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AN ELEMENTARY LATE BABYLONIAN SCRIBAL EXERCISE FEATURING NAZI-MARUTTAŠ

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A fragmentary scribal exercise now in the University of Pennsylvania Museum, UM 29-16-215(+)-29-16-216,¹ provides further evidence for an interest in the Kassite ruler Nazi-Maruttaš (r. ca. 1303-1278 BCE) lingering in the central Babylonian city of Nippur centuries after his reign.² The exercise also sheds indirect light on the transmission history of the so-called *Name Book* (K 4426+Rm 617), a list of non-Akkadian names and Akkadian translations of them.³

The exercise, an edition of which is provided below, is divided into multiple columns. Of the obverse, three subdivided columns have survived, all of which seem to contain the same seventeen-line extract from Tablet 2 of the canonical lexical list Ura = *bubullu* (*Materials for the Sumerian Lexicon* 5 pp. 79-80, ll. 353-369). Six narrow columns of the reverse survive, in which are written: an extract from a non-canonical list (col. i), two names, which are discussed further below (col. ii), a phrase that combines the phraseology of administrative texts with the vocabulary of lexical texts (col. iii), and phrases and personal names encountered in Babylonian administrative documents (cols. iv-vi). The appearance of an extract from a canonical list on its obverse and of extracts from a literary text and administrative texts on its reverse means that the exercise belongs to Type 1b of Neo- and Late Babylonian elementary school tablets, following P. Gesche's typology.⁴

The occurrence of the two names Nazi-Maruttaš and Ina-ṣilli-Ninurta (reverse col. ii), is the reason for the present study. The pairing of these two names is reminiscent of the entry in the *Name Book* which equates Nazi-Maruttaš, linguistically a Kassite name, with the otherwise

1. I thank Joshua Jeffers for sending me photographs of the fragments, Philip Jones for facilitating my collation of them at UPenn Museum, and Jon Taylor for facilitating my collation of K 4426+ in the British Museum.
2. On Nazi-Maruttaš's posthumous reputation see Frazer 2013.
3. Often referred to by its publication abbreviation VR 44. For an edition of columns ii and iii, see Lambert 1957, 12-13.
4. Gesche 2000, 45-46.

unattested Akkadian name Šillī-Ninurta (wr. ^m*šil*-^r*d*^l*nin-urta*, lit. “My Protection Is Ninurta”).⁵ Although the *Name Book* is only attested in one manuscript from Nineveh, written in Neo-Assyrian script, the Babylonian focus of the names it contains means that it is probably a Babylonian work. The latest securely datable figure in the list is Simbar-Šipak (col. i, l. 24), the first king of the Second Sealand Dynasty (r. ca. 1025-1008), and so the text may have been composed as early as the late eleventh century. No manuscript of the *Name Book* has been found at Nippur, but the text includes the names of many Nippureans.⁶ Accordingly, it may have been composed there, circulated there in the following centuries, and reached Nineveh probably at some point in the eighth or seventh centuries (perhaps in the aftermath of the Šamaš-šuma-ukīn’s defeat in 648 BCE). The survival of at least one manuscript in Nippur until the sixth or early fifth century BCE may be indicated by the appearance of the name pair Nazi-Maruttaš Ina-šillī-Ninurta in the elementary scribal exercise under consideration. The inclusion of the preposition *ina* as the initial component of the Akkadian name in the scribal exercise may reflect the influence of contemporary Akkadian naming practice.⁷

By the time of the Neo-Babylonian Empire if not before, Nazi-Maruttaš had become a figure of scribal wisdom, due in part to his appearance in the long-lived Babylonian literary text, *Ludlul bēl nēmeqi*.⁸ He was not, however, the only figure of earlier Babylonian learning to appear among the personal names that often feature in elementary Babylonian scribal exercises in the period ca. 600-100 BCE. The name Esangil-kīna-ubbib, the name of the scholar believed to have composed the *Babylonian Theodicy* during the reign of the eleventh-century Babylonian king Adad-apla-iddina,⁹ is

5. Maruttaš is probably the name of a storm god of Indo-Aryan origin (Sassmannshausen 2014, 183), whereas Ninurta seems to have been primarily associated with war rather than weather (Streck 1998-2001, 517). The rationale behind the equation is thus unclear. Some editions of the *Name Book*’s entry have transliterated ^m*šil*-^r*li*-^d*nin-urta*, but the possibility of a sign intervening between *šil* and *d* seemed slim when the tablet was collated in the British Museum in 2016.
6. Several of the names in col. iii feature Enlil or Ninurta, theonyms that were common in names of people from Nippur in the first millennium. In addition, the three names treated in col. iii, ll. 37-39 are born by protagonists in the comic tale set in Nippur, the *Tale of Ninurta-pāqidat’s Dog Bite* (George 1993, 63).
7. Although Ina-šilli-Ninurta is not otherwise attested, several other names of the form Ina-šilli-DN are attested only in documents dated to the reigns of the Chaldean and early Persian kings (Tallqvist 1905, 78b). By contrast, names of the form Šilli- or Šilluš-DN, such as the Šilli-Ninurta attested in VR 44, seem to be otherwise attested only in documents dated to the reigns of the Ur III and Babylon I dynasties (Stamm 1968, 348-9).
8. Frazer 2013, 192-194, 205-206. Accidentally omitted in that publication was discussion of the fragmentary text BM 38611 // K 9952 (BWL 296-297 with pl. 12), in which both Nazi-Maruttaš and Šubši-mešrē-Šakkān, the protagonist and possible author of *Ludlul bēl nēmeqi*, are mentioned. Both known manuscripts of the text are discussed and edited together by Oshima 2014, 465-469 with pl. xxxi and Frazer 2015, 18-36. Also relevant to the issue of Nazi-Maruttaš’s place in later tradition is the cylinder seal BM 129534 (Carnegie 1908, 84 Q § 41), which is inscribed with the words “Kudur-Baba, son of Urpa-Sah, slave of Nazi-Maruttaš, king of the world” (translation of W.G. Lambert, published in the online catalogue of the British Museum). According to Lambert, “The signs are so badly engraved and proportioned ... that almost certainly this is an illiterate copy of a genuine Kassite seal, perhaps much later than king Nazi-Maruttaš”. See British Museum Collection Database. “1945,1013.78” <http://www.britishmuseum.org/collection>, British Museum, Online (accessed 01/02/2016). Finally, Ron Wallenfels has kindly pointed out to me that the Seleucid scribe Nazi-Maruttaš son of Enlil-šuma-imbi, discussed in Frazer 2013, 203-205, is also attested as a scribe in the prebend sale document BM 105190 l. 29, published by Corò 2005, 385-387 (the correct reading of his name is courtesy of Wallenfels). For his seal, whose iconography is unique among the Seleucid seal corpus, see Wallenfels (1994, no. 448).
9. For a recent discussion of the identity of the author with earlier literature, see Oshima 2014, 121-125.

repeatedly written in two slightly different ways on the reverse of another Type 1b tablet, which was written during or shortly after 317 BCE, probably in Babylon.¹⁰ It seems likely that the name in this late fourth-century context reflects a memory of the eleventh-century scholar because the name is otherwise born by just one of the thousands of individuals attested so far in administrative texts from the first millennium.¹¹

Although the current location of its fragments in the University of Pennsylvania Museum means that the present exercise almost certainly comes from Nippur, the date when it was written cannot be specified with confidence. Since there is no record of the fragments' find spots, they probably stem from the Babylonian Expedition's four seasons at Nippur (1888-1900), which targeted the ziggurat complex on the East Mound, the southern area of the East Mound (known as "Tablet Hill"), and the southeastern end of the West Mound (where many Kassite-era tablets were found).¹² The exercise's reference to Nazi-Maruttaš invites the possibility of associating it with the Late Babylonian Nippur manuscript of a historical-literary text featuring Nazi-Maruttaš, PBS 13 69 (CBS 11014).¹³ The names in PBS 13 69's colophon suggest that it was written in the early Persian period (539-484 BCE).¹⁴ Consequently, the scribal exercise under consideration may date to this time period.¹⁵

Since Nippur was an important cultural and administrative center during the Kassite period, it is unsurprising that later Nippureans were interested in certain Kassite kings, and that this interest spilled over into the texts that members of Nippur's literate elite studied during the elementary stage of their education in the Neo- and Late Babylonian periods. However, if the suggested dating of both PBS 13 69 and the elementary exercise edited here to the early Persian period is correct,

10. BM 65649+76479, edited by Gesche 2000, 493-497, with Tafeln VIII-IX. The date of the tablet is based on the date that forms part of the exercise: "Month Nisannu, Year 7 Philip (Arrhideios), King of Lands". The fragments belong to the consignments 82-9-18 and AH 83-1-18. For the varied provenance of the tablets in these consignments see Reade 1986, xxxiii-xxxiv. A Babylon provenance seems likely because, first, Babylon has yielded more tablets dating to the last centuries of the first millennium BCE than Sippar, and, second, men with the name Lultammar-Adad (Col. 8, 2) are attested in documents from Babylon but not, to date, from Sippar.
11. Saggil-kīnu-ubbib, a temple administrator in the eastern Babylonian city of Dēr (Baker 2002, 1060).
12. Gibson – Hansen – Zettler 1998–2001, 549.
13. Re-edited in Frazer 2013, 206-212. According to the CBS Catalogue, published by Clayden 2016, 39-87, PBS 13 69 was found somewhere on the "E(ast) side of Shatt-en-Nil" during the First Season (Clayden 2016, 63, entry 531). However, as noted by Clayden 2016, 28, who cites personal communication with A. Westenholz, many of the provenances given in the Catalogue have been proven wrong.
14. The early period of Persian rule of Babylonia is the only period consistent with the personal names of (1) the owner of the tablet, Enlil-nā'id, (2) the name of his father, Bazūzu, and (3) the name of the individual perhaps mentioned in the final lines of the main body of the text, Enlil-šuma-imbi. See Frazer 2013, 211-212 for more detailed information.
15. Peters 1897, 200 reports that texts from the Persian and Neo-Babylonian periods were among the several thousand cuneiform tablets discovered on Tablet Hill during the First and Second Seasons (1888-1890): "Very little below the surface we found tablets of the Persian and late Babylonian periods, and a few mud-brick constructions identified by the tablets as belonging to the same period ... one and a half metres below the surface, close to a little hole full of ashes, we found lying together in the earth a number of tablets of the Persian kings, with one of Nabonidus". Hilprecht 1903, 511 states that in addition to administrative documents were found "a few fragments of Babylonian hymns, letters and syllabaries". It is possible that this scribal exercise was among them.

these two texts may suggest something more, namely an increased interest in earlier rulers in the decades following the Persian conquest.

Obverse

i	ii	
1 gun	<i>bil-t[um]</i>	
2 gun-bi	<i>bi-lat-'su'</i>	Broken away
3 gun-e-ne-ne	<i>bi-la-ti-šú-n[lu]</i>	<i>[gun]-'e-ne-ne'</i>
4 gun-a.šà.ga	<i>min eq-[lu]</i>	<i>[gun]-a.šà.ga</i>
5 gun-giš.sar	<i>min ki-ri-i</i>	<i>[gu]n-giš.sar</i>
6 [g]un-še	<i>min še-im</i>	<i>[g]un-še</i>
7 [g]un-še.giš.ì	<i>min šá-maš-šam-mu</i>	<i>[g]un-še.giš.ì</i>
8 gun-zú.lum.ma	<i>min su-lu-up-pu</i>	<i>[gu]n-zú.lum.ma</i>
9 gun-urudu	<i>min e-ri-i</i>	<i>g[un]-urudu</i>
10 gun-zabar-ra	<i>min si-par-rum</i>	<i>[gun-za]bar-ra</i>
11 gun-kù.babbar	<i>min kás-[pi]</i>	<i>[gun-k]ù.babbar</i>
12 gun-kù.GI	<i>'min bu'-ra-su</i>	<i>g[un-kù.G]I</i>
13 gun-[sík]	<i>min ši-pa-a-tú</i>	<i>g[un-sík]</i>
14 'gun'-[sík]-'ùz'	<i>min en-žu</i>	<i>gu[n-sík-ùz]</i>
15 [gun]-'gada'	<i>min ki-te'-e</i>	<i>gu[n-gada]</i>
16 [gun-hu]r.sag	<i>min šá-da-du</i>	<i>gu[n-hur.sag]</i>
17 [gun]-íd	<i>min na-a-ri</i>	<i>gu[n-x-x]</i>
18 gun	<i>bil-tum</i>	<i>gu[n]</i>
19 [gun]-bi	<i>bi-lat-su'(zu)</i>	<i>gu[n-bi]</i>
20 [gun-e-n]e-'ne'	<i>bi-la-ti-šú-<nu></i>	<i>gu[n-e-ne-ne]</i>
21 [gun-a.šà.ga]	<i>[min] eq-lu</i>	<i>gu[n-a.šà.ga]</i>
22 [gun-giš.sar]	<i>[min k]'-ri-i</i>	<i>[gun-giš.sar]</i>
Broken away	Broken away	<i>[gun-še]</i>
		<i>[gun-še.giš.ì]</i>
		Broken away

iii		
	Broken away	Broken away
1' 'gun'-[a.šà.ga]	<i>[min eq-lu]</i>	
2' 'gun-giš'.[sar]	<i>[min ki-ri-i]</i>	
3' 'gun'-[še]	<i>[min še-im]</i>	
4' g[un-še].'giš'.ì	<i>[min šá-maš-šam-mu]</i>	
5' g[un-z]ú.lum.m[a]	<i>[min su-lu-up-pu]</i>	
6' g[u]n-urudu	<i>[min e-ri-i]</i>	
7' [g]un-zab[ar-ra]	<i>[min si-par-rum]</i>	
8' [g]un-kù.babb[ar]	<i>[min kás-pi]</i>	
9' [g]un-kù.G[I]	<i>[min bu-ra-su]</i>	
10' gun-sík	<i>[min ši-pa-a-tú]</i>	
11' gun-sík ùz	<i>min [en-žu]</i>	
12' gun-gada	<i>min 'ki'-[ke-e]</i>	
13' [g]un-hur.sag	<i>min šé-d[ə̄-du]</i>	
14' [gun]-íd	<i>min 'x'-[x x]</i>	
15' [gu]n	<i>b[il-tum]</i>	
16' [gun-b]i	<i>'bi'-[lat-su]</i>	
17' [gun]-'e'-ne-ne	<i>bi-la-ti-šú-nu</i>	
18' [gu]n-'a.šà.ga'	<i>'min eq'-[lu]</i>	
Broken away	Broken away	

Reverse

	iii	ii	i
Tablet broken away	Tablet broken away	Tablet broken away	Tablet broken away
	[x x x x x] 'x'	1' [x x' [(x)]	1' [x x' [(x)]
	[x x x x x] 'x'	2' lagab [?] 'x' [(x)]	2' lagab [?] 'x' [(x)]
	[x x x x x] 'x'	3' še [(x x)]	3' še [(x x)]
	[x x x x x] 'x'	4' še ba [(x)]	4' še ba [(x)]
	[x x x x x] 'x'	5' alla-'x' [x]	5' alla-'x' [x]
	[x x x x x] 'x'	6' al-'x'	6' al-'x'
	[x x x x x] 'x'	7' al-bat ^a []	7' al-bat ^a []
	[x x x x x x]	8' balqat(záh-a[A])	8' balqat(záh-a[A])
	[x x x -ia-a-m] ^d	9' bal-qá[A]	9' bal-qá[A]
	[x x x -id]-'a'-ma	10' hal-qa-at	10' hal-qa-at
	[x x x -i]a-a-ma	11' u ₆ -at	11' u ₆ -at
	[x x x -i]a-a-ma	12' ba-[x-x]	12' ba-[x-x]
Line broken away	1' [x] 'x KAL ² -ia-a'-ma	12' [x x' [x x]	13' [x x' [x x]
1 me gun šá giš ^r gi. ¹	2' ^m na-zi-míru-taš	13' x-lu-'x'-[x]	14' x-lu-'x'-[x]
zú.lum.ma	3' ^m na-gíssu-dmaš	14' lu-ba[^k -liq [?]]	15' lu-ba[^k -liq [?]]
1 me gun šá giš ^r gi. ¹	4' ^m na-zi-míru-taš	15' lu-ba[^k -liq [?]]	16' lu-ba[^k -liq [?]]
zú.lum.ma	5' ^m na-gíssu-dmaš	16' lu-ba[^k -liq [?]]	17' lu-ba[^k -liq [?]]
1 me gun šá giš ^r gi. ¹	6' ^m na-zi-míru-taš	17' lu-ba[^k -liq [?]]	18' lu-ba[^k -liq [?]]
zú.lu[m.ma]	7' ^m na-gíssu-dmaš	18' ^m lu-ba[^k -liq [?]]	19' ^m lu-ba[^k -liq [?]]
1 me gu[n šá giš ^r gi.]	8' [m] 'na-zi-míru-taš	19' lu-ba[^k -liq [?]]	20' lu-ba[^k -liq [?]]
zú.lu[m.ma]	9' [m]na-gíssu-u-dmaš	20' ^m lu-[ba ^k -liq [?]]	21' ^m lu-[ba ^k -liq [?]]
Tablet broken away	[m]na-zi-míru-taš	21' [lu-ba[^k -liq [?]]]	22' [lu-ba[^k -liq [?]]]
	[m]na-gíssu-dmaš	22' 'lu-[ba ^k -liq [?]]	23' 'lu-[ba ^k -liq [?]]
	[x x x x x] 'x'	Tablet broken away	Tablet broken away
	[x x x x x] 'x'		
	Tablet broken away		
Tablet broken away	Tablet broken away	Tablet broken away	Tablet broken away
'ús.sa'.DU še.numun	1' ^m en-[šú-nu]	1' [x ki? mu] '4-[kam]	1' [x ki? mu] '4-[kam]
šá lúuš.bar ^{mes}	2' a šá 'm ¹ [šeš-šú-nu]	2' [m ¹ x x-sip]a-a-nu	2' [m ¹ x x-sip]a-a-nu
úš.sa.DU še.numun	3' ina b[u-ud lib-bi-šá]	3' [x ki? itig]a n mu 4-kam	3' [x ki? itig]a n mu 4-kam
šá lúuš.bar ^{mes}	4' ^m en-[šú-nu]	4' [m ¹ x x]-sipa ¹ -a-nu	4' [m ¹ x x]-sipa ¹ -a-nu
úš.sa.DU še.numun	5' a šá [m]šeš-šú-nu]	5' [x ki?]ti gan mu 4-kam	5' [x ki?]ti gan mu 4-kam
šá lúuš.bar ^{mes}	6' ina b[u-ud lib-bi-šá]	6' [m ¹ x x]-sipa ¹ -a-nu	6' [m ¹ x x]-sipa ¹ -a-nu
úš.sa.DU še.numun	7' ^m en-[šú-nu] a šá	7' [x ki?]ti gan mu 4-kam	7' [x ki?]ti gan mu 4-kam
šá lúuš.bar ^{mes}	8' m]šeš-šú-nu	8' [m ¹ x x]-sipa ¹ -a-nu	8' [m ¹ x x]-sipa ¹ -a-nu
úš.'sa.DU' še.numun	9' ina bu-<ud> lib-bi-[šá]	9' [x ki?]ti gan mu 4-kam	9' [x ki?]ti gan mu 4-kam
šá lúuš.bar ^{mes}	10' ^m en-[šú-nu] [a šá]	10' [m ¹ x x]-sipa ¹ -a-nu	10' [m ¹ x x]-sipa ¹ -a-nu
úš.sa.DU še.numun	11' m]šeš-šú-nu	11' [x ki?]ti gan mu 4-kam	11' [x ki?]ti gan mu 4-kam
šá lúuš.bar ^{mes}	12' [ina] bu-<ud> lib-bi-[šá]	12' [m ¹ x x]-sipa ¹ -a-nu	12' [m ¹ x x]-sipa ¹ -a-nu
úš.sa.DU še.numun	13' ^m en-[šú-nu] [a šá]	13' [x ki?]ti gan mu 4-kam	13' [x ki?]ti gan mu 4-kam
šá lúuš.bar ^{mes}	14' m]šeš-šú-[nu]	14' Tablet broken away	14' Tablet broken away
úš.sa.DU še.numun	15' ina bu-ud [ib-bi-šá]	15' Tablet broken away	15' Tablet broken away
ugal uš.bar ^{mes}	16' ^m en-[šú-nu]	16' Tablet broken away	16' Tablet broken away
	a šá m]šeš-[šú-nu]	17' Tablet broken away	17' Tablet broken away
	ina bu-ud [ib-bi-šá]	18' Tablet broken away	18' Tablet broken away
	^m en-[šú-nu]	19' Tablet broken away	19' Tablet broken away
	a šá m]šeš-[šú-nu]	20' Tablet broken away	20' Tablet broken away
	ina bu-ud [ib-bi-šá]	21' Tablet broken away	21' Tablet broken away

Notes

Obverse i 3, ii 1') Unlike other manuscripts of Ura 2 that contain this entry, -bi- is omitted from the Sumerian suffix chain.

Obverse i 16) The scribe seems to have misspelt *šadū*, “mountain”.

Obverse i 17, iii 14') The entry after gun-hur.sag *bilat šadē* in all other manuscripts of Ura 2 is gun-a.ab.ba *bilat tāmti*, “produce of the sea”. In this exercise the scribe skips this entry and instead writes the next one, gun-íd *bilat nāri*, “produce of the river”.

Reverse i 8'-10', 15'-23') seem to be lists of alternative spellings of different forms of the verb *balāqu*.

Reverse ii 8'-12') seem to contain repeated writings of a phrase that could be either (1) part of a letter's opening address or (2) a Yahwistic personal name. In support of the first possibility, the sequence *-ia-a-ma* is frequently encountered in the Babylonian epistolary formula *umma ana (šarri) bēlŷāma*, “Thus to (the king) my lord”, encountered in Neo-Babylonian letters from the 8th and 7th centuries BCE (see, for example *State Archives of Assyria* 17 11 o 4, 17 o 4, 21 o 4 and *State Archives of Assyria* 19 134 o 4). In support of the second possibility, Judeans with names endings with the sign sequence *-ia-a-ma* appear (a) in the so-called Murašū archive, a group of ca. 900 cuneiform administrative documents found at Nippur, dated to the second half of the 5th-century; see, for example, ^mba-na-ia-a-ma and ^mia-di-ia-a-ma (Stolper 1985, no. 2 o 2 and 7) and (b) in cuneiform administrative documents from Āl-Yahūdu and Bīt-Našar; see, for example, ^mha-šá-bi-ia-a-ma a-šú šá ^mza-ka-ri-ia-a-ma (Pearce and Wunsch 2011, no. 23 15-16). Traces of the sign that precedes *-ia-a-ma* are preserved only in l. 12', where they resemble KAL. See Figure 1 for a photograph.

Reverse iii) “100 talents of the *gišgi.zú.lum.ma*-plant”. This plant appears in Ura 3 468 ff. and 8 151, as well as in the lexicon of drugs, Uruanna, and in medical texts, but it does not seem to be attested in administrative documents. Its absence from the administrative corpus together with the large quantity in which it is attested here (100 talents = 3,000 kg) suggests that the entire phrase reflects lexical rather than bureaucratic reality. Additional support for such an origin of the phrase is the fact that the word “talent” features in all the entries of the excerpt of Ura 2 on the tablet's obverse. Note that the distribution of the word *gišgi.zú.lum.ma* over two lines might indicate that the scribe understood it as two more common words, *gišgi* (“canebrake”) and *zú.lum.ma* (“date”).

Reverse iv) “[DN]-rēmanni, [GN (?)], month IX, year 4”. Traces of the sign that precedes *-rēmanni* are preserved only in l. 6', but could not be identified. See Figure 1 for a photograph.

Reverse v) “Bēlšunu son of Ahūšunu of his own free will ...”. The common personal names Bēlšunu and Ahūšunu appear in other Neo- and Late Babylonian scribal exercises: see Gesche (2001, 87 and 88) for references. Note that the scribe has mistakenly omitted *-ud* in *bu-ud* in at least two of the preserved iterations.

Reverse vi) “Adjacent to the arable land of the weavers”. Note the erroneous writing of LUGAL for *šá lú* in l. 18'.



Fig. 1: Detail of signs preceding *ia-a-ma*, rev. ii 12', and *-rēmanni*, rev. iv 6' (photographs: author's own)

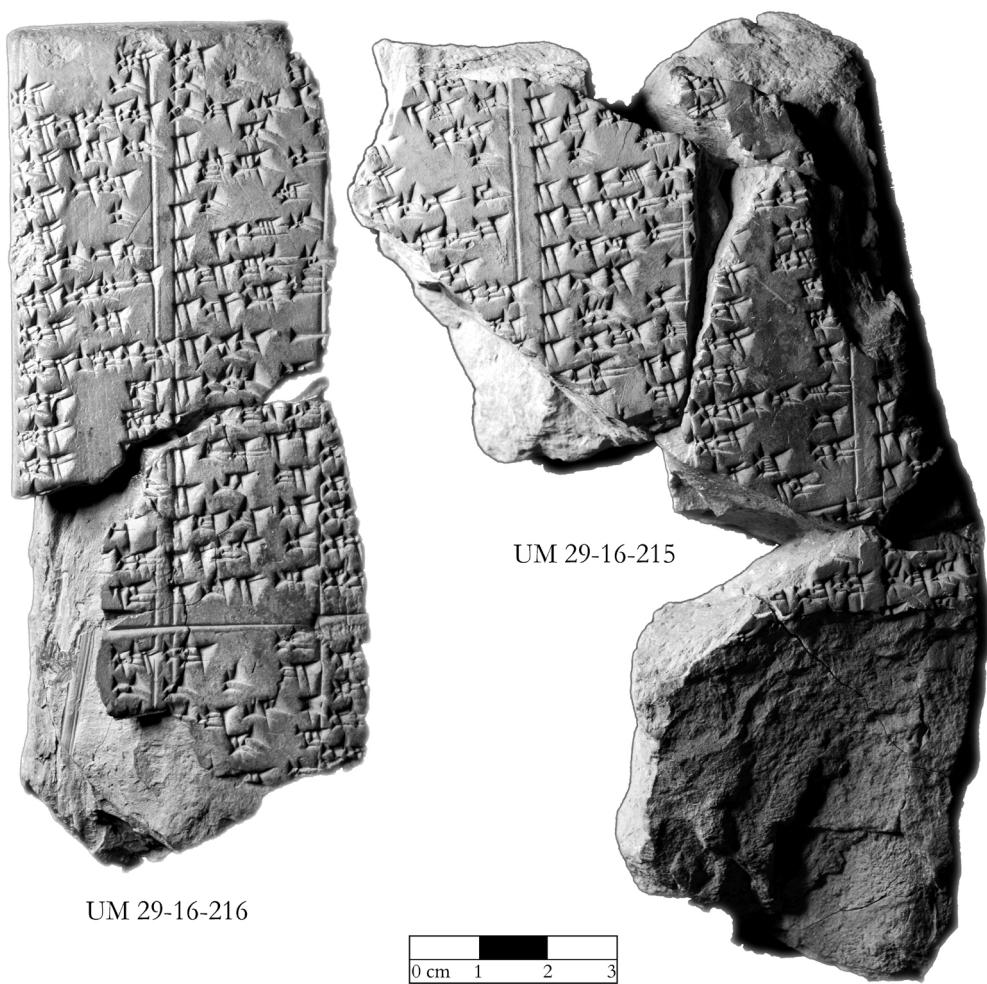


Fig. 2: UM 29-16-215 (+) 29-16-216, obverse (photographs: author's own)



Fig. 3: UM 29-16-215 (+) 29-16-216, reverse (photographs: author's own)

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