381 | 1913-4-16  | —      | AnOr 12 102 3 (“Orient 21 7”) = NG 69 |      |             

I am grateful to the Trustees of the British Museum for the kind permission given to publish these texts, as well as to C. B. F. Walker and J. Taylor for their always invaluable help during my stays at the Student’s Room. I am also indebted to W. Sallaberger and P. Steinkeller who kindly read the manuscript and made helpful comments and suggestions. Any errors are of course my own responsibility. Abbreviations follow “Abbreviations for Assyriology,” in http://cdli.ucla.edu/wiki/index.php/Abbreviations_for_Assyriology, with these additions: BPOA 1 and 2: T. Ozaki and M. Sigrist, Ur III Administrative Tablets from the British Museum. Biblioteca del Próximo Oriente Antiguo 1–2 (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 2006).
It is important to note that 1913-4-16 and 1914-4-4 collections were parts of a single consignment that actually arrived at the British Museum on 24th June 1912, containing a total of 5,617 tablets from Göla offered by the Paris dealer I. Elias Gejou (courtesy C. B. F. Walker). This suggests that we are dealing with a homogeneous group of tablets from the central archives of the governor of Umma, possibly coming from a single findspot.

The ten tablets presented here concern problems with runaways (nos. 1–4), or other kinds of litigation concerning the ownership of slaves (nos. 4–10). In the commentaries following the transliterations and translations I have refrained from discussing or listing other references to court officials (maškim, di-kus, lu2 ki-ba gub-ba, etc.), partly due to limitations of space, but also because this will be the topic of a paper presented by the writer at the RAI 53.

1. BM 106527 (AS5)

1 Na-na-tum-e
2 Ma-an-šum₂-mu-na-ra
3 arad₂ zah₃-a-uzu
4 `/ga₁-mu-ra-an-tum₂` (KA)
5 in-na-an-du₁₁
6 mu-un-na-tum₂
7 a-ra₂ 2-kam ba-an-da-zah₃
8 arad₂-ra igi mu-ni-T[U'-a]m₃
9 arad₂ U₂-za-ar-Šul-gi-ra₅ i₃-tuš
10 šu-du₈-a im-mi-dab₅
11 [i]n-na-an-du₁₁

u.e. 1 [...] / [A]-kal-la₁ [m]ussa₅² ga-ni-ir

rev. 1 dub šum₂-mu-na-ab in-na-an-du₁₁
2 A-kal-la₂ dub Ma-an-šum₂-mu-na mu-de₆
3 arad₂ mu-sa₁₀ ba-ra-an-ne-zuh
4 ku₃ arad₂-da tum₂₁₆₈ bi₂-du₁₁
5 Ur-gu₂-de₃-na-ke₄ ba-an-ši-sa₁₀

BM 107379 1913-4-16-2211 — BPOA 1 1055
BM 107413 1913-4-16-2245 — BPOA 1 1086
BM 107626 1913-4-16-2458 AS2 BPOA 1 1285
BM 107955 1913-4-16-2787 AS2 JNES 63 3
BM 110171 1914-4-4-2537 AS7/xii Unpublished
BM 110379 1914-4-4-4445 — no. 4
BM 110490 1914-4-4-556 — Unpublished
BM 110603 1914-4-4-669 Š39/i Unpublished
BM 110614 1914-4-4-680 AS8/v Unpublished
BM 111032 1914-4-4-1098 AS2 Unpublished
BM 111052 1914-4-4-1118 — Unpublished
BM 111148 1914-4-4-1214 AS2 no. 10
BM 111173 1914-4-4-1239 — Unpublished
BM 111186 1914-4-4-1252 AS2 Unpublished
BM 112949 1914-4-4-3015 — AnOr 12 104 7 (Orient 21 7) = NG 122
BM 113035 1914-4-4-3101 AS2 AnOr 12 104 8 (Orient 21 7) = NG 48
6 A-kal-la ku₃ ba-an-de₆
7 kišši Ma₃(BA)-an-šum₂-mu-na in-na-an-ra
8 te₇₂-bi mu lugal ib₂-pad₃
9 A-kal-la ku₃-še₃ ge-ne₂-da
10 iti-ta u₄-₆-am₃ ba-ra<(zal)

lee. i.1 saq₄-sakar-še₃ tum₂-da ib₂-du₁₁
i.2 iti ḫDumu-zi-še₃ Ur-niḡ-a₂
i.3 maškim A-ba₉-En-lil₂-gin₇
ii.1 mu [En]-₁
ii.2 un[u₆-gal ḫInanna]

1–4 Nanatum said to Manšumuna: “I will bring your runaway slave for you.”
6–7 (Nanatum) brought (the slave) for him (Manšumuna), (but the slave) was able to escape for a second time.
8–11 (Nanatum) said to (Manšumuna): “I found the slave; the slave is living at the town of Uṣar-Šulgi; I captured him there.”
ue–r.1 (Nanatum) said to (Manšumuna): “I will let (. . .) Akala, (my) son-in-law, . . . Give him the tablet!”
r.2–4 (Nanatum) declared: “Akala brought the tablet of Manšumuna; he bought the slave; he certainly did not steal (the slave) for them (Nanatum and Ur-Guedena?); the silver (paid) for the slave was adequate.”
r.5–6 Ur-Guedena bought (the slave) from him (Nanatum); Akala brought the silver.
r.7 They have sworn together by the name of the king (not to contest each other).
r.8–12 They declared that Akala will confirm that he (paid) with silver; that, being the sixth day of the month, (Akala) will be brought before the beginning of (next) month, before (the beginning of) the month of Dumuzi (xii).
le.e.ii.1–2 Ur-niḡ-a₂ was the commissioner of Aba-Enlilgin.
le.e.i.1–2 Date.

As I understand this text, Manšumuna claims the ownership of a runaway slave, who is now the property of Ur-Guedena. It is Nanatum who explains what happened with the slave.

Nanatum states that he once seized the slave and gave him back to Manšumuna. Nevertheless, the slave fled again. This time, Nanatum found the slave in Uṣar-Šulgi, and subsequently retained him. It seems that Nanatum decided to keep the slave, paying for him to Manšumuna. With this purpose he says he sent Akala, his son-in-law, to pay for the slave, obtaining in return a document sealed by Manšumuna. It was thus confirmed that the slave was officially sold to Ur-Guedena, so a new tablet was sealed for him. A final agreement established that Akala would be brought to prove the purchase of the slave from Manšumuna.

2, et passim. The frequently attested PN Ma-an-SUM-na in Ur III texts (often read as Ma-an-si₃-na) should be understood, in the light of our variant Ma-an-šum₂-mu-na, as [ma.n.šum.en.a] “you are the one who will give him to me.”

4. The context would better require in this line the verbal form ga-mu-ra-an-tum₂ “I will bring him for you,” instead of ga-mu-ra-an-du₁₁ “I will tell you about him (?),” so I assume that final KA is a dittography.

8. I cannot reconstruct the verbal form of this line with certainty. The broken sign begins with a group of wedges which could fit with TU, LI, TIR, etc. One could thus tentatively think of TU as a
writing for du₃, well attested in Ur III texts (see C. Wilcke, *Wer las und schrieb in Babylonien und Assyrien. Überlegungen zur Literalität im Alten Zweistromland*, SBAW 2000/6 [Munich: Verlag der BAW, 2000], 70). In any case, the context requires a similar compound verb with i gi, meaning something like “to see, to localize, to find,” as for example in no. 4 below.

9. The toponym U₂-ša-ar₂-Sul-gi is attested in MVN 11 181:14; its variant A-ša-ar₂-Sul-gi can be found in SAT 2 171.2, r.4, and RA 25 20 AF 1:iii.4. This kind of place name has been discussed by I. J. Gelb, “Studies in the Topography of Western Asia,” AJSL 55 (1938) 84–85, and M. Hilgert, *Akkadisch in der Ur III-Zeit*, IMGULA 5 (Münster: Rhema-Verlag, 2002), 195.

e. The beginning of this line, written on the upper edge of the tablet, shows slight traces of signs for which it is uncertain whether they are part of the text. On the other hand, I cannot propose a convincing explanation for ga-ni-i-r; the possibility of [ani.r] (3rd sg. possessive suffix and dative case marker) would leave unexplained the preceding [g]; and in case we should understand it as a co-hortative verbal form (perhaps with a meaning such as “I will let him go there,” or “I will send him there”), the use of the plural stem of ge₂n “to go” would be improbable.


i.e. i.3. Aba-Enlilgin is mentioned as a judge in a case regarding fugitives in a tablet from Nippur (NRVN 1 1; cf. also NRVN 1 241), and in the Umma legal text SNAT 541 (here together with judges from other places). In this case, it is said that Ur-niĝar acts as his representative.

2. BM 106550 (AS2/xiid)

```
1 4Geme₂₂²A-šar₂
2 5 gin₂ ku₃-babbar-še₃
3 Amar-ši₄ u₃ Lu₂₂²En-lil₂₁a₂-še₃
4 Ur⁻⁴Ba₂u₂ in-ši-sa₁₀
5 Lu₂₂-igi⁻ša₀-sa₆ lu₂₂-gi-na-ab-tum-ma
6 geme₂ u₄ gub-ba nu-til ba-zah₃
7 Amar-ši₄ u₃ Lu₂₂²En-lil₂₁a₂-ke₄
8 su-su-dam
9 igi ensi₂-kar-še₃
rev. 1 igi Lu₂₂²Nanna-šे₃
2 igi Lugal-ku₃-zu-šе₃
3 igi Ur⁻nin₃ar²-bar-šе₃
4 igi Lu₂₂²Šara₂-šе₃
5 di-bi ba-til
6 dumu Umma³
7 iti diri mu 4Amar⁻⁴Suen lugal-e Ur⁻bi₂-lum⁶ mu-hul
```

¹⁻⁴ Geme-Ašar bought Ur-Bau from Amarsi and Lu-Enlila for 5 shekels of silver.
⁵ Lu-igisasa was the guarantor.
⁶ Not having completed the established period, the slave woman escaped.
⁷⁻⁸ (Therefore) Amarsi and Lu-Enlila will repay (to Ur-Bau the purchase price).
⁹⁻¹⁴ Before the governor; before Lu-Nanna; before Lugalkuzu; before Ur-niĝar; before Lu-Šara.
¹⁵⁻¹⁶ This case has been closed. (It concerns) citizens of Umma.
¹⁷ Date.
This document records a case in which it is decided that the sellers (perhaps the parents) of a slave woman, who had escaped from the buyer, must return the purchase price to the latter. Such an obligation would be here expressed by the verbal form su·su·da, while in other cases (SDUS3), when the warranty requires a substitute as a replacement for the runaway, the verb tum₂ is used. Repayment for flight is also attested in an Old Babylonian document, quoted by P. Steinkeller (Sale Documents of the Ur-III-Period [= SDU], FAOS 17 [Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1989], 70 and 92), where the guarantors promised to return the purchase price if the sold man escaped (RA 54 [1960] 34–35 no. 38).

On the other hand, I assume that the expression u₄ gu₂·ba, here translated as “the established period,” refers to the duration of the warranty in case of flight. The existence of such a clause in Ur III times, rarely attested for later periods, had been already inferred by Steinkeller (ibid.) from the aforementioned tablet SDUS3, and from ITT 5 9594, a text that reads: 

\[
\text{[S]a·u₄·i₃·u₃ du·mu·gu₁₀·ne·ha₁-ba·za₅·de₃·es·i₂\text{g[e]me₂ g[a-\text{ab-\text{sum₂}]} bi₂-[in-d]u₁₁ (“[P]N has declared: ‘By the name of the king! If from this day on PN₂ and my children escape, I will give two slave women in their place”). Our interpretation of the expression u₄ gu₂·ba relies also on its occurrence in a legal text from Girsu published by E. Sollberger (“Some Legal Documents of the Third Dynasty of Ur,” in Kramer Anniversary Volume. Cuneiform Studies in Honor of Samuel Noah Kramer, eds. B. L. Eichler et al., AOAT 25 [Kevelaer - Neukirchen Vluyn: Verlag Butzon & Bercker – Neukirchener Verlag, 1976], 442), who discussed and translated it as “on the appointed day” (M. Sigrist, who re-edited the same tablet, similarly translated “on the said day”); “Some di-til-la Tablets in the British Museum,” in Solving Riddles And Untying Knots. Biblical, Epigraphic And Semitic Studies In Honor Of Jonas C. Greenfield, eds. Z. Zevit, S. Gitin, and M. Sokoloff [Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1995], 611).

3. BM 85441 (§48/iv)

1 1 sag·munus Nin·gu₁₀-u₄šur₅ (LAL₂.TUG₂)·gu₁₀ mu·ni·im
2 a·ba·za₅·da·ri·še₃
3 im·mi·gu₂·ru·a
4 Lu₂₄·Inanna nu·ba₄·kiri₆ Nin₄·tur·tur·ra·ke₄
5 mu·lu·gal·bi in·pad₃
6 ili Lu₂₄·di·gi·ra·lu·i₃·ga·ra₂·še₃
7 ili Ur·Šu·l-pa·e₃ ku₃·dim₂·še₃
rev. 1 ili Me·pa·e₃ nu·ba₄·kiri₆ ⁴Lamma·gu₁₀·še₃
2 ili A·ab·ba·ni ku₃·dim₂·še₃
3 ili Lu·gal·ma₃·gur₈·re du·mu·An·da·gu·du·še₃
4 ili A·ni šu·i₂·še₃
5 ili Za·la·g₃·g₃·nu·du₂·še₃
6 ili Ba·zi·ge gu₃·ga₂·še₃
7 ili Ša·ar·ša·bi₃·i₂·bu·šu·i₂·še₃
8 ili A·du·du·ku₃·dim₂·še₃
9 lu₂·ki·in·im·ma·me
10 ili šu·numun
lo.e. 1 mu·us₂·sa Ki·ma₃·mu·us₂·sa·a·bi

1-5 A woman named Ningu-uşurğu: if she flees, Lu-Inanna, gardener of Ninturtura, has sworn by the name of the king that he will make her return forever.

6-9 Before Lu-diğira, dairy farmer; before Ur-Šulpaa, goldsmith; before Mepaa, gardener of Lammağu; before A’abbani, goldsmith; before Lugal-magure, son of Andagudu; before Ani, barber; before Zalagani, guda-priest; before Bazige, guda-priest; before Saršabib, barber; before Adudu, goldsmith: they are the witnesses.

10-16 Date.
This text records the oath of Lu-Inanna that he will bring back a slave woman in case she flees. Lu-Inanna would have been the seller of the slave woman, thus responsible for her flight, and most probably her father or a close relative (see P. Steinkeller, SDU, p. 69).

2. The verb a-ba-zah is prospective [u.ba.zah]; da-ri is interpreted as a variant of da-ri2 “lasting.”


6. This is the earliest attestation known to me of Lu2-di’gi’r-ra lu2-i3-gara2, well documented in other sources: TCNU 457:r.2 (AS4), TCL 5 6039:r.ii.21 (AS5), AnOr 1 88:iv.25 (AS5), BPOA 1 708:3–4 (AS7), MVN 21 330:9 (AS9), BPOA 1 445:6 (IS1).

7. Ur-d†ul-pa-e3 ku3-dim2 is widely attested in Umma, although it is not certain that the same person is always involved. We find him in texts dated from Š47 (BRM 3 148:3) to IS2 (CST 546:r.9).

r5. Zalag-ga-ni gud a-ni gu d-a3 is also attested in OrSP 47-49 500:r.ii.28.

r8. A-du-du ku3-dim2 is perhaps the same person recorded in AOAT 25 444 9:r.i.9’.

4. BM 110379 (-/-)

1. [I]Nig-ar^xi^ki-du10 dumu Ur^-Li^-si^4-na-ka-ke4
2. Di’gi’r-ga2-bi2-du11 arad2 Ur^-Li^-si^4-na-ka i3-me-a-aș
3. in-ge-en[^6
4. Ha-ha-şą
5. Ur^-I^ş-taran
6. NI-da
7. lu2-inim-ma-me
8. Ha-ha-şą nam-erim2-bi in-ku3
9. Er3-ra-nu-IB lu2-kig2-gi4-a lugal maškim-bi-im

10. ————

rev.

1. [I]Lugal^-ur^-ra-ni u3 Ur^-Nun-gal
2. dumu! Lu2^-Nanna arad2 U2-da-ka-me
4. U2^-da ba-uş2 arad2 ba-za-h3
5. [ara]d2’ ki zah3^-a-na An-şą-an4 ba-uş2
7. nam-erim2-bi Gu3^-de2-a in-ku3
8. Lu-u5 dumu U2-da-ka
9. 10 gin2 ku3^-babbar ba-an-na-la2
10. giš-gid2-da-aš ba-an-na-du3
11. ————

1-3 Nigär-kidu, son of Ur-Lisi, confirmed that Di’gir-ga-bidu was the slave of Ur-Lisi.
4-7 Hahaśa, Ur-Iš-taran (and) NIda were the witnesses (to the transaction).
3 Hahaśa has taken the (assertory) oath.
9 Erra-nuIB, envoy of the king, was the commissioner of this (case).
11-2 Lugal-urani, and Ur-Nungal, sons of Lu-Nanna, were slaves of Uda.
13 Uda appointed (Lu-Nanna) for lancer service, but freed (his sons).
14 Uda died (and) the slave escaped.
r.5–6 (It was believed that) [the slave] had died in Anšan, where he had fled, (but) Gudea, son of Gududu, saw him there;

r.7 Gudea took the (assertory) oath (to confirm this).

r.8–9 Lalu, son of Uda, has paid him (Gudea) ten shekels of silver.

r.10 (Lalu) has appointed (the slave) for lancer service.

The text records two different procedures. The first one, written on the obverse of the tablet, is a duplicate of a document published by T. Fish (AnOr 12 102 2 BM 105379), later re-edited by A. Falkenstein (NG 60). In this court record, the property of a slave is confirmed to Ur-Lisi after the statement of his son. According to the second case, a slave had escaped from lancer service after his owner’s death. He was nevertheless found in Anšan, so it was decided that the son of the owner would compensate the man who found him, and return the slave to his duties.

4, 8. Ha-ha-sha is perhaps the same merchant acting as witness in the Umma legal text AfO 4 23. There is also a Ha-ha-sha guša frequently attested in Umma tablets (SAKF 13:3; MVN 15 390:iv.41, xi.24; SAT 3 1879; BPOA 2 2571:r.5), who could also well be the one of our text.

r.3, 10. The basic meaning of du₃ is “to erect; to plant”. Accordingly, W. Sallaberger suggests (personal communication) to interpret the verb in this context as “to place, to nominate”.

The gš-gšd₂-da work was developed by guruš or erin₂, frequently mentioned in Ur III texts in connection with fishing (see R. K. Englund, Organisation und Verwaltung der Ur III – Fischerei, BBVO 10 [Berlin: Dietrich Reimer Verlag, 1990], 75, 107–55). With regard to some of these texts, which deal with a naval operation against Anšan, P. Steinkeller argues (personal communication) that fishermen, employed as marines in the army, used their fishing spears as weapons.

Another text (NG 189 = BM 105346) where a man who escaped from the gš-gšd₂-da service is mentioned has been discussed by Englund (Fischerei, pp. 160–61). It deals with a certain ME.PIZU dumu Ur-dSa-unu₅, who fled and was seized by a fisherman. This same ME.PIZU is recorded one year later, together with his father, in a text listing prisoners (MVN 18 557 = AuOrS 11 557).

5. BM 105369 (AS2)

1  Lu₂-du₁₀-ga dumu Ur-mes¹
2  u₃ Ama-kaₙ-la₅ dam¹
3  Ni₃₂-u₂-rum arad₁₂-da-ni
4  Lu₂-Inanna dumu-ni
5  dumu-munus-gaba-ni
6  1₇ gin₂ ku₃-babbar-še₅
7  Na-a-na dam Ku-li/-ke₄
8  i₃-s₅₉
9  egi₃-a Lu₂-du₁₀-ga
10  sa₃₉ nu-mu-ši-sa₁₀₅ bi₂-du₁₁
11  Ur-sukkal simug
12  ¹Ur-ma₂-gur₅-re
13  ¹Ur₆-Ma₄-mi

rev. 1  ib₂-ta₃-e₅-eš₂
2  Na-a-na nam-erim₂₅ ba-ni-dab₅
3  Ur₆-Da₉-me₄
4  sa₃₉-ga₂₂₉ bi₂-dar-a
5  nam-erim₂₂-bi i₃₉-ku₃-re₆
6  Lu₂-du₁₀-ga sa₃₉ in-na-šum₂₉-mu
From Luduga, son of Urmes, and from Amakala, the wife of Nigurum, his (Luduga’s) slave, her (Amakala’s) son Lu-Inanna (and) her baby-girl, for 17 shekels of silver Na’ana, the wife of Kuli, bought.

9–10 Afterwards, Luduga declared: “She (Na’ana) did not buy those children from me!”  

11–12 Na’ana has taken over (the actual case) by (swearing an assertory) oath.

13–14 Ur-Damu will swear that he (Luduga) illegally seized the children.

15 Luduga will give back the children to her (Na’ana).

17 Concluded case of the envoy, commissioner (of the king).

18–11 Gudea, overseer; Šu-Ninšubur, overseer; (and) Lugalkuzu: they were the “bystanders.”

This tablet, drawn up by a rather unskillful scribe, records the sale of two children by Luduga, who was also the owner of their father, and by their mother. The latter apparently was a free woman who shared the right of reselling the children into slavery with the owner of her husband and children. Subsequently (perhaps after her death), Luduga disclaimed the sale, but payment and sale were confirmed following the testimony of the witnesses of the sale, and the oaths of Na’ana (the buyer) and of Ur-Damu (Na’ana’s husband?).

A similar situation is found in ITT 2 3519 (= NG 71), a text discussed by A. Falkenstein (NG I, pp. 90–91, II, p. 117) and P. Steinkeller (SDU, p. 100). According to this court record, a girl (Ummagina) had been sold by her mother (Ušime), the girl and her father (Ur-Igizibara) being the slaves of Azmu. The object of the litigation was the right to sell the slave girl, a problem raised after the death of Azmu by his son. What our text and no. 6 below show, is that when children were sold (most probably for debts), their mother kept some kind of rights to them: they could not be sold into slavery to a third party by their new owner without the consent and participation of the mother. On the other hand, the mother could not sell them on her own initiative unless, as ITT 2 3519 establishes, a royal decree making them free was handed down.

1–5. The translation proposed here runs against the difficulty of arad₂-da-ni where arad₂-da-na is expected. Nevertheless, I find problematic the alternative of considering Amakala the wife of Luduga, since it would imply that Niğurum was their slave and the father of the children (a baby girl included).

r.2. For this interpretation of nam-erim₂ dab₅, see the contribution by W. Sallaberger in this volume.


6. BM 106439 (AS5/vii)

1. Lugal-itida, (and) Šeškal-la
2. Lugal-dub-la
3. dumu Lugal-itida-me
4. 12 gin2 ku3-babbar-še3
5. Lu2Šara2 lugal saq-Ša2-še3
6. E2še3-igi-zu ama saq-Ša2-še3
7. min-na-ne-ne-še3
8. Lamma-šu10-a
9. in-neši-sa10
10. NIM-mu ki<na-ab>-tum-bi i3-me-am3 ba-uš2
11. Lu2gu-la
12. Ba-si5
13. Ur-dDumu-zi-da

rev.
1. Ama-ni-ba-an-sa6
2. Šara2sa6-ga
3. lu2-inim-ma-bi-me
4. Ur-dDumu-zi-da-ke4 nam-erim2-bi ku5-dam
5. Unti-Ša2-dumu Ha-ba-lu5-še2
6. Lugal-Ša2-zu-dumu Ha-ba-lu5-še2
7. NI-da-mu dub-sar
8. Lu2digi-Šara2 dumu Lugal-bar-ab-e3
9. Lu2Šara2 dumu um-mi-a
10. Lu2Šara2 dumu UTU-MI
11. lu2 ki-ba gub-ba-me
12. Ur-diši4 di-ku5
13. iti min-eš3
14. mu En-unu6-gal Inanna ba-huš

1–10 Lugal-itida, (and) Šeškal-la and Lugal-dubla, who are the sons of Lugal-itida, for 12 shekels of silver Lammağu bought from Lu-Šara, the owner of these persons, and Eše-igizu, the mother of the children, from both of them.

11 NIMmu, who was the guarantor of this (sale), died.

12–v4 Lugula, Basig, Ur-Dumuzida, Amani-bansa (and) Šarasaga: these were the witnesses of this (sale). Ur-Dumuzida will take the (assertory) oath. r5–11 Ur-Šu₂, son of Habaluge; Lugalkuzu, son of Habaluge; Ndamu, scribe; Lu-dišira, son of Lugal-barabe; Lu-Šara, assistant of the ummi’a; Lu-Šara, son of Šamaš-silli: they were the “bystanders.”

12 Ur-Lisi was the judge.

13–14 Date.

This trial probably originated in a claim for a sale similar to the one recorded in text no. 5. In this case, a slave and his two sons had been sold by their owner, while the mother of the children acted as co-seller (I am not certain whether she would had also acted as co-seller of her husband). The point now was to establish that the guarantor was dead, and on the other hand to confirm that the sale had indeed taken place through the testimony of its witnesses.
11. The interpretation of this line as NIM - mu ki - ña - ab - tum - bi i3 - me - am3 ba - uš2 (instead of ba - til), is supported by BPOA 1 664. In this court record concerning citizens of Id2 - du - la9 - 1a4, and originating in a claim whose precise nature is uncertain, it was also established that the guarantor of the sale, whose name is not mentioned, had died (lu2 - gi - ña - ab - tum - bi ba - uš2).

r.9. In Ur III administrative texts, the function of the um - mi - a is frequently related with the supervision or calculation of fields and orchards production (see K. Volk, “Edubba’a und Edubba’a-Literatur: Rätsel und Lösungen,” ZA 90 [2000] 9–10). The dumu um - mi - a, as for example HLC 72:i.3 and MVN 2 175:vii20, r.v.1, 19 show, is to be understood also as a profession, probably something like “assistant of the ummi’a.”

7. BM 106540 (AS6/xiid)

1 1Nin9-kal-la geme2 U-r4Nin-sun2-ka
2 Lugal-iti-da inim in-ni-ĝar
3 nin9-ĝu10-um nu-sa10 bi2-du11
4 sa10-a-šar
5 1E2-a-šar
6 1A-ba-al-la-šu-um
7 lu2-ki-inim-ma geme2 U-r4Nin-sun2-ka-ke4 sa10-a-me
8 mu Lu2-ša-lim lu2-/(ki)/inim-ma
rev.
1 1kaskal-a (mur-ti)-la-še3
2 saĝ ki 1U-r4Nin-sun2-ka i3-tuš
3 Lu2-ša-lim kaskal-ta du-ni
4 di di-da
5 U-r4Nin-<sun2>-ka-ke4
6 mu lugal in-pad3
7 tukum-bi di li2-bi2-in-du11
8 Nin9-kal-la Lugal-iti-da ba-an-tum2-mu
9 igt ensig2-ka-še3
10 igt Lu2-du10-ga dumu lugal-še3
11 iti diri mu Ša-aš-du4 ba-hul

1–3 Lugalitida has claimed Ninkala, slave woman of Ur-Ninsun. “She is my sister, he did not buy her,” he declared.

4–7 Concerning the case that she had been bought, Ea-šar (and) Aballašum were the witnesses of the purchase of the slave woman by Ur-Ninsun.

8–9 Because the witness Lū-šalim was on a journey, the woman kept living with Ur-Ninsun.

10–12 Ur-Ninsun swore by the name of the king that when Lū-šalim comes from his trip, the process will be undertaken.

13–8 If he (Ur-Ninsun) does not engage in the process, Lugalitida will take Ninkala with him.

19–10 Before the governor; before Luduga, prince.

11 Date

The tablet records a claim presented by the brother (Lugal-itiida) of a slave woman (Ninkala) against her owner (Ur-Ninsun). The litigation was postponed until Lū-šalim, one of the witnesses of the sale, would have returned from a trip. In the meantime, the woman kept living with Ur-Ninsun, who swore to engage in a process as soon as Lū-šalim returned.

4–7. Note the parallel construction lu2 - inim - ma saĝ sa10 - a - še3 mu - ne - ra - e3 “They appeared as witnesses concerning the case that the slave had been bought” (TCL 5 6167 = NG 51:r.3).
r.1. The restoration of this line (kaskal-a [mu-ti]-la-še3) has been made on the basis of AOAT 25 444 9:ii.6–7 (PN kaskal-a mu-ti-la-am3), and TCL 5 6047:ii.16 (kaskal-a mu-un-ti-il).

r.10. For Lu2-du10-ga du umu lugal, possibly a son of Šulgi who carried over his title of “prince” through the reign of Amar-Suen, see D. R. Frayne, Ur III Period (2112–2004 BC), RIME 3/2 (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 1997) 168:28 (delete the reference to AuOrS 11 125; add SNAT 374, YOS 18 68, SAT 2 309, AAICAB 1/1 Ashm. 1924–665).

r.11. The ambiguity of the year name (Š42 / AS6) is solved by the fact that the formula i g i ensi2-ka-še3 is used in Umma legal texts only after AS2. Furthermore, the governor and Lu2-du10-ga du umu lugal are also attested as judges in SNAT 374, a text dated to the same month and year, which records Ur-niğar5 du umu Ha-ba-lu5-ge2. This Ur-niğar5 appears in Umma legal texts dated to AS4 (BM 106479) and AS5 (no. 6 [BM 106439] and SNAT 473). Other similar links could also be suggested, such as, for example, the occurrence of Lu2-diğir-ra du umu Lugal-ba-ta-ra(ab)-e3 in legal texts from Umma dated from AS4 onwards (BM 106479, BM 106442, no. 6 [BM 106439], BPOA 1 600, and SNAT 373).

8. BM 106551 (AS/i)
1 iN-n-a-ni-sa4 gene2 I3-lam-ma
2 I3-lam-ma-še3
3 Ša3-ge-bu3-lu5
4 in-ši-sa10 bi2-in-du11
5 sa10-2-aš nu-un-da-ge-en6
6 Ša3-ge-bu3-lu5
7 mu lugal in-pad3
rev. 1 tukum-bi u4-3-kam-ka
2 lu2-inim-ma nu-mu-tum2
3 di til-la1 hi2-e2 bi2-in-du11
4 lu2-inim-ma nu-mu-da-tum2
5 NiIn-n-a-ni-sa4 ba-an-tum2
6 igi NiI-d[a3-mu-še3
7 igi Arad2-Nanna gu-za-la2-še3
8 igi Ur-dNun-gal lu2-ki6-gi4-a lugal-še3
9 iti še-sa7-11-ku5 mu uš2-sa Enunu-6-gal dInanna ba-huğ

1–4 “Šagebulu bought Nanina, slave woman of Ilamma, from Ilamma,” he (Šagebulu) declared.
5 As for the purchase, he (Šagebulu) was not able to confirm it.
6–9 Šagebulu has sworn by the name of the king: “If in three days I do not bring the witness(es), let it be a concluded case,” he declared.
10–5 He could not bring the witness(es), so Ilamma took Nanina with him.
16–8 Before NIdamu; before Arad-Nanna, the “throne-bearer”; before Ur-Nungal, envoy of the king.
19 Date.

This document records the statement of Šagebulu, who claims to have bought a slave woman from Ilamma. Nevertheless, he was not able to provide witnesses who could testify that the purchase took place, so the property of the slave woman was confirmed to Ilamma.

9. BM 106614 (AS2)
1 iUr-zikum-ma du mu-Hu-la-lum-ma
2 šu Ur-sig3-ta
NEW UR III COURT RECORDS CONCERNING SLAVERY

The tablet records a case regarding the purchase of a slave from Ursig by Lugal-ane. After Lugal-ane's death, Ursig claimed that he had not bought the slave, so Lugal-ane's wife litigated with him. The witnesses of the sale confirmed that Lugal-ane's wife was the owner of the slave.

2. To the best of my knowledge, the usage of the prepositional phrase šu seller-(a k) -ta is otherwise unattested. It is obviously parallel to kī seller-(a k) -ta, for which see P. Steinkeller, SDU, p. 157.
8 1Lugal-me-a
9 1Lugal-nesağ-e
10 nam-lu2-inim-ma-še₂ im-š₃-e₂-eš₂
rev. 1 ša₂-ša Di-ni nam-erim₂-ma ba-ni-dab₅
2 Di-ni nam-erim₂ u₃-ku₅
3 4-li₄-ke₄-sa₂-ga-an-tum₂-mu
4 1Ur-niğár₄-ab₂-ba₂ uru
5 1Du-du še₂-ša₂-ma₂
6 lu₂ ki-ba gub₂-ba-me
7 di til-la dumu Umma₄
8 mu₄-Amar₄-Suen lugal-e Ur-bi₂-lum mu-hul

1–5 Uği paid 7 ½ shekels of silver to Dini for Ninhegal.
6–1 Ur-Geştinana, Dada (and) Lugal-nesağ-e appeared in their status of witnesses (of the sale). From among them Dini has taken over (the actual case) by (swearing an assertory) oath.
2–3 After Dini has taken the oath, Uği will take the woman with him.
4–6 Ur-niğar, city elder; Dudu, brother of the l u m a h -priest: they were the “bystanders.”
7 Concluded case (concerning) citizens of Umma.
8 Date.

This record originates in a litigation raised by Dini, who would have claimed that he did not receive the payment for the sale of a slave woman. The tablet records the testimonies of the witnesses of the purchase, and the oath of the seller himself, confirming that the buyer had indeed paid for the woman.

1. BM 106527
NEW UR III COURT RECORDS CONCERNING SLAVERY

2. BM 106550

3. BM 85441
4. BM 110379

5. BM 105369
6. BM 106439

7. BM 106540
8. BM 106551

9. BM 106614
10. BM 111148