

THE CUNEIFORM TABLETS OF THE VARELA COLLECTION

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The four cuneiform tablets here presented belong to the private collection of the Varela family, to whom we are very grateful for kindly having granted us permission to publish them. They were purchased in Iraq in the 1950s by the late Mr. José Antonio Varela Dafonte. Two of the tablets come from ancient Šuruppak, and the other two are dated to the Third Dynasty of Ur.

The Fara Tablets

The site of Fara, ancient Šuruppak, was excavated by the *Deutsche Orient-Gesellschaft* in 1902-1903, and by the University Museum of the University of Pennsylvania in 1931¹. These regular excavations yielded a large number of lexical, administrative and literary tablets, but some other texts found their way into the antiquities market². This was the case of the majority of the sale contracts, a group to which one of our texts (no. 1), or possibly both, belong. Thus, only seven sale documents were regularly excavated by the D.O.G., whereas the rest of them were purchased by about thirty different collectors. The fact that the seven tablets excavated by the D.O.G. were found in five different places, in three of which no other tablets were found, as well as the nature of the documents themselves seem to suggest that they were originally kept in private households in Šuruppak³.

At present, apart from the tablets of the Varela Collection, a total of forty-seven Fara sale contracts are known⁴. In spite of their irregular digging, they can easily be linked together through their physical features⁵, formularies and structure⁶, and prosopography⁷.

The structure of tablet no.1, following the pattern proposed in *ELTS*, pp. 203-204, can be established as follows:

¹ See Martin 1988, pp. 12-17.

² See Krebernik 1998, pp. 245-53, 337-61, 372-77. The tablets published in *FTUPM* should be added to the catalogue provided by Krebernik, as well as some other references to more recent publications provided by Pomponio 2001, pp. xxv-xxvii.

³ See Martin 1988, p. 101; Visicato - Westenholz 2000, pp. 1122-23; Pomponio 2001, p. xxvi.

⁴ An updated list can be found in Visicato 2001, p. 139, to which the text published in *SEL* 19 is to be added.

⁵ See Visicato - Westenholz 2000, pp. 1122-23.

⁶ See *ELTS*, pp. 203-204.

⁷ The prosopography of the sale documents of Fara has been worked out by Visicato 2001, pp. 139-62. The recurrence of officials, witnesses, buyers or sellers in different texts has led Pomponio (1983, pp. 132-33) to suggest that these people probably belonged to a few families of the Šuruppak *élite* (see also Visicato - Westenholz 2000, pp. 1127-29).

- Amount of the price of the field (i.1-2).
- Size of the field (i.3).
- Additional payments (i.4-7).
- Commodities received by the sellers (ii.1.-iii.1).
- List of sixteen witnesses (lu₂-ki-inim omitted) (iii.2-iv.10).
- Commodities received by the surveyor (scribe of the field) (v.1-7).
- Commodities received by the ENGAR.UŠ (v.8-r.i.3).
- Name of the buyer (ii.1-2).
- Location of the field (ii.3).
- "Office" of PN (ii.4-5).

Text no. 2 clearly comes from similar Fara archives. It records a transaction regarding a field and a house, the precise nature of which is uncertain. It lacks some essential sections which are common in sale documents dated to the Fara period, although such sections are not always present in this kind of contracts⁸. Most probably, the clue for the identification of the nature of this document was to be found in the now lost line(s) i.5 (-6). The structure of the text could be the following:

- Size of field and house (i.1-2).
- [Nature of the transaction] and name of one of the parts (i.3-[5/6]).
- List of eleven witnesses (ii.1-r.i.2).
- Location of the field and house (iii.1-2).

No. 1

92x95x2

i	1	10+6 uruda ma-na	16 minas of copper
	2	šam ₂ gan ₂	(is) the price of a field
	3	1 (eše) 2 (iku) gan ₂ -bi	of 8 iku of land.
	4	10+4+[x] uru[da ma-na]	14+[x] minas of copper
	5	niḡ ₂ -[diri]	(is) the additional payment.
	6	4 še lid ₂ -ga	4 lid ₂ -ga measures of barley
	7	niḡ ₂ -ba	(is) the gift.
ii	1	8 siki ma-na	8 minas of wool
	2	tug ₂	(in) garments,
	3	1 ^{uḡ} me-ḡal ₂	1 ... garment,
	4	40 ninda	40 (loaves of) bread,
	5	1 gug ₂	1 cake,
	6	5 kur ₂ tu ₇	5 kur ₂ measures of soup,

⁸ On sale documents that do not follow the standard structure described in *ELTS*, pp. 203-204, see Visicato 1995.

	7	5 kur ₂ GA ₂ xHA.A	5 kur ₂ measures of ... fish,
	8	1 i ₃ sila ₃	1 sila ₃ of oil,
	9	Amar-amar	(to) Amar-amar
	10	Um-ma-tur	(and) Ummatur,
iii	1	lu ₂ šam ₂ gu ₇	the sellers.
	2	¹ Ad-da-ki-za	Addakiza,
	3	ad-da uru	city elder (?);
	4	¹ Ur- ^d Lugal-DU	Ur-LugalDU;
	5	¹ Ur- ^d NU.KAŠ ₄	Ur-NUKAŠ;
	6	¹ Šeš-kur-ra	Šeškura;
	7	¹ AN-a-zu	ANazu,
	8	engar	“farmer”;
	9	¹ Nu-ra-a [?]	Nura’a [?] ;
iv	1	¹ A ₂ -nu-kuš ₂	Anukuš;
	2	¹ Uru-zi	Uruzi;
	3	¹ Si ₄ -si ₄	Sisi;
	4	¹ Lu ₂ -lul	Lulul;
	5	¹ Igi- ^d Sud ₃ -še ₃	Igi-Sudše;
	6	¹ HE ₂ -Utu	HE-Utu;
	7	¹ Lugal-an-DU	LugalanDU;
	8	Ur-saḡ	Ursaḡ;
	9	¹ Šeš-ama-na	Šešamana;
	10	¹ ^d Ama-ḡu ₁₀	(and) Amaḡu (are the witnesses).
v	1	1 še lid ₂ -ga	1 lid ₂ -ga measure of barley,
	2	10 ninda	10 (loaves of) bread,
	3	10 gug ₂	10 cakes,
	4	2 kur ₂ tu ₇	2 kur ₂ measures of soup,
	5	2 kur ₂ GA ₂ xHA.A	2 kur ₂ measures of ... fish,
	6	A-har-ši	(to) Aharši,
	7	dub-sar	scribe.
	8	2 (ul) še	120 sila ₃ of barley,
	9	5 ninda	5 (loaves of) bread,
	10	10 gug ₂	10 cakes,
rev.			
	1	2 kur ₂ tu ₇	2 kur ₂ measures of soup,
	2	2 kur ₂ GA ₂ xHA.A	2 kur ₂ measures of ... fish,
	3	ENGAR.UŠ	(to) the ENGAR.UŠ.

=====

i	1	Šeš-ama-na	Šešamana
	2	lu ₂ gan ₂ šam ₂	(is) the buyer.
	3	gan ₂ a-gar- ^f gu ¹ -la	The field (is located in the agricultural district) of Agar-gula.
	4	bala	“Office” of
	5	Inim- ^r dSud ₃ -da ¹ -zi	Inim-Sudazi.

i.5: on the meaning of the additional payment niġ₂-diri, see *ELTS*, pp. 222-24.

i.6 *et pass.*: on lid₂-ga, a measure of capacity equivalent to 240 sila₃, see Powell 1987-90, p. 495.

i.7: on the meaning of this gift (niġ₂-ba), see *ELTS*, pp. 224-25.

ii.1-2: for the interpretation of these two lines, see Visicato - Westenholz 2000, p. 1124 n. 28.

ii.3: on the garment ^{lu}me-ġal₂, see *SRU*, p. 19; Krecher 1973, p. 197; *ELTS*, p. 294.

ii.6 *et pass.*: on the capacity measure kur₂, see Krecher 1974, pp. 179-80. For tu₇ “soup”, see *TLAT*, pp. 15-19.

ii.7 *et pass.*: for GA₂xHA.A, a kind of processed fish, see *TLAT*, p. 19.

ii.9: Amar-amar, here recorded as seller, is also attested as witness in *SRU* 6:iv.5, and *WF* 35:iii.5.

ii.10: The seller Um-ma-tur is also attested as such in *SEL* 3 p. 4:iii.5.

iii.2-3: Ad-da-ki-za ad-da uru (e₂-al-la) is also mentioned in *MVN* 10 84:iii.9. The name of profession ad-da uru is mainly found in contracts (see references in Visicato - Westenholz 2002, p. 1119); in connection with a GN it appears in *UET* 2 Suppl 25:ii'.3-4, so that one could think of a meaning like “city elder” (see Falkenstein 1956, p. 36; Alberti - Pomponio 1986, p. 74; *PSD* A/3 p. 13 s.v. ad-da).

iii.4: Ur-^dLugal-DU is also attested as witness in *Orient* 19:iii.8.

iii.5: To the best of our knowledge, there are no other attestations of this PN; the DN ^dNU.KAŠ₄ is neither known in the Fara god-lists. The interpretation of AN.UR.NU.KAŠ₄ as Ur-^dNU.KAŠ₄ is therefore only tentative.

iii.6-iv.10: some of the witnesses mentioned in these lines are also attested in other documents: Šeš-kur-ra, in *TLAT* 1:iv.5 (na-gada), and *Orient* 19:v.1 (niġir); AN-a-zu₍₅₎ engar, in *ArOr* 39 15:iv.6 (=BAOM 5:iv.6), and as official in *MVN* 10 84:r.i.7, and *ArOr* 39 14:r.i.2; A₂-nu-kuš₂, in *ArOr* 39 15:iv.5 (=BAOM 5:iv.5); Uru-zi, in *MVN* 10 84 iv:1; Lu₂-lul, in *MVN* 10 84:iv.10 (engar); Šeš-ama-na, in *Orient* 19:iv.3; HE₂-Utu, as seller in *MVN* 10 84:ii.9.

v.6-7: A-har-ši dub-sar is also known as an official in Fara contracts in *ArOr* 39 15:r.i.1 (=BAOM 5:r.i.1), *MVN* 10 84:r.i.1, and *Ung.* 1:r.ii.6, and as witness in *WF* 32:iv.2. The role of the scribe in the Fara period has been discussed by Visicato 2000, pp. 22-50.

r.i.3: ENGAR.UŠ probably designates an official responsible for the publicity of field sales (see *ELTS*, p. 237). Wilcke (2003, p. 82) prefers to understand this term as ABSIN-us₂ “the owner of a neighbouring field”.

- r.ii.1-2: Šeš-ama-na is also attested as buyer in *ArOr* 39 15:r.ii.1 (=BAOM 5:r.ii.1), *MVN* 10 84:r.ii.1, and *WF* 32:r.iii.1.
- r.ii.3: a list of locations of fields recorded in Fara sale contracts can be found in *ELTS*, p. 214. For a-gar-gu-la, cf. a-gar-tur in text no. 2:iii.1 below, and *ArOr* 39 15:r.ii.3 (=BAOM 5:r.ii.3). In this context, a-gar could be well understood as a variant of a-gar₃ / agar₄ “field, meadow” (note, for example, the frequent attestations of the field-names a-ša₃ agar₃/a-gar₃-tur, and a-ša₃ a-gar₃-gu-la in Ur III texts). On a-gar₃ / agar₄, see Marchesi 2001, pp. 313-17.
- r.ii.5: a list of *bala*-names in sale contracts of Fara has been published by Visicato 2001, p. 140 (add *SEL* 19:r.iv.5). Inim-^dSud₃-da-zi is also attested in *Orient* 19:r.ii.6, *RTC* 15:r.iv.5, *TMH* 5 71:r.ii.3, *WF* 34:r.iii.4, Visicato - Westenholz 2000 4:r.ii.6. On the meaning of this *bala*-names, see Visicato 2001, p. 140 n. 3.

No. 2

78x84x22

i	1	5 (iku) gan ₂	A field of 5 iku (and)
	2	3 sar e ₂	3 sar of a house
	3	Ar ₃ -tu-	Artu-HEabzu
	4	HE ₂ -abzu	
	5	[x] 'x' / [...]	...
		(one line lost?)	
ii	1	¹ Šeš-ama-na	Šeš-amana,
	2	kuš ₇	equerry;
	3	¹ Lugal-a ₂ -na	Lugal-ana,
	4	ugula	overseer;
	5	¹ Lugal-zag-si	Lugal-zagsi,
	6	dumu Lugal-ġu ₁₀ -en-nu	son of Lugalġu-ennu;
iii	1	¹ Ar ₃ -tu-	Artu-Enlilazi;
	2	^d En-lil ₂ -la ₂ -zi	
	3	¹ Amar-EZENxAN	Amar-EZENxAN;
	4	¹ Ba-za ¹	Baza,
	5	gudu ₄ (L A K . 2 2 6 . M E) ^d Nin-kin-nir	priest of Ninkinnir;
iv	1	¹ Lugal-me-lam ₂ ŠIM ²	Lugalmelam, brewer (?);
	2	¹ Ur-zi	Urzi;
	3	¹ Lugal-NA ₂ -du ₁₀	LugalNAdu;
	4	¹ Ur- ^d E-'lum ¹	Ur-Elum;
rev.			
i	1	¹ Utu-mu-kuš ₂	(and) Utu-mukuš

	2	'lu ₂ '-ki-inim	(are) the witnesses.
		=====	
ii		=====	
iii	1	gan ₂ -bi a-gar-tur	This field (is located in the agricultural district) of Agar-tur;
	2	e ₂ -bi dag-si-sa ₂ (<i>and one sign erased</i>)	this house (is located in the city quarter ⁹ of) Dagsisa.
		=====	

i.3: for the reading ar₃-tu of HAR.TU, see Steinkeller 1993, p. 121 n. 38. See also Krecher 1987, pp. 16-17, and Wilcke 2003, p. 54.

ii.1-r.i.2: some of the witnesses here recorded also appeared as such in other Fara sale documents: Šeš-ama-na, perhaps in no. 1:iv.9 above, and *Orient* 19:iv.3, where he is not referred to as kuš₇; Amar-EZENxAN, perhaps the same Amar-EZENxAN.ŠA₃ in *Ung.* 1:v.5 (cf. other references to this PN in Krecher 1973, p. 198); Lugal-NA₂-du₁₀, in *Ung.* 1:r.iii.4, perhaps in *Ung.* 4:r.iv.4 (Lugal-NA₂-du₁₀-ga dumu Ur-^dEn-lil₂), and as seller in *ArOr* 39 15:iii.1 (=BAOM 5:iii.1); Ur-^dE-lum, in *WF* 35:vi.3, and as seller in *TMH* 5 78:iii.3, and *Ung* 3:iii.2; Ur-zi, in Visicato - Westenholz 2000 3:iii.7 (kaš₄); ^dUtu-mu-kuš₂, in *TSS* 66:iv.3', *WF* 35:iv.6, and *WF* 36:iv.1.

iii.5: for the goddess ^dNin-kin-nir, see Krebernik 1986, p. 199, and Pomponio 2001, p. 109.

r.iii.1: cf. gan₂ a-gar-gu-la in no. 1:r.ii.3 above and see commentary to this line; gan₂ a-gar-tur is also attested in *ArOr* 39 15:r.ii.3 (=BAOM 5:r.ii.3).

r.iii.2: for the location of houses recorded in the sale documents of Fara, see *ELTS*, pp. 215-16 (cf. Dag-^dEn-lil₂, attested in *TMH* 5 75:iv.8).

The Ur III tablets

Tablets nos. 3 and 4 are dated to the Third Dynasty of Ur. The provenance of tablet no. 3 can not be established with certainty: personal names are not conclusive, and although the use of the *Reichskalender* probably points to Drehem or Ur, other sites can not be excluded.

Tablet no. 4 comes from Drēhim, ancient Puzriš-Dagān. It deals with the expenditure of a number of gazelles and sheep, booked out of Urkununa's account. This official was responsible of small livestock in Puzriš-Dagān between Š43 and AS8 and between ŠS4 and IS2⁹.

⁹ See Maeda 1989, pp. 76-80; Sigrist 1992, pp. 269-72 and 306-307.

No. 3

34x31x13

ŠS6 - 07 - 00

1	0.1.4 še	100 (sila ₃) of barley
2	Ur- ^d Šul-pa-e ₃	for Ur-Šulpa ^ʿ e,
3	0.1.0 (<i>eras. over 0.0.2</i>) Tum-ma-al ^{ki} -še ₃	60 (sila ₃) for the Tummal,
4	0.0.1 Ta ₂ -din-Eš ₄ -tar ₂	10 (sila ₃) for <i>Taddin-Eštar</i> ,
5	0.0.2 Be-li ₂ -du-ri ₂	20 (sila ₃) for <i>Bēli-dūri</i> .
rev.		
1	zi-ga-am ₃ =====	It has been expended.
2	iti a ₂ -ki-ti	(In) the 7 th month.
3	mu na-ru ₂ -a / ba-du ₃	(In) the year “the stele was erected (ŠS6).”

4: it is not probable that *Taddin-Eštar* is here the daughter of Amar-Sîn, since her name is only attested until AS9. For *Taddin-Eštar*, daughter of Amar-Sîn, see Frayne 1997, p. 267, and Hilgert 2002, p. 304 n. 60.

5: to the best of our knowledge, *Bēli-dūri* is a PN so-far unattested in Ur III texts.

No. 4

42x33x12

ŠS4 - 01 - 11

1	2 amar maš-da ₃ -nita ₂	2 young male gazelles
2	^d En-lil ₂	for Enlil,
3	1 amar maš-da ₃ -nita ₂	1 young male gazelle
4	1 amar maš-da ₃ -munus	(and) 1 young female gazelle
5	^d Nin-lil ₂	for Ninlil,
6	1 amar maš-da ₃ -munus	1 young female gazelle
7	^d Nin-tin-ug ₅ -ga	for Nintinuga,
8	ša ₃ e ₂ ^d Nin-lil ₂ -la ₂	in the temple of Ninlil,
9	lugal ku ₄ (<i>REC.144</i>)-ra	in the presence of the king;
rev.		
1	4 udu-u ₂	4 grass(-fed) sheep,
2	1 amar maš-da ₃ -nita ₂	(and) 1 young male gazelle,
3	ba-ug ₇ e ₂ muhaldim	slaughtered for the kitchen
4	mu aga ₃ -us ₂ -e-ne-še ₃	in the name of the royal guard.
5	u ₄ -11-kam	(On) the 11 th day.

6	ki Ur-ku ₃ -nun-na-ta ba-zi	It was expended by Urkununa.
7	g̃iri ₃ Hu-la-al dub-sar	Conveyer: <i>Hulal</i> , the scribe.
8	iti še-sag ₁₁ -ku ₅	(In) the 1 st month.
9	mu ^d Šu- ^d Suen / lugal Uri ₅ ^{ki} -ma-ke ₄ / bad ₃ mar-tu mu-ri-iq / ti-id-ni-im mu-du ₃	(In) the year “Šu-Sîn, king of Ur, built the wall of the Amorites (called) ‘holding back the Tidanum’ (ŠS4).”
le.ed.	4 udu 6 maš-da ₃	(Tablet concerning) 4 sheep (and) 6 gazelles.

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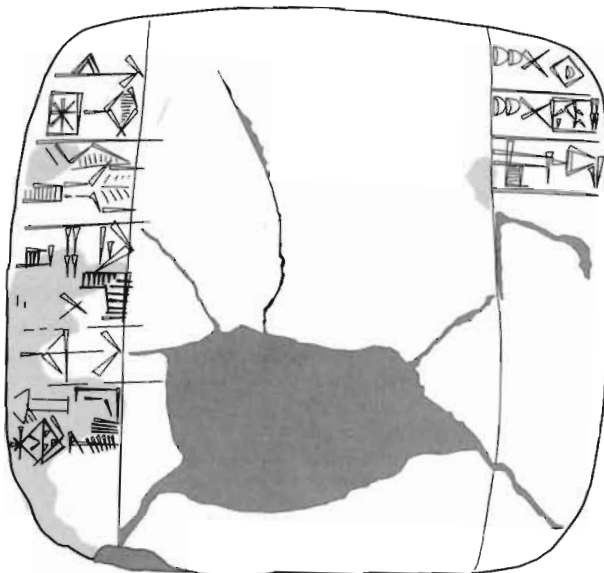
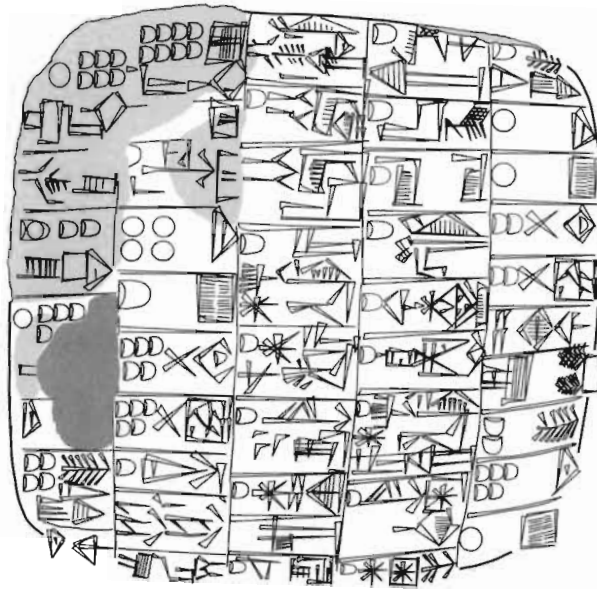
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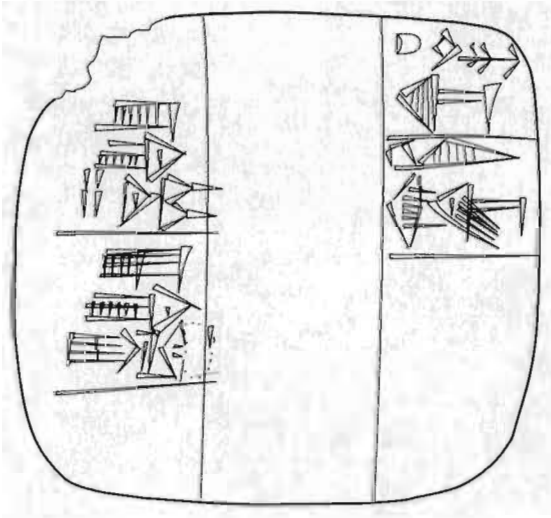
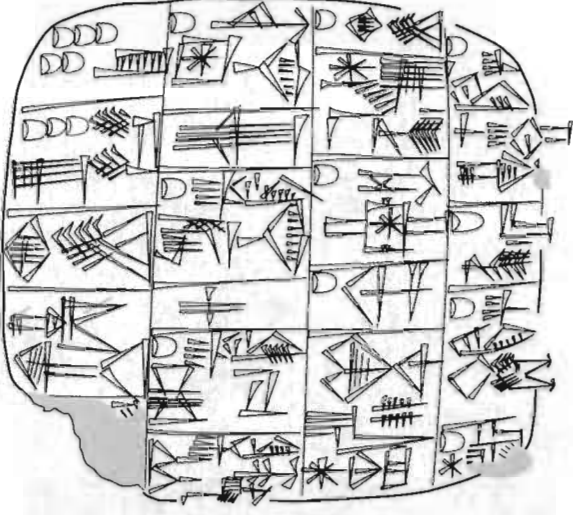
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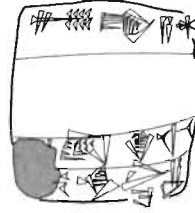
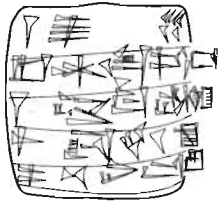
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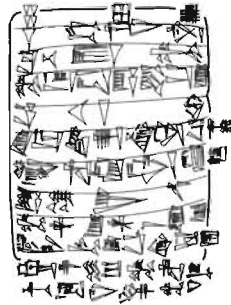
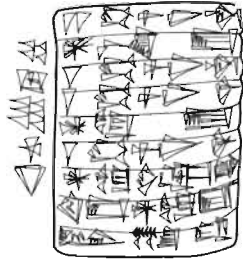
No. 1



No. 2



No. 3



No. 4



No. 1



No. 2



No. 3



No. 4