

Archival Interrelationships During Ur III

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Although the documentation for the Ur III period is abundant, the sheer numbers of these formulaic economic texts as well as their cryptic administrative language makes any serious attempt at archival reconstruction seem at times to be almost impossible. In dealing with these documents scholars have, on the one hand, studied the texts as "building blocks in establishing the structure or function of an office based upon archival context,"¹ or, on the other, they have examined a single interesting document, "which has immediate significance outside of its archival context."² Modern scholars by implication have treated the major extant archives as unrelated socio-economic entities existing somehow in a curious historical void. As a result, much of the work which is undertaken concerning the administrative or social history of the period has an archival orientation.

The archival approach of course has proven itself to be most successful on many occasions.³ Three of these studies we will examine below.⁴ However, the general

1 Robert Whiting, "Tiš-Atal of Nineveh and Ba-ba-ti, Uncle of Šu-Sin," *JCS* 38 (1976), 173.

2 *Ibid.* The case of Ba-ba-ti discussed by Whiting is, in itself, illustrative of the points being made in this paper. The exact same sealing of Ba-ba-ti is found at both Drehem (*BRM* 3, 37 and 38) and at Tell-Asmar. Earlier, similar sealings of Ba-ba-ti can be found at Drehem in both Amar-Sin 5 (Istanbul 386) and Amar-Sin 6 (Istanbul 398). Also, this same sealing found at Drehem in Amar-Sin 5 and 6 is found again at Umma in Amar-Sin 9 (*YOS* 4, 101). Evidence for Ba-ba-ti's inter-archival orientation can also be found at Nippur in Ibbi-Sin 2 (*NRVN*, 177b) where we find the sealing which reads La-te-ni-iš, dumu La-gi-bu-um ir Ba-ba-ti. The sealing of ^dSakan-ni-i-ša₆ Ba-ba-ti's son and therefore Šu-Sin's first cousin is found on a text dated Ibbi-Sin 1 (*AOS* 23, P4).

3 The reader is referred to the extensive bibliography found in the Catalogue of the *Cuneiform Tablets in the Wilberforce Eames Collection in the New York Public Library* by A. Leo Oppenheim = *AOS* 32 (1948). This bibliography was supplemented by Jones and Snyder in their *Sumerian Economic Texts* (University of Minnesota, 1961) [= *SET*]. This bibliography was expanded by A. Goetze in his review of *SET* (*JCS* 17 [1963], 33-37). To this can be added the bibliography in my unpublished Ph.D. thesis, "On the Hereditary Nature of the Ensiship at Umma" University of Minnesota, 1976. For an analysis of Ur III cylindrical sealings cf. P. Steinkeller, *Seals and Sealing* (Udenna, 1976).

4 Jones-Snyder, "An Early Drehem (?) Series" *SET*, 203-8; idem, "The Basic Organization at Drehem," *SET*, 212-41; and D. McGuinness, "On the Hereditary Nature of the Ensiship at Umma," 46-71.

absence of inter-archival investigation seems largely to stem from the circumstances surrounding both the discovery and disbursement of the documents themselves as well as the linguistic concerns of Sumerologists in the field.⁵ Further, even though some historians have argued convincingly in favor of the significance of these texts for socio-economic history, connecting the bureaucrats within the economic system to the ruling establishment controlling it has been seldom attempted and indeed seemed impossible. An example of this attitude would be as one historian said, "To the humble Na-ša₆, Ab-ba-ša₆-ga and In-ta-è-a of the twenty-first century B.C., the equally humble scholar of the twentieth century A.D. is duly grateful."⁶ A recent study has shown that two "humble" bureaucrats appearing at Umma and performing what might be considered mundane bureaucratic duties ultimately became the ensis, or governors, of that city.⁷ It is possible therefore to suggest that we might now wish to move away from that attitude which supposed little connection between the economic system and the people who controlled it. Nor is it necessary to totally agree with the statement made by the same historian who said, "We possess, for example, bodies of documents from Ur, Lagash, Umma, Drehem and Nippur, but the texts from these five towns are not homogeneous: each group differs from the other, and none can be called representative of Ur Three."⁸

Certainly, the documents of the Ur III period do not seem to be homogeneous. However, this lack of homogeneity may prove to be more an accident of survival rather than of an uncoordinated Neo-Sumerian economic system. We will show below that the archives are indeed fragmentary. However, even within this framework it is possible to show that the administrative archives are physically linked by the same or similar cylinder seal impressions. Further, realizing that these fragmentary documents are also formulaic in nature will help in demonstrating that inter-archival investigation might prove successful.

The fragmentary nature of the textual evidence can be shown by contrasting the extant cylinder seal impressions of four individuals, who were contemporaries during the third regnal year of Šu-Sin. The first of these, ^dEn-lil-lá, was a scribe and the son of Ī-kal-la the "overseer of the barley fed oxen" (sipa gu₄-niga_x). He is known from four seal impressions,⁹ the earliest of which is found on a text dated to Šulgi 46 while the latest is found fourteen years later in Šu-Sin 3. It is certainly possible to assume that this individual used this seal more than four times in fourteen years. We can say this

5 An excellent survey of the discovery of the economic documents as well as the attitude of modern scholars can be found in Tom B. Jones, "Sumerian Administrative Documents: An Essay," *AS 20*, 41-61.

6 Tom B. Jones, *Paths to the Ancient Past*, 146-7.

7 D. McGuiness, "On the Hereditary Nature of the Ensiship at Umma," 46-71.

8 Jones-Snyder, *SET*, ix. To this can be added the statements of W. W. Hallo and J. B. Curtis (*HUCA* 30 [1959], 104) and I. J. Gelb (*JAOS* 87 [1967], 3).

9 For the evidence of the cylindrical seal impressions the reader is referred to Vol. II of my unpublished Ph.D. thesis, see note 3 *supra*.

since we can contrast the extant sealing of ^dEn-líl-lá with those of Lú-kal-la the son of Ur-e₁₁-e. Texts with Lú-kal-la's sealing are found from as early as Amar Sin 2 to as late as Šu-Sin 9. During these seventeen years this sealing is found impressed upon 119 documents. The same contrast can be made by looking at the extant sealings of Ab-ba-gi-na and Ur-Mes. The sealing of Ab-ba-gi-na son of Lugal-ma-gur₈-re can be found on seven texts ranging in date from as early as Šulgi 47 to as late as Ibbi-Sin 1. During these twenty-one years this sealing appears but seven times. In contrast we find the sealings of Ur-Mes son of La-na impressed on forty-six documents in the one year of Šu-Sin 2. Certainly Ur-Mes does not significantly differ from Ab-ba-gi-na as to administrative status but the evidence extant for each varies in amount. However, it is possible to suggest that since we know a little about some and a great deal about others we may know a little about many of the bureaucrats, enough perhaps to come to some conclusions as to the nature of Ur III bureaucratic society itself.

Realizing therefore that these texts are fragmentary and realizing that this fragmentation may give the appearance of archival isolation, we might now say that there is more homogeneity here than at first meets the eye.

The archives are abstractly homogeneous on several levels. In the first instance, the texts are chronologically linked. All use the regnal year formula of Ur III kings. Also the documents give the appearance of being culturally linked. They use the same written script which seems to have been the result of some type of standardized system of education. Further they all utilize a rather specialized administrative jargon which is rendered in a very specific stenographic fashion. Thirdly, the texts reflect the socio-economic value of orderliness which seems to have been a Sumerian "national characteristic." On a more practical level though the archives can be shown to be physically linked by sealings. The same or similar sealings of an individual can be found impressed on documents found in different archives. This is of course of greater significance than the myriad single personal names which are found in common in all of the archives, since the seal represents a unique combination of two names: a father and his son.

There are numerous examples of the same or similar seal impressions found in more than one archive. The majority of these inter-relationships are found between Drehem (Puzuriš-Dagan) and Umma (Giš-u_h^{ki}). For example, the sealing of Ur-^dŠul-pa-è the scribe and son of Lugal-kù-ga-ni is found on twenty documents between the years Šulgi 44 and Šu-Sin 5. The majority of these sealings are found in an Umma context, for example Or. Sp. 47/49, 344 with the month ^dDumu-zi (AS 4). The exact same sealing is found impressed on a text from Drehem with the month Me-ki-gál (BIN 3, 530). Additionally, one finds the sealing of Da-a-ga the son of Ur-giš-ša-ga on an Umma document dated Amar-Sin 8 (YOS 4, 153) with the months RI and šu-numun. The exact same sealing can be found on a Drehem text also dated to Amar-Sin 8 (BIN 3, 406) month šu-eš₅-ša.

Other exact Umma/Drehem seal correspondence can be found in the sealings of Lú-dingir-ra, ^dŠara-kam and En-kaš₄. The sealings of Lú-dingir-ra son of Ur-nigin-gar can be found in a Drehem setting in Šu-Sin 2 (PDT 692) and in an Umma context in Šu-Sin 7 (YOS 4, 196). Also the exact same sealing of ^dŠara-kam son of Lugal-giš-kiri₁₁ can be found at both Drehem in Amar-Sin 9 (BIN 3, 548) and Umma in Šu-Sin 4 (Lutz, UCP 9/II, 107). The sealing of En-kaš₄ son of Ur-^dIštaran is found from as early

as Šulgi 44 (*YOS* 4, 66) to as late as Šu-Sin 1 (*BIN* 5, 278). Most of the textual evidence concerning this individual comes from the Umma archive. However, an undated text with this sealing (*BIN* 3, 319) bears the Drehem month *mašda-kù*.

Inter-archival relationships can also be found in the sealings of Ur-^dNin-tu son of Du₁₁-ga. Ur-^dNin-tu's early sealing is of a dedicatory type to the king Amar-Sin. This type of sealing is found at Drehem in Amar-Sin 8 (*PDT* 324). A similar sealing found at Umma (*AnOr* 1, 157) describes the same relationship; however this sealing bears no dedication.

The cities of Umma and Drehem therefore are clearly linked by these common sealings. However Umma is linked to the city of Lagash as well. An early seal of Lugal-ezen the scribe and son of Da-da is dedicated to Ur-^dLisi city-governor of Umma. In Šulgi 42 we find this sealing impressed on a document from Umma (*YOS* 4, 167). The *kišib*, or signature, written on the document itself is not that of Lugal-ezen, whose seal it was but rather A-gu-gu. Whether A-gu-gu was acting as Lugal-ezen's agent we can not now know. However a similar but undedicated sealing describing the same father to son relationship of Da-da and Lugal-ezen can be located in the Lagash archive (Amherst 35). On this text the signature reads Lugal-ezen and the document is also dated to Šulgi's forty-second year. Another Lagash-Umma connection is found among the sealings of Šeš-kal-la son of Da-da. The exact same impression is found at Lagash in Šulgi 47 (Neis, *UDT* 26) that is found at Umma in Amar-Sin 5 (*AOS* 32, Noor 1). The city of Umma and the archive of Nippur also can be linked by common sealings. The sealing of Ur-^dSin son of Šeš-kal-la appears on an Umma text in Šulgi 34 (Fish, *CST* 657). Twenty-seven years later at Nippur (*NRVN* 232) we find a similar sealing describing the same relationship.

In addition to its Umma linkage the Nippur archive can also be shown to have Lagash connections. The sealing of Ur-^dNina son of Lú-du₁₀-ga the "overseer of the granary" (*ka-gur₇-ka*) is found at Lagash in Šulgi 46 (Amherst 48) while the exact same sealing appears on an undated Nippur text (*NRVN* 25).

The city of Lagash, in addition to its Umma and Nippur ties, can also be linked with the capital city of Ur. One example of this would be the sealing which reads Ur-^dIg-alim *dub-sar dumu* Ur-giš-gigir u-DU-lu. By comparison a sealing from Ur reads, Ur-^dIg-alim *dumu* Ur-giš-gigir gu-la (*UET* 3, 715). Clearly the same father to son relationship is maintained. What is different here is that the title *dub-sar*, scribe, is applied to Ur-^dIg-alim in the Lagash text but not on the Ur sealing and the title of Ur-^dIg-alim had changed from u-DU-lu on the Lagash sealing to gu-la on the sealing from Ur. Another Lagash-Ur connection exists in the similar sealings of Ur-^dLamma son of Lú-gu-la. On a text with the Lagash month *še-il-la* we find the cylinder sealing which reads Ur-^dLamma *dumu* Lú-gu-la *dumu* Sa-ba-na-ku (Sauren, *MAH* 44). This text which is dated to Šu-Sin 4, bears the *kišib* which reads Ur-^dLamma *dumu* Lú gu-la. By contrast a similar sealing from Ur (*UET* 3, 370) reads simply Ur-^dLamma *dumu* Lú-gu-la. This Ur text, which is dated to Ibbi-Sin 2, maintains that same father to son relationship which is described on the sealing from Lagash, however the Lagash sealing was of a three generational type and gives us the name of Lú-gu-la's father. In the Ur sealing this third generational information has been omitted. Most of the documents whose sealings link them with other archives have their origin at Umma. In all probability this has more to do with the extant evidence than any conscious difference in sealing documents.

In any case, the archival inter-relationships as they now exist in the cylinder seal evidence can be graphically expressed in the following way:

	Drehem	Umma	Nippur	Lagash	Ur
Drehem	X	X			
Umma	X	X	X	X	
Nippur		X	X	X	
Lagash		X	X	X	X
Ur				X	X

In this diagram we can see that the Drehem archive presently is linked only to Umma by common sealings. This is interesting since the Drehem archive is our best source for the so-called *bala* or regular turn of office required by several citizens throughout the empire.¹⁰ Although most of the individuals from Umma sealing documents at Drehem can be shown to be associated with the *bala* activity we know that many other citizens from many other towns must also have participated.

Umma sealings are shared with all of the major extant archives save for the capital city itself. Nippur sealings are found at Umma and Lagash but not at Ur nor, interestingly, at Drehem. Lagash connections can be seen with Nippur, Ur and Umma but also not with Drehem. The capital city of Ur shares common archival connections at present only with Lagash. Certainly this fragmentary pattern of inter-relationships is directly related to the fragmentary nature of the surviving documents themselves.

Clearly as this evidence suggests individuals travelled from place to place and conducted their business away from their homes. And even though we know that a fragmentary network of texts exists it has been possible to demonstrate that the economic activity of individuals can be absolutely detected in more than one archive.

However in addition to their cultural, chronological and physical integration, the archives have other common characteristics which will help us better understand them. In the first place, the system as it existed during the twenty-first century B.C. possessed an order. The current misunderstanding of the system is the direct result of time's distortions and modern man's inability to reconstruct the milieu of these archives. Even within the fragmentary textual material it is possible to detect the orderly nature of Sumerian society, an orderliness which is betrayed in the very formulaic character of the texts themselves. It is an ironic business to make order out of the disorder of an orderly society's dissolution.

The Drehem archive, for example, contains hundreds of texts which seem to say the same thing. The same formulaic textual evidence can also be found at Umma, Lagash, Ur and Nippur. However the evidence from these towns is much more fragmented and diffuse than the Drehem material. But by analyzing the formulaic documents which are known and building upon the realization that the archives are physically integrated, we can begin to illustrate something about the archival system as a whole.

10 W. W. Hallo, "A Sumerian Amphictyony," *JCS* 14 (1960), 88-114.

There have been three specific studies of formulaic texts published to date (see note 4 *supra*). The first of these dealt with the Drehem establishment while the second covered the administrative activity of "Sul-gi-si-im-ti the wife of Šulgi, and the third concentrated on the post of dead animal and silver receiver at Umma. By scrutinizing the receipts and expenditures recorded in these texts we can begin to say even more about the Ur III bureaucracy, especially as it is reflected by one named Ur-^dIštaran. We will now illustrate how Ur-^dIštaran's activities can be traced in Lagash, Umma and Drehem and how we can know that he possessed not only the title but also the responsibility of "overseer of the barley fed sheep" as well as the prestigious title of "king's son" (*dumu lugal*).

The first study of the formulaic texts we shall take up concerns the "position" of dead animal receiver at Umma. It is known that this office also had as part of its function the receipt of silver. While it is difficult to determine absolutely what the collection activity might have represented, the fact that two of the individuals who held the post later became city governors of Umma suggests strongly that the deliveries may have been a taxing function. In any case, from as early as Šulgi 35 to as late as Ibbi Sin 2 this office was held in turn by four individuals. The first of these was A-kal-la son of Ur-nigin-gar between Šulgi 35 and Šulgi 38. The second, Da-da-ga, also son of Ur-nigin-gar, took up the receipt where A-kal-la left off and continued it to Amar Sin 1. The third individual to hold this office was Lú-kal-la, son of Ur-e_u-e, whose association with the office began as early as Amar Sin 2 and continued until Šu-Sin 6. The last of the officials was Gu-du-du, the son of Da-da-ga, the ensi of Umma. Gu-du-du held this post between Šu-Sin 6 and Ibbi-Sin 4.

These collectors at Umma received dead animals at various times from numerous individuals during their years of activity. An important example of this would be the delivery made by Ur-^dIštaran, illustrated below in Document A. As recorded on this text Ur-^dIštaran delivered three dead sheep to A-kal-la, the earliest of the receivers on the second month of the thirty-ninth year of the reign of Šulgi (Or. Sp. 47/49, 206).

Document A

3 sila ba-úš
 ki Ur-^dIštaran-ta
 Kišib A-kal-la
 month
 year
 Seal: A-kal-la
 dub-sar
 dumu Ur-nigin-gar kuš,

In this archive Ur-^dIštaran, of course, does not hold greater significance than others. An individual with the name A-lu-lu is better represented textually from the Umma documents than any of the individuals mentioned as delivering dead animals to the dead animal and silver receivers.¹¹

¹¹ Jones-Snyder, *SET*, 244-46.

Another important collection archive is the so-called Early Drehem (?) Series discussed by Jones and Snyder in *SET* (see note 4 *supra*). In this archive, there were five individuals who held the receivership post in succession from as early as Šulgi 34 to as late as Šulgi 48. These men collected animals for the great lukur priestess ^dŠul-gi-si-im-ti. Although the reasons for these deliveries are still imperfectly understood, the gods involved and the destinations of the animals seem highly significant.¹²

The five men who received animals designated mu-DU ^dŠul-gi-si-im-ti were Be-li-Dug from Šulgi 34 to Šulgi 39, A-bi-li-a from Šulgi 39 to Šulgi 43, A-bi-la-tum from Šulgi 43 to Šulgi 47, Ur-lugal-edin-ka during Šulgi 47 and early 48 and Šulgi-i-li during the last months of Šulgi 48.

In Document B below we can see that during the second month of Šulgi 48, Ur-lugal-edin-ka received three barley fed sheep and one lamb from Ur-^dIštaran (Kang, *SACT* 1, 60). This is undoubtedly the same individual who delivered dead ovines nine years earlier to A-kal-la of Umma in Šulgi 39. Again we have no clear explanation for these deliveries but for a second time in a second archive we see ovines brought to a "tax" collecting official by Ur-^dIštaran.

Document B

3 udu-niga_x
 1 sila
 Ur-^dIštaran
 iti-ta u₄ 29 ba-ra-zal
 mu-DU ^dŠul-gi-si-im-ti
 Ur-^dLugal-edin-ka
 month
 year

Drehem, the ancient Puzuriš-Dagan, was organized by Šulgi during his thirty-ninth year. We can know this since the establishment of this administrative center was deemed to be of such significance as to warrant its inclusion as a regnal year formula. According to the records coming from this site there were significant individuals who held the post "Chief Receiving Official." It was the function of this office to receive those items delivered to Drehem as "royal delivery" i.e., mu-DU lugal. The chief receiving officials held their offices in succession throughout the thirty-one years of the extant documentation. The first of these, Na-ša₆, served in this post from at least Šulgi 48 to as late as Amar-Sin 1. The second, Ab-ba-ša₆-ga entered upon his duties in Amar-Sin 1 and continued in this office until Amar-Sin 9. In-ta-è-a, the last of these officials, held this position until the end of the documentary period in Ibbi-Sin 4.

According to the reconstruction of the economic community at Drehem, animals were brought to and expended from this facility when required or needed. Initially the animals were delivered to the chief receiving officials who could expend them (zi-ga or ba-zi) to places where they were otherwise destined to go. If an immediate disbursement

12 N. Schneider, "Das Gotterpaar ^dBe-la-at-mus-nir und ^dBe-la-at-dir-ra-ba-an" *AnOr* 6 (1933), 13-23.

was not called for, the animals would be turned over to sub-receiving officials. These officials in turn could expend these animals as needed or turn them back to the chief receiving official who would expend them.

The documents list literally hundreds of individuals who brought animals to the Drehem establishment. As of yet it is difficult to decipher any distinctive rationale for this delivery. However, it has been suggested that the animals are part of a larger tribute gathering activity that may mirror the tax collecting apparatus of the Ur III kings.

An important example of this type of delivery is Document C (*BIN* 3, 605). This receipt records the delivery of one sheep to Drehem by Ur-^dIštaran (line 3) during the fifth year of the reign of Amar-Sin. The animal was received by Ab-ba-ša₆-ga (line 11) who was the chief receiving official at that time. It is important for our understanding of Ur-^dIštaran's social status to note that he appears along with the city governor of Adab who is involved in the same activity.

Document C

1 síla ensi UD.NUN.KI (Adab)
 1 síla Hu-la-al
 1 síla Ur-^dIštaran
 1 síla Eš₄-dar-il-šu
 1 síla Engar-du₁₀
 1 síla Bur-ma-ma dam-gàr
 1 amar mašda
 Ib-ni-ga-gal
 u₄ 23 kam
 mu DU
 Ab-ba-ša₆-ga i-dib
 month
 year

Also from Drehem comes Document D (*SACT* 1, 153). This text dated Amar-Sin 3 records the expenditure of 340 sheep and 260 kids by In-ta-è-a, who was a sub-receiving official working under Ab-ba-ša₆-ga. The recipient of the ovines was Ur-^dIštaran. If-mu is designated as "maškim" (requisitioner)¹³ and the title applied to Ur-^dIštaran is "dumu-lugal" (Prince).

¹³ On the role of the maškim at Drehem cf. Kang, *SACT* 1, 248-56.

Document D

340 udu
 260 máš
 Ur-^dIštaran / dumu-lugal
 Ir-mu maškim
 5) ki In-ta-è-a /-ta ba-zi
 month
 year

Little is known about the archival or administrative organization of Lagash. However it is known that certain stock raising activities did take place on the various large fields surrounding the city. The most notable field, the great Na-kab-tum, covered much of the area between the cities of Umma and Lagash. It is not insignificant then that in the Lagash archive one finds Document E dated to the 36th year of Šulgi (*ITT* 4, 7173). This text records the receipt of fodder (sa-du₁₁) for the “barley fed sheep” (udu-niga_x).¹⁴ The recipient is Lú-kal-la and the significance of this text lies in the seal impression found on the document. This sealing reads, Lú-kal-la dumu Ur-^dIštaran sipa-udu-niga_x (overseer of the barley fed sheep) and is illustrated below.

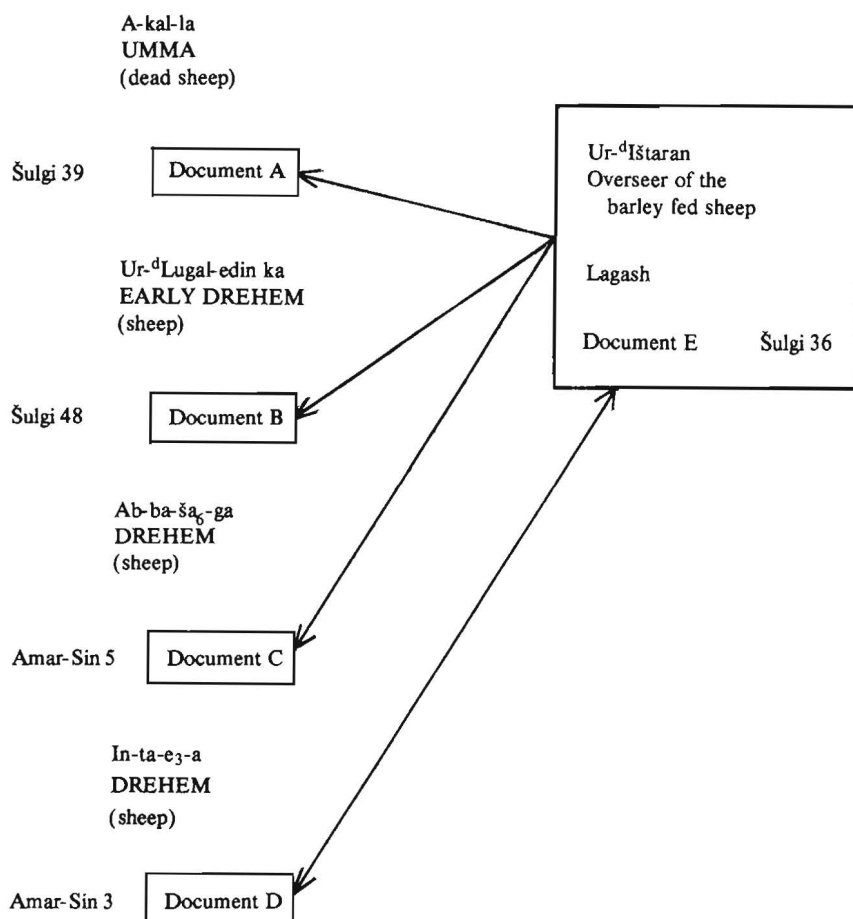
Document E

10 niga_x kur lugal
 sa-du₁₁ udu-niga_x
 Kišib Lú-kal-la
 dumu Ur-^dIštaran kurušda
 gir Ka-gi-ul
 u Ur ^dUtu
 ma Lu ^dNin-subur
 month
 year
 Seal: Lú-kal-la
 dumu Ur-^dIštaran
 sipa udu niga_x

In recapitulating the documentation discussed above we can abstract the following information: On a text dated to Šulgi 36 (Document E) Ur-^dIštaran's son is receiving barley for sheep at Lagash. The sealing on this text tells us that Ur-^dIštaran is entitled “overseer of the barley fed sheep.” On a document dated three years later in Šulgi 39 (Document A), Ur-^dIštaran sends dead sheep to A-kal-la, the dead animal receiver at Umma. Nine years later (S48) on a third document (Document B) we find Ur-^dIštaran sending ovines to Ur-lugal-edin-ka as mu-DU ^dŠulgi-si-im-ti. And on a fourth text five years later (Document C) Ur-^dIštaran sends one lamb to Ab-ba-ša₆-ga the chief receiving official at Drehem.

¹⁴ For a similar occurrence of this cf. the formulaic receipt text dated Šulgi 36 (Eames Collection, 55) where Ur-nigin-gar receives fodder for the barley fed sheep.

Meanwhile on Document D we see that Ur-^dIštaran had already received 600 sheep and kids two years earlier (*AS* 3) from In-ta-è-a who was a sub-receiving official at Drehem at that time. These transactions are graphically illustrated below:



In the activities of one man and his son we can see how part of the economic machinery of the Ur III empire may have worked. We can assume a probable correlation between the name Ur-^dIštaran and his title, overseer of barley fed sheep. Ur-^dIštaran therefore was responsible for the raising and caring for large herds of sheep at Lagash. Certainly he was not the only official in the Ur III period involved in this activity. In any case, he received his ovines from Drehem and expended them to various locations as needed or as required. Even though we do not possess his cylinder sealing in any other archive, we can assume that a physical connection and economic association must have existed between Ur-^dIštaran and the administrative functionaries at Umma, Lagash and Drehem. If he personally did not attend to this labor certainly his agents did.

Materials and men moved back and forth from city to city and formulaic documents reflecting this travel must have been made. The canals and barges were used in transport. Hence the barley received by Lú-kal-la for his father's sheep (Document E) is designated as coming via the gir¹⁵ officials Ka-gi-ul and Ur-^dUtu on the Ship (ma) of Lu-^dNin-Subur. We can assume that the sheep expended by In-ta-è-a in Document D were taken via some type of water transport with a gir official assigned for that transport and a maškim to requisition the animals.

Two texts (Documents F and G) from the Lagash archive dated to Amar-Sin 1 (Pinches, *Berens Coll.* 29) and Šulgi 48 (*ITT* 4, 7171) illustrate in a concrete way the type of movement between Drehem and Lagash.

Document F

2 udu
 zi-ga Zabbar-dib
 e-udu e-gal-ta
 kišib ensi
 gir Ur-^dBa-ba₆
 month
 Amar-Sin 1
 Seal: ^dŠul-gi lugal an-ub/-
 nita-kal-ga da limmu-ba
 lugal Urim/^{ki} ma Ur-^dBa-ba₆
 di-kud
 ir-zu

Document F records the delivery of 2 (120) sheep to the city governor of Lagash. The gir official is Ur-^dBa-ba₆ the judge (di-kud).¹⁶ The sheep are said to be expended by Zabbar-dib. Kang has shown that Zabbar-dib was an important maškim at Drehem (see note 13 *supra*). So in this text we see the Lagash reflection of the economic activity which had been undertaken by Ir-mu in Document D.

Document G

Case: 60 sila-du ₈	Tablet: 60 sila-du ₈
ki Na-ša ₆ -ta	ki Na-sa ₆ -ta
ma u ₄ -ni-la	é-gal-la ba tur
é-gal-la ba tur	gir Ur- ^d Ig-alim
5) gir Ur- ^d Ig-alim	month
month	year
year	

¹⁵ On the role of the gir at Drehem cf. Kang, *SACT* 1, 257-60.

¹⁶ This sealing also appears on a Lagash text dated nineteen years earlier in Šulgi 30 (Amherst 22). Further Ur-^dIštaran the sipa-udu-niga_x was also entitled maš-šu-gid-gid and was also the son of Lugal-ušum-gal who also held the same post. As such Ur-^dIštaran was also a judge and appears on numerous di-til-la at Lagash. In all probability he was the brother of this Ur-^dBa-ba₆. Cf. note 17.

Seal: ^d Šul-gi	Lú-[]
nita-kal-gal	sal-[dub-ba]
Lubal-Urim/ ^{ki} ma	dumu[]
	ír-zu

Document G on the other hand records the delivery of 60 sheep via Ur-^dIg-alim on the ship called Unila, during the sixth Lagash month of Šulgi 48 (ezen Ba-ba₆). The sheep are designated as being "brought into the palace." Significantly, the sheep are shown as coming from Na-ša₆. Now as we have already noted the chief receiving official at Drehem in Šulgi 48 was Na-ša₆. This text also records the actual occurrence of an activity which is only implied in the texts of Ur-^dIšaran.

There are several inferences which can be drawn from the extant documentation of Ur-^dIšaran. The documents which do exist reflect other formulaic records which must have been made. To begin with, our first text is a receipt document which belongs to a larger grouping of texts at Umma. According to Jones-Snyder's research into A-lu-lu's activities this payment of dead animals was but part of larger activities associated with his position as kurušda ^dŠarā.

In any case, the animals would have been expended by Ur-^dIšaran at Lagash and we can assume that documentation of this fact must have existed in that place. Further a "traveling" case tablet would have been made and a "gir," or traveling official, assigned for the transport. This text would undoubtedly provide us with information concerning the mode of transport from Lagash to Umma. It is conceivable that a receipt document of the dead animal receiver (like Document A) would have been made at the time of delivery; however, in light of what we will say below concerning the Lagash archive there probably would have been an intermediary step made in the documentation when the dead animals arrived at Umma. That is, an intermediary would receive the animals at Umma and route them to the appointed destination in that city. These hypothetical steps are listed in the illustration below:

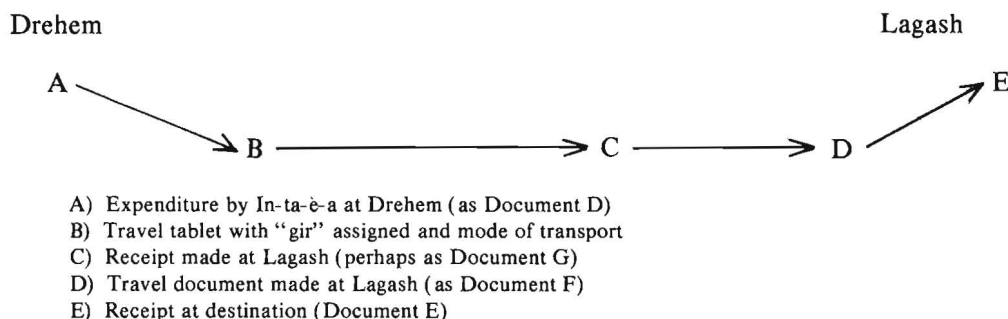


- Document A) Expenditure noted in Ur-^dIšaran's file
- Document B) Case tablet designating "gir" and mode of transport
- Document C) Receipt made at Umma
- Document D) New internal case tablet made at Umma
- Document E) Receipt by dead animal receiver (as Document A above)

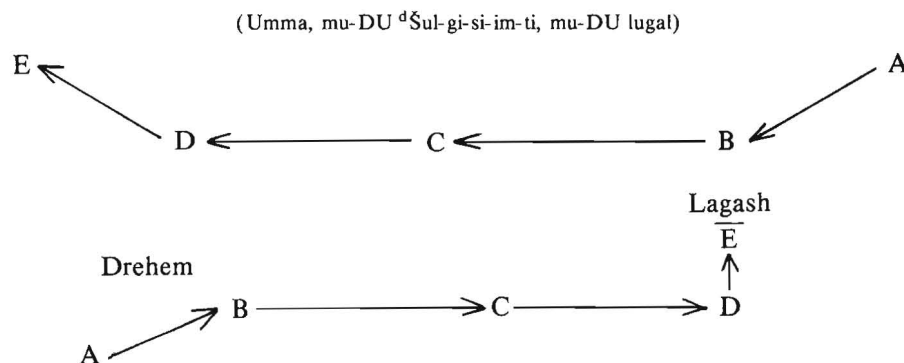
The second document recording deliveries mu-DU Šul-gi-si-im-ti, certainly implies that same type of documentation recording the actual movement of animals from point A to point E. Here also there probably was an intermediate step between the expenditure at Lagash and the actual receipt by the officials of ^dŠul-gi-si-im-ti.

Fortunately we have an extremely clear picture of the external delivery of animals to Drehem. Here, too, we can see how internal transfer of animals takes place. Hence the

expenditure from In-ta-è-a to Ur-^dIštaran (Document D) also implies certain documentation. First of all these animals had already been delivered to the chief receiving official who in Amar-Sin 3 was of course Ab-ba-ša₆-ga. Ab-ba-ša₆-ga, then, would turn these animals over over to the sub-receiving official In-ta-è-a. As we indicated earlier the sub-receiving officials could either expend these animals themselves or turn them back to the chief receiving official to be expended. In the case of Ur-^dIštaran, In-ta-è-a is expending the animals himself. There are further implications; we must assume that a traveling tablet would have been made, a "gir" assigned and transport arranged so that the 600 animals could be moved from Drehem to Lagash. This is the clear implication of Documents F and G which of course are travel tablets recording expenditures of animals from Drehem officials (Na-ša₆ and Zabar-dib) destined for Lagash. This hypothesis is illustrated below:



Document F also gives us our best indication of that intermediary office between the Drehem expenditure and ultimate receipt by Ur-^dIštaran. This text, of course, bears a Lagash month ezen Ba-ba₆. This along with the circumstance of its discovery implies that the travel tablet was made not at Drehem but at Lagash. Hence we can assume that an original travel tablet was made at Drehem and then carried by a "gir" to Lagash. At Lagash someone opened the text (possibly Ur-^dBa-ba₆) and, surely, counted the animals and finally rerouted them to their appointed destination. Document E clearly shows the type of formulaic text which was made at the point of final delivery and disbursement. Even though this text is a receipt for fodder rather than ovines we find evidence of receipt as well as designation of "gir" and mode of transport. The entire process is illustrated below:



The connection of the archives in this manner is significant for our understanding not only of the economic life of the Empire but also for our understanding of the entire structure of Neo-Sumerian society itself. In a schematic way we have delineated the career of Ur-^dIštaran from as early as Šulgi 36 to as late as Amar-Sin 5. We will examine his career more completely elsewhere.¹⁷ What we have attempted to do here is to note the activities of this man in three of the major extant archives. Ur-^dIštaran's economic activity may well be representative of many individuals of the period. His social status and economic position may mirror the system as it existed and as it was exercised during the Ur III period. As we have shown, Ur-^dIštaran produces his own capital (i.e. ovines), pays it as "tax" and has it replenished by that same collection agency into which he pays his "tax." Hence we see an individual who seems to have responsibility for, but not the power over his capital product. Therefore his participation in the economic activity at Drehem, Umma and Lagash seems rather to be the expression of his administrative function than any indication of private initiative. However, his claim to this administrative status may well be the direct result of his societal position.

While such economic interrelationships are not yet understood, the use of the extant archives to interpret one another must be pursued. Even though the texts are fragmentary and not homogeneous they have much to reveal when looked at as a whole. There are implications in this study which are both economic and social in nature. I think that this circular and orderly economic system reflects a closed social system, a system in which the control of the administration, the economy and the government is in the hands of one clearly defined socio-economic class. A class which, as Diakonoff points out, was reflected in a "despotic bureaucratic machinery"¹⁸ under which "no producers for the market outside of the state could exist"¹⁹ and where all economic life was "the monopoly of the despotic state."²⁰

The Ur III rulers were usurpers; in some way they had to both legitimize and secure their rule. Somehow they had to retain the loyalty of those groups who had helped them to power while at the same time securing the loyalty of veterans of the *ancien regime*. To do this, it now appears, the kings created a "new bureaucratic nobility"²¹ which was integrated with the older existing social system. As a result fewer and fewer individuals came into power during the period and a great part of the wealth became concentrated in a remarkably few hands.

17 Cf. my forthcoming article entitled "From lugal to lu-bappir: On the Self Perpetuation of the Classes During the Third Dynasty of Ur."

18 I. M. Diakonoff, "On the Structure of Old Babylonian Society," in Horst Klengel ed., *Beiträge zur sozialen Struktur des alten Vorderasien* (Berlin, 1971), 20.

19 *Ibid.*

20 *Ibid.*

21 I. M. Diakonoff, *Structure of Society and State in Early Dynastic Sumer* (Udenna, 1974), 9.