

6 Prebends

More than half the documents in the BM collection (68 tablets) deal with prebends.¹ The earliest dated contract (**No. 2-P**) goes back to SE 12, the latest (**No. 110-P**) is written in SE 162.²

Among them, the largest part are sales (62 contracts), four are leases, and only one is a quitclaim.³

As is well known, the tasks covered by the prebendary system are reflected in the prebend's name, that may consist of the abstract noun for the profession or craft, the list of goods (usually food) associated with it, and a particular cultic location where and/or the name of the deity to whom the service is offered.⁴

The collection conforms in general to the corpus from Hellenistic Uruk as regards the types of prebends it includes, with the exception of its evidence for the existence in the Seleucid period of the previously unattested title of the 'arranger of the sacrificial table' (*mubannû*, **Nos. 87-P//88-P**)⁵ and that connected to the *malîtu*-offerings (**No. 34-P**; see Table 26).

Comparing the collection's make-up with that of the corpus,⁶ it comes as no surprise that the best documented prebend is that of the temple-enterer (13 contracts), followed by the butcher's (*ṭābihu*; 8 contracts); conversely, underrepresented here is the brewer's prebend (*sirāšu*; 5 contracts) that plays an important role in the rest of the corpus.⁷ Worth mentioning are seven tablets concerning the service of the temple attendant (*gerseqqûtu*) and eight concerning that of the exorcist (*āšipûtu*): both groups significantly increase the number of available documents concerning these two tasks.⁸ Absent from the collection is evidence concerning the prebendary duties of the builder (*itinnu*), the doorkeeper (*atû*; *sukkal atû*), the oil-presser (*šāhîtu*) and the cultic singer (*kalû*), while the single example in the collection of the combined titles of cook and miller (*nuhatimmu* and *ararru*) increase to two the number of tablets that have this title as the object.⁹

When moving to prebends described by means of the cultic location to which they are attached, or the goods to which they give right, we find an example of 'food prebend' consisting of cuts of meat and five prebends in the *hallatu*-orchard (which, as we have argued before, might be connected to the office of the prebendary gardeners).

1 Out of the total, thirty-eight of the prebend contracts in the BM collection are included and transliterated in our study of the prebend system of Uruk (Corò 2005a). For a summary of the definitions of prebend in the studies see esp. Corò 2005a, chap. 1, to which Waerzeggers 2010, esp. pp. 34-38 can now be added.

2 The earliest dated contract in the collection is **No. 1-S**, a business document dating to SE 11; the latest dated (**No. 112-P**; SE 162/163) is a quitclaim involving a prebend among other items.

3 It must be noted that the prebend is only one of the many different items that are the object of the contract.

4 Corò 2005a, esp. pp. 26-32.

5 Corò 2005a, pp. 110-111 and pp. 219-223. On the *mubannû* in the Neo-Babylonian period see Van Driel 2002, pp. 118-119 (with related bibliography), Linssen 2004, pp. 142-143, and more recently Waerzeggers 2010, p. 39 and fn. 206.

6 Corò 2005a, part II.

7 For the documents concerning these prebends in Seleucid Uruk see Corò 2005a, pp. 153-190 (temple-enterer); pp. 243-280 (brewer) and pp. 297-330 (butcher), with bibliography. The relevant contracts published in Doty 2012 must be added. Bakers, brewers and butchers (in addition to oxherds, not attested in Uruk as prebendary professions) are the only four represented prebendary professions in Sippar: Waerzeggers 2010, p. 38. The picture is different in Uruk, where these are the best represented professions characterising the prebendary system of the city, but a bunch of other titles are attested alongside them.

8 On the prebend of the temple attendant see Corò 2005a, pp. 225-237; for the exorcist see Corò 2005a, Corò 2009 and Robson 2007. YOS 20 84 (exorcist) and YOS 20 51 and 55 must be added.

9 The only other example known so far is in fact OECT 9 62: see Corò 2005a, pp. 367-369, with bibliography; recently on this tablet, Monerie 2018, chap. 8.

Also well represented are contracts that have a portfolio of prebends as their object (i.e. more than one prebend is sold or leased out in the same contract: 10 documents in total): as we shall see below, noteworthy among them are those involving women as buyers.

Table 26. Types of prebends: comparison between the corpus from Uruk and the BM collection

	Corpus from Hellenistic Uruk	BM collection	Total
Professions			
<i>āšipūtu</i>	2	8	10
<i>ērib bītūtu</i>	19	13	32
<i>gerseqqūtu</i>	8	6	14
<i>mubannūtu</i>	—	2	2
<i>nuhatimmūtu</i>	7	2	9
<i>sirašūtu</i>	21	5	26
<i>ṭābihūtu</i>	20	9	29
<i>itinnūtu</i>	6	—	6
<i>kalūtu</i>	1	—	1
<i>rab banūtu</i>	1	—	1
<i>(sukkal) atūtu</i>	2	—	2
<i>šāhitūtu</i>	4	—	4
Combined professions			
<i>ērib bīt pirištūtu u kutimmūtu</i>	14	—	14
<i>sirašūtu, ṭābihūtu, nuhatimmūtu</i>	1	—	1
<i>nuhatimmūtu u ararrūtu</i>	1	1	2
<i>ērib bītūtu, gerseqqūtu</i>	—	1	1
<i>ērib bītūtu u ṭābihūtu</i>	2	—	2
<i>ērib bītūtu u ṭābihūtu</i> in the <i>hallatu</i> -orchard of the temple of Bēlet-šēri	1	—	1
Food and cultic locations			
<i>malītu</i>	—	1	1
Food offerings	12	1	13
Food offerings in the Ešgal, Rēš and <i>akītu</i>	1	—	
In the <i>hallatu</i> -orchard	6	5	11
In the cultic pedestal of Anu, of the Ešgal and Rēš	1	—	
Other			
Portfolios	6	10	16

6.1 Prebends of the Ritualists

It is generally assumed that rank amongst priests depended upon their proximity to the statues of the gods: those who were allowed to access the restricted areas of the temple in order to perform their cultic activities were thus ranked higher.¹⁰

Among the high-ranking specialisations covered by the prebendary system only those of the temple-enterer and the exorcist are represented in our collection.

6.1.1 The Temple-enterers

As we have observed before, the temple-enterer's prebend is the best documented, totalling thirteen contracts.¹¹

¹⁰ On ranks and hierarchy see the synthesis by Waerzeggers 2010, pp. 42-51 and Van Driel 2002, pp. 34-45 and pp. 112-127.

¹¹ On this prebend see McEwan 1981, pp. 75-81 and Funck 1984.

The largest number of examples involve the service of the temple-enterers of Enlil; a smaller group is that of the temple-enterers of Anu.

Temple-enterers of Enlil

As is clear from Table 27, the gods for whose meals the temple-enterers of Enlil were responsible included, in addition to Enlil, Ea, Sin, Šamaš, Adad, Marduk, Nanāya, Bēlet-ša-Rēš and all the gods of their temple.

Table 27. Prebends of the temple-enterers of Enlil

Deities	Text	Buyer
Enlil, Ea, Sin, Šamaš, Adad, Marduk, Nanāya, Bēlet-ša-Rēš and all the gods of their temple	BM collection	
	24-P	L/AZI//EZ
	26-P	AZI/AMI//EZ (L's cousin?)
	28-P	L/AZI//EZ
	35-P (=Oppert 1)	Šamaš-iddin/Nidinti-Anu//H
	54-P//55-P(=Oppert 3)	L/AZI//EZ
	49-P	L/AZI//EZ
	Hellenistic Uruk	
	BRM 2 19	L/AZI//EZ
	RIAA ² 294	‘Bēlessunu
	TCL 13 243	Anu-ahhē-iddin/Anu-abu-ušur/Anu-ušallim//GA
	VS 15 26	Anu-šumu-lišir/Rabi-Anu/Dumqi-Anu//H
	YOS 20 33	L/AZI//EZ
	YOS 20 37	L/AZI//EZ
YOS 20 59	Anu-abu-ušur/Nidinti-Anu/ Anu-abu-ušur//H	
Enlil (...) and all the gods of their temple	76-P	NA and AU/AZI/L//EZ
Enlil, Papsukkal, Nanāya and Bēlet-ša-Rēš and all the gods of their temple	106-P (=Oppert 5)	AZI/AU/AZI//EZ
Enlil, Ea, Sin, Šamaš, Adad, Marduk, Papsukkal, Ištar, Bēlet-šēri, Nanāya, Bēlet-ša-Rēš and Šarrahītu	BRM 2 55	Dipatas/Kephalon=Anu-uballit/Anu-balāssu-iqbi//Ah

The extant examples of this title in the corpus refer to exactly the same group of deities, except in the case of one of the shares that make up the prebends' portfolio of Oppert 5 (= **No. 106-P**), where the reference is to the temple-enterer of Enlil, Papsukkal, Nanāya and Bēlet-ša-Rēš, and one of the shares sold in BRM 2 55, also a portfolio, where the gods mentioned in connection with the service of 'temple-enterer of the gods of the temple' are detailed as Enlil, Ea, Sin, Šamaš, Adad, Marduk, Papsukkal, Ištar, Bēlet-šēri, Nanāya, Bēlet-ša-Rēš and Šarrahītu.¹²

Temple-enterers of Anu

As for the contracts concerning the prebend of the temple-enterers of Anu, the documents in the collection offer evidence for the service performed for Anu, Antu, Ištar, Bēlet-šēri and the gods of their temples (**Nos. 09-P//YOS 20 17; 77-P; 78-P; 82-P**): the same set of deities, as shown in Table 28, is attested by three documents in the corpus (one of which is the duplicate of **No. 9-P**).¹³

¹² See Corò 2005a, pp. 154-190, to which YOS 20 33, 20 37 and 20 59 may now be added. Note that the reading du.gur of BRM 2 19 obv. 4 in Corò 2005a, p. 158 must be corrected into ^aiškur, as is clear from the copy.

¹³ The full set of deities opening with the names of Anu and Antu in YOS 20 10 is not preserved; the names of the gods are not preserved in VS 15 11, VS 15 7, BiMes 24 6, thus they are not included in the table. Note that the buyer is the wife of the seller's son in VS 15 11.

Table 28. Prebends of the temple-enterers of Anu

Deities	Text	Buyer
Anu, Antu, Ištar, Bēlet-šēri and all the gods of their temple	BM collection	
	9-P//YOS 20 17	L's father
	77-P	Bēl.
	78-P	Bēl.
	82-P	Bēl.
	Hellenistic Uruk	
	YOS 20 17//No. 09-P	L's father
	OECT 9 25	Kidin-Anu/Anu-ahhē-iddin/Nanāya-iddin//H NB: seller is Bēl.'s cousin
	YOS 20 54	'Antiochis W AU=Kephalon NB: seller is Bēl.'s cousin 'Ana-rabutišu/Šamaš-iddin/Nidinti-Anu//H
Anu, Antu, Papsukkal, Ištar, Bēlet-šēri and all the gods of their temple	Oppert 5=106-P	AZI/AU/AZI//EZ
Anu, Antu (...)	YOS 20 10 ¹	Zēriya/Anu-ušallim? ² (Gimil-Anu?)
Anu, Antu, Enlil, Ea, Šamaš, Adad, Papsukkal, Ištar, Bēlet-šēri, Nanāya, Bēlet-ša-Rēš, Šarrahītu	BRM 2 46//NCTU 2+YOS 20 75	Anu-māru-ittannu/Kidin-Anu/Tanitti-Anu//H
<p>1 YOS 20 69, also having an <i>ērib bitūtu</i> prebend as its object, is not taken into consideration here due to the poor state of preservation of the tablet, which does not allow for the reconstruction of the sequence of gods to which the service is associated. It is interesting to note that this is the only example of the lease of an <i>ērib bitūtu</i> prebend that has come down to us.</p> <p>2 If the individual mentioned here is the buyer and his full name is Zēriya/Anu-ušallim we might connect YOS 20 10 to YOS 20 17 and No. 5-P (sale of <i>ašipūtu</i> prebend: see commentary to the text, for details).</p>		

Conversely, absent from the BM collection is any evidence for the combined service of temple-enterers of Anu and Enlil (i.e. Anu, Antu, Enlil, Ea, Šamaš, Adad, Papsukkal, Ištar, Bēlet-šēri, Nanāya, Bēlet-ša-Rēš, Šarrahītu), which occurs once in the corpus (BRM 2 46//NCTU 22+YOS 20 75).

The uniqueness of this document, both in terms of its unusual formulation and price, has already been underlined:¹⁴ although the nature of the office attached to this title and the fact that the type of arrangement the contracts might have referred to is still unclear, it is worth stressing that no prebend other than this appears to have been performed in front of the same group of deities in Hellenistic Uruk; the late date of the document may account for the unusual sequence of gods,¹⁵ that results from the combination of the deities mentioned in the standard Anu formula for the temple-enterer's prebend and those occurring in BRM 2 55 (discussed above).

Overall in the corpus, no prebend other than the temple-enterer's was connected to the cult of groups of gods headed by Enlil.

Buyers

With the exception of **No. 35-P** all the documents referring to the temple-enterers of Enlil in the BM collection have a member of Lâbâši's family as buyer (see Table 27); Lâbâši himself, who is particularly active in the context of prebend acquisitions,¹⁶ purchases only prebends involving the service of Enlil, like his cousin Anu-zēru-iddin (**No. 26-P**).

The Ekur-zākirs' interest in the service of temple-enterer of Anu is, on the contrary, confined to one transaction only, ascribed to Lâbâši's father (**No. 9-P**//YOS 20 17).

It is at the time of the marriage alliance between the Ekur-zākirs and the Hunzûs, when Lâbâši's nephew, Anu-uballit, got married to 'Bēlēssunu (the daughter of Anu-abu-ušur/Nidinti-Anu//H), that

14 See Corò 2005a, pp. 56-57; Waerzeggers, Pirngruber 2011, p. 117 on the basis of the unusual formulation and the low price of the prebend suggest the possibility that the contract indicates a form of permanent rent instead of a normal sale. Recently on the prices of the temple-enterer's prebends: Monerie 2018, p. 370, Fig. 57.

15 The document is dated in the reign of Demetrius, in SE 155.

16 See Corò 2005b.

we find again the name of a member of the Ekur-zākir family in documents concerning the service for Anu: †Bēlēssunu buys, in fact, a number of shares of the prebend of temple-enterer of Anu in documents where she is identified as ‘the wife of Anu-uballit/AZI/EZ’. Her uncle Šamaš-iddin, and her father, are both known to have owned shares in prebends of temple-enterer of Enlil (as shown by **No. 35-P**=Oppert 1 and YOS 20 59); conversely she mainly purchases prebends connected to the service of Anu,¹⁷ while her two cousins †Ana-rabūtišu/Šamaš-iddin/Nidinti-Anu//H and Kidin-Anu/Anu-ahhē-iddin/Nidinti-Anu//H, who owned shares in this prebend too, sold them, as recorded in YOS 20 54 and OECT 9 25.

Whether the marriage alliance between the two clans hid an intention on the part of the Ekur-zākir to exercise a monopoly over the service of temple-enterer as a whole and, in that case, to what extent they succeeded in their goal, remains subject to debate: in fact, the information on the temple-enterers of both Anu and Enlil after †Bēlēssunu and Anu-uballit’s generation comes to a halt and the next document on the title (BRM 2 46//NCTU 22+YOS 20 75, mentioned above), dated some 40 years later, already features a completely new (and unique) scenario, both with respect to the group of gods to which the service is offered, the families holding the title and the characteristics of its organisation.

To conclude, it is worth noting that women have a significant part as principals in contracts involving the *ērib bītūtu* prebend, especially that of Anu: one wonders if this is simply due to the fact that this is the best represented type of prebend in the corpus, or it is a clue to some change in the organisation of the service (or in the way the prebend was transmitted through the generations).

6.1.2 The Exorcist’s Prebend

The collection provides substantial evidence on the prebend of the exorcist. As is well known, this is the only professional title in Uruk that is described in fractions of one-seventh shares, probably in connection with the number of exorcists acting in the temple and/or the cuts of meat associated with it as income, instead of referring to the days of service.

All the contracts that have come down to us show that this title was bought and sold exclusively between members of either the Gimil-Anu or the Ekur-zākir clan.¹⁸ Brothers and/or co-owners are always mentioned in the contracts and the ownership history of the title is mentioned in few cases (**No. 5-P** and BRM 2 16).

The documents are unevenly distributed in time, with large undocumented gaps between the extant sources. The first two date to SE 22 and SE 32 respectively; **No. 5-P** involve members of the GA family only; we have to wait a century (**No. 90-P**) before encountering another individual belonging to the Gimil-Anu, buying a share in the exorcist’s prebend.

The second, **No. 7-P**, is a very fragmentary tablet, whose reverse and edges only are preserved. What remains of the transaction informs us that “this exorcist prebend, the entire share of Anu-balāssu-iqbi/Tattannu/Mukīn-apli belongs forever to Anu-bēlšunu/Anu-ahhē-iddin//EZ”. The mother of Anu-balāssu-iqbi and his older brother Mušallim-Anu, acts in the document for them, as is clear from the *ina ašābi* formula that is recorded on the upper edge of the tablet.

Anu-bēlšunu/Anu-ahhē-iddin//EZ sells a share of the exorcist’s prebend to Lābāši fifteen years later (**No. 20-P**): it is tempting to see in **No. 07-P** the document entitling Anu-bēlšunu to the ownership of the share that he later sold to Lābāši. Anu-bēlšunu would have bought it from the heirs of Mukīn-apli, probably in the context of their settling the rights of inheritance upon the death of Mukīn-apli; at that time, the two brothers were not yet of age, as is clear from the fact that their mother acts in the document, but her husband’s name is not recorded.

Lābāši buys another share of the exorcist’s prebend from Anu-bēlšunu at a certain point during his career (as attested by **No. 40-P**, date lost) and two more shares from two brothers, Anu-ahu-ittannu and Anu-uballit/Nidinti-Anu/(Kidin-Anu)//EZ, in SE 57: it is interesting to note that the service is performed in front of different groups of deities in these documents.

¹⁷ She also buys a share of temple-enterer of Enlil in RIAA² 294.

¹⁸ McEwan 1981, pp. 71-73; Corò 2005a, pp. 81-84; Corò 2009.

In general in fact the exorcist's task is performed in the service of a fixed groups of deities including Anu, Antu, Ištar, Nanāya, Bēlet-ša-Rēš; Bēlet-šēri joins the main group in **No. 31-P** and **No. 66-P** (after Ištar) and Papsukkal further pops up in three cases (occupying the third position after Anu and Antu and before Ištar, Bēlet-šēri, Nanāya, Bēlet-ša-Rēš, in YOS 20 84, **No. 90-P** and **No. 91-P**).

A somewhat new scenario is offered by the next two documents in time, i.e. **No. 66-P** and YOS 20 84: the first records the purchase by two individuals of a very tiny share of the exorcist's prebend (but still divided into sevenths), from an individual who does not claim descent from the traditional families of Uruk; the other records the purchase of an exorcist's prebend by a woman (not surprisingly, Lâbâši's wife!). This is also the first document where Papsukkal appears besides Antu, Ištar, Nanāya, Bēlet-ša-Rēš, and Bēlet-šēri. **Nos. 90-P** and **91-P**, the next in time and last two contracts regarding the *âšipûtu* prebend, in fact, both mention this same larger group of deities.

The two contracts have some interesting points of contact: while the buyers are different (one is a Gimil-Anu again, the other is also a member of the Lâbâši family), the seller is the same, and they both include an interesting description of the prebend as "the seventh share of the estate of Šamaš-ētir/Anu-uballiṭ", pointing in the direction of a more explicit form of family/household-related monopoly over the title in the latest phases of its attestation.

Fragmentation is another characteristic of these late contracts, with shares as small as 1/18 of 1/7 or 1/30 of 1/7, an unprecedented situation for this title.

Table 29. The exorcist's prebend

Text No.	Date SE	Type	Buyer	Seller	Notes
5-P	22	sale with ownership history	prev. B: Anu-abu-ušur/Anu-ahhē-iddin//GA B1: Zēriya/Anu-ušallim//GA B2: Anu-ahhē-iddin/Nidinti-Anu//GA	prev. S: Anu-bēlšunu/[...]/Ina-qibīt-Anu//GA S: Anu-abu-ušur/Anu-ahhē-iddin//GA co-owner: Zēriya/Anu-mukīn-apli//GA.	Receipt style, ownership history no shares; and no gods
7-P	32	inheritance/quitclaim?	R: Anu-bēlšunu/Anu-ahhē-iddin//EZ	prev. O?: Anu-balāssu-iqbi/Tattannu/Mukīn-apli The document was written in the presence of 'Ramat-Ištar/Anu-ahu-iddin, M of Mušallim-Anu and Anu-balāssu-iqbi/Mukīn-apli. Ri.e.: [Anu-bēlšunu] Anu-balāssu-iqbi 'Ramat-Ištar	obverse lost
20-P	47	sale standard	B: L/AZI//EZ	S: Anu-bēlšunu/Anu-ahhē-iddin//EZ Co-owners generic	1/4 in 1/7 no gods mentioned
BRM 2 16	57	sale? Ownership history	B: L/AZI//EZ prev. B: Nidinti-Anu/Kidin-Anu//EZ	S1: Anu-ahu-ittannu/Nidinti-Anu/(Kidin-Anu)//EZ S2: Anu-uballiṭ/Nidinti-Anu/(Kidin-Anu)//EZ prev. S1: Anu-balāssu-iqbi/Anu-uballiṭ prev. S2: 'Ana-rabutišū/Anu-abu-uṭer/Anu-zēru-lišir	Prebend is plural 1/8 in 1/7 Gods: Anu/Antu/Ištar/ Nanāya/BšaRēš
31-P	57	sale	B: L/AZI//EZ	S1: Anu-ahu-ittannu/Nidinti-Anu/Kidin-Anu//EZ S2: Anu-uballiṭ/Nidinti-Anu/Kidin-Anu//EZ Co-owner: B+co-owners	1/8 in 1/7 Gods: Anu/Antu/Ištar/B-šēri/ Nanāya/BšaRēš

Text No.	Date SE	Type	Buyer	Seller	Notes
40-P	38-66	sale	B: L/AZI//EZ	S: Anu-bēlšunu/Anu-ahhē-iddin//EZ co-owner: Anu-iksur/Nanāya-iddin co-owners: Nidinti-Anu/Mannu-iqabbu+bros+ 1 co-owner of all of his share	1/4 in 1/7 Anu/Antu/Ištar/Nanāya/BšaRēš
66-P	90	Sale LOG	B1: Anu-abu-ušur/Anu-ušallim B2: Lâbâši/...// x-Anu(?)	S: Šamaš-ētir/Anu-balāssu-iqbi/Anu-mukīn-apli/Rabûti-Anu co-owner: 1 co-owner + brothers clearer: Anu-ittannu/Dumqi-Anu	1/12 and 1/4 di 1/60 in 1/7 Anu/Antu/Ištar/ B-šēri/ Nanāya/BšaRēš
YOS 20 84	96? Ant III	sale SYLL/LOG	B: 'Dannatu or Eribtu or Etirtu? (KAL-tu4)/Anu-abu-ušur//H W of L/AZI//EZ (when does L get married?)	S: Ina-qibīt-Anu/Anu-uballit/ Ina-qibīt-Anu//EZ brothers and all his co-owners	1/18 in 1/7 Anu/Antu/Papsukkal/Ištar/ B-šēri/Nanāya/BšaRēš/ Šarrahītu
90-P	125- 137	sale SYLL	B: Lâbâši/Šamaš-ittannu/Anu-ittannu//GA	S: Anu-uballissu /...(-iddin)/ Rabûti-Anu//EZ brothers and all his co-owners clearer: Illût-Anu/Nidinti-Anu/ llût-Anu//K	1/30 and one half ... in one seventh of the house of Šamaš-ētir/Anu-uballit Anu/Antu/Papsukkal/Ištar/ B-šēri/Nanāya/BšaRēš/ Šarrahītu
91-P	lost	sale SYLL	B: AZI/AU/AZI//EZ	S: Anu-uballissu /...(-iddin)/ Rabûti-Anu//EZ brothers and all his co-owners clearer: Nanāya-iddin/Anu-uballissu (son of S)	... in one seventh of the house of Šamaš-ētir/Anu-uballit Anu/Antu/Papsukkal/Ištar/ B-šēri/Nanāya/BšaRēš/ Šarrahītu

6.2 Food Preparers and Cult Attendants

Fifteen documents in the collection have prebends related to the activities of brewers, bakers and butchers as the object.

Table 30. The food preparers' prebend in the BM

Prebend	Text No.
<i>ṭābihūtu</i>	30-P//31-P; 61-P//62-P; 72-P//73-P; 83-P; 84-P
<i>sirašūtu</i>	38-P; 39-P; 51-P; 56-P; 64-P
<i>nuhatimmūtu</i>	41-P; 68-P

6.2.1 The Butchers

The butcher's prebend is referred to in eight contracts: interestingly, six of them are pairs of duplicates (**Nos. 30-P//31-P; 61-P//62-P; 72-P//73-P**); of the pairs, consistently one of the tablets belong to the 1913-4-16 collection, the other to the 1914-4-4 collection. Three more pairs of duplicates are known for this title in the corpus (BRM 2 40//NCTU 9; NCTU 2+//NCTU 16 and YOS 20 23//YOS 20 24. Since the existence of a duplicate copy of the contract recording the sale of a butcher's prebend is explicitly referred to in VDI 1955/4 6,¹⁹ one wonders if any specific regulation presided over

¹⁹ VDI 1955/4 6, 1-4 (on Ulul, day 2, year 12, Seleucus the king; Anu-balāssu-iqbi/Nidinti-Anu/Anu-balāssu-iqbi//EZ in a contract and its copy has sold ...).

its transfer that might explain the large number of duplicates involving this kind of title that have come down to us.

Table 31. Gods served by the prebendary butchers (BM only)

Prebend	Text No.	Deities
<i>tābihūtu</i>	30-P//31-P; 61-P//62-P	Anu, Antu, Ištar, B-šēri, Nanāya, BšaRēš, Šarrahītu
	72-P/73-P	Anu, Antu, Enlil, Ea, Papsukkal, Ištar, B-šēri, Nanāya, BšaRēš
	83-P	[Anu, Antu], Enlil, Ea, Sin, Šamaš, [Adad, Marduk, Papsukkal, Ištar, Nanāya, B-šēri], BšaRēš, Šarrahītu
	84-P	Anu, Antu, Enlil, Ea, Sin, Šamaš, Adad, Marduk, Papsukkal, Ištar, Nanāya, B-šēri, BšaR, Šarrahītu

According to the contracts in the BM collection, the prebendary butchers provided for the meals of different sets of gods, as shown in Table 31.

The tables of Anu, Antu, Ištar, Nanāya and Bēlet-ša-Rēš (and the gods of their temples) were the responsibility of the prebendary butchers from the beginning of the Seleucid period until the reign of Antiochus III: only a few documents from this same period include also Bēlet-šēri and Šarrahītu.²⁰

Nos. 83-P and **84-P** (with YOS 20 49), provide the first examples of the addition of Enlil and Ea, and occasionally also Sin, Šamaš, Adad, Marduk, to the group; Bēlet-šēri is already a fixed member of the sequence. We have no evidence of the characteristics of the prebendary service of the butchers in the period between these three documents and the reign of Demetrius, since no contract is preserved. When information on the prebend is again available, the contracts show that the task is still performed in the service of the same large group of gods including Enlil and Ea but sometimes also Sin, Šamaš, Adad and Marduk.²¹

Until SE 66, members of the Ekur-zākir family appear almost exclusively as buyers of shares of the butcher's prebend; Anu-zēru-iddin, i.e. Lâbâši's father, acts as buyer in the first document in the series (VDI 1955/4 6); Lâbâši is the principal in five transactions and their duplicates (YOS 20 22; YOS 20 23//YOS 20 24; YOS 20 25; **Nos. 30-P//31-P**; YOS 20 29); Lâbâši's cousin (if our addition to the family tree is correct), i.e. Anu-zēru-iddin/Anu-māru-ittannu, is the protagonist of three contracts (TCL 13 236, TCL 13 237 and TCL 13 238). All except **Nos. 30-P//31-P** involve the butchering of the sacrificial meals offered to Anu, Antu, Ištar, Nanāya and Bēlet-ša-Rēš.

Contracts dated to SE 95-97, all feature as protagonist Kidin-Anu/Anu-ahhē-iddin/Nanāya-iddin//H, the well known member of the Hunzû family (in particular, the branch of the Hunzûs allied to the Luštammar-Adad; he was married to his cousin ^fEtirtu/Anu-uballit); that he actually served as butcher in the temple seems to be confirmed by the fact that he takes over the task as lessee. In both the lease contracts where he is recorded, the service is offered to the tables of the main gods (Anu, Antu, Ištar, Nanāya and Bēlet-ša-Rēš), while the share he buys refers to those of Papsukkal and Šarrahītu, as well.²²

The Ekur-zākirs are again attested in the generation after Lâbâši: shares of the butcher's prebend are bought by Lâbâši's son Anu-zēru-iddin (**Nos. 61-P//62-P**) and his grandson Nanāya-iddin (to the same generation belongs also YOS 20 49, where acting as principal is ^fBēlessunu the wife of his most active grandson. It is not unlikely that ^fBēlessunu's involvement in this area of specialisation is more a matter of the Hunzûs involvement in the butcher's service than of her in-laws).

When information on the title is again available, in the reign of Demetrius, we find a family of doorkeepers, members of the *kiništu* of the temple, not belonging to the traditional families of the city, who act in the contracts, buying and leasing out shares of the butcher's prebend from the hands of individuals stemming from the traditional clans of the city, including the Kurîs and the Kidin-Marduks (BRM 2 40//NCTU 09 and NCTU 02). The title is now attached to the service

20 Note however TCL 13 238 where Bēlet-šēri replaces Ištar and Šarrahītu is not mentioned and OECT 9 32 where Papsukkal is recorded instead of Bēlet-šēri.

21 Only one document, BRM 2 47, is an exception, referring to the butcher's service for Anu, Antu and Enlil only.

22 On Kidin-Anu see Doty 1977, pp. 240-242 and Corò 2005a, pp. 95-97, with bibliography.

of Anu, Antu and Enlil (only) in one (exceptional) case, i.e. BRM 2 47, while the longer sequences of gods (also the one including Sin, Šamaš, Adad and Marduk) occur in the others.²³

6.2.2 The Brewers

Only five contracts concerning the brewers's prebend are part of the BM collection. They add substantial information on the activity of the prebendary brewers of Uruk between the first century of the Seleucid Era and the beginning of the second.

In particular, since all of them involve either Lâbâši/AZI//EZ or his son Anu-zêru-iddin, they indicate that this branch of the Ekur-zâkirs also had a stake in this area of specialisation, contrary to what we previously knew from the other documents in the Hellenistic corpus.

Members of this family were, in fact, underrepresented there, and acted as protagonists only in a very limited number of cases.²⁴

Table 32. The brewer's prebend in the BM collection

Text	Type	date SE	Buyer/Lessee
38-P	sale	38-66	L/AZI//EZ
39-P	sale	38-66	L/AZI//EZ
51-P	lease	77	L/AZI//EZ (lessee)
56-P	sale	78	L/AZI//EZ
64-P	sale	66-89	AZI/L//EZ

Especially important among the BM tablets involving the brewer's prebend, as we have shown elsewhere,²⁵ is **No. 51-P**, a lease contract recording Lâbâši as lessee that demonstrates that he himself served at least as brewer in the temple.

We have no evidence of the earlier generations of the Lâbâši's family as prebendary brewers; at the present state of our knowledge they seem to have entered the brewers's business only with his best-known representative.

Earlier documents, dating to the coregency of Antiochus I and Seleucus, show that at the beginning of the Seleucid period, a certain Ubar/Anu-ahhê-iddin, an individual claiming descent from the Šumâtis, had a marked interest in the brewer's prebend; he bought a couple of shares from the Hunzûs²⁶ but apparently did not perform the service himself, as a lease contract where he features as the lessor shows.²⁷

The share that Ubar leases out is owned jointly with a certain Nanâya-iddin/Anu-uballiṭ; if he were the same Nanâya-iddin/Anu-uballiṭ mentioned in BRM 2 8 among the co-owners of the brewer's prebend sold in that contract, Nanâya-iddin would be the brother of the seller of that prebend (namely, Anu-ahhê-iddin/Anu-uballiṭ//SLU), that is to say a member of the Sîn-lêqe-unnînî clan. Ubar would thus own his brewer's prebends jointly with individuals claiming descent from the Sîn-lêqe-unnînîs, who, except for these examples, occur as principals in one other contract only (BRM 2 11), where a member of the family sells a share in the brewer's prebend to Lâbâši.

We have no more evidence of Ubar or members of his family other than in the documents discussed

²³ On Idat-Anu and the porters of Uruk see Doty 1977, pp. 271-307; McEwan 1981, pp. 54-55 and Corò 2005a, pp. 98-99. It is maybe worth noting that the share of butcher's prebend bought by Idat-Anu in SE 155 (NCTU2//NCTU 16), that he himself leased out ten years later (VDI 1955/4, 8), involves the butcher's task for the meals of exactly the same set of gods.

²⁴ Namely, BRM 2 11 and YOS 20 36 (L/AZI//EZ); YOS 20 52 (AU/AZI/L//EZ).

²⁵ Corò 2005a, p. 79 and pp. 89-92.

²⁶ As shown by OECT 9 8 and OECT 9 65. On the date of these two documents, based on the reigning kings, the payment and the identity of the buyer, see Corò 2005a, p. 243, fn. 1.

²⁷ OECT 9 9 where Ubar leases out to Anu-abu-ušur/Anu-zêru-iddin//H the brewer's service for days 1, 2, 3, 4 and 10, for a period of 3 years, in exchange for 'everything appertaining to the brewer's prebend that belongs to the Urukeans'.

above. The next pieces of evidence at our disposal are the contracts involving Lâbâši, his son Anu-zêru-iddin, and his nephew Anu-uballit on the one hand, and five tablets witnessing the activities of Kidin-Anu/Anu-ahhê-iddin/Nanâya-iddin//H, on the other; they seem to be active in this sector from the middle of the first century of the Seleucid Era until approximately the first (or first two) decades of the second. Kidin-Anu accumulated shares in the brewer's prebend but he did not perform the related service since, as we have shown elsewhere, he was a butcher.²⁸

The prebendary brewers of this period served at the altars of Anu, Antu, Ištar, Nanâya and Bêlet-ša-Rêš. The first contract mentioning a different set of deities is the one involving Lâbâši's nephew in SE 108.

Table 33. Deities in brewer's prebends²⁹

Deities	Text No.
Anu, Antu, Ištar, Nanâya, BšaRêš	BRM 2 8; OECT 9 9; OECT 9 19; OECT 9 20; OECT 9 23; OECT 9 30//31; OECT 9 34//35; OECT 9 65; BRM 2 11; 56-P; 39-P;
Anu, Antu, Papsukkal, Ištar, Nanâya, BšaRêš, Šarrahîtu	BiMes 24 12
Anu, Antu, Ištar, Nanâya, BšaRêš, Šarrahîtu	TCL 13 245
Anu, Antu, Enlil, Ea, Sin, Šamaš, Adad, Marduk, Papsukkal, Ištar, B-šêri, Nanâya, BšaRêš, Šarrahîtu	OECT 9 61
Broken sequences	OECT 9 8; YOS 20 36; OECT 9 69; 51-P; 38-P; 64-P; VS 15 10; YOS 20 52

Here again, as in the case of the butcher's prebend, we are confronted with a gap in the documentation, covering the period between the coregency of Antiochus III and his son Antiochus and that of Antiochus IV and his son: when evidence on the brewer's prebend is again available, in 141 SE, the number of deities served by the prebendary brewers may include Papsukkal and/or Šarrahîtu, while they are responsible for a much larger group of deities (including Enlil and Ea but also Sin, Šamaš, Adad and Marduk) in the reign of Demetrius.

The sons and a nephew of Kidin-Anu are still acting in the contracts concerning the title dated to the later period, some selling and others buying shares in the title; all the transactions in which they are involved are carried out between individuals claiming their ancestry from either the Hunzûs or the Ekur-zâkirs: however while on the side of the Hunzûs they are still direct relatives of Kidin-Anu, no traces of the Lâbâši branch of the Ekur-zâkirs may yet be detected.

6.2.3 The Bakers

The evidence on the prebendary bakers within the BM collection is very limited (only two contracts, one of which is the duplicate of VDI 1955/4, 7): this reflects the general make-up of the collection, where also the evidence concerning this title is scanty (seven documents in total).

Table 34. Brewer's prebend in the BM collection

Text	Type	Date SE	Buyer/Lessee
41-P	sale	33-63	L/AZI//EZ
68-P//VDI 1955/4 7	sale	99	NI and AU/AZI/L//EZ

Nos. 41-P and **68-P**//VDI 1955/4 7 both record the purchase of shares in the baker's prebend by members of the Lâbâši family, as detailed in Table 31. Apart from them, only YOS 20 58 involves

²⁸ Corò 2005a, pp. 87-88 and pp. 95-97.

²⁹ It is plausible that all the documents dating earlier than 100 SE where the sequence is not preserved in its entirety (or at all) originally exhibited a short standard sequence including Anu, Antu, Ištar, Nanâya and Bêlet ša Rêš, OECT 9 08; YOS 20 36; OECT 9 69; **Nos. 51-P; 38-P; 64-P.** VS 15 10 and YOS 20 52, dating later, feature a longer one, that according to what remains of them does not correspond to any of the two long ones included in the Table.

a member of the same family, namely ^fBēlessunu, the wife of AU/AZI/L//EZ. Neither earlier, nor later generations of this branch of the Ekur-zākir are known to have operated in this field.

Interestingly, all the extant documents have either Kidin-Anu/AAI/NI//H or a member of his family as buyer: he acts in OECT 9 28 and 64; his wife ^fEṭirtu in OECT 9 15 and his nephew's wife (also named ^fEṭirtu) in RIAA 297. It is not sure if the ^fBēlessunu/Kidin-Anu the wife of Anu-ahu-ittannu/Ša-Anu-iššu/Tanitti-Anu//H who acts in YOS 20 50 is 'our' Kidin-Anu's daughter.

It is worth noting that, despite the small number of documents available for this title, their chronological distribution is in line with what we have already observed for the butcher's and brewer's prebends; there is in fact a gap in the documentation between the first decade of Seleucid domination (the last dated tablet going back to SE 109) and SE 160, in the reign of Demetrius I. Also the gods to whom the service is offered follow the same trend as noticed above.

Moreover, as we have observed for the brewer's prebend, while the Lâbâši branch of the Ekur-zākirs is no longer active in the later contracts, members of the family of Kidin-Anu are still serving as prebendary bakers in the reign of Demetrius. Should we see in this the reflection of some structural change that occurred during the undocumented period?

6.3 Service Personnel

6.3.1 The Temple Attendants

The prebend of the temple attendant (*gerseqqû*) is well represented in the BM collection: the six contracts (and a duplicate) housed in London amount to almost half the documents in the corpus involving this title.³⁰

The dated documents may be divided into two main groups: the first group includes tablets dating from SE 18 to SE 56; the second comprises those ranging in time between SE 108 and 120. No document later than SE 119 bearing on the temple attendants' prebend has come down to us.

Table 35. The temple attendant's prebend in the BM

Text No.	Type	Date SE	Buyer
4-P	sale	18	AZI/NI//EZ
8-P	sale	33	L/AZI//EZ
18-P	sale	44	L/AZI//EZ
22-P	sale	47-49	^f Nuptis and Ana-rabûti-Nanāya/Anu-balāssu-iqbi/Anu-iqīšanni//K
23-P	sale	50	L/AZI//EZ
87-P//88-P	sale	120	Nidinti-Anu/Anu-abu-ušur/Nidinti-Anu//H

Five out of the six tablets in the BM collection belong to the first group: Lâbâši and his father feature as buyers in four of them. **No. 22-P**, while neither featuring Lâbâši nor his father as protagonists, may be connected to the dossier; there is a chance, in fact, that it is the act preceding the transaction carried out in **No. 23-P**. Here, in fact, Lâbâši buys a share for days 9-13 of the *gerseqqûtu* prebend from ^fNuptis and Ana-rabûti-Nanāya/Anu-balāssu-iqbi/Anu-iqīšanni//K: co-guarantor for the purchase is the two women's father. The two women bought almost the same prebend (with the exception of day 13) out of their grandfather Anu-iqīšanni, for exactly the same price, a couple of years earlier, as recorded in **No. 22-P**:

Anu-iqīšanni/Ina-qibīt-Anu//K voluntarily sold to ^fNuptis and ^fAna-rabûti-Nanāya/Anu-balāssu-iqbi, his son, 1/3 of a day, in days 9, 10, 11 and 12, his *gerseqqûtu* prebend before Anu, Antu, Ištar,

³⁰ See Corò 2005a, p. 191, to which YOS 20 51 and YOS 20 55 may now be added. On the *gerseqqûtu* prebend Doty 1977, p. 128; McEwan 1981, pp. 85-87; Pirngruber, Waerzeggers 2011, p. 119.

Nanāya, Bēlet-ša-Rēš and all the gods of their temple, which is monthly throughout the year, the *g.* and *eš.* offerings and whatever appertains to that *gerseqqûtu* prebend, which is with his co-owners, for 10 š of silver, g.q. staters of Antiochus, as the full price. [...] Should a claim arise with regard to that *gerseqqûtu* prebend, Anu-iqīšanni will clear it up to 12-times and will give to ʿNuptis and ʿAna-rabûti-Nanāya/Anu-balāssu-iqbi, his son. 1/3 of a day in days 9, 10, 11 and 12, that *gerseqqûtu* prebend, belongs to ʿNuptis and ʿAna-rabûti-Nanāya/Anu-balāssu-iqbi/Anu-iqīšanni [...].

Lâbâši purchased another share of this prebend, for exactly the same days 9-13, from the hands of another woman, also stemming from the Kurîs, named ʿTaddin-Ištar (**No. 8-P**). She is the daughter of another Lâbâši and, as we know from **Nos. 10-P//11-P** (SE 37) the wife of Anu-bēlšunu/Mukīn-apli//K. At the time the transaction recorded in **No. 8-P** was concluded she was probably not yet married, since her husband is not mentioned in her onomastic chain. Should we see a specific strategy behind Lâbâši's involvement in document having women as sellers? On the present state of our knowledge this question remains unanswered.

No. 23-P is the latest document recording the Ekur-zākirs' participation in contracts concerning the *gerseqqûtu* prebend. On the basis of the available evidence, it seems that his family's interest in this profession did not reach very far beyond, since none of Lâbâši's sons and nephews is involved in the contracts stemming from the second group.

In addition, **Nos. 22-P** and **23-P** are also the only extant examples of the *gerseqqû* service being offered to Anu, Antu, Ištar, Nanāya, Bēlet ša Rēš; all the others, in fact, include also Bēlet-šēri and Šarrahîtu, while those of the second group may even refer to larger groups of deities.

It is worth stressing that Kidin-Anu/Anu-ahhē-iddin, who also appeared prominently in addition to Lâbâši and his family members in the dossiers concerning the prebendary food preparers, is never involved in transactions regarding the temple attendant's service.

The contracts in the second group, all dating between SE 108 and 120, show a somewhat different scenario: a certain Lâbâši/Ina-qibīt-Anu/Ištar-šuma-ēreš//Ahhûtu is the buyer of a share in the *gerseqqûtu* prebend in VS 15 18 and YOS 20 51; Anu-bēlšunu/Nidinti-Anu//SLU³¹ acts in YOS 20 55 and CM 12 06//VS 15 32. **Nos. 87-P//88-P** feature Nidinti-Anu/Anu-abu-ušur/Nidinti-Anu//H.

The days of service to which the title is attached are now completely different, and include day 1, 24 and 30; 2 and 30; day 27, whereas among the gods Papsukkal is now added to Anu, Antu, Ištar, Bēlet-šēri, Nanāya, Bēlet-ša-Rēš, Šarrahîtu and longer sequences, including Enlil, Ea, Sin, Šamaš, Adad, Marduk are recorded.

The information comes to a halt with SE 120, the date of the latest document of the group.

6.3.2 The Arranger of the Sacrificial Table

The only reference in the Hellenistic corpus from Uruk to the prebend of the arranger of the sacrificial table (*mubannû*) is preserved in **No. 10-P** and its duplicate **No. 11-P**, both part of the BM collection.

Table 36. Prebend of the arranger of the sacrificial table

Text	Type	date SE	Buyer
10-P//11-P	sale	37	ʿTaddin-Ištar/Lâbâši/K W of Anu-bēlšunu/Mukīn-apli//K

The name of the prebend, which is consistently spelled syllabically in the two documents, has proven especially important, as we have shown elsewhere, for settling the *vexata quaestio* of the reading of the logogram ŠITIM as *itinnu* in prebend-related texts from Uruk, confirming the existence of two separate prebends for the builder (*itinnu*) and the arranger of the sacrificial table in the corpus.³²

³¹ On this individual and the documents in which he is mentioned, also including canonical tablets, see Wallenfels 1998, pp. 36-37.

³² See Corò 2005a, pp. 110-111, with bibliography; to which add Baker 2005. On the *mubannû* in the cultic texts from Hellenistic Uruk see Linssen 2004, p. 143.

Since **Nos. 10-P//11-P** is the only reference to the *mubannûtu* prebend in the corpus, it is difficult to generalise from it. However, a number of interesting features emerge from a detailed examination of the contract.

First among them is that the buyer is a woman and in particular the same ʿTaddin-Ištar/Lâbâši/K whom we encountered before (**No. 8-P**) selling L/AZI//EZ a share in the *gerseqqûtu* prebend. When **Nos. 10-P//11-P** was drafted, ʿTaddin-Ištar/Lâbâši/K was already married to Anu-bêlšunu/Mukîn-apli//K and the contract sees her buying the prebend from her husband. The prebend is held together with a number of individuals, who are all mentioned by name, as co-owners (as detailed in Table 37).

Table 37. Details of **Nos. 10-P//11-P**

Text	Share	Days	Price	Co-owners
10-P//11-P	1/2 day	9-13	1/3 m	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Nidinti-Anu/Anu-balâssu-iqbi//Ah 2. Kidin-Anu/Anu-abu-ušur 3. Anu-ahhê-iddin/Anu-abu-ušur 4. Anu-zêru-iddin/Anu-balâssu-iqbi 5. Šibqat-Bêl(/Rihat-Bêl?)

Probably three of them occurred together as co-owners of the share in the *gerseqqûtu* prebend that ʿTaddin-Ištar sold to Lâbâši earlier on (**No. 9-P**), as one can see from the following Table:

Table 38. Details of **No. 9-P**

Text	Share	Days	Price	Co-owners
8-P	1/2 day	9-13	1/3 m	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. .../Nidinti-Anu//Ah 2. Kidin-Anu/... 3. Anu-ahhê-iddin/Anu-abu-ušur 4. Anu-zêru-iddin/Anu-balâssu-iqbi

The contract involving ʿTaddin-Ištar is the only piece of evidence for the *gerseqqûtu* prebend that gives the full names of the co-owners, instead of simply mentioning them in passing as ‘all the brothers and co-owners’.

The similarities between the two documents encompass also the days of service, the price and the share sold (as well as some of the witnesses to the transactions): one wonders if we are not dealing with the same title in both cases. But why use two different names? The Babylonian origin of the scribe of **Nos. 10-P//11-P** (suggested by his personal name) might offer an answer to our question. The *mubannûtu* prebend, in fact, is well known in Babylon: it would thus not be unexpected that a Babylonian scribe used a term more familiar to him to describe the office of the arranger of the sacrificial table, instead of the Urukian variant *gerseqqûtu*, that must have sounded odd to his ears. If this were the case, we would also have explained what exactly the role of the *gerseqqû* was in the prebendary system of Uruk.

6.4 Combined Titles: the Baker and Miller’s Prebend

Only one contract (**No. 19-P**) in the BM collection involves a combined title, namely that of baker and miller (*nuhatimmûtu u ararrûtu*), that with OECT 9 62 makes up two known examples of this type of prebend in the corpus. The two contracts date more than one hundred years apart; interestingly, both are leases. The similarities between the two documents, however, stop here, as evidenced in the following Table 39.

Table 39. Comparison between **No. 19-P** and OECT 9 62

	No. 19-P	OECT 9 62
share/day	1/6 in day 5 1/3 in 14	1/3 of day in days 2, 3, 19 (with equivalent in grain)
gods	Anu, Antu, Ištar, Bēlet-šēri, Nanāya, BšRēš	Anu, Antu, Enlil, Ea, and the great gods
duration	5 years	10 years
lessor	L/AZI//EZ	Mušallim-Anu/Anu-abu-ušur//H, <i>treasurer</i> of the temple of Uruk
lessee	Kītu-Anu/Nidinti-Anu/Anu-mukīn-apli//K Anu-ahhē-iddin/Nidinti-Anu/Anu-mukīn-apli//K	Nidinti-Anu/Anu-zēru-iddin/Kidin-Anu//H
counterpart	millers(?) share and <i>riqītu</i>	millers' share and <i>riqītu</i> + grain (for the <i>nuhatimmu</i>)
guarantor	their father	lessee
warranties	performance no interruption	performance no interruption comply with deadlines
restrictions	n/a	Lessor: no power of disposition; no transfer (or invalid)
penalties	n/a	Lessor: 10 š/day in case of transfer w/o contestation Lessee: 10 š/day in case of interruption or not complying with deadlines + penalties established by <i>rab ša rēš āli</i> and <i>puhru</i> of Uruk

In **No. 19-P**, Lâbâši/AZI/EZ leases out the title for days 5 and 14, to two brothers, Kittu-Anu and Anu-ahhē-iddin, from the Kurîs, for a period of five years; the service is performed for the altars of Anu, Antu, Ištar, Bēlet-šēri, Nanāya, Bēlet ša Rēš.³³ The lessees' father guarantees for his sons the performance and uninterrupted service, while they remain responsible for paying to Lâbâši the shares in the meat cuts connected to the title that represent the counterpart for the lease. No restriction nor penalties apply to the contract.

Conversely, the document drafted in the time of Demetrius I (OECT 9 62) includes a detailed description of the restrictions and related penalties applying to both the lessor and the lessee in case they do not comply with the requirements stated in the agreement. These are quantified in money/day and amount to the fixed sum of 10 š per day. The penalties are straightforward and do not require the intervention of any judicial body if the lessor acts against any of the restrictions applying to the agreement; conversely, they amount to the fixed daily sum plus an extra in case the lessee does not comply with his contractual obligations.

The *rab ša rēš āli* and the *puhru* of Uruk are the authorities responsible for quantifying the penalties incumbent on a failing lessee. One should note that the lessor is here a member of the temple board, being qualified as the treasurer of the temple of Uruk and this might be the reason why the pronouncement of the *rab ša rēš āli* and the *puhru* of Uruk was required; a similar case is recorded in BRM 2 47, a lease of a butcher's prebend, where also the two bodies are mentioned and the lessor is a member of the temple board (Dumqi-Anu, "from the *kiništu* of the temple").³⁴

6.5 The Prebends in the 'Palace of the Steppe', the Temple of the 'hallatu-orchard'

Shares in the prebend associated with the cult of Bēlet-šēri are the object of four documents (plus a duplicate) within the BM collection: all of them are sales.

As Table 40 shows,³⁵ the title is referred to in different ways, either as the prebend "in the Palace of the Steppe, the temple of the *hallatu-orchard*", or as the prebend "in front of Bēlet-šēri in the *hallatu-orchard*", or again as the prebend 'in the *hallatu-orchard*, the Edusaggara, the temple of Bēlet-šēri'.

33 **No. 10-P** is the only document where L/AZI//EZ appears as the lessor.

34 On this see also Monerie 2018, p. 361.

35 Due to the fragmentary state of preservation of the tablet, the name of the reference to Bēlet-šēri only recorded in NCTU 23 has not been included in the Table.

The same names are known from the other references to the prebend in the Hellenistic corpus from Uruk. In one text in the corpus (BRM 2 12), however, the description ‘in the Palace of the Steppe, the temple of the *hallatu*-orchard’ alternates with a longer version including ‘in front of Bēlet-šēri’; this suggests that the first is short for the full name of the title, i.e. ‘in the Palace of the Steppe, the temple of the *hallatu*-orchard, in front of Bēlet-šēri’, so that the two may be considered the same.

Another example from the corpus refers to the prebend as that ‘in the *hallatu*-orchard’, with no further addition (VS 15 04). It is plausible that this is the shortest version for either of the other two descriptions.

Table 40. Names for the prebend connected with the cult of Bēlet-šēri

Name	Text No.	Year SE	Days
In the <i>hallatu</i> -orchard	VS 15 04	36	15-21
Palace of the Steppe, the temple of the <i>hallatu</i> -orchard (in front of Bēlet-šēri)	BRM 2 12 No. 25-P	48 46-51	6 4; 11-12; 14-21
in front of Bēlet-šēri in the <i>hallatu</i> -orchard	BRM 04 WZJ 19 No. 47-P//48-P No. 53-P	29 48 74 66-76	25-26 25-27 11-12 16-21
in the <i>hallatu</i> -orchard, the Edusaggara, the temple of Bēlet-šēri	No. 94-P //TCL 13 244	132	28

While all examples clearly refer to the cult of Bēlet-šēri and to its location in the *hallatu*-orchard, the name of the temple varies: this is called the ‘Palace of the Steppe’ in the earlier documents (with the exception of VS 15 04), but Edusaggara in **No. 94-P//TCL 13 244**. Since this document dates to the reign of Seleucus IV, some 80 years later than the others, it is possible that the late reference reflects a change of some kind in the organisation of the goddess’ cult at Uruk, that included the new name for the temple.³⁶

As Table 38 shows, out of the four (and a duplicate) documents in the BM collection, two have Lâbâši as buyer **Nos. 47-P//48-P** and **53-P**, and one features his great-nephew Anu-zēru-iddin (**No. 94-P//TCL 13 244**). We know from the corpus that in addition to those recorded in these contracts, Lâbâši and his father purchased more shares of this title: in particular, he himself bought a share of day 6 in in SE 48 (BRM 2 12)³⁷ and his father Anu-zēru-iddin one for days 25 and 26 in SE 29 (BRM 2 4).

Table 41. Prebend of Bēlet-šēri in the BM collection

Name	Text No.	Year SE	Days	Buyer
Palace of the Steppe, the temple of the <i>hallatu</i> -orchard	25-P	46-51	4 11-12 14-21	Anu-uballiṭ/Nidintu-Anu/ Anu-zēru-lišir/H
in front of Bēlet-šēri in the <i>hallatu</i> -orchard	47-P//48-P 53-P	74 66-76	11-12 16-21	L/AZI/EZ
in the <i>hallatu</i> -orchard, the Edusaggara, the temple of Bēlet-šēri	94-P //TCL 13 244	132	28	AZI/AU/AZI//EZ

In Neo-Babylonian Uruk the *hallatu* was a special type of orchard under the responsibility of the prebendary *rab banês*, who had to supply the tables of the gods with its products and enjoyed particular rights over it. In the Seleucid period evidence for these orchards is absent, with the exception of its occurrence in the names of the prebend analysed so far; reference to the *rab banûtu* is also scanty: arable land belonging to the “estate of the *rab banûtu*” is mentioned once as the eastern

³⁶ The Edusaggara might also be mentioned in BiMes 24 12: 3-4 where the combined title of ‘temple-enterer and butcher in the *hallatu*-orchard, in the Edusaggara, the temple of Bēlet-šēri’ is mentioned. It must be noted that this document dates to 162 SE, thus confirming the idea that this was the new name of the goddess’ temple. On the name of the temple see George 1993, p. 78, no. 192.

³⁷ The text is BRM 2 12: see Corò 2005a, pp. 412-413.

border of a field purchased in **No. 16-AL** and a single sale of a *rab banûtu* prebend occurs in the corpus (BRM 2 13, dated to SE 49).

Interestingly, the two documents are clearly interconnected: the field described in **No. 16-AL** is purchased by Lâbâši's father and besides adjoining the arable land of the estate of the *rab banûtu* to the east, it also adjoins, to the south, the arable land of 'the estate of Lâbâši and his brothers'. As we have shown above, Lâbâši/AZI//EZ himself bought arable land, partly tenured property of the temple, in the same area, i.e. that of bank of the moat and the city wall of Uruk; we cannot thus exclude that the arable land of 'the estate of Lâbâši and his brothers', was his own; this would be located not far away from the fields of the prebendary gardeners. Now, if one considers that Lâbâši/AZI//EZ is also the buyer of the only *rab banûtu* prebend attested in the corpus, the idea that he had some interest in the activities of the prebendary gardeners, if not that he and his family were among the prebendary gardeners of the temple, would not be so unlikely.

The purchases of prebends connected to the cult of Bêlet-šêri in the *hallatu*-orchard by Lâbâši and his father must be interpreted in the same light: they would show that the disappearance of the *rab banûtu* prebend from the corpus did not mean that the task was no longer a prebendary one in the Seleucid period, but that at a certain point in time the contracts simply referred to it with a different name, covering either the name of the cultic shrine, the name of the goddess to which the service was addressed and/or the location of her temple.³⁸ The cult, originally associated with the Lady of Uruk and Nanâya would in the meantime have been substituted by that of Bêlet-šêri, a new entry in the Pantheon of Uruk; its traditional association with the Steppe would have made her the perfect candidate for the cultic activities connected to the tasks of the prebendary gardeners, whose orchards were traditionally located at the fringes of the city.

6.6 Offerings and Prebends

A small number of contracts in the BM record particular prebends whose names refer totally or in part to the offerings associated with the title as an income.

6.6.1 Travel Provisions

No. 44-P mentions the purchase by L/AZI//EZ of a share in the *êrib bîtûtu* of the Sky Gods: the text offers details on the cuts of meat associated with it, i.e. part of the mutton sacrificed to the Sky Gods and part of that belonging to the travel provisions of the gods. Lâbâši is indicated in the texts also as co-owner of the prebend. No reference is made to the day when the service is to be performed.

6.6.2 Meat Cuts from the *eššešu* of Day 3

No. 52-P is an interesting and anomalous contract in many respects, with L/AZI//EZ as the buyer. It records the purchase of an otherwise unspecified prebend, described as "one half of each mutton and lamb (belonging to) the *eššešu* day 3, of Anu [...]". The reference to the Rêš temple is unfortunately lost. Since in the transfer of ownership's clause we read that the meat was associated with the Ešgal (and ...?), it is plausible that the text in the lacuna might have specified that the prebend implied service in the two temples. This does not help much in understanding the characteristics of the tasks involved. However, that it might have had some special significance is suggested by the fact that this is the only contract where the seller, Šibqat-Anu/Ana-rabûti-Anu (presumably to be identified with the individual by the same name claiming descent from the Luštammar-Adads), is liable for clearing the prebend from claims raised by "the city of Uruk, the temples, the Urukeans, the house of the king and whosoever else", to the advantage of the buyer.

³⁸ Monerie 2018, p. 378, fig. 57 classifies this prebend among those of the temple-enterers.

In addition to it, the document though featuring a (broken) witness list, is not sealed. Does this mean that it was just a draft or a copy deprived of any legal validity, intended for personal use only, as was the practice in the earlier periods? And should we see any connection between the reference to the institutional bodies of the city, the temple, and the State and the absence of sealings? On the present state of our knowledge it is unfortunately not possible to offer an answer to this question.

6.6.3 A New Prebend in the Corpus: the Prebend in the *malītu* Offerings

No. 34-P is the only example known so far, both in the corpus from the Hellenistic Uruk and in the BM collection, of the existence of a prebend *šá ma-al-la-a-tú* (to be interpreted as plural for *malītu*).³⁹

The tablet is unfortunately not well preserved: however, it is clear that the title was connected to worship in the Ešgal and Rēš and probably (at least a part of it) consisted of juniper(?) of the clothing ceremonies of an unknown god.

In the Neo-Babylonian period, we have evidence of the *malītu* offering for the altars of Marduk, for the temple of Adad, in connection to the festivals of the temple-enterers and, in Uruk, for the altars of the Lady of Uruk and also on the occasion of the opening of the temple's ceremonies.⁴⁰

In Seleucid Uruk, reference to the two temples of Ešgal and Rēš are only found in tablets dealing with the builder's prebend: but neither the seller nor the buyer are here identified here as *itinnus*, thus a connection to this type of service seems unlikely.

Juniper and the clothing ceremonies of the gods are mentioned many times in contracts concerning the combined title of temple-enterer and goldsmith. However, no link may be established between those tablets and our text, especially because of the date of **No. 34-P**, that may be fixed to SE 59, i.e. definitely earlier than any contracts involving the prebend of temple-enterer and goldsmith (whose first dated occurrence goes back to SE 95).

The buyer of the prebend is Lâbâši's son, Anu-zêru-iddin (see commentary to the text, below) and Lâbâši himself appears among the co-owners of the prebend, alongside the sons of a certain Kidin-Anu (probably to be identified with the seller's father). We have no evidence, so far, of their involvement in transactions dealing with any food prebend, with the exception of **No. 52-P**, discussed above.

6.7 Portfolios

A substantial group of ten tablets in the BM collection have as their objects prebend portfolios,⁴¹ i.e. they record the sale or lease of a bunch of prebends at once. The data from the contracts are plotted in Table 42.

Table 42. Prebend portfolios in the BM collection

Text	Prebends	Type	Buyer/lessee
13-P	Temple attendant butcher	sale	B: L/AZI//EZ S1: Anu-abu-ušur=Dumqi-Anu/Anu-uballiṭ/Anu-abu-ušur//LA S2: Nidinti-Anu/Anu-uballiṭ/ Anu-abu-ušur//LA S3: Šamaš-ittannu/Anu-uballiṭ/Anu-abu-ušur//LA
43-P	Temple-enterer of Anu butcher	sale	B: Anu-zêru-iddin/Anu-māru-ittannu//EZ S: Nidinti-Anu/Anu-ahu-iddin/Nidinti-Anu//H

³⁹ A term *malītu* (pl. *malāti*), is well attested in the NB period (see CAD M/1, pp. 169-170, s.v. *malītu* A) where it indicates either a plate or bowl or 'an offering to a temple and an item of income for its personnel'. For a *malītu* prebend see Van Driel 2002, p. 116, fn. 103. For such bowls in a prebendary context see Baker 2004, no. 51 (reference courtesy Baker). See also Bongenaar 1997, p. 144.

⁴⁰ *Malītu* offerings were offered to the Lady of Uruk (YOS 6 239: 6) and we have evidence of wool, dates and barley being part of this offerings.

⁴¹ Elsewhere also defined as 'pacchetti di prebende': Corò 2005a, p. 26 et passim.

Text	Prebends	Type	Buyer/lessee
67-P (Oppert 4)	Temple-enterer Temple attendant of the sky gods	lease	Le: Kidin-Anu/Nidinti-Anu Lr: [...]
70-P	Temple-enterer of ? Temple-enterer of Enlil	sale	B1: NI/AZI/L//EZ B2: AU/AZI/L//EZ S: Šamaš-ittannu/Balātu/Šamaš-ittannu//LA
71-P	Temple-enterer of (Anu?) Temple-enterer of Enlil Baker Butcher ... Bēlet-māti, temple that is adjoined to Eanna, in front of B-m prebend in the <i>hallatu</i> -orchard	sale	B: 'Belēssunu/Anu-abu-ušur/Nidinti-Anu//H) W AU/AZI/L//EZ S: Nidinti-Anu[/Šamaš-ēṭir/Kidin-Anu]
85-P	Temple-enterer of Anu Temple-enterer of Enlil Baker Butcher Temple attendant In the temple ..., in front of Bēlet-māti	sale	B: 'Belēssunu/Anu-abu-ušur/Nidinti-Anu//H) W AU/(AZI/L//EZ) S: Nidinti-Anu/Šamaš-ēṭir/Kidin-Anu/
89-P	Temple-enterer of Enlil brewer	sale	B1: NI/AZI/L//EZ B2: AU/AZI/L//EZ S: Šamaš-ittannu/Balātu/Šamaš-ittannu//LA
98-P	Temple-enterer of Anu Temple-enterer of Enlil butcher	lease	Le: Idat-Anu/Nidinti-Anu/Eribaya//EZ Lr: AZI/AI/AZI//EZ
106-P (=Oppert 5)	Temple-enterer of Anu Temple-enterer of Enlil Temple-enterer and butcher of the Egalmah, temple of Gula, adjoined to Eanna, in front of Bēlet-māti	sale	B: AZI/AU/AZI//EZ S: 'Rubuttu/Anu-uballiṭ/Nidinti-Anu//Ah) W Anu-ahu-ittannu/Antipatros//Ah
109-P// Iraq 59 38	Food offerings Temple-enterer of	sale	B: 'Erištu-Nanāya/Tanittu-Anu) W Anu-bēšunu/Anu-ahu-ittannu/Anu-bēšunu//Ah

The portfolios may consist of different numbers and types of titles, ranging from a minimum of two to as many as six. While no specific trend may be noted as to the types of possible associations, it is interesting that the prebend of the temple-enterer (either of Anu or Enlil) is always part of the portfolio (the only exception being **No. 13-P**, the earliest document in the group). This title can be associated with other shares of the temple-enterer's prebend, with a food preparer's prebend (a butcher, a brewer or a baker), with a temple attendant's (in one case specifically associated to the Sky gods: **No. 67-P**), with shares of food offerings and also with the particular combined title of temple-enterer's and butcher's of the Egalmah, for Bēlet-māti or to the prebend in the *hallatu*-orchard.

The temple-enterer's prebends always come first in the portfolios, with the temple-enterers of Anu preceding those of Enlil. The food preparers follow, the bakers always before the butchers (no evidence is available on the relative position of the bakers, who are mentioned only once, with no other food preparers); the temple attendant occurs after the food preparers in **No. 85-P**, while in **No. 13-P** he is mentioned before the butcher.

The majority of the contracts have members of Lâbâši's family as buyers: L/AZI//EZ himself acts in **No. P-13**; his two nephews, Nanāya-iddin and Anu-uballiṭ occur in **Nos. 70-P** and **89-P**; his great-nephew is the protagonist in **No. 109-P**. In addition, Anu-uballiṭ's wife, Bēlessunu, is the buyer in **Nos. 71-P** and **85-P**, while his son Anu-zēru-iddin is buyer in **No. 106-P**. It is not clear if the Anu-zēru-iddin/Anu-māru-ittannu//EZ, mentioned as buyer in **No. 43-P** is a cousin of L/AZI//EZ, as his name might suggest, and if the Anu-zēru-iddin/Anu-ahu-ittannu/ Anu-zēru-iddin//EZ who acts as lessor in **No. 98-P** is the nephew of Lâbâši's great-nephew: if this were the case, two more contracts would belong to the family's dossier.

Of the remaining documents, **No. 67-P** is a very fragmentary tablet for which only part of the name of the lessee (Kidin-Anu/Nidinti-Anu) can be reconstructed; **No. 109-P** (the duplicate of Iraq 59 38) is a sale featuring a woman named 'Erištu-Nanāya, claiming descent from the Ahhūtu clan, as the buyer.

Anu-uballiṭ and his eldest brother Nanāya-iddin buy both their portfolios from Šamaš-ittannu/Balātu/Šamaš-ittannu//LA; Lâbâši, too, bought his small portfolio from two individuals belonging to the same clan; the possibility that one of them, Šamaš-ittannu/Anu-uballiṭ is the grandfather of the seller of **Nos. 70-P** and **89-P** cannot be ruled out.

An interesting characteristic of the dossier is the high number of women acting in the contracts: four out of ten, in fact, have a woman either as seller (**No. 106-P**), or as buyer (**Nos. 71-P; 85-P; 109-P**//Iraq 59 38). No restrictions apply to their capacity of buying different types of prebends, as is clear from those contracts involving 'Bēlessunu and 'Rubuttu that have the largest portfolios as the object.

These two documents bear witness to the existence of a prebend connected to the meals of the goddess Bēlet-māti, probably worshipped in a cella within the temple of Eanna. While the possibility that women are involved in both the transactions mentioning this type of service due to some gender-related preference cannot be excluded, it is clear that no gender-related restriction applied to the transfer of the title, since 'Rubuttu sells it to a man.

The reason why documents with prebend portfolios as objects coexist with others that only concern one title remains to be explained. The strong involvement of the Lâbâši family in this type of transaction might offer a clue for its better understanding; the investigation of the business strategy of the Ekur-zākir family is, however, beyond the scope of the present analysis and will be the object of a separate study.

