

No ‘garda of the fourth year’ in PBS 2/1 91 — PBS 2/1 91 (= CBS 12988), from the Murašû archive, is a receipt for field rent paid in barley. The payer is Rimut-Ninurta, of the Murašû family. The recipients are named Tattannu, son of Nergal-eṭir, and Šalam(mu)manu (wr. ^mŠá-lam-mu-ma-nu, lines 7 and 9, ^mŠá-lam-ma-nu, upper edge), son of Ḫašdaja. The recipients act on the instructions (*našpartu*, line 6) of Padan-Esi³, entitled ‘chief of *gardu*-personnel’ (LÚ *gardupata*, line 4). The text is dated 27/IX/4 Darius II = 25 December 420 B.C. The tablet bears seal impressions with captions: one on the reverse from the seal of the first named witness, and one each from the seals of the recipients, Tattannu₄ on the left edge, and Šalam(mu)manu’s on the upper edge.

Clay’s copies in PBS 2/1 are laid out with the captions that accompany the seal impressions placed one above the other alongside the main body of the text. In the copy of PBS 2/1 91 on pl. 47, the caption on the reverse is uppermost, followed by the caption on the left edge, then by the caption on the upper edge. The caption on the upper edge therefore does not appear in the copy above the first line of the obverse, as it would appear to someone holding the tablet to read it.

As presented in the copy, the text on the upper edge appears to be a single caption:

un-qu ^mŠá-lam-ma-nu

šá LÚ *ga-ar-du*

šá MU.4.KÁM(!) ^mDa-ri-²-muš

LUGAL

CAD G 50 s.v. *gardu* s. usage b translates « (impression of) the ring of PN from the g.-people of the fourth year of King Darius, » understanding LÚ *gardu* as plural, and assigning the two uses of *ša* different meanings, the first of them a prepositional or partitive sense that would be extraordinary in such a context. Dandamayev (Dandamayev and V. I. Lukonin, *The Culture and Social*

Institutions of Ancient Iran [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989], 173) understood LÚ *gardu* as singular and took this passage to mean that Šalammanu «was named as ‘*garda* of the fourth year of Darius’,» a description that refers to an apparent «annual obligation which was performed by the *garda* in a certain location,» and invites comparison with earlier Elamite texts from the Persepolis Fortification archive in which workers called *kurtasš* (the Elamite reflex of Old Iranian **grda-*, which also underlies Akkadian *gardu*- and Aramaic *grd’-*) are qualified as *rabbap*, perhaps ‘conscripted’ (Hallock, *Persepolis Fortification Tablets* [OIP 92], p. 34).

Bregstein («Seal Use in Fifth Century B. C. Nippur, Iraq,» Ph.D.Dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1993, p. 705 No. 304) took the caption to refer to an «office,» but queried the reading and left the interpretation open.

Briant (*Histoire de l’Empire Perse de Cyrus à Alexandre* [Paris: Fayard, 1995], 473) called attention to Dandamayev’s treatment of this «expression assez mystérieuse» in the light of Elamite *kurtasš rabbap*, but hesitated over a comparison between unclear terms. His reservations are appropriate.

If the passage represents a title, it must be emended to conform to Dandamayev’s translation («šá» LÚ *ga-ar-du*, etc.) or else translated in a way that indicates odd syntax, as the CAD’s translation does. But neither translation is plausible. It is not likely that a caption meant to identify the seal impression at some indefinite later date would specify the seal-owner’s temporary status in the year in which the text was written — more precisely, the owner’s discharge in that year of an obligation that was implicit (it is surmised) in his status as *gardu*.

Rather, the text on the upper edge is not a single caption including a unique title, but two different phrases, combined by the editor in a way that was not intended by the scribe. The uppermost line is the caption identifying the seal impression of Šalam(mu)manu. The remainder is an addendum to the first line of the text, identifying the rented property and the year for which the rent was paid (that is, the current year).

Clay’s copy displaced the addendum along with the caption. It also omitted a

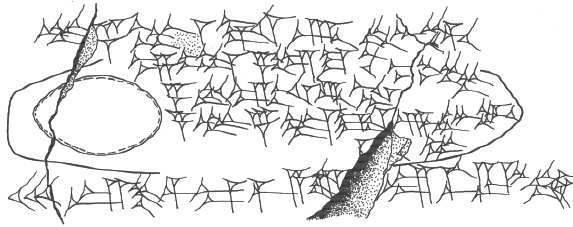
fragmentary sign from the addendum and slightly misrepresented the king's title at the end of the date formula. Here is how the text and seal impression appear on the upper edge in relationship to the first line of the obverse and the last lines of the reverse :

CBS 12988 = PBS 2/1 91

Rev. 21

Up. Ed.

Obv. 1



Addenda of this kind are frequent in Murašû texts. Most were recognized by Clay and represented in his copies (e.g., PBS 2/1 32, 63, 74, 88, 133, 196, 212, 215). In this case, the scribe first added MEŠ to mark the fields as plural, and later – after the seals were impressed but before the captions were written – added the remaining description of the fields and the rent. He left little space for the seal caption proper, so he had to line up the caption with the royal title at the end of the date formula and had to omit Šalam(mu)manu's patronym. The seal caption simply says «Ring of Šalammanu.» The beginning of PBS 2/1 91 is to be understood in this way :

(1) 30 GUR ŠE.BAR GIŠ.BAR A.ŠĀ^(Up. Edge d)M[E]Š^(b) šá LÚ *ga-ar-du* ^(c)
 šá MU 4 KÁM ^m*Da-ri-²-muš* ^(d) LUGAL (1) [šá ina] URU.DÛ.UR.MAḤ
⁽²⁻⁵⁾ ša ina muḥḥi Nār S[ippa]r-Nippur u Nār Enlil ša [Pad]an-Esi² gar-
 dupata ša ina pan Rimūt-Ninurta

« 30 gur of barley as rent on fields of *gardu*-workers, (rent due) for year 4 of King Darius, (fields) [that are in] the town Bannēšu, that are on the Sippar-Nippur Canal and the Enlil Canal, that are of (i.e., under the control of) Padan-Esi², the chief of *gardu*-workers, that are in the possession of Rimut-Ninurta ... »

Rented fields of *gardu*-workers in the town of Bannēšu are also mentioned in PBS 2/1 204: 7f., written a few months after PBS 2/1 91.

This is not the scribe's only lapse in laying out the receipt. He wrote the long lines 7 and 9 across the right edge and about halfway across the reverse, so he had to make space for the first witness's seal impression and caption on the reverse in the middle of the list of witnesses, not, as is usual, between the list of witnesses and the scribe-place-and-date formula.

Matthew W. Stolper (07-10-98)