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# ANCIENT NEAR EAST



# Who watches the watchers?

## New evidence on the role of foremen in the Ur III administration\*

Manuel Molina, Madrid

The administration of the Ur III state (c. 2110–2003 BC) is well known for the enormous mass of documentation it has left behind: more than 97,000 Sumerian cuneiform tablets are currently catalogued in BDTNS, and many others remain unpublished in museums and private collections all over the world.<sup>1</sup>

The feeling of someone who approaches this documentation might be that large administrations, at least, kept a record of everything, even the most insignificant issues. But this was obviously not true. Like any other administration, no matter how complex it is or tends to be, the Ur III administrative apparatus relied on written documentation, but also on oral communication, personal decisions and on trust. However, trust could be betrayed, and mechanisms to avoid it needed to be implemented. The present contribution deals with some of these procedures put into practice by the administration in the management of manpower.

§ 1. In large administrations like those of Umma or Girsu, foremen had at their disposal gangs of men and women of different ages and social conditions. With them under their responsibility, foremen were entitled to fulfil a fixed amount of work per year through various types of tasks, most frequently agricultural activities, irrigation, transportation, craft production, milling and textile works. When a work-gang performed one of these tasks, an official sealed a tablet recording its completion and delivered it to the foreman. One example of these labour accounts shall suffice:

USC 6513 = CDLI P235328

330 sar al aka 4 sar-ta, a<sub>2</sub>-bi u<sub>4</sub> 82½ ġuruš, 350 sar al aka 5 sar-ta, a<sub>2</sub>-bi u<sub>4</sub> 70 ġuruš, 96 ġuruš u<sub>4</sub> 1-še<sub>3</sub>, KA-us<sub>2</sub>-sa<sub>2</sub> ġar-ra, a<sub>2</sub> ša<sub>3</sub>-gu<sub>4</sub>-ka, a-ša<sub>3</sub> [Me]-en-kar<sub>2</sub>, **ugula Lu<sub>2</sub>-du<sub>10</sub>-ga, kišib Šeš-kal-la**, mu us<sub>2</sub>-sa bad<sub>3</sub> mar-tu ba-du<sub>3</sub> (ŠS5). *Seal*: Šeš-kal-la, dub-sar, dumu Na-DI.

330 sar (1 sar = 35 m<sup>2</sup>) of hoeing at 4 sar each (man-day), its work is 82½ workdays; 350 sar of hoeing at 5 sar each (man-day), its work is 70 workdays; 96 men during one day

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1 See Molina 2008.

(= 96 workdays) have put ... Work (carried out by) oxdrivers. At the Menkar-field. Foreman: Luduga. Seal of Šeškala. Year /following that in which the wall of the Amorites was built (Šu-Suen 5). Seal: Šeškala, scribe, son of NaDI.

One of the numerous issues these texts raise concerns the way these calculations were made and who was responsible for them. Was it the foreman who was in charge of the work-gangs, or was it the sealing official who gave the final approval to the workdays<sup>2</sup> said to have been necessary for the works? Or was it someone else? Were inspections carried out in situ, while the works were performed, or immediately afterwards?

There is actually in the Ur III corpus a large amount of tablets recording inspections (gurum<sub>2</sub> aka),<sup>3</sup> which were essentially of two types: a) those apparently made on the ground, carried out to have control over the works and the workforce employed in them; b) those made on workers in service in certain sectors of the provincial economy, establishments or households, which also provided detailed information about the condition of the workers.

The most numerous are those belonging to the first category: there are, for example, more than 300 texts of this type preserved for the Umma province. A comprehensive study of them, and of their relationships with single labour accounts of foremen, like the preceding text, has yet to be made. Basically, they presented very similar contents to labour accounts: they recorded either the number of workers belonging to one or more gangs, or the workdays completed, together with the name of the foremen; most frequently, the type of task carried out and the place where it was performed; the day, month and year when the inspection (gurum<sub>2</sub> aka) took place; and eventually a sealing official or his name preceded by ġiri<sub>3</sub> “under the responsibility of”.

Some of them can be grouped together chronologically in the span of a few weeks, showing that certain tasks in certain places were inspected daily, until the job was completed, and also that inspections could be repeated year after year.

An example of these texts, a group constituted by twenty-seven tablets, follows, although many others could be provided. It has been chosen because some of the texts record work-gangs under the supervision of the foreman Luduga, while others mention Šeškala, the official under whose responsibility the inspections were carried out; both Luduga and Šeškala were probably the same officials recorded in the preceding labour account (USC 6513). The tablets record works intended for the preparation of the Menkar-field for cultivation, namely hoeing and weeding, performed between the fifth and the eighth months of the year. They always follow the same pattern:

$n$  hired workers (ġuruš huġ-ġa<sub>2</sub>) have cut weeds (kiši<sub>17</sub> or diġ<sub>3</sub>),  $n$  sar each (1 sar = 35 m<sup>2</sup>) //  $n$  hired workers (guruš huġ-ġa<sub>2</sub>), at a salary of  $n$  liters of barley each (a<sub>2</sub> še  $n$  sila<sub>3</sub>-ta), have hoed  $n$  sar each (al  $n$  sar-ta).

2 “Workdays”, or “man-days”, is an abstract notation, which means that the days recorded in the text are not real days of work but accounting units: 10 guruš u<sub>4</sub> 1-še<sub>3</sub> does not mean that “10 workers (worked) during 1 day”, but that 10 workdays were performed by  $n$  workers during  $n$  days (e.g. 4 workers during 2.5 days, or 20 workers during 0.5 days).

3 For gurum<sub>2</sub> aka “inspection made”, see Steinkeller 1982; de Maaġer and Jagersma 2003/04: 353; Attinger 2005: 226.

Their foreman (ugula) is PN<sub>1</sub>. Under the responsibility of (ġiri<sub>3</sub>) PN<sub>2</sub>. Inspection performed on the *n*th day (gurum<sub>2</sub> aka u<sub>4</sub> *n*-kam). At the field of Menkar. Month and year name.

ŠS1/[x]/6: 10 ġuruš huġ-ġa<sub>2</sub>, ugula Kal-la, 11 ġuruš huġ-ġa<sub>2</sub>, **ugula Lu<sub>2</sub>-du<sub>10</sub>-ga**, al 6 sar-ta, a-ša<sub>3</sub> Me-en-kar<sub>2</sub>, ġiri<sub>3</sub> Šeš-kal-la, gurum<sub>2</sub> aka u<sub>4</sub> 6-kam (MVN 14 492)

ŠS1/v/3: 10 ġuruš huġ-ġa<sub>2</sub>, ugula Kal-la, 10 ġuruš huġ-ġa<sub>2</sub>, **ugula Lu<sub>2</sub>-du<sub>10</sub>-ga**, al aka 5 sar-ta, gurum<sub>2</sub> aka u<sub>4</sub> 3-kam, a-ša<sub>3</sub> Me-en-kar<sub>2</sub> (MVN 14 281)

ŠS1/v/11: 2 ġuruš, ugula Kal-la, 10 ġuruš, **ugula Lu<sub>2</sub>-du<sub>10</sub>-ga**, a<sub>2</sub> [5] sila<sub>3</sub>-ta, al 5 [sar]-ta, gurum<sub>2</sub> aka u<sub>4</sub> 11-kam, a-ša<sub>3</sub> Me-en-kar<sub>2</sub>, (UTI 5 3204)

ŠS1/v/20: 23½ ġuruš a<sub>2</sub> 6 sila<sub>3</sub>-ta, al 5 sar-ta, gurum<sub>2</sub> aka u<sub>4</sub> 20-kam, a-ša<sub>3</sub> Me-en-kar<sub>2</sub> (UTI 3 2034)

ŠS1/v/21: 24 ġuruš huġ-ġa<sub>2</sub>, a<sub>2</sub> 6 sila<sub>3</sub>-ta, al 4 sar-ta, u<sub>4</sub> 21-kam, 32 ġuruš huġ-ġa<sub>2</sub>, a<sub>2</sub> 6 sila<sub>3</sub>-ta, al 3 sar-ta, gurum<sub>2</sub> aka u<sub>4</sub> 22-kam, a-ša<sub>3</sub> Me-en-kar<sub>2</sub> (Farmer's Instructions 3.09)

ŠS1/vi/4: 13 ġuruš huġ-ġa<sub>2</sub>, a<sub>2</sub> 6 sila<sub>3</sub>-ta, al 5 sar-ta, gurum<sub>2</sub> aka u<sub>4</sub> 4-kam, a-ša<sub>3</sub> Me-en-kar<sub>2</sub>, **ġiri<sub>3</sub> Šeš-kal-la** (MVN 16 642)

ŠS1/vi/5: 13 ġuruš-[huġ]-ġa<sub>2</sub>, a<sub>2</sub> 6 [sila<sub>3</sub>]-ta, al 6 sar-ta, gurum<sub>2</sub> aka u<sub>4</sub> 5-kam, a-ša<sub>3</sub> Me-en-kar<sub>2</sub>, **ġiri<sub>3</sub> Šeš-kal-la** (UTI 5 3183)

ŠS1/vi/10: 15 ġuruš huġ-ġa<sub>2</sub>, a<sub>2</sub> 7 sila<sub>3</sub>-ta, al 7 sar-ta, gurum<sub>2</sub> aka u<sub>4</sub> 10-kam, a-ša<sub>3</sub> Me-en-kar<sub>2</sub>, **ġiri<sub>3</sub> Šeš-kal-la** (Nisaba 9 107)

Other texts belonging to this dossier and dated to Amar-Suen 7 or to the following days of Šu-Suen 1 are:

AS7/vii/2: SACT 2 60  
AS7/vii/3: ŠA 80, pl. 111  
AS7/vii/7: NYPL 232  
AS7/vii/10: SACT 2 56  
AS7/vii/12: TCS 36

ŠS1/vi/12: BPOA 6 124  
ŠS1/vi/14: MVN 16 946  
ŠS1/vi/15: MVN 14 548  
ŠS1/vi/16: MVN 16 631  
ŠS1/vi/19?: UTI 5 3201  
ŠS1/vi/20: MVN 18 275  
ŠS1/vi/23: BPOA 6 1405

ŠS1/vi/24: Nisaba 9 254  
ŠS1/vi/26: UTI 3 2178  
ŠS1/vi/28: MCS 3, p. 88  
ŠS1/vi/29: UTI 5 3305  
ŠS1/8/10: MVN 16 941  
ŠS1/8/13: BIN 5 218  
ŠS1/8/14: BPOA 6 1338

§ 2. The administrative connection of daily inspections with single labour accounts of foremen will be better understood with the group of tablets schematized below in Table 1. They are all dated to the first regnal year of Šu-Suen, “during the harvest” (ša<sub>3</sub> buru<sub>14</sub>), sealed by the same official (Ur-lugal), and record exactly the same tasks by several work-gangs supervised by different foremen. Interestingly, two (or three) of them record also the expression gurum<sub>2</sub> aka u<sub>4</sub> 18-kam “inspection belonging to the 18th day”, an inspection that most probably was also carried out in the rest of cases (cf. the inspection digests discussed below). Therefore, the approval of the labour account by the Umma official who sealed the tablet for the foreman seems to have been confirmed by an inspection on the ground. I cannot say whether these inspections were carried out every day on every work-gang all over the Umma province, or whether they were randomly made, an issue that a thorough study of inspection texts will perhaps clarify.

	BPOA 1 752	BPOA 7 2392	UTI 5 3146	BPOA 1 673	BPOA 6 53	BPOA 6 1139
<i>n</i> ġuruš u <sub>4</sub> 1-še <sub>3</sub> še gur <sub>10</sub> -a zar <sub>3</sub> tab-ba	198 ġuruš	233 ġuruš	217 ġuruš	28 ġuruš	236 ġuruš	72 ġuruš
<i>n</i> ġuruš u <sub>4</sub> 1-še <sub>3</sub> gu <sub>4</sub> -e us <sub>2</sub> -sa-(a) a-ša <sub>3</sub> Ka-ma-ri <sub>2</sub>	12 ġuruš	18 ġuruš	30+1 <sup>7</sup> ġuruš	36 ġuruš	18 ġuruš	18 ġuruš
<i>n</i> ġuruš u <sub>4</sub> 1-še <sub>3</sub> KA.GIR <sub>3</sub> -da e Ki-sur-ra-(ka) ad aka	80 ġuruš	74 ġuruš	80 ġuruš	96 ġuruš	92 ġuruš	—
<b>gurum<sub>2</sub> aka u<sub>4</sub> 18-kam</b>	√	√	[√?]	—	—	—
ugula PN	<b>Da-DU-mu</b>	<b>Ba-sa<sub>6</sub></b>	<b>Ur-<sup>d</sup>En-lil<sub>2</sub>-la<sub>2</sub></b>	<b>Lugal-ku<sub>3</sub>-zu</b>	<b>Da-a-gi</b>	<b>Ur-<sup>gis</sup>gigir</b>
kišib Ur-lugal	√	√	√	√	√	√
ša <sub>3</sub> buru <sub>14</sub>	√	√	√	√	√	√
mu <sup>d</sup> Šu- <sup>d</sup> Suen lugal	√	√	√	√	√	√
Seal: Ur-lugal dub-sar dumu Da-a-gi <sub>4</sub>	√	√	√	√	√	√
<i>Translation: n</i> workers during 1 day (= <i>n</i> workdays) have reaped grain and have piled up sheaves, <i>n</i> workers during 1 day (= <i>n</i> workdays) have driven oxen (lit. “have followed upon the oxen”), at the field of Kamari; <i>n</i> workers during 1 day (= <i>n</i> workdays) have performed matting work on the path <sup>7</sup> of the embankment of Kisura. Inspection belonging to the 18th day. Foreman: PN. Seal of Ur-lugal. During the harvest. Year: Šu-Suen 1. Seal: Ur-lugal, scribe, son of Da’agi.						

Table 1

These daily inspections on the ground were later summarized in other texts listing the name of the foremen, the number of workers under their responsibility, and the tasks performed. The names of foremen given above are collected together in a group of texts of this kind dated to the third month of Amar-Suen’s seventh regnal year. Even if not expressed in the text, the connecting link was certainly the sealing official of their labour accounts. An example of the texts from this dossier is the following:

PPAC 4 173

- |          |  |
|----------|--|
| 1        | 3 ġuruš ugula <b>Ba-sa<sub>6</sub></b>                                 |
| 2        | 3 ugula Ur-mes   |
| 3        | 3 ugula Unken-ne <sub>2</sub>  |
| 4        | 3 ugula I <sub>7</sub> -pa-e <sub>3</sub>                              |
| 5        | 3 ugula <b>Ur-<sup>d</sup>En-lil<sub>2</sub>-la<sub>2</sub></b>        |
| <b>6</b> | <b>3 ugula Lugal-ku<sub>3</sub>-zu</b>                                 |
| 7        | 3 ugula <b>Da-du-mu</b>  |
| 8        | 3 ugula Lugal-e <sub>2</sub> -mah-e                                    |
| rev. 1   | 3 ugula <b>Ur-<sup>gis</sup>gigir</b>                                  |
| 2        | 3 ugula Ur- <sup>gis</sup> gigir šabra                                 |
| 3        | tug <sub>2</sub> -sag <sub>x</sub> (ŠE.KIN) 0.0.1 <sup>gana2</sup> -ta |
| 4        | gurum <sub>2</sub> u <sub>4</sub> 17-kam                               |

- 5 a-ša<sub>3</sub> ušur<sub>3</sub><sup>1</sup> (<LAL<sub>2</sub>>×LAGAB) Da-ur<sub>4</sub>  
 6 iti še-kar-ra-ġal<sub>2</sub>  
 7 mu Hu-hu-nu-ri<sup>ki</sup> ba-hul

Three workers, (their) foreman is Basa; three (workers, their) foreman is Urmes; three (workers, their) foreman is Unkenne; three (workers, their) foreman is Ipa'e; three (workers, their) foreman is Ur-Enlila; three (workers, their) foreman is Lugal-kuzu; three (workers, their) foreman is DaDUMu; three (workers, their) foreman is Lugal-emahe; three (workers, their) foreman is Ur-gigir; three (workers, their) foreman is Ur-gigir, the prefect. (They have done) ploughing work, at 1 *iku* (= 0.35 ha.) each (per day).

Inspection belonging to the 17th day.

At the neighbouring field of Da'ur.

The month of "barley is on the quay" (iii). The year in which Huhnuri was destroyed (Amar Suen 7).

The whole dossier, with slight differences in the number of workers, foremen and tasks is constituted by the following texts:

AS7/iii/3: MVN 4 17

AS7/iii/7<sup>2</sup>: Ebay WWW20021221-01 (= BDTNS 167911)

AS7/iii/15: TJAMC IOS 13 (pl. 51)

AS7/iii/17: PPAC 4 173

AS7/iii/19: Bull. Buffalo SNS 11-2, p. 141 10

AS7/iii/22: BPOA 1 1210

AS7/iii/24: MVN 4 18

§ 3. The second type of inspection mentioned above is the "inspection list",<sup>4</sup> also called "gurum<sub>2</sub> aka roster", but its administrative connection with daily inspections on the ground is not obvious. The inspection lists are long records of workers listed by name and classified according to the wages they received, their social status, age, and family relationships. They also included information on the reasons for the absence of certain workers, i.e. sickness, death, absenteeism or transfer to other gangs. This sort of information, which is not usually found in daily inspection texts, means that these were not used to compile the inspection lists. Nevertheless, it is important to know who was behind the compilation of these inspection lists, since they were used to calculate the wages needed for the work-gangs, and also to calculate the capital section of a foreman's balanced-account<sup>5</sup> (see below).

To try to answer to this question we will turn our attention now to the Girsu provincial archive. The composition of this corpus with respect to inspection texts is somewhat different: there are not as many daily inspection texts as there are in the Umma corpus, but it includes some fifty labels (*pisaġ dub-ba*) that were hung from baskets holding

4 Inspection lists from Umma have been studied by Steinkeller (1987) and Koslova (2004; 2008: 165–173 and Texts 13–21). Texts of this type from Umma are the following (after Koslova 2008: 175): Torino 2 703, OrSP 47–49 324, YOS 4 232, BM 106132, BCT 2 288, OrSP 47–49 382, OrSP 47–49 483, RA 73, pp. 115–120 and YOS 18 115.

5 See Steinkeller 1987: 76, 2003: 47, and Koslova 2013: 318.



inspection tablets, and many of these inspections were carried out on personnel working at the temple households of the province, for example:<sup>6</sup>

TCTI 2 3687

pisaĝ dub-ba, gurum<sub>2</sub> aka, ĝiri<sub>3</sub>-se<sub>3</sub>-ga, eren<sub>2</sub> saĝ-apin, e<sub>2</sub> <sup>d</sup>Nanše, ĝiri<sub>3</sub> Ur-e<sub>2</sub>-ninnu, dumu Al-la-mu, i<sub>3</sub>-ĝal<sub>2</sub>, mu Ša-aš-ru-um<sup>ki</sup> ba-hul

Tablet-basket: it contains (tablets of) inspections of personnel, (concerning) *eren*-workers (working as) chief ploughmen at the household of Nanše. Year in which Šašrum was destroyed (Amar-Suen 6).

These baskets would have contained inspection lists,<sup>7</sup> like the one published in MVN 13 346, which recorded workers under the responsibility of the foreman Ur-Ninpiriĝ. The workers, listed by their personal names, were classified according to their category, age, profession and the wages they received, indicating also whether they were absent because they had died. The last lines of this tablet read as follows:

(...) gurum<sub>2</sub> aka dib-ba, eren<sub>2</sub> saĝ-apin, ugula Ur-<sup>d</sup>Nin-piriĝ, e<sub>2</sub> <sup>d</sup>Nanše, mu Ša-aš-ru<sup>ki</sup> ba-hul  
(...) (Tablet of) inspection transferred (concerning) *eren*-workers (working as) chief ploughmen, (their) foreman (being) Ur-Ninpiriĝ, at the household of Nanše. Year in which Šašrum was destroyed (Amar-Suen 6).

§ 4. Some insights on how these inspection lists were compiled, and who was responsible for the information written down on them, may be provided by two unpublished texts kept in the British Museum, here edited for the first time.

**Text 1. BM 21411.** 1896-330-77

Copy: Fig. 1. Photo: Fig. 2 and BDTNS 041983

Date: Šulgi 47. 82×48×27

- 1 1 Ur-sa<sub>6</sub>-ga
- 2 1 Ur-<sup>d</sup>Ba-u<sub>2</sub>
- 3 1 Lu<sub>2</sub>-kal-la
- 4 1 Ab-ba
- 5 1 Ur-Ba-gara<sub>2</sub>
- 6 1 A-hu-ma
- 7 1 Ur-ki-la<sub>2</sub>-a
- 8 *Blank line*
- 9 ugula eren<sub>2</sub>-na e<sub>2</sub> eš<sub>3</sub>

<sup>6</sup> See Maekawa 1999: 77.

<sup>7</sup> Inspection lists from Girsu are, for example: HLC 2 10 (pl. 53) (Š41/vii); UDT 58 (Š43); CT 1, pl. 6 94-10-15 5 (Š43/viii); Orient 16, p. 91 135 (Š46/ix/7); CT 7, pl. 13 BM 12939 (Š47); HLC 1 26 (pl. 22) (Š47/v); ASJ 11, p. 129 59 (Š48); PPAC 5 324 (Š48/v); MVN 2 176 (Š48/vii); MVN 17 54 (Š48/xii); PPAC 5 1552 (AS1); TUT 159 (AS1/v); HLC 1 253 (pl. 46) (AS2); MVN 6 290 (AS2); MVN 6 298 (AS2); SAT 1 417 (AS2); ASJ 18, p. 157 2 (AS2/vii); MVN 17 55 (AS4); CTNMC 54 (AS4/i); MVN 13 346 (AS6); TCTI 1 736 (ŠS1/xii); PPAC 5 286 (-/v); HLC 2 25 (pl. 63) (date lost); HLC 3 238 (pl. 113) (date lost); MVN 22 24 (date lost); PPAC 5 1 (date lost).

- 10 lu<sub>2</sub> gub-ba ba-zah<sub>3</sub>-še<sub>3</sub> nu-mu-sar-a  
 11 lu<sub>2</sub> ti-la ba-uš<sub>2</sub>-še<sub>3</sub> nu-mu-sar-a  
 12 mu lugal-bi in-pa<sub>3</sub>-eš<sub>2</sub>  
 rev. *Blank space*  
 1 mu us<sub>2</sub>-sa  
 2 Ki-maš<sup>ki</sup> ba-hul  
*Blank space*

Ursaga, Ur-Ba'u, Lukala, Abba, Ur-Bagara, Ahuma, Ur-kila'a.

(They are) foremen of *eren*-workers (working at) the temple household(s) and sanctuaries.

They swore by the name of the king that they will not have inscribed a man in service as an absentee, that they will not have inscribed a living man as a dead one.

Year following that in which Kimaš was destroyed (Šulgi 47).

§ 5. The first issue raised by this text is the interpretation of e<sub>2</sub>-AB in line 9, a term that is most frequently understood by text editors as e<sub>2</sub>-kurušda “fattening house”. In fact, in Ur III texts, most of the time kurušda is written with the sign AB (KWU 821),<sup>8</sup> which might also be read as eš<sub>3</sub> “shrine, sanctuary”. Although the interpretation e<sub>2</sub>-kurušda “fattening house” cannot be completely ruled out, here I prefer the reading e<sub>2</sub> eš<sub>3</sub> “temple household (and) sanctuaries” because of the –in my view– clear relationship of the oath recorded in the text with inspection lists and balanced-accounts that are well attested for temple households, but not for a fattening house in the Girsu/Lagaš province (see below).

Unfortunately, I cannot say which household(s) and sanctuaries are being referred to in our text, since I have not been able to identify the foremen recorded in it. With regard to the sanctuaries, it would be tempting to identify the *eren*-workers of Text 1 and their foremen with those mentioned in a group of fifty texts, dating between Šulgi 46 and Šu-Suen 4, which deal with complementary tasks assigned to *eren*<sub>2</sub> eš<sub>3</sub> didli “*eren*-workers of various sanctuaries”.<sup>9</sup> Nevertheless, despite the accurate recording of the overseers' and foremen's personal names in this dossier, no prosopographical links can be established with our text. This could be due, of course, to the function of these accounts, which were specifically meant to record the reallocation of workers to different tasks and establishments of the provincial and royal sectors. The numerous sanctuaries or chapels disseminated all over the province and the administrative relationship frequently shown with temple households make it perfectly plausible that one or more temple households and sanctuaries were meant in Text 1 with e<sub>2</sub> eš<sub>3</sub>.

8 KWU 822 for kurušda is rarely used: see for example ASJ 19, p. 138 122 (BM 109149); i 19; Borrelli 2013: T 11 (BM 18073) rev. 2 and 4; on seal legends it is found for example in Torino 2 645: Ur-dumu-zi-da, dub-sar, dumu Ur-niğar<sup>gar</sup> kurušda (photo CDLI P135491).

9 See Uchitel 1992; Lafont 1994: 107–110; Uchitel 1996; Sallaberger 1999: 311–313; Sharlach 2004: 95–98; Allred 2008 and 2014. A list of 38 texts of this group was provided by Allred 2008: 11. The following tablets should be added to that list: Studies Owen, p. 169 L. 6429 (AS8/v/10+); AnOr 1 192 (ŠS4); SM 1899.02.314 = CDLI P406048 (-/ii/8); LB 586 = CDLI P389069 (-/iv/15); NBTS 4 = CDLI P423352 (-/iv/18); UC CSC 1946 = CDLI P479897 (-/iv/19); PPAC 5 173 (-/iv/25); PPAC 5 1637 (-/iv/26); MVN 22 56 (date lost); LB 473 = CDLI P388990 (date lost); AAcAB 1/3, Bod. A 022b (date lost); Studies Owen, p. 168 L. 5652 (date lost).

Note in this regard, for example, the expressions  $e_2$  <sup>d</sup>Ba-u<sub>2</sub> 3-a-bi,  $e_2$  <sup>d</sup>Nin-ġir<sub>2</sub>-su 2-a-bi,  $u_3$  eš<sub>3</sub> didli-bi “the three temple households of Ba’u, the two temple households of Ninġirsu, and their various respective sanctuaries” (HLC 2 28 [pl. 66]: rev. iii 8-10; PPAC 5 3: i 2, ii 3, ii 8-9), which are detailed in HLC 2 2 (pl. 52), a list of deliveries of goats. Similarly, an inspection (UDT 58) of the personnel of the sanctuaries of Nanše at Niġin is resumed at the end of the text as  $guru_m_2$  aka eš<sub>3</sub> didli  $e_2$  <sup>d</sup>Nanše “inspection of the various sanctuaries of the temple household of Nanše”, and a basket label (OBTR 162) recorded inspections of the personnel of the temple household and the sanctuaries of Girsu ( $e_2$  eš<sub>3</sub> Ġir<sub>2</sub>-su<sup>ki</sup>) and of the goddess Nanše ( $e_2$  <sup>d</sup>Nanše, eš<sub>3</sub> didli-bi).

If this interpretation is correct, then foremen and *eren*-workers of Text 1 could well be identified with those recorded in the “inspection lists” like MVN 13 346, cited above (§3), and with those recorded in the “staff lists” of temple households,<sup>10</sup> the kind of tablets that were also kept in the baskets mentioned in §3. These “staff lists” constitute a very interesting group of texts that recorded the personnel of temple households in the Girsu/Lagaš province.<sup>11</sup> Among this personnel, a number of foremen (*ugula eren<sub>2</sub>-na*) and their *eren*-workers, mainly assigned to cultivation and irrigations tasks,<sup>12</sup> was recorded.<sup>13</sup> An example of these texts follows:

#### ITT 3 5270

- 1 1 saġġa 5 aga<sub>3</sub>-us<sub>2</sub>
- 2 1 pišaġ-dub-ba 1 šeš-tab-ba
- 3 1 saġ-du<sub>5</sub> 1 šeš-tab-ba
- 4 1 ka-guru<sub>7</sub> 1 šeš-tab-ba
- 5 1 šar<sub>2</sub>-ra-ab-du
- 6 3 dub-sar gu<sub>4</sub> 10
- 7 3 šeš-tab-ba
- 8 15 nu-banda<sub>3</sub>
- 9 1 šeš-tab-ba

10 The “staff lists” have been studied by Gelb 1979: 12–24; Lafont 1994: 104–106; Maekawa 1999: 76–82; Studevent-Hickman 2006: passim. The following “staff lists” are currently known: MVN 17 3 = Priests and Officials, p. 99 App. 3 ( $e_2$  <sup>d</sup>Nin-dar-a, balanced-account, Š37); Priests and Officials, p. 96 App. 1 ( $e_2$  Urub<sub>x</sub><sup>ki</sup>, Š43); HSS 4 4 (various temple households, AS2/i); MVN 18 607 ( $e_2$  <sup>d</sup>Nin-dar-a and others, AS7); ITT 2 865 ( $e_2$  <sup>d</sup>Hendur-saġ, AS8/iv); ITT 2 907 ( $e_2$  Ba-gara<sub>2</sub>, AS8/iv); ITT 2 4192 ( $e_2$  <sup>d</sup>Ig-alim, AS8/vii); ITT 3 5270 ( $e_2$  <sup>d</sup>Nin-ġiš-zi-da, AS8<sup>7</sup>); ITT 2 3536 ( $e_2$  Urub<sub>x</sub><sup>ki</sup>, ŠS1/iv); MVN 13 319 (household name lost, -/iii/20); ASJ 20, p. 103 4 ( $e_2$  <sup>d</sup>Lugal-Urub<sub>x</sub><sup>ki</sup>  $u_3$   $e_2$  <sup>d</sup>[...], undated); ASJ 20, p. 101 3 ( $e_2$  <sup>d</sup>Nin-ġir<sub>2</sub>-su,  $e_2$ -babbar,  $e_2$  <sup>d</sup>Ġiš-bar- $e_3$ ,  $e_2$  <sup>d</sup>Pa-bil<sub>3</sub>-saġ,  $e_2$  Ba-gara<sub>2</sub>, undated); Priests and Officials, p. 101 App. 4 ( $e_2$  <sup>d</sup>Nin-MAR.KI,  $e_2$  <sup>d</sup>Na-du<sub>3</sub>-a,  $e_2$  <sup>d</sup>En-ki,  $e_2$  <sup>d</sup>Inanna, undated); TÉL 34a ( $e_2$  <sup>d</sup>Nin-ġiš-zi-da, undated); MVN 6 279 ( $e_2$  Šul-gi, undated); Priests and Officials, p. 98 App. 2 ( $e_2$  <sup>d</sup>Nin-dar-a and others, date lost).

11 For an overview of the different temple households in the three districts of the province, see Studevent-Hickman 2006: 106 Table 3.1.

12 See Maekawa 1999: 81, with previous literature; Studevent-Hickman 2006: 108.

13 Staff lists recording foremen and *eren*-workers are the following: Priests and Officials, p. 96 App. 1 (Š43); ITT 2 865 (AS8/iv); ITT 2 907 (AS8/iv); ITT 2 4192 (AS8/vii); ITT 3 5270 (AS8<sup>7</sup>); ITT 2 3536 (ŠS1/iv); ASJ 20, p. 103 4 (undated); ASJ 20, p. 101 3 (undated); Priests and Officials, p. 98 App. 2 (date lost).

10	30 engar
11	90 gu <sub>4</sub> -da-ri-a
12	1 gu-za-la <sub>2</sub>
13	1 a-igi-du <sub>8</sub>
14	1 lu <sub>2</sub> -nisig
rev. 1	1 naġar
2	1 ašgab
3	1 tug <sub>2</sub> -du <sub>8</sub>
4	1 i <sub>7</sub> <sup>1</sup> -da gub-ba
5	2 ugula eren <sub>2</sub> -na 48 eren <sub>2</sub>
6	[x] ½ UN-ga <sub>6</sub>
7	1 ugula ša <sub>3</sub> -gu <sub>4</sub>
<hr/>	
8	[gur]um <sub>2</sub> ġiri <sub>3</sub> -se <sub>3</sub> -ga
9	[e <sub>2</sub> <sup>d</sup> ]Nin-ġiš-zi-da
10	[ugula Du <sub>11</sub> ]-[ga]-zi-da
11	[mu en Eridu (?)] <sup>ki</sup> / [ba-huġ (?)]

1 administrator (and his) 5 guards, 1 archivist (and his) assistant, 1 land surveyor (and his) assistant, 1 granary manager (and his) assistant, 1 *šarabdu*-official, 3 scribes of 10 plough-teams (and) 3 assistants, 15 supervisors (of plough-teams) (and) 1 assistant, 30 ploughmen, 90 ox drivers, 1 throne-carrier, 1 canal-worker, 1 vegetable-grower, 1 carpenter, 1 leather-worker, 1 felter, 1 man in service at the canal, 2 foremen of *eren*-workers (and) 48 *eren*-workers, [x]+½ menials, 1 foreman of ox drivers.

Inspection of personnel of the household of god Ninġišzida.

[Under the supervision of Du]gazida.

[The year in which the high priest of Eridu was installed (?)] (Amar-Suen 8).

§ 6. The uniqueness of Text 1 is based on the oath taken by the foremen, who swore that “they will not have inscribed a man in service as an absentee, that they will not have inscribed a living man as a dead one”. This was an oath taken in the name of the king, commonly known as a “promissory oath”.<sup>14</sup> This sort of oath is ubiquitous in Ur III documents: more than 700 texts recording them are preserved. In the vast majority of cases, they are taken in the context of judicial procedures or, much more frequently, in the context of agreements (loans, sales, leases, security arrangements, *šuku*-allotments), in connection with goods that have to be returned, or with the repayment of arrears (la<sub>2</sub>-i<sub>3</sub>).

14 I am grateful to Walther Sallaberger for having shared with me his thoughts on the oath recorded in Texts 1 and 2. On the “promissory oath”, see Sallaberger 2008; a different view was expressed by Steinkeller 1989: 75–80.

“Promissory oaths” dealing with workforce are much rarer, although some can be found:<sup>15</sup>

- MVN 6 117 (Girsu, undated): oath (probably taken by a foreman) on the transfer and death of workers.
- TLB 3 171 (Girsu, undated): oath taken by a foreman on the work, absence and transfer of workers.
- MVN 22 24 (Girsu, date lost): oath taken by two foremen (rev. i 24–26) on the transfer and death of workers.
- TLB 3 64 (Girsu, undated): oath taken by foremen and scribes for unknown purpose.
- BPOA 2 2619 (Umma, AS1): oath taken by a foreman on the sickness of a worker.

The grounds for these oaths can now be understood more clearly, thanks to Texts 1 and 2. In fact, it could happen that foremen might have altered the real situation of workers, making them appear as dead when they were alive, as absent when they were in service, or (according to Text 2) as youths when they were adults. In what sort of documents and circumstances would they have done so? Certainly, it would have been absurd to do it in the context of daily works, first because inspections were carried out by other officials, as was seen above in §1–2; and second, because to protect their own interests they needed to demonstrate that work was being performed, not the opposite.

More reasonably, inspection lists, such as those discussed in §3, were the records where they would have falsified the information. As was said above (§3 and fn. 5), inspection lists were used to calculate the capital section of a foreman’s balanced-account.<sup>16</sup> In this section, the workers at the disposal of the foreman, mainly calculated from the inspection lists,<sup>17</sup> plus the result of the previous year’s balance, were added up, thus constituting the “capital” (saĝ-niĝ<sub>2</sub>-gur<sub>11</sub>-ra, also known as “debits”) of the foreman. The “capital” was then compared with the “withdrawals” (zi-ga, also known as “credits”), justified by means of the receipts provided by the foreman and validated by his supervisor (see §1–2). As a result, a balance indicating whether there was a “deficit” (la<sub>2</sub>-i<sub>3</sub>) or a “surplus” (diri) in the amount of work expected from the foreman and his workers was calculated. This result, whether positive or negative, was carried forward (si-i<sub>3</sub>-tum) to the balanced-account of the following year, where it was added to the work expected from him, thus again constituting the capital of the foreman for that new year. The balanced-accounts concerning the foreman were archived and kept in a tablet-basket.<sup>18</sup>

15 The few examples of “assertory oaths” (nam-erim<sub>2</sub> ku<sub>5</sub>) in the Girsu corpus, taken by foremen on the status of workers, have been collected by Notizia and Verderame 2017: 61.

16 Some examples of balanced-accounts of workforce from Girsu are the following: MVN 17 3 = Priests and Officials, p. 99 App. 3 (§37); CT 9, pl. 46 BM 21348 (§46/v); TCTI 1 896 (date lost); NATN 674 (undated).

17 Cf. in this regard the expression ša<sub>3</sub> gurum<sub>2</sub> “in the inspection”, referring to workdays recorded in the capital section of balanced-accounts: CT 9, pl. 46 BM 21348: rev. i 5 (Girsu, §46); OBTR 258 = CUSAS 16 63: ii. 3 (Girsu, AS1); NATN 674: 1 (Girsu, undated); TCTI 1 896: i 5 (Girsu, date lost). It most probably indicated that the amount of workdays had been taken from inspection lists.

18 For the case of the aforementioned Luduga (§1), we have a label of a tablet-basket plausibly connected with him and dated to Šu-Suen 9 (BPOA 1 1069):

pisaĝ dub-ba, niĝ-kas<sub>7</sub>-aka, Lu<sub>2</sub>-du<sub>10</sub>-ga ugula, mu e<sub>2</sub> dŠara<sub>2</sub> ba-du<sub>3</sub>

Tablet-basket (containing) balanced-accounts of Luduga, the foreman. The year in which the temple of Šara was built (Šu-Suen 9).

Nevertheless, this system of accounting had some weaknesses. The first one was the exaggerated demands of work made on foremen, who were always in debt with the administration, accumulating deficits of work performance year after year. Secondly, workers did not constitute a stable workforce, since people frequently fled, died, became unwell or were transferred to other gangs. To reduce the pressure on them, and taking advantage of the unpredictability of available manpower, the foremen, who were responsible for the information and details in the inspection lists, sometimes decided to manipulate them.

They thus registered people who actually were in regular service as absent from work or dead, or adults as younger workers. By altering the inspection lists in this way, they could reduce, to some extent, the amount of work expected from their work-gangs and relieve their liability. Making foremen take an oath swearing that they would not do so was the way the administration tried to prevent them from manipulating inspection lists and therefore altering work plans.

§ 7. This was a problem that not only affected the management of workforces in temple households, but also in other areas of the provincial economy, as is shown by Text 2.

**Text 2. BM 22859.** 1897-511-5

Copy: Figs. 3–4. Photo: Fig. 5–6 and BDTNS 042909

Undated. 82×48×27

- |    |    |  |
|----|----|--|
| i  | 1  | 1 Lu <sub>2</sub> -uš-ge-na dumu x-da              |
|    | 2  | 1 Ur- <sup>d</sup> Da-mu dumu A-tu                 |
|    | 3  | 1 Ba-la-la   |
|    | 4  | _____  |
|    | 5  | nu-banda <sub>3</sub> Na-ba-sa <sub>6</sub>        |
|    | 6  | 1 Ur-sa <sub>6</sub> -ga dumu Lugal-igi            |
|    | 7  | 1 Lu <sub>2</sub> - <sup>d</sup> Ba-u <sub>2</sub> |
|    | 8  | 1 Ur-e <sub>2</sub> -ninnu                         |
|    | 9  | dumu Ur-sa <sub>6</sub> -ga                        |
|    | 10 | nu-banda <sub>3</sub> Lugal-igi                    |
|    | 11 | 1 Ur-niĝar <sub>x</sub> <sup>gar</sup>             |
|    | 12 | 1 Lugal-da-ga dumu Lu <sub>2</sub> -ba             |
|    | 13 | 1 Ur-Šu-ga-lam-/ma                                 |
|    | 14 | dumu Du <sub>11</sub> -[ga-zi]-da                  |
| ii | 1  | 1 Lu <sub>2</sub> - <sup>d</sup> Inanna            |
|    | 2  | dumu Ĝiš-sa <sub>6</sub>                           |
|    | 3  | nu-banda <sub>3</sub> UN-ga <sub>6</sub>           |
|    | 4  | 1 Ur-ki-gu-la dumu Zi-NE-sa <sub>6</sub>           |
|    | 5  | 1 Lu <sub>2</sub> - <sup>d</sup> Ba-u <sub>2</sub> |
|    | 6  | dumu Ur- <sup>giš</sup> gigir                      |
|    | 7  | 1 Šeš-kal-la                                       |

- 8      dumu Lu<sub>2</sub>-<sup>d</sup>Ba-u<sub>2</sub>  
 9      nu-banda<sub>3</sub> Ur-<sup>d</sup>Nanše dumu Ur-DUN  
 10     1 Lu<sub>2</sub>-diĝir-ra  
 11     dumu Ur-DUB.MI  
 12     1 Lu<sub>2</sub>-<sup>d</sup>Ba-u<sub>2</sub> dumu Ur-<sup>ĝi</sup>šgigir  
 13     1 Lu<sub>2</sub>-eb  
 14     1 Ur-lugal  
 15     dumu Gu<sub>2</sub>-[x]-gi-me (*or* Gu<sub>2</sub>-[g]i<sub>4</sub>)  
 16     nu-banda<sub>3</sub> Ur-<sup>d</sup>Utu
- rev.    i    1      1 Ur-<sup>d</sup>Ba-u<sub>2</sub>  
              2      dumu He<sub>2</sub>-ti  
              3      1 Ur-mes  
              4      dumu Za-a  
              5      nu-banda<sub>3</sub> Lu<sub>2</sub>-kal-la šeš saĝ-du<sub>5</sub>  
              6      \_\_\_\_\_  
              7      1 Inim-<sup>d</sup>Inanna  
              8      1 Lu<sub>2</sub>-diĝir-ra dumu [x-(x)-NI<sup>?</sup>]  
              9      1 Ur-ĝar  
             10     1 Ur-<sup>d</sup>Ba-u<sub>2</sub> dumu Za-ga-la<sub>2</sub>  
             11     1 Ur-sukkal  
             12     1 Ur-<sup>d</sup>Ba-u<sub>2</sub> dumu Na-DI  
             13     1 Ur-<sup>d</sup>Ba-u<sub>2</sub> dumu Lu<sub>2</sub>-kal-la  
             14     1 Ur-<sup>d</sup>Lamma  
             15     1 Niĝ<sub>2</sub>-<sup>d</sup>Ba-u<sub>2</sub>  
             16     1 Ur-<sup>d</sup>Šul-pa-e<sub>3</sub> dumu Ur-<sup>d</sup>Da-mu  
             17     1 Ur-sa<sub>6</sub>-ga  
             18     1 Lugal-ur<sub>2</sub>-ra-ni  
             19     1 Ur-<sup>d</sup>Ba-u<sub>2</sub> dumu Ur-LI  
             20     1 He<sub>2</sub>-na-ti  
             21     1 Lu<sub>2</sub>-<sup>d</sup>Ba-u<sub>2</sub> <dumu> A-hu-a  
             22     1 Lugal-a-ma-ru  
             23     1 Ba-za-mu  
             24     1 Lu<sub>2</sub>-<sup>d</sup>[Ba]-[u<sub>2</sub>] dumu Šeš-šeš  
             25     1 Ab-ba-ge-na  
             26     1 Lu<sub>2</sub>-<sup>d</sup>Na-du<sub>3</sub>-a mu Ur-<sup>d</sup>Lamma-še<sub>3</sub>
- ii    1      1 Ur-<sup>d</sup>Asar dumu Na-DI  
                  2      1 Ur-<sup>d</sup>Asar dumu Al-la  
                  3      1 I-ti-a  
                  4      1 Lu<sub>2</sub>-<sup>d</sup>Ba-u<sub>2</sub> dumu Ur-<sup>d</sup>Suen  
                  5      1 Lu<sub>2</sub>-<sup>d</sup>Inanna  
                  6      1 Ur-<sup>d</sup>Šul-pa-e<sub>3</sub> dumu Ur-<sup>d</sup>Suen  
                  7      1 Lugal-pa-e<sub>3</sub> mu Ur-sa<sub>6</sub>-ga-še<sub>3</sub>  
                  8      1 Niĝ<sub>2</sub>-ša<sub>3</sub>-ge mu Ur-gu-la-še<sub>3</sub>  
                  9      1 Ur-<sup>ĝi</sup>šgigir mu Ur-<sup>d</sup>[Utu<sup>?</sup>-še<sub>3</sub>]  
                 10     *Erased line*

- 11 ti-la ba-uš<sub>2</sub>-še<sub>3</sub> buluĝ-ĝa<sub>2</sub> tur-ra-še<sub>3</sub> nu-u<sub>3</sub>-ši-gid<sub>2</sub>-da  
 12 mu lugal-bi in-pa<sub>3</sub>-de<sub>3</sub>

Lu-ušgena, son of x-da; Ur-Damu, son of Atu; Balala. (Their) overseer is Nabasa.

Ursaga, son of Lugal-igi; Lu-Ba'u; Ur-eninnu, son of Ursaga. (Their) overseer is Lugal-igi.

Ur-niĝar; Lugal-daga, son of Luba; Ur-Šugalama, son of Dugazida; Lu-Inanna, son of Ġišsa. (Their) overseer is Uŋga.

Ur-kigula, son of ZiNEsa; Lu-Ba'u, son of Ur-gigir; Šeškala, son of Lu-Ba'u. (Their) overseer is Ur-Nanše, son of Ur-DUN.

Lu-diĝira, son of Ur-DUB.MI; Lu-Ba'u, son of Ur-gigir; Lu-eb (and) Ur-lugal, they are sons of Gu(...)gi. (Their) overseer is Ur-Utu.

Ur-Ba'u, son of Heti; Urmes, son of Za'a. (Their) overseer is Lukala, brother of the field registrar.

Inim-Inanna; Lu-diĝira, son of ...; Urĝar; Ur-Ba'u, son of Zagala; Ur-sukkal; Ur-Ba'u, son of NaDI; Ur-Ba'u, son of Lukala; Ur-Lamma; Niĝ-Ba'u; Ur-Šulpa'e, son of Ur-Damu; Ursaga, Lugal-urani; Ur-Ba'u, son of Ur-LI; Henati; Lu-Ba'u, <son of> Ahu'a; Lugal-amaru; Bazamu; Lu-Ba'u, son of Ur-Suen; Lugal-pa'e, on behalf of Ursaga; Niĝ-šage, on behalf of Urgula; Ur-gigir, on behalf of Ur-Utu<sup>19</sup>.

They swore by the name of the king that they will not have recorded a living man as a dead one, a grown-up one as a young one.

The foremen and overseers recorded in this text worked at a large brewery-mill complex, probably located in Girsu, which is suggested by the identification of the last group of them as brewers, and of two more as millers, in Orient 16, p. 85 127 (Text A in Table 2). This long text, dated to Šulgi 35, is a balanced-account of workdays performed under the responsibility of foremen of *eren*-workers working at the mill (iii 6) and the brewery (rev. I 6). The foremen of brewers can also be identified in MVN 2 175 (Text B), a long list of workers on duty at the brewery, dated to Šulgi 46. Some of the overseers (nu-banda<sub>3</sub>) of Text 2 are also mentioned as supervisors of works performed at a canal in PPAC 5 1257 (Text C).

Here follows a concordance of foremen and overseers recorded in Text 2 with their occurrences in the above mentioned texts:

**Mill section** (i 1, probably until rev. i 5)

Lu<sub>2</sub>-uš-ge-na dumu x-da

Ur-<sup>d</sup>Da-mu dumu A-tu

A i 21

Ba-la-la

nu-banda<sub>3</sub> Na-ba-sa<sub>6</sub>

A ii 4

Ur-sa<sub>6</sub>-ga dumu Lugal-igi<sup>19</sup>

Lu<sub>2</sub>-<sup>d</sup>Ba-u<sub>2</sub>

Ur-e<sub>2</sub>-ninnu dumu Ur-sa<sub>6</sub>-ga

19 Ursaga, son of Lugal-igi, is recorded taking an "assertory oath" (nam-erim<sub>2</sub> ku<sub>5</sub>) on the filling of the granary of the field "Ninĝirsu-azida-Nanše", in CT 3, pl. 21 BM 18957: iii 1–5 (Girsu, Š46).



nu-banda <sub>3</sub> Lugal-igi	C ii 8
Ur-niĝar <sub>x</sub> <sup>ĝar</sup>	
Lugal-da-ga dumu Lu <sub>2</sub> -ba	
Ur-Šu-ga-lam-ma dumu Du <sub>11</sub> -ga-zi-da	
Lu <sub>2</sub> - <sup>d</sup> Inanna dumu Ĝiš-sa <sub>6</sub>	
nu-banda <sub>3</sub> UN-ga <sub>6</sub>	C ii 3
Ur-ki-gu-la dumu Zi-NE-sa <sub>6</sub>	
Lu <sub>2</sub> - <sup>d</sup> Ba-u <sub>2</sub> dumu Ur- <sup>ĝiš</sup> gigir	
Šeš-kal-la dumu Lu <sub>2</sub> - <sup>d</sup> Ba-u <sub>2</sub>	
nu-banda <sub>3</sub> Ur- <sup>d</sup> Nanše dumu Ur-DUN	
Lu <sub>2</sub> -diĝir-ra dumu Ur-DUB.MI	
Lu <sub>2</sub> - <sup>d</sup> Ba-u <sub>2</sub> dumu Ur- <sup>ĝiš</sup> gigir	
Lu <sub>2</sub> -eb	
Ur-lugal	
dumu Gu <sub>2</sub> -[x]-gi-me (or Gu <sub>2</sub> -[g]i <sub>4</sub> )	
nu-banda <sub>3</sub> Ur- <sup>d</sup> Utu	
Ur- <sup>d</sup> Ba-u <sub>2</sub> dumu He <sub>2</sub> -ti	
Ur-mes dumu Za-a	
nu-banda <sub>3</sub> Lu <sub>2</sub> -kal-la šeš saĝ-du <sub>5</sub>	C i 18
<b>Brewery section</b> (rev. i 7 – ii 9)	
Inim- <sup>d</sup> Inanna	A iii 27
Lu <sub>2</sub> -diĝir-ra dumu [x-(x)-NI <sup>?</sup> ]	A iii 21
Ur-ĝar	A iii 14
Ur- <sup>d</sup> Ba-u <sub>2</sub> dumu Za-ga-la <sub>2</sub>	
Ur-sukkal	
Ur- <sup>d</sup> Ba-u <sub>2</sub> dumu Na-DI	
Ur- <sup>d</sup> Ba-u <sub>2</sub> dumu Lu <sub>2</sub> -kal-la	
Ur- <sup>d</sup> Lamma	B iii 18
Niĝ <sub>2</sub> - <sup>d</sup> Ba-u <sub>2</sub>	B v 10, vi 9
Ur- <sup>d</sup> Šul-pa-e <sub>3</sub> dumu Ur- <sup>d</sup> Da-mu	A iii 20
Ur-sa <sub>6</sub> -ga	A iii 9; B rev. iv 16
Lugal-ur <sub>2</sub> -ra-ni	A iii 18; B i 16
Ur- <sup>d</sup> Ba-u <sub>2</sub> dumu Ur-LI	A iii 10; B ii 34, v 28
He <sub>2</sub> -na-ti	B iv 7, v 33
Lu <sub>2</sub> - <sup>d</sup> Ba-u <sub>2</sub> <dumu> A-hu-a	B rev. iv 37
Lugal-a-ma-ru	A iii 11
Ba-za-mu	A iii 17
Lu <sub>2</sub> - <sup>d</sup> [Ba]-u <sub>2</sub> dumu Šeš-šeš	A iii 26
Ab-ba-ge-na	A rev. i 2

Lu <sub>2</sub> - <sup>d</sup> Na-du <sub>3</sub> -a mu Ur- <sup>d</sup> Lamma-še <sub>3</sub>	A iii 15
Ur- <sup>d</sup> Asar dumu Na-DI	A iii 13
Ur- <sup>d</sup> Asar dumu Al-la	A iii 29 ; B iii 28
I-ti-a	A iii 19
Lu <sub>2</sub> - <sup>d</sup> Ba-u <sub>2</sub> dumu Ur- <sup>d</sup> Suen	
Lu <sub>2</sub> - <sup>d</sup> Inanna	B iv 38, v 36
Ur- <sup>d</sup> Šul-pa-e <sub>3</sub> dumu Ur- <sup>d</sup> Suen	
Lugal-pa-e <sub>3</sub> mu Ur-sa <sub>6</sub> -ga-še <sub>3</sub>	A iii 24
Niġ <sub>2</sub> -ša <sub>3</sub> -ge mu Ur-gu-la-še <sub>3</sub>	
Ur- <sup>gis</sup> gigir mu Ur- <sup>d</sup> [Utu <sup>?</sup> -še <sub>3</sub> ]	B ii 7, vi 13

Table 2

§ 8. To sum up, foremen had at their disposal work-gangs of men and women to perform different tasks in agriculture, irrigation, transportation, crafts production, milling and textile production. Generally depending on their age, sex and social status, workers received different wages and were supposed to perform varying amounts of work. The work expected from these gangs also varied through the years, due, among other reasons, to the death of workers, long illnesses, absence from work, or transfer to other gangs. All these details were gathered in inspection lists, texts that were presumably written down on the basis of the information provided by foremen. These inspection lists were crucial to planning the wages needed, and to fixing the amount of work expected for certain periods of time from the work-gangs under the responsibility of the foremen. Expectations of work were nevertheless overestimated by the administration, so foremen put in place a mechanism of manipulation of data dealing with the situation of their workers, in order to reduce the pressure on them: they registered workers on duty as if they were dead or absent, and adults as if they were young men and women.<sup>20</sup> In this way, the calculations of the amount of work expected from the gangs for the coming year would be appreciably lower. Other alterations of reality at other stages of the relationship of foremen with the administration would be more problematic, since inspections on the ground by other officials could be made during or right after the works were performed. To avoid the frauds, the administration made foremen to take an oath by the name of the king, as is attested in Texts 1 and 2. We do not know how frequent and widespread within the Ur III state these practices were, and whether oaths to avoid them were regularly or exceptionally required from foremen. The very few testimonies we have are concentrated in the Girsu/Lagaš province and during the last years of Šulgi's reign. Beyond this, further explanations for the manipulations implemented by foremen, possibly based on the difficulties of the deep administrative and economic reorganization of the Girsu/Lagaš province put into effect by king Šulgi, would be a matter of speculation.

<sup>20</sup> Manipulation of data in administrative texts has also been demonstrated, for example, for the so-called *naptan šarrim* documents of Mari (Sasson 1982).

**Text 1**  
**BM 21411**

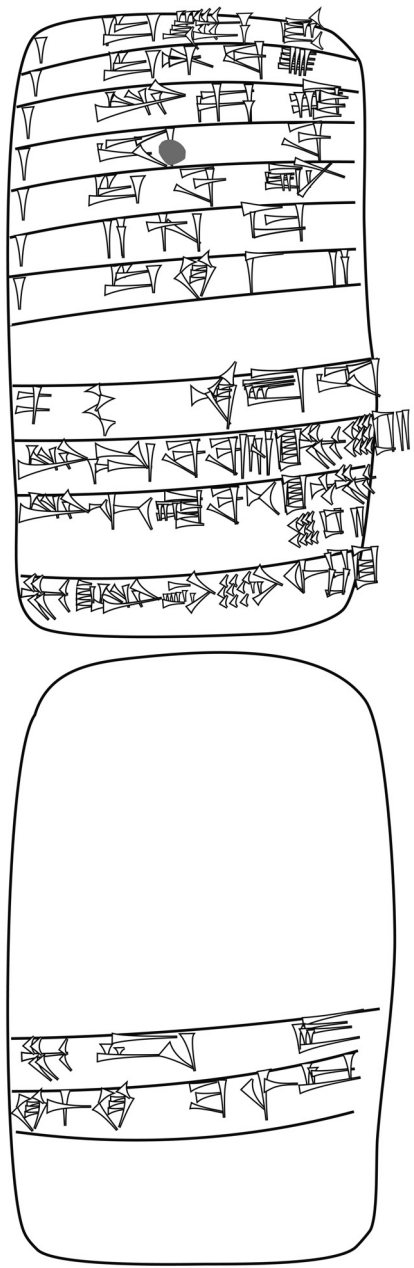


Fig. 1

**Text 1**  
**BM 21411**



Fig. 2

**Text 2**  
**BM 22859**  
 obv.

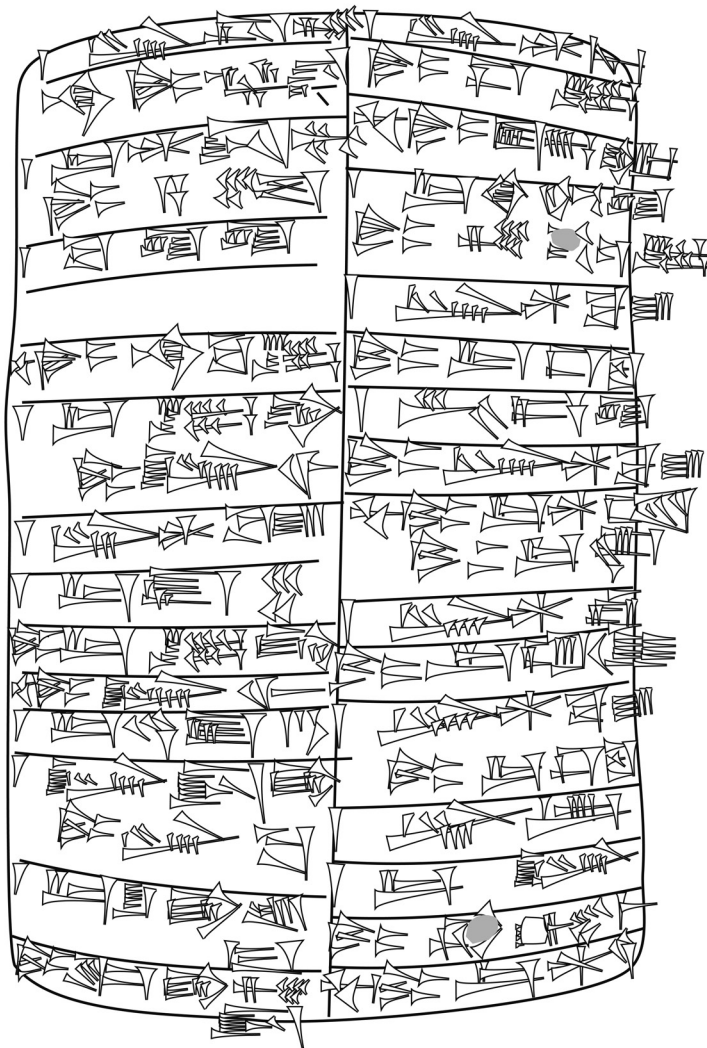


Fig. 3

**Text 2**  
**BM 22859**  
rev.

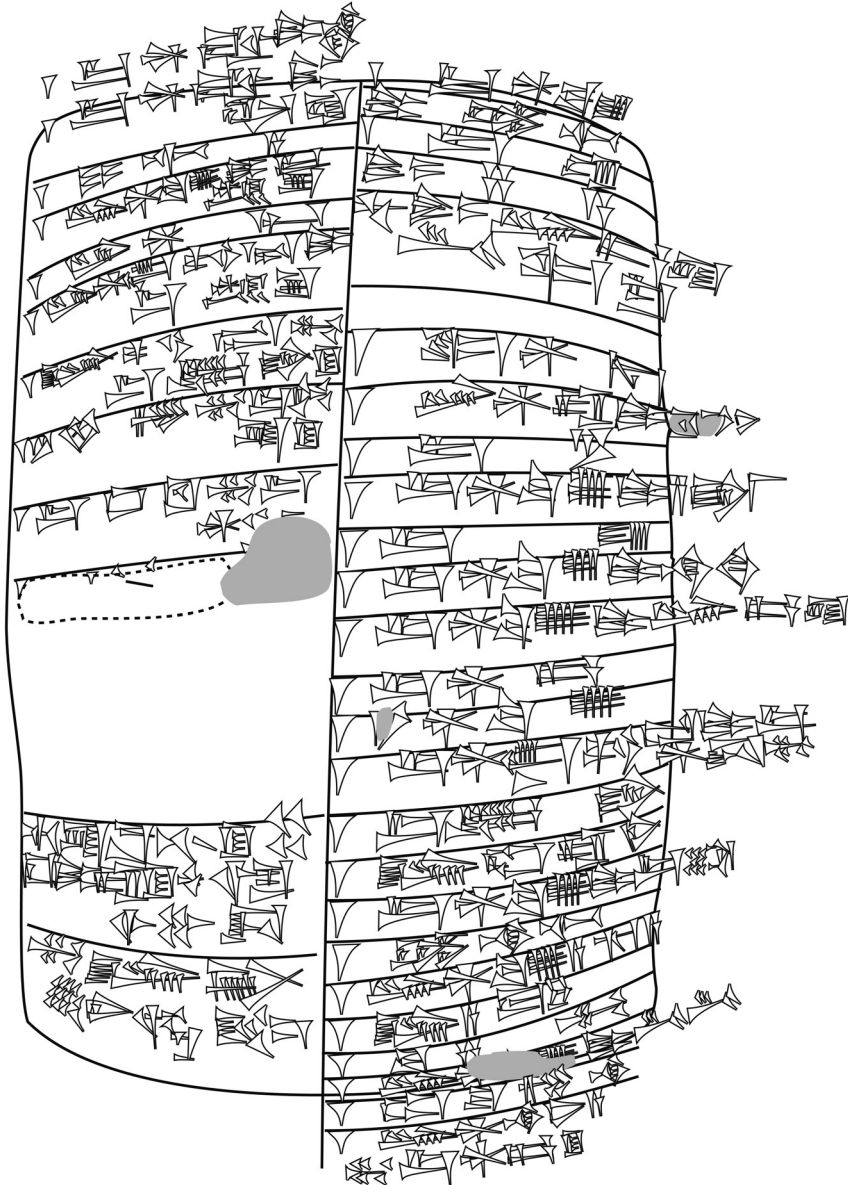


Fig. 4

**Text 2**  
**BM 22859**  
 obv.



Fig. 5

**Text 2**  
**BM 22859**  
rev.



Fig. 6



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