

NOTES ON TWO ALLEGED LITERARY TEXTS
FROM AL-HIBA/LAGAŠ*

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Among the epigraphical finds of the joint expedition of the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Institute of Fine Arts of the New York University at Tell al-Hiba, special interest can be attached to some texts that have been understood as literary. They have been published in copy by R.D. Biggs in his volume *Inscriptions From Al-Hiba-Lagash: The First and Second Seasons* (BiMes 3), Malibu 1976, as nos. 26-28 and 30-31¹.

In point of fact, none of them appears to be a literary text *stricto sensu*; even so, they are equally notable in that, together with no. 29 of the same volume, they document the existence and the activities of a scribal school in Lagaš dating back to the times of Enannatum I and Enmetenak². A full understanding of these texts, however, is still far from being achieved.

No. 26 has been separately edited by Biggs³, who interpreted it as a collection of riddles⁴. However, this document rather looks like a scribal exercise combining names of canals, deities (each accompanied by an epithet), fishes and snakes, according to a fixed scheme: «(of the city so-and-so) its canal is ... ; its deity is ... , the ... (epithet of the deity); its fish is ... ; its snake is ... »⁵.

No. 29 is probably a school text that deals with sign values and illustrates the usage of some ideograms⁶. Still, many entries remain at present unintelligible.

No. 30, described by Biggs as «a literary text concerned mostly with Enlil»⁷, appears to be a learned composition consisting of sentences about items of various kinds, all somehow connected with the above-said god⁸.

* Bibliographic references and abbreviations are according to Å.W. Sjöberg (ed.), *The Sumerian Dictionary of the University Museum of the University of Pennsylvania*, Philadelphia 1984 ff.; (abbreviated as PSD). I am grateful to Prof. Carlo Zaccagnini (Istituto Universitario Orientale, Napoli) for revising the English of this article.

1 Cf. J. Bauer, BiOr 36, 1979, 46.

2 In Old Sumerian, the phoneme /k/ of the genitive was probably pronounced in word-final position: cf. J. Bauer, AfO 36-37, 1989-90, 77.

3 R.D. Biggs, *Pre-Sargonic Riddles from Lagash*, JNES 32, 1973, 26-33.

4 *Ibid.*, 26.

5 Cf. M. Civil, *Studies Reiner*, 37-38; J. Krecher, in P. Fronzaroli (ed.), *Literature and Literary Language at Ebla* (QuSem 18), Firenze 1992, 292-94.

6 See M. Civil, *An Early Dynastic School Exercise from Lagash (al-Hiba 29)*, BiOr 40, 1983, 559-66.

7 Biggs, *Al-Hiba*, 7.

8 Note: [I] na₄ d^len-lil, «Enlil's weights» (col. i 5; cf. M. Civil, JCS 28, 1976, 73 and 75); I ki den-lil tuš, «the place where Enlil dwells» (ii 1); I dūr d^len^l<-lil>, «En<lil>'s dwelling» (ii 4); I sukkal-maš <d>en-lil, «Enlil's Chancellor» (iii 2); I b[arag] [d]^len^l-l[il], «Enlil's dais» (rev. iii' last line); and so

No. 31, finally, is a collection of incantations⁹, unfortunately very mutilated.

I have left the texts nos. 27 and 28 aside: these are much more difficult to be defined and classified. Biggs recognized that they are closely related and described them simply as literary texts¹⁰. In a more recent study, A. Alberti¹¹ has taken a very different position: according to him, Biggs, *Al-Hiba* 27 and 28 would be catalogues listing names of fields, canals or cult places under the jurisdiction of the god 'Šulutul'¹².

He correctly observes: «l'assai diversa disposizione che i registri assumono di volta in volta nei due testi esaminati dimostra indubbiamente la loro natura non letteraria, mentre la presenza di un indice numerico ricorrente ... in ogni registro *li(!)* inserisce nell'ambito delle 'liste'»¹³. His further assumption, that the texts are lists of field names and other toponyms connected with 'Šulutul', is based on the possible presence, in one of them, of a colophon «che sembra rivelare il contenuto del documento»¹⁴. That is, no. 27 ix 1'-5'; especially 4'-5': ^d[su]l-LUḪŠA(LAK-442)-gána-zid-dè / ^lḫ²-x¹, about which Alberti writes: «a causa della rottura del testo è difficile ricostruire il senso dell'intera colonna. Si ha tuttavia l'impressione che si tratti di 'campi legittimi' o di campi che competono al dio Šulutul»¹⁵.

However, such hypothesized topographical names are not attested elsewhere. Furthermore, no way can no. 27 ix 4'-5' be interpreted as a reference to fields belonging to 'Šulutul': most likely, ^dsul-LUḪŠA-gána-zid-dè is a personal name¹⁶ in the ergative case. The comparison with the name of a votive object called ^dnin-ḡír-su-gána-zid-iri-enim-ge-na-ka¹⁷, «Ninḡirsuk is the good (i.e. fertile) ground¹⁸ of Iri²enimgenak», suggests that this name is possibly an abbreviation, and that it might include the king's name in its full form. If so, ^dsul-LUḪŠA-gána-zid may be the same person as [^ds]u[1-LUḪ]ŠA-[... -z]id-[en]-mete-na-ka-k(e₄) who appears in the colophon of Biggs, *Al-Hiba* 3¹⁹. Lastly, while field names are generally quite prosaic and in most

forth. From the scanty remains of the text it appears that the tablet was divided into sections of two or three lines: a semicircular DIŠ (symbolized here as I) marks the beginning of each section. Unfortunately, only three sections are complete: col. i 1-2: I ^lz²ḡ¹ giggi ^den-lil / ^lNE¹-ḡar; *ibid.* 3-4: I^l [z]z² bábbar ^den-lil / [s]aḡ í[l]-la; and col. ii 1-3 (see below, comment to Biggs, *Al-Hiba* 27 ii 1).

⁹ See A. Alberti, *Or NS* 50, 1981, 257.

¹⁰ *Al-Hiba*, 7.

¹¹ *Due testi lessicali da Lagash presargonica?*, *RSO* 54, 1980, 1-13.

¹² *Ibid.*, 2. The reading /šulutul/ for the god name written ^dsul-LUḪŠA(LAK-442) has no bases, as pointed out by W.G. Lambert, *Or NS* 64, 1995, 135. For the sake of simplicity I will make use of Alberti's reading.

¹³ *Loc. cit.*, 1.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 2.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 2, n. 5.

¹⁶ Cf. the PNs lugal-gána-zid (Westenholz, *OSP* 2, 153:5; 177:4) and nin-gána-zid (Nik 15 ii 4).

¹⁷ *Uruimgina* 39:1 (Steible, *ABWI*, 349).

¹⁸ Cf. M.A. Powell, *On the Reading and Meaning of GANA*₂, *JCS* 25, 1973, 178-84 (especially, 182-83).

¹⁹ Cf. J.S. Cooper, *RA* 76, 1982, 191; G. Selz, *Untersuchungen zur Götterwelt des altsumerischen Stadtstaates von Lagaš*, Philadelphia 1995, 143 with n. 593. Note that Biggs, *Al-Hiba*, 7, reports that no. 27 was found directly underneath, and partly smashed by, no. 3.

cases consist of practical designations²⁰, many entries of Biggs, *Al-Hiba* 27 and 28 look rather literary.

Therefore, I am reluctant to accept Alberti's suggestion and I think that a re-consideration of these texts is in order. Here follows an edition of both the tablets. I have attempted to identify the content of every single entry, providing – whenever possible – a first, often tentative, translation.

Each entry is marked by a semicircular DIŠ which I have transliterated as I. Entries can be classified as follows:

- 1) personal or profession names
- 2) phrases
- 3) clauses or sentences (mostly abbreviated).

Twentyfive entries are common to both tablets, but are differently arranged. Moreover, entries in no. 27 are generally more complete than the corresponding ones in no. 28²¹. Such correspondences are pointed out below in parentheses.

Biggs, *Al-Hiba* 27

col. i

1 I 'é ¹ -u ₆ -e	(28 i 1: I é-u ₆ <-e>)
2 I šidim-me eridugki-ga	(28 iii 1: I šidim-me eridugki<-ga>)
3 'I ¹ dug ₄ -ga-ni	(28 ii 2: I dug ₄ -ga-ni)
4 I KAL(LAK-709b)-zid	(28 iii 7: I KAL-zid)
5 [I ^{dn}]in-tur ₅ [iri-ga]-e<-na>	(28 ii 6: I ^{dn} nin- ¹ tur ₅ ¹ iri-ga-e-[n]a)
6 I d[u]-du ¹ nemur _x (PIRIG.TUR)-gin ₇ ¹	(28 i 3: I du-du nemur _x -gin ₇)
7 [...] 'x ¹ [...]	

(possibly one line destroyed)

col. ii

1 I šidim-me é-ga[r ₈] ì-dù 'min ¹	(28 iii 2: I šidim-me é-gar ₈ aš _x (AŠ-tenû)
2 I lagas LA eš ₅ -am ₆	(28 ii 4: I lagas)
3 I íd-nun-né	(28 ii 3: I íd-nun-né)
4 I um-ma nin<-né> me šu NA[M]-ti	(28 i 6: I um<-ma> nin-né me)
5 I ^{dn} nin-tur ₅ zabala(m) ₅ ^{ki} -ka	(28 ii 5: I ^{dn} nin-tur ₅ zabala(m) ₅ ^{ki} -ka)
6 I LU.ME.ZA ¹ (-)[...]	

col. iii

1 I LU.ME.ZA bil ₄ mun	(28 iv 6: <I> LU.ME.ZA bil 'mun ¹)
2 I LU.ME.ZA É.NUN<-né>	(28 iv 7: I 'LU ¹ .ME.ZA É.NUN-né)

²⁰ See Pettinato, *Untersuchungen*; and cf. J. Krecher, ZA 60, 1970, 188 ff.

²¹ A few opposite cases must however be pointed out: see 27 i 5 // 28 ii 6 and 27 iii 2 // 28 iv 7. Thus it appears rather unlikely that no. 27 was used as a source for no. 28, or vice versa. My analysis and conclusions partially differ from those of Alberti: cf. RSO 54, 3-7.

3 I LU.ME.ZA DUG.RÉC-78 DÍM-ma

(28 iii 5: I LU.ME.ZA DUG.RÉC-78
DÍM<-ma>)

4 I LU.ME.ZA za-ge-li

5 I LU.ME.ZA-ke₄ fíd(-)da-na

(28 v 1: I LU.ME.ZA¹(GAR)-ke₄
fíd(-)[d]a-na)

6 I LU.ME.ZA(-)[...]

col. iv

1 I LU.ME.ZA GUR₈ dirig-ga

2 I LU.ME.ZA-ke₄ an-da-bé an-da-dug₄-dug₄

3 I LU.ME.ZA é sír-ra nam-TAR iri-a

4 I šidim-me Ú.š^{es}pèš gùn(u)-a

5 I šidim-me an-¹né¹ PŪ¹ gibil₍₄₎¹

(28 ii 7: I šidim-me an-né)

col. v (reverse)

1 I en¹x(x)¹

2 I TUKU_xĤAL [G]A UD

3 I¹gešnu_x(NU₁₁)¹ gal an-na

4 I šag₄-TAR an-úr<-šè-ke₄>

5 I šag₄-TAR enim-zid-ke₄

(28 i 7: I šag₄-TAR an-úr<-šè-ke₄>)

(28 i 8: <I šag₄-TAR¹ enim¹-zid<-
ke₄>)

6 I UD babba[r] bura_x(BŪR)^{ra}-ta

col. vi

1 [...]¹x¹ [...]¹x¹

2 I da-da-ġu₁₀

3 I lú zid-dè

4 I en-né temen-na

5 I en-né É.NUN

6 I [d]a-da úr TÚG

7 I šè-DU

(28 iv 5: I da-da-ġu₁₀)

(28 vi 4: I lú zid<-dè>)

(28 v 5: I en-né¹temen¹-na)

(28 v 6: [I en-né]é¹É¹.NUN)

(28 v 3: I da-da úr)

col. vii

1 [...]

2 I¹ur²l-saġ [g]a[l²] an-na

3 I en-né niġen_x(ABxĤA)^{ki}-na

4 I LU.ME.ZA BUR NU₁₁ KUG DI{+x} UM

(28 vi 6: I LU.¹ME¹[ZA]¹BUR
NU₁₁ KUG¹[...]É¹?)

5 I en urun_x(EN)<-né>-ne en-na-ne-¹ne¹

col. viii

1 [...]

2 [...]

3 [I] nintaḥ-e kalam-ma

4 I en kur-ta l'è¹-a

(28 iii 8: I en kur-ta)

5 I gudug 𒄀𒄀𒀭𒀭
(rest blank)

col. ix (colophon?)

1' 𒄀𒄀 [x] 𒄀𒄀𒀭𒀭 KA?1

2' [x]+𒄀𒄀 𒄀𒄀𒀭𒀭 KI

3' 𒄀𒄀𒄀-LU𒄀𒄀𒀭𒀭(LAK-442)

4' 𒄀𒄀𒄀[su]𒄀𒄀-LU𒄀𒄀𒀭𒀭-gána-zid-dè

5' 𒄀𒄀? -x1

Commentary

i 1: Probably a personal name: é-u₆-e occurs as such in Westenholz, OSP 1, 39 ii 5' (Pre- or Early Sargonic); *et passim* in the Ur III documentation: see Limet, *L'anthroponymie*, p. 411; J.-P. Grégoire, *Archives administratives et inscriptions cunéiformes de l'Ashmolean Museum et de la Bodleian Collection d'Oxford, I/1*, Paris 1996, pl. 69, Ashm. 1924.668 ii 2; F. Yıldız - T. Gomi, *Die Umma-Texte aus den archäologischen Museen zu Istanbul*, III, Bethesda, Maryland, 1993, Um. 1778:1; etc.

i 2: «The builder (...) in/of[?] Eridug». Incomplete sentence: the ergative subject šidim-me means that a direct object and a transitive finite verb follow. eridug^{ki}-ga can represent either a locative {eridug.a}²² or a genitive {eridug.ak}²³. In the former case the locative may have locative value proper, denoting the place where the action performed by the builder occurs (that is, in the city of Eridug); otherwise, it marks the 'second object' of a compound verb²⁴. Should instead eridug^{ki}-ga be a genitive, we would then have the *rectum* of an anticipatory genitive construction: «of Eridug, (its ...)», that is, «(the ...) of Eridug»; in this case the missing *regens* would be the object of the clause²⁵. Analogous entries can be found in iii 5(?), vi 4, vii 3 and viii 3.

i 3: dug₄-ga-ni is well attested as a personal name: see Pomponio, *Prosopografia*, 68 (s.v. du₁₁-ga-ni); Struve, *Onomastikon*, 39; Westenholz, OSP 1, 80 (index: s.v. Du₁₁-ga-ni); etc.

i 4: A term KAL(LAK-709a)-zid occurs in the Ebla documentation, where it appears to denote an occupation or a title: see MEE 4, p. 338, VE 1385; A. Archi, MARI 6, 1990, 34, *sub* 86; *id.* - P. Piacentini - F. Pomponio, *I nomi di luogo dei testi di Ebla* (ARES 2), Roma 1993, 300, s.v. KAL-zi. Also note, in TM 75.G.2420, LAK-709b-zid (see SEB 3, 1980, fig. 27e, right edge 5'), which could represent a variant

22 In Sumerian the usual order of a transitive sentence with more than one complement is: subject (ergative case) – indirect object(s) (dimensional case[s]) – direct object (absolute case) – verb. Cf. M.-L. Thomsen, *The Sumerian Language: An Introduction to its History and Grammatical Structure* (Mesopotamia 10), Copenhagen 1984, 51-52, § 44.

23 Cf., for instance, Gudea Statue A iii 5-iv 2: 𒄀𒄀𒄀-tur₅ / ama diġir-re-ne-ke₄ (ergative subject) / gù-dé-a / lú é ù-a-ka (genitive) / nam-tìl-la-ni (direct object) mu-sud (verb), «Nintur, mother of the gods, has lengthened the life of Gudea, the man (in charge) of building the temple (Sumerian: of Gudea, the man ..., his life)».

24 Cf. Thomsen, *Sumerian Language*, 99, § 186.

25 See n. 23 above.

spelling of the same term²⁶; and cf. M. Bonechi, MARI 8, 1997, 530-31, n. 394. In Babylonian sources, as far as I know, KAL-zid is otherwise attested only as an element of proper nouns: see the DN ^ld^l[n]in-KAL(LAK-709b)-zid in Deimel, SF 1 i 27 (cf. M. Krebernik, ZA 76, 1986, 186); and the PNs en-KAL(LAK-709b)-zid (Pomponio, *Prosopografia*, 98, s.v. en-ġuruš-zi) and lugal-KAL(LAK-709b*/709c)-zid (RTC 1 i 4*; BIN 8, 116 i 2*; 180:12; 213:3 and 9; Westenholz, OSP 2, 197 [index]; etc.).

i 5: «Nintur, <what you> say (...)». See comment to no. 28 ii 6 below.

i 6: «The vagabond, like the panther, (...)» / «The vagabond (...) like a panther»(?). The reading /nemur/ of PIRIG.TUR is given by Proto-Ea 573 (MSL 14, 54). Also note the gloss ⁿⁱ-mur to PIRIG.TUR in a source of 𒌦 XI 29 (see CAD N/2, 234, s.v. *nimru* A, lexical section); and cf. P. Steinkeller, ZA 80, 1990, 54, n. 3. I take du-du to be the same as lú du-du, «one who moves about, vagabond», in SP Coll. 2.35 (see B. Alster, *Proverbs of Ancient Sumer: The World's Earliest Proverb Collections*, Bethesda, Maryland, 1997, 52). However, the possibility that the correct reading sequence is nemur_x-gin₇ du-du should also be considered: cf. the spellings è-PIRIG and DU-zabala(m)₅^{ki} of the hydronyms PIRIG-è and *zabala(m)₅^{ki}(-šè)-DU-a («Going/Leading to Zabala(m)») in Biggs, *Al-Hiba* 26 iii 3 and 8, respectively; and the canal name (^{id})nemur_x-gin₇-DU, «Going like a panther» (*Rép. géogr.* 1, 225-26, s.v. Piriġturgim(DU), and 2, 284, s.v. Piriġturgimdu). Should this be the case, our passage would mean: «Who goes about like a panther».

ii 1: «The builder erected the walls – two»(?). The meaning of the numeral is unclear (note that the corresponding entry in no. 28 has «one» [aš_x] instead of «two» [min]); perhaps min has to be read after é-gar₈, so as to have: «The builder erected two walls». However, cf. Biggs, *Al-Hiba* 30 ii 1-3: I ki ^den-líl tuš / ki má gal-ke₄ / ġanun min, «the place (where) Enlil dwells, near the (berthing-)place for large boats, is the (city) storehouse – two». It is possible that in such cases min represents a sort of scribal mark, the meaning of which is unknown to us.

ii 2: See below, pp. 17-18.

ii 3: For this canal (here in the ergative or adressive case), see *Rép. géogr.* 1, 224 and 2, 282-83, s.v. Nun; and F. Carroué, ASJ 15, 1993, 52-61. That ^{id} is not a simple determinative, but part of the canal name, can be inferred from Biggs, *Al-Hiba* 26 viii 2' (I ^{id}-bi ^ld^l-nun, «Its canal is the Idnun») compared with *ibid.* i 1 (I ^{id}-bi ^lnigen_x^l(ABx^lHA^l)-^lDU^l); i 8 (I ^{id}-bi en-A-[g]al[?]); ii 3 (I ^{id}-bi en-^lze_x^l(ÁB.ŠÁ.^lGI^l)-nu-DU); ii 6 (I ^{id}-bi pa₅-^dsaman-KAŠ₄<.DU>); etc.

ii 4: «The woman sage and lady took the me's». I have left NAM- in capitals because of the possibility that it is to be read nan_x- (= modal prefix /na/ + pronominal prefix /n/), rather than nam-: cf. P. Attinger, *Éléments de linguistique sumérienne: La construction de du₁₁/e/di «dire»*, Fribourg, Suisse - Göttingen 1993, 104, § 26 with n. 51a; and 276, ex. 104. For um-ma with the nuance «a wise and clever woman», see

²⁶ The similar signs LAK-709a and LAK-709b are occasionally interchanged at Ebla: cf. LAK-709a for ġuruš(LAK-709b) in TM.75.G.427 xiv 16 (G. Pettinato, Afo 25, 1974-77, 9 and 12); and the spelling lugal-enim-LAK-709b, in ARET 5, 20+ xv 7 (A. Archi, in P. Fronzaroli [ed.], *Literature and Literary Language at Ebla* [QuSem 18], Firenze 1992, 28 and pls. 7-8), of the PN lugal-enim-kalag(LAK-709a) (ARET 5, 25 ii 1); cf. nu-gal-en-nam-gal-ga, *ibid.* 24 iii 1 [syllabic duplicate]).

Jacobsen, *Tammuz*, 346, n. 55; and Alster, *Dumuzi's Dream*, 90. For the double appellative «woman sage and lady», cf. 'Nanše Hymn' 225 (W. Heimpel, JCS 33, 1981, 96): nin um-ma lagaš^{ki} ki ḡar-ra, «the lady and woman sage of settled Lagaš» (following Jacobsen, *Harpis*, 141).

ii 5: «Of (the?) Nintur of Zabala(m)». To my knowledge, a goddess Nintur of Zabala(m) is not otherwise attested. Perhaps in our entry we have an example of an Antonomastic use of the DN Nintur, rather than a reference to a local form of the above-said deity, who was at home in Keš. Cf. Th. Jacobsen, *Notes on Nintur*, Or NS 42, 1973, 274-98.

ii 6: Here starts a section characterized by entries beginning with the obscure term LU.ME.ZA(-k), also found in vii 4. As far as I know, it occurs only, excluding the parallel passages to our text in the related Biggs, *Al-Hiba* 28, in UET 2, pl. XLVIII, 27:1 (cf. Alberti - Pomponio, *UET 2 Supplement*, 76). While the meaning of LU.ME.ZA(-k) remains unknown, the context of col. iv 2 of the present text seems to suggest that it represents a noun of the personal class (namely, a noun having a person as its referent): see translation and comment below.

iii 3: For DUG.RÉC 78, cf. Alberti, RSO 54, 10, *ad loc.*

iii 4: za-ge-li is the name of a bird, in MEE 3, 40 iii 5 (za-ge-li^{mušen}).

iii 5: See comment to i 2 and III 6.

iv 2: «The L. talks with him/her about it; he/she always talked with him/her»(?). For LU.ME.ZA(-k), see comment to ii 6. For an-da-bé, cf. an-dab₆-e in the Sargonic literary text CBS 8383 i 12-14 (B. Alster - A. Westenholz, ASJ 16, 1994, 18 and 43): an-né ki-da / enim an-dab₆-e / ki an-da 'enim' an-dab₆-e', «Heaven talks with Earth; Earth talks with Heaven»; as well as in the PNs gal-an-dab₆-e (MVN 10, 84 iv 9) and maḥ-an-dab₆-e (Luckenbill, *Adab* 51 v 4; Westenholz, OSP 1, 45 vi' 4'). The verbal form an-da-dug₄-dug₄, with reduplicated *hamtu* base, is instead wholly unattested elsewhere, as far as I know²⁷.

iv 4: «The builder (...) variegated figs/fig-grass». Ú.ḡeš^{peš} is otherwise found in Ur III texts, where it appears to have the same meaning as ú-ḡeš^{peš}, «fig»: see, for instance, MVN 7, 541:5: 0.1.0 ú-ḡeš^{peš}, «60 quarts of figs»; MVN 11 AA:6: 1 1/2 ú-ḡeš^{peš}, še^l-er^l-gu, «1 string and a half of figs»; etc.; and cf. I.J. Gelb, *Sumerian and Akkadian Words for «String of Fruit»*, in *Studies Kraus*, 67-82. On the other hand, the comparison with ú-ḡeš^{hašhur}, «apple-grass» (a type of weed)²⁸, might suggest an alternative reading ú-ḡeš^{peš} with the literal meaning of «fig-grass». Also note that gùn(u)-a, «multicoloured, variegated», is never attested in connection with figs: a fact which could speak for a different sense of Ú.ḡeš^{peš} in the present context.

iv 5: «The builder (built?) a new cistern on high». Cf. Enannatum I 9 iv 6-8 (Steible, ABW I, p. 186): PÚ še[g₁₂] BÁḤ[AR(LAK-742)-ra] du₆ iri-ka mu-na-dù, «he built a cistern of fired bricks for him/her on the city mound».

v 3: «Great light of heaven». Cf. the temple name é-ḡeš^{nu}/_{nu}₁₁(ŠIR)-gal-an-na, for which see A.R. George, *House Most High: The Temples of Ancient Mesopotamia*, Winona Lake, 1993, 135, sub 913 (there, «the great light of heaven» is an

²⁷ Note that both an-da-bé and an-da-dug₄-dug₄ are not recorded in the «Liste générale des séquences préfixales et/ou suffixales de du₁₁/e/di» compiled by P. Attinger (*Éléments*, 323ff.).

²⁸ See Civil, *Studies Reiner*, 51.

epithet of the goddess Inana/Ištar, presumably referring to her astral aspect as the planet Venus). For the reading /*ġešnu*/ of NU₁₁(LAK-24) in the sense of «light», see M. Civil, OA 21, 1982, 16; id., *Bilinguismo*, 96²⁹.

v 4: «ŠagTAR of Anurše (...)». Šag₄-TAR and an-úr-šè are two well-documented personal names: for the former, see Pomponio, *Prosopografia*, 224 (s.v. ŠÀ.TAR); Struve, *Onomastikon*, 167; Gelb, *Kudurrus* 23 xi 2; UET 2, pl. XLVI, 14 iii' 1; etc.; for the latter, Pomponio, *Prosopografia*, 49-50. Apparently, here and in the following line we have two examples of the formula PN₁ of PN₂³⁰ occurring as a noun-phrase in the ergative case (that is, with PN₁ being the ergative subject of a finite clause). For examples of this type of phrase see CT 50, 26 vi 1-4: šu-nígin 136 gur-sag-ġ[ál] / amar-izin / ur-nu-ke₄ / ur₅-šè ba-šúm, «in all, Amarizinak of Urnu gave 136 *gursagġal* (-measures) of barley as loans»; M. Lambert, RA 73, 1979, 14, x 13-16: 1/3 igi-4-ġál kug ša-na ġin / ur-^dAŠNAN / ^den-líl-zid-da-ke₄ / šu ba-ti, «UrAŠNAN(a)k of Enlilzid took 20 1/4 shekels of silver»; Steinkeller, *Legal and Administrative Texts* 5 rev. 9': Lugal-nġg-zu ur-li-ke₄, «Lugalniġzu of Urliak (...)» (cf. Cl. Wilcke, ZA 86, 1996, 23, n. 56); etc.

v 5: «ŠagTAR of Enimzidak (...)». See above, comment to v 4. For enim-zid(-da) as a personal name, see Pomponio, *Prosopografia*, 133-34 (s.v. KA-zi[-da]); BIN 8,

²⁹ However, scholars generally transliterate this word as nu₁₁: see, for example, PSD B, 93, s.v. bar A (1.1). Therefore, I think it convenient to clear up the point. The first-millennium vocabulary Aa gives nu-u as the reading of ŠIR = *nūru*, «light», and ġeš-nu as a reading of ŠIR.GIŠ with the same meaning (MSL 14, 511, Aa VIII/4:93-94; also cf. MSL 16, 199, SIG7.ALAN XXI 259-260). In Old Babylonian Sumerian texts both the writings ŠIR and GIŠ.ŠIR occur (see, for instance, A. Falkenstein, ZA 52, 1957, 63, n. 1), but these are probably to be analysed as ġešnu_x and ġešġešnu_x (that is, as variants of spelling), rather than as nu₁₁ and ġeš-nu₁₁ (that is, as two different words with the same or a similar meaning). The first-millennium lexical equivalence nu₁₁ = *nūru*, beside ġešnu(ŠIR.GIŠ)/ġeš-nu₁₁ = *nūru*, presumably represents a late neologism resulted from the re-interpretation of the Old Babylonian (ġeš)ġešnu_x(ŠIR) as (ġeš-)nu₁₁. In Gudea only NU₁₁(ŠIR-*gunū* = LAK-24) is found, used both for the word «light» (Gudea Cyl. A xxv 4; xxviii 22) and «alabaster» (*ibid.* xvi 24; xxiv 16). Note incidentally that NU₁₁ in the latter sense is probably to be read /*ġešnugal*/, chiefly in view of the later spelling ^{na}₄GIŠ.ŠIR.GAL(= ġešġešnugal_xgal/ġešġešnu_xgal/ġeš-nu₁₁-gal) and of the loanword (g)išnugal_{lu} (AHw, 293; CAD G, 104). The same term is otherwise written NU₁₁.GAL (that is, ġešnugal_xgal) in Gudea Statue B vi 15; and NA₄NU₁₁.GAL (that is, ^{na}₄ġešnugal_xgal) in Gudea 44 ii 4 (Steible, NBW 1, 299). In addition, the sign NU₁₁ appears to have also had a value nu₁₁ (see Westenholz, *Jena* 173:6: UB.SUR.NU₁₁.KAD₄ = ME-maġ-nu-DI; and M. Civil, MEE 3, 276), but this is hardly related to the nu₁₁(ŠIR) = *nūru* that is found in the late lexical tradition: the former must have had some other meaning, since in origin the word for «light» was /*ġešnu*/. It is also possible that the nu₁₁ of third-millennium texts is a mere syllabic value, coming either from the so-called UD.GAL.NUN orthographic style (cf. the above cited passage from Westenholz, *Jena* 173 [list of personal names which are written both in UD.GAL.NUN and normal orthography]; and Krecher, *Literature and Literary Language*, 300), or from the Akkadian word *nūru* (cf. M. Civil, *Ebla 1975-1985*, 148, n. 21).

³⁰ For which see J. Bauer, JESHO 18, 1975, 195-96; I. J. Gelb, in E. Lipiński (ed.), *State and Temple Economy in the Ancient Near East* (OLA, 5-6), Leuven 1979, 54-56; Pomponio, *Prosopografia*, XVII-XIX; and XXIX, n. 17. Also cf. Steinkeller, *Legal and Administrative Texts*, 30, comment to no. 5.

37 (index: s.v. Inim-zi-da); Westenholz, *Jena* 159 iv 12; etc. Note that enim-zid-ke₄ stands for *enim-zid-da-ka-ke₄³¹.

v 6: «Bright light from the depths». Cf. UM 29-13-609:25' (Å.W. Sjöberg, *OrSuec* 19-20, 1970-71, 142): bura_x(BÜR)^{ra} UD babbar ša-mu-un-ne-ri-ib-è, «you let go out bright light for them from the depths» (cf. PSD B, 199, s.v. buru₃ A [1.2]). For my reading babbar, instead of zalag (so for instance in PSD, *loc. cit.*), cf. 'Lugalbanda Epic I' 202 (quoted in PSD B, 198, s.v. bur₂ G): UD babbar-re ġi₆-a bí-ib-búr-re, «a bright light illuminates the night».

vi 2: «My sides»(?). Cf. Ugumu (Nippur version) 207 (MSL 9, p. 58); and Klein, *Šulgi*, 136-37, l. 17. DA.DA(.)MU can be also interpreted as *da-da* muḫaldim, «Dāda the cook», but then this would be the only entry of the type 'PN + profession' in our text. The PN Dādaġu or Dādaġa, equally written DA.DA.MU (see Limet, *L'anthroponymie*, 393; Sollberger, *TCS* 1, 106, *sub* 126), is not documented before the Ur III period.

vi 3: «The good/upright man (...)».

vi 4: «The lord (...) in/of' the *temen*» (cf. comment to i 2). For the various meanings of the term *temen*, see S. Dunham, *Sumerian Words for Foundation. Part I: Temen*, RA 80, 1986, 31-64.

vi 5: «The lord (...) the *E*». For É.NUN, see especially R. Caplice, *É.NUN in Mesopotamian Literature*, Or NS 42, 1973, 299-305. Also cf., among others, M. Krebernik, *Beschwörungen*, 21 with n. 21 (on 306-307); H. Waetzoldt - F. Yıldız, OA 26, 1986, 295 with n. 8; G. Cunningham, «*Deliver Me from Evil*». *Mesopotamian Incantations 2500-1500 BC* (Studia Pohl - SM, 17), Rome 1997, 12-13.

vi 7: šè-DU is a verbal form with prefix {ši}: cf. Attinger, *Éléments*, 294-95, § 192. As an illustration, reading DU as ġen we would have: «Then he/she went».

vii 2: «Great champion of An»(?). The suggested restoration is compatible with the traces as reproduced on Biggs' copy, but the arrangement of the signs appears somewhat unusual. Therefore, a collation of the tablet would be opportune. I do not know of any other occurrence of such a title; however, cf. ur-saġ aš an-na-ke₄, «the only champion of An» (referred to Ninurta), in STVC 34 ii 11 (Falkenstein, *Götterlieder*, 82). ur-saġ gal an-na would be parallel to ur-saġ gal den-líl-lá, epithet of Ningirsuk in Biggs, *Al-Hiba* 26 ii 7.

vii 3: «The lord (...) in/of' Niġen» (cf. comment to i 2). For the reading of ABxĤA^{ki} as /niġen/, see Proto-Ea 288 (MSL 14, 43³²) and cf. J. Krecher, in B. Hruška - G. Komórocz (eds.), *Fs. Lubor Matouš*, II, Budapest 1978, 53, s.v. niġin_x(NINA)^{ki}.

vii 5: «The mighty lords, his lords, (...)».

viii 3: «The man (...) in/of' the Land» (cf. comment to i 2).

viii 4: «The lord who comes/came out of the mountain».

viii 5: Cf. Alberti, RSO 54, 11, *ad loc.* (there: viii 3').

ix 3': On the reading of this divine name, see most recently W.G. Lambert, Or NS 64, 135-36.

ix 4'-5': Cf. above, p. 4-5.

³¹ Cf. Lieberman, *Loanwords*, 52; and Th. Jacobsen, ZA 78, 1988, 162, n. 2 (6).

³² There, in place of ni-me-en, and of the variants ni-ne-em and ni-èn-en, read ni-ġe₆-en, ni-ġe₉-em and ni-ig-en, respectively.

Biggs, *Al-Hiba* 28

col. i

- 1 I é-u₆<-e> (27 i 1: I [é^l-u₆-e])
 2 I kingal
 3 I du-du nemur_x(PIRIG.TUR)-gin₇ (27 i 6: I d[u]-du [nemur_x-gin₇])
 4 I ġen-ġen-na-ke₄
 5 I DU.DU.BU.KID
 6 I um<-ma> nin-né me (27 ii 4: I um-ma nin<-né> me šu NA[M]-ti)
 7 I šag₄-TAR an-úr<-šè-ke₄> (27 v 4: I šag₄-TAR an-úr-šè-ke₄)
 8 <I> šag₄-TAR [enim^l-zid<-ke₄> (27 v 5: I šag₄-TAR enim-zid-ke₄)

col. ii

- 1 I ^dnin-ġír: [su(/sú)]^l-ke₄
 2 I dug₄-ga-ni (27 i 3: [I] dug₄-ga-ni)
 3 I íd-nun-né (27 ii 3: I íd-nun-né)
 4 I lagas (27 ii 2: I lagas LA eš₅-am₆)
 5 I ^dnin-tur₅ zabala(m)₅^{ki}-ka (27 ii 5: I ^dnin-tur₅ zabala(m)₅^{ki}-ka)
 6 I ^dnin-[tur₅^liri-ga-e-[n]a (27 i 5: [I ^dn]in-tur₅ [iri-ga]-e<-na>)
 7 I šidim-me an-né (27 iv 5: I šidim-me an-[né^l PÚ [gibil(4)]^l)

col. iii

- 1 I šidim-me eridug^{ki}<-ga> (27 i 2: I šidim-me eridug^{ki}-ga)
 2 I šidim-me é-gar₈ aš_x(AŠ-tenû) (27 ii 1: I šidim-me é-ga[r₈] i-dù [min^l])
 3 I ^dutu(-)kur-ra
 4 I saġġa ^dutu-ke₄
 5 I LU.ME.ZA DUG.RÉC-78 DÍM<-ma> (27 iii 3: I LU.ME.ZA DUG.RÉC-78 DÍM-ma)
 6 I šidimgal_x(GAL.DÍM) an-na
 7 I KAL(LAK-709b)-zid (27 i 4: I KAL-zid)
 8 I en kur-ta (27 viii 4: I en kur-ta [è^l-a])

col. iv

- 1 I en-né ħé-ġál
 2 I nir-ġál
 3 I en tarah_x(DÀR)
 4 I lugal-šag₄^l-an-[zu]^l
 5 I da-da-ġu₁₀ (27 vi 2: I da-da-ġu₁₀)
 6 <I> LU.ME.ZA bil [mun]^l (27 iii 1: I LU.ME.ZA bil₄ mun)
 7 I [LU]^l.ME.ZA É.NUN-né (27 iii 2: I LU.ME.ZA É.NUN<-né>)
 8 I [a^l-si-[si]^l

col. v (reverse)

- 1 ILU.ME.ZA¹(GAR)-ke₄ f¹d¹(-)[d]a-na (27 iii 5: I LU.ME.ZA-ke₄ f¹d(-)da-na)
 2 (blank)
 3 I da-da úr (27 vi 6: I [d]a-da úr TÚG)
 4 I e[n]-né nibru¹(EN{.x}.LÍL)ki-ta
 5 I en-né t¹emen¹-na (27 vi 4: I en-né temen-na)
 6 [I en-n]é f¹É¹.NUN (27 vi 5: I en-né É.NUN)

col. vi

- 1 I f¹UD.UD¹-na
 2 I f¹šè-x¹[-x]
 3 I <d>f¹GAN¹-gír-f¹ke₄¹
 4 I lú zid<-dè> (27 vi 3: I lú zid-dè)
 5 I en f¹kiši¹-ke₄
 6 I LU.f¹ME¹.[ZA] f¹BUR NU₁₁ KUG¹ [...] f¹É¹? (27 vii 4: I LU.ME.ZA BUR NU₁₁
 KUG DI{+x} UM)
 7 [...]f¹na-ke₄¹
 8 I en-[n]é f¹niġen_x(ABxĤA)k¹i.f¹šè¹

Commentary

i 1: Probably a personal name: cf. comment to no. 27 i 1 above.

i 2: For this title («leader of the council», «assembly chief», or the like), see van Dijk, *Götterlieder*, 122-24; Å.W. Sjöberg, TCS 3, 96-97; Alberti - Pomponio, *UET 2 Supplement*, 53.

i 3: «The vagabond, like the panther, (...)» / «The vagabond (...) like a panther»(?). Cf. comment to no. 27 i 6 above.

i 4: «Because he always went». ġen-ġen-na-ke₄ is probably the same as i-ġen-ġen-na-ke₄-eš (Alster, *Proverbs*, p. 313, UET 6/2, 278:1 and 318:1): cf. Attinger, *Éléments*, 309, § 202; and Lieberman, *Loanwords*, 56-57.

i 5: Cf. the PN DU.DU.BU.AK (UET 2, 89 i 3'), of which DU.DU.BU.KID could represent a variant spelling³³.

i 6: «The woman sage and lady (took) the me's». Cf. comment to no. 27 ii 4 above.

i 7: «ŠagTAR <of> Anur<še> (...)». Cf. comment to no. 27 v 4 above.

i 8: «ŠagTAR <of> Enimzidak (...)». Cf. comment to no. 27 v 5 above.

ii 1: «Ningirsuk (...)».

ii 2: Personal name: cf. comment to no. 27 i 3 above.

ii 3: «The Idnun(-canal) (...)»/«(...) the Idnun(-canal)». Cf. comment to no. 27 ii 3 above.

ii 4: See below, p. 16-17 with n. 50.

ii 5: «Of (the?) Nintur of Zabala(m)». Cf. comment to no. 27 ii 5 above.

³³ Cf. the interchange between AK and KID in the writing of the term /karki(d)/, «prostitute» (see M.A. Powell, *Studies Diakonoff*, 317).

ii 6: «Nintur, what you say (...)». This entry has been previously interpreted as containing a toponym *uru-ga^{ki}* (Alberti, RSO 54, 8 and 11) or *uru-e-ga^{ki}* (Selz, *Götterwelt*, 266, n. 1297), but the sign read KI is actually a partially preserved NA. Our passage should be compared with Luckenbill, *Adab* 53 (Pre-Sargonic literary text) iii 2 and 4: *ì-lu iri-ga-e*, where *iri-ga-e* is clearly a verbal form³⁴, corresponding to *iri(-in)-ga-àm-e/me(-e)* in Sumerian texts from the Ur III and Old Babylonian periods³⁵. Incidentally, these yet unnoted occurrences of the modal prefix /iri/ – of obscure meaning – prove that it already existed in Old Sumerian³⁶, and that its use was not originally restricted to the expressions *mí (zi(d)(-dè-eš/éš))... e* and *silim-e-eš/éš ... e*, as is the case later.

ii 7: «The builder (built? a new cistern) on high». Cf. comment to no. 27 iv 5 above.

iii 1: «The builder (...) <in/of?> Eridug». Cf. comment to no. 27 i 2 above.

iii 2: «The builder (erected) the walls – one»/«The builder (erected) one wall». Cf. comment to no. 27 ii 1 above. For the value /aš/ of *AŠ-tenû*, see Biggs, *Al-Hiba* 29 rev. iii 2-3: I ʽáste-l-am₆ / aš_x(*AŠ-tenû*)-ti-am₆ (cf. Civil, *BiOr* 40, 559-63); and cf. MAD 2, 47.

iii 3: Possibly a personal name: cf. the Fara PN UD-kur-ra (Pomponio, *Prosopografia*, 241, s.v. *u₄-kur-ra*), which is possibly to be read *utu-kur-ra*. Otherwise, an incomplete sentence or phrase: «Utu (...) over? the mountain».

iii 4: «The temple administrator of Utu (...)».

iii 5: Cf. comment to no. 27 iii 3 above.

iii 6: «Masterbuilder of An». To my knowledge, this (divine?) title is not attested elsewhere. Cf. *šidim-gal^den-líl-lá*, «the masterbuilder of Enlil», as a title of the god Mušdama in 'Enki and the World Order' 345 (I. Bernhardt - S.N. Kramer, *WZJ* 9, 1959-60, 238).

iii 7: Cf. comment to no. 27 i 4 above.

iii 8: «The lord (who comes/came out) of the mountain».

iv 1: «The lord (...) abundance». The sentence is presumably to be completed by a verb with the meaning of «to bring, cause, spread», or the like.

iv 2: Possibly a personal name: cf. Pomponio, *Prosopografia*, 202; Struve, *Onomastikon*, 157.

iv 3: «Lord, wild goat». Cf. *en tarah_x an-na*, «lord, wild goat of An» (said of Dumuzi), in TuM NF 3, 26:6 = PRAK C 118 rev. ii 7. The reading /*tarah_h*/ for *DĀR* is based on Proto-Ea 846 (MSL 14, 62). Other syllabaries give the variants /*dura_h*/, /*darah_h*/ and /*dar(a)*/: see Liebermann, *Loanwords*, p. 211, sub 153. Also cf. P. Steinkeller, *Studies in Third Millennium Paleography - 3: Sign DARA₄*, SEL 6, 1989, 3-7. For its translation as «wild goat», instead of «ibex», see Steinkeller, *loc. cit.*, 5, n. 5.

iv 4: Personal name: cf. *lugal-l-šag₄-an-lzu* in RTC 15 rev. ii 1.

³⁴ *ì-lu... e* is the same as *ì-lu... e*, lit. «to say an *ilu*», that is, «to utter a wail, to intone a lament», or the like (see Attinger, *Éléments*, 555-62): cf. *ibid.* iv 1: *ì-lu ab-ke₄ geš-nám-ma-tuku-am₆*, «the wail of the sea was heard».

³⁵ For references, see W.H.Ph. Römer, *BiOr* 32, 1975, 3-4.

³⁶ Cf. Thomsen, *Sumerian Language*, 211 with n. 94; Attinger, *Éléments*, 106-107, § 29, sub e; and 296-97, § 194.

- iv 5: «My sides»(?). Cf. comment to no. 27 vi 2 above.
 iv 8: Possibly the same personal name as a-si₄-si₄ (Pomponio, *Prosopografia*, 13).
 v 1: Cf. comment to no. 27 iii 5.
 v 4: «From (or: There in) Nippur, the lord (...)».
 v 5: «The lord (...) in/of? the *temen*». Cf. comment to no. 27 vi 4 above.
 v 6: «The lord (...) the *E*». Cf. comment to no. 27 vi 5 above.
 vi 1: Cf. the Fara PN UD-na (Pomponio, *Prosopografia*, 241).
 vi 3: «GANḡirak (...)». For the goddess ^dGAN-ḡír, see Selz, *Götterwelt*, 140-41, s.v. ^dHÉ-ḡír.
 vi 4: «The good/upright man (...)».
 vi 5: «The lord of Kiš (...)».
 vi 8: «The lord (...) to(ward) Niḡen». Cf. comment to no. 27 vii 3 above.

Interpretation

What textual category do Biggs, *Al-Hiba* 27 and 28 belong to?

This is not an easy question: although structured as lexical lists and including literary elements, they are certainly neither literary compositions nor lexical texts. Some entries are, or can be, personal names³⁷ and names of profession³⁸. Others – such as en kur-ta (è-a), «the lord (who comes/came out) of the mountain» (27 viii 4; 28 iii 8); en tarah_x, «lord, wild goat» (28 iv 3); ḡešnu_x gal an-na, «great light of heaven» (27 v 3); šidimgal_x an-na, «masterbuilder of An» (28 iii 6); ur²-saḡ gal² an-na, «great champion of An» (27 vii 2) – are to be understood as divine epithets or titles, or expressions referring to deities. Most entries, however, are phrases of various types as well as clauses or sentences.

A remarkable fact is that the greatest majority of the sentences are abbreviated. In some instances they are reduced to the only ergative subject, which can be either a noun³⁹ or a noun-phrase⁴⁰; in others, we have the ergative subject followed by a direct⁴¹ or indirect object⁴²; or by an indirect object plus a direct one⁴³.

37 a-si-si (28 iv 8), DU.DU.BU.KID (28 i 5), dug₄-ga-ni (27 i 3; 28 ii 2), é-u₆-e (27 i 1; 28 i 1: <-e>), KAL-zid (27 i 4; 28 iii 7), lugal-šag₄¹-an-zu (28 iv 4), nir-ḡál (28 iv 2), UD.UD-na (28 vi 1), ^dutukur-ra (28 iii 3).

38 kingal (28 i 2).

39 <^d>GAN-ḡír-ke₄ (28 vi 3), íd-nun-né(?) (27 ii 3; 28 ii 3), ^dnin-ḡír:su/(sú)-ke₄ (28 ii 1).

40 en kiši-ke₄ (28 vi 5), en urun_x<-né>-ne en-na-ne-ne (27 vii 5), lú zid-dè (27 vi 3; 28 vi 4: <-dè>), saḡḡa ^dutu-ke₄ (28 iii 4), šag₄-TARan-úr-šè-ke₄ (27 v 4; 28 i 7: <-šè-ke₄>), šag₄-TAR enim-zid-ke₄ (27 v 5; 28 i 8: <-ke₄>).

41 en-né É.NUN (27 vi 5; 28 v 6), en-né ḡé-ḡál (28 iv 1), šidim-me é-garḡ aš_x (28 iii 2), šidim-me Ú.ḡešpès ḡun(u)-a (27 iv 4).

42 en-né nibru!^{ki}-ta (28 v 4), en-né niḡen_xki-šè (28 vi 8), šidim-me an-né (28 ii 7), um<-ma> nin-ne me (28 i 6; me stands for *me-e [adessive]). Also see comment to no. 27 i 2 above.

43 šidim-me an-né PÚgibil(4) (27 iv 5).

As far as I know, abbreviations of such types are only found 1) in some rare stenographic texts listing the consecutive line beginnings of individual compositions⁴⁴, or 2) in the so-called 'literary catalogues', i.e. school inventories of literary works cited by their incipits⁴⁵. However, our documents are neither stenographic texts (since the entries common to both of them differ in the order of their respective arrangements) nor literary catalogues (since some entries undeniably represent personal names). And yet, many entries in Biggs, *Al-Hiba* 27 and 28 indeed appear to be incipits. Therefore I would suggest that personal names were incipits as well: that is, 'titles' of scholarly *Personennamenlisten*⁴⁶ cited by their first entry⁴⁷. One could then understand the entries $\text{\$ag}_4\text{-TAR an-}\dot{\text{u}}\text{-}\text{\$}\dot{\text{e}}\text{-ke}_4$ (27 v 4; 28 i 7: < $\text{\$}\dot{\text{e}}\text{-ke}_4$ >) and $\text{\$ag}_4\text{-TAR enim-zid-ke}_4$ (27 v 5; 28 i 8: < -ke_4 >) as incipits of legal texts (or, of models for drawing legal texts), considering that such a type of phrase only occurs in legal documents⁴⁸.

Thus Biggs, *Al-Hiba* 27 and 28 would turn out to be two inventories of miscellaneous texts, which were grouped together for some unknown reason⁴⁹. Such an interpretation could also be supported by the passage 27 ii 2: I lagas LA eš₅-am₆. The sign LA if understood as a logogram must be read šika, meaning «shard» or «scale (of a fish)», but a translation «Lagaš is three shards/scales» is senseless. Instead, if we assume that this document is an inventory of texts, and interpret šika eš₅-am₆ as a scribal note referring to the condition of the tablet inscribed with the composition 'Lagaš', the entry becomes perfectly intelligible: «Lagaš – it (namely, its tablet) is (reduced to) three shards/fragments»⁵⁰. On the other hand, it should be noted that in a few cases the same phrase or sentence, written in full in no. 27, occurs in an abbreviated form in no. 28⁵¹, in contrast with the later 'titles' which are always either complete or abbreviated phrases/sentences. It is possible, however, that title-giving procedures in the third millennium had not yet reached the same level of standardization of the Old Babylonian scribal schools⁵².

At any rate, Biggs, *Al-Hiba* 27 and 28 are two extremely remarkable texts, in that they contain a lot of references and allusions to a rich and varied literature dating

44 See M. Civil, Or NS 54, 1985, 37 and 40; and A. Cavigneaux, in Ö. Tunca - D. Deheselle (eds.), *Tablettes et images aux pays de Sumer et d'Akkad: Mélanges offerts à Monsieur H. Limet*, Liège 1996, 15-17.

45 See J. Krecher, *Kataloge, literarische*, RIA 5, 478-85.

46 Such as those edited by W.G. Lambert, *An Old Akkadian List of Sumerian Personal Names*, in *Studies Sachs*, 251-60; and M.E. Cohen, *Two Versions of a Fara-Period Name-List*, in *Studies Hallo*, 79-86. Or the so-called 'Names and Professions List', known from Abū Šalābīkh and Ebla (see most recently A. Archi, *La 'Lista di nomi e professioni' ad Ebla*, SEB 4, 1981, 177-204; also cf. id., RA 78, 1984, 171-74 and Or NS 58, 1989, 127), as well as from an Ur III source (see F.M. Fales - Th.J.H. Krispijn, *An Early Ur III Copy of the Abū Šalābīkh 'Names and Profession' List*, JEOL 26, 1979-80, 39-46; and F.M. Fales, *Prima dell'alfabeto: La storia della scrittura attraverso testi cuneiformi inediti*, Venezia 1989, 52-53).

47 Cf. M. Civil, *Mélanges Birot*, 69 and 71, l. 13; and 74, *ad loc.*

48 See above, comment to no. 27 v 4.

49 Cf. P. Michalowski, OA 19, 1980, 265-66.

50 Note that the corresponding entry in no. 28 only consists of the supposed title, 'Lagaš' (col. ii 4).

51 See i 6 (// 27 ii 4), iii 2 (// 27 ii 1) and 8 (// 27 viii 4). Also cf. 27 iv 5 with 28 ii 7.

52 Cf. W.W. Hallo, JAOS 83, 1963, 169 and 173.

back to the times of the early kings of the so-called First Dynasty of Lagaš – a literature which up to now has not left any traces. It is to be hoped that future excavations at Al-Hiba/Lagaš will enable us to retrieve, at least in part, the documentary items possibly alluded to in our documents.