

Report with assessment and recommendations concerning objects impounded at Martin Schøyen's residence August 24, 2021

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I. Introduction and general information

The Embassy of Iraq has requested assistance from the Norwegian Ministry of Culture and pertinent authorities to secure 107 cuneiform objects¹ and 656² incantation bowls suspected of originating from Iraq. The Iraqi embassy asserted that the objects are illicitly obtained and illicitly exported from Iraq, and hence acquired illegally by Martin Schøyen, and are therefore to be returned to Iraq.

At the request of The Norwegian Ministry of Culture, and in collaboration with Økokrim (the National Authority for Investigation and Prosecution of Economic and Environmental Crime), a team from the Museum of Cultural History, UiO (MCH), The National Library (NL) and the Department of Archaeology, Conservation and History, UiO (IAKH) participated in the police operation directed towards Martin Schøyen with the intention of seizing 107 objects listed in the publication *Cuneiform Royal Inscriptions and Related Texts in the Schøyen Collection*. Ed. A.R. George. Cornell University Studies in Assyriology and Sumerology (CUSAS), Vol 17. Manuscripts in the Schøyen Collection, Cuneiform Texts VI. Bethesda, Maryland: CDL Press, 2011 (George 2011). In addition to the cuneiform objects the team was charged with securing any of the 656 incantation bowls suspected of being stored on Schøyen's premises.

During the search, a total of 83 of the requested objects were identified and seized, cf. Police report on search / seizure, dated 27.8.2021 (Lok. Ark. No. 129 / 20-60).

¹ The Iraqi authorities referred to 107 cuneiform objects and an exhibition at the Kontiki Museum in 2003 and/or 2008. The basis for identifying the 107 cuneiform objects is George 2011. Two of these, MS 2814 and MS 2063 were exhibited at the Kontiki Museum in 2003.

² It is commonly held that Martin Schøyen acquired 564 incantation bowls. However, this is the number deposited at University College London. The number Schøyen acquired is 656. According to Schøyen, 654 are presently at his property at Hamstead, London. One was impounded on August 24, 2021. The whereabouts of one is presently unknown.

The objects were secured and packed by staff from the MCH / UiO and the National Library, under the supervision of a curator from the museum. The majority were transported from Schøyen's residence to MCH's facility in the boxes they were stored in by Martin Schøyen but were packaged to ensure safe transportation and as gentle storage as possible while being moved. The largest objects were secured and packed in boxes brought from the museum.

The seizure was transported to the museum's storage facilities (Kabelgata 34, Økern, Oslo) for secure storage and technical assessment. The seizure is today located in the same place.

All items were insect decontaminated before storage, but no further conservation has been done.

The technical review was carried out by the museum's staff at the premises. Økokim inspected the seizure in January 2021.

The objects are listed in the sequence from the Police Report.

Initial issues and aims

In this report, two descriptive concepts pertaining to artefact context are used:

- *Provenience* refers to the actual find spot and archaeological context of a find. For convenience, in this report a sharp distinction is not drawn between the ancient contexts of the object (where it was produced, used, and deposited) and provenience. Where an object was found determines where it is to be returned.
- *Provenance* encompass the object's history of ownership, including its provenience. This is important in determining if an object was legally exported, traded, and acquired.

Due to its rich archaeology, Iraq has suffered extensive looting and illicit export of archaeological artefacts. Though extending back in time, looting was intensified after the 1880's and was particularly intensive and destructive during the run up to and after the first Gulf War (the late 1980s and after 1990-91). Collectors' markets throughout the affluent world were supplied with looted objects from Iraq. Objects were also looted in other countries, in Schøyen's case potentially Afghanistan, Syria, Turkey and Iran. Objects without substantiated ownership histories (i.e., false or opaque ownership histories), from areas of civil unrest or war, acquired through known or convicted traffickers or their wider networks and/or held by collectors with a history of dealing with the traffickers represent circumstantial evidence of illicit trade. These factors are particularly relevant concerning objects originating in Iraq that turn up on the market and in collections during the 1980-2000s. For example, one of Martin Schøyen's major supplier chains, the Rihani-Martin network, was active in Iraq in 1980s, in Kuwait and Iraq during the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and the ensuing embargo through the 1990s.

State authorities and international bodies have passed legislation, resolutions, and conventions to counter the trade and the destruction it in its wake. The following laws, resolutions and conventions are referred to by Iraq's authorities as particularly relevant for objects looted in, smuggled from Iraq, and traded in other countries:

- British occupation military Communiqué number 2, dated 22 March 1917
- Iraqi Antiquities Law of 1924
- Iraqi Antiquities Law of 1936
- Security Council resolutions 661 dated 6 August 1990, reaffirmed 2003.
- UNESCO Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property 1970.

The Norwegian ratification of the 1970 UNESCO convention in 2007 is pertinent to dealings in Norway with objects from Iraq.

Iraqi authorities refer to these laws and conventions and maintain that it is the responsibility of the collector to provide documentation of legal export from Iraq. Objects that are not documented to have been exported and acquired in accordance with Iraqi legislation, international conventions and Security Council resolutions are property of and are to be returned to the Iraqi government.

The illicit nature of the antiquities trade from looter to collector/academic study creates difficulties in positively proving looting and smuggling histories. Objects are removed clandestinely, and the involved parties obfuscate origin and ownership histories. To assess the probability of whether an object is legally/illegally acquired and exported from Iraq and legally/illegally acquired in other countries, it is important to ascertain:

- Is the object acquired in agreement with national legislation and international conventions?
- Is the object legally exported from Iraq and legally imported to other countries?
- It follows from the above questions that the owners and dealers must either
 - provide authentic documents including export permits,
 - or document (e.g., with authenticated ownership titles, sales receipts, collection documentation) that the artefacts were acquired and removed from before relevant legislation and/or international agreements were in place.

In the case of Martin Schøyen these issues are acute, for despite his opaque statements to the contrary, neither Schøyen or his collaborators have provided comprehensive, accurate and publicly accessible statements about or documentation of where objects come from, how and when they were removed from Iraq (and other countries) or their ownership history. In an e-mail September 2021, Sunneva Sætevik of the Norwegian Ministry of Culture explicitly requested Schøyen to supply such documented information. Schøyen has chosen not to respond. The ensuing issues for the “Schøyen collection”, both those objects impounded in 2021 and numerous other artefacts now in Schøyen’s possession, are therefore:

- What was the original archaeological or museum context for the objects?
- When and how were the objects removed from their depositional context?
- If originating from Iraq, when and how were the objects removed from Iraq? Similar questions are concerned with objects removed from other countries (e.g., Turkey, Syria, Iran, and Afghanistan).
- What ownership history can be inferred?
- When did Martin Schøyen acquire the artefacts?
- Can Martin Schøyen provide authentic documentation of ownership histories and export permits?

- Alternatively, is there circumstantial evidence of illicit acquisitions (ref. District Attorney of New York's *Statement of Facts* of December 3, 2021 concerning the *Reinhardt case*): e.g. involvement of known and convicted traffickers, find spot without provenance information, civil unrest and war in conjunction with appearance chronology, confirmed and specific looting, and false or opaque provenance.
- The Norwegian Police recovered only 86 of the 107 cuneiform artefacts and 1 of the 656 incantation bowls on August 24, 2021. The issue arises as to where the remaining artefacts are now.

General aspects concerning sources and credibility

The demand for objects has created an industry of looting, fakes, and smuggling. It is in the nature of the trade in archaeological objects that positively documenting the questions above is difficult. A robust default position is that objects that turn up on the market and in collections without documented provenance and *genuine* export documents are looted, smuggled, and illegally traded or are forgeries. Collectors and dealers generally refuse to cooperate in determining or actively attempt to obfuscate provenance. However, to trade objects (or harvest the prestige collectors frequently seek) and gain appreciation on investments it is often necessary for dealers and collectors to supply some information to a range of actors, if discreetly or opaquely. Likewise, researchers frequently have to provide fragments of information to substantiate interpretative claims or the authenticity of their research materials. Distinguishing misinformation from valid facts is complicated. Opaque, generic, and often conflicting statements – like Schøyen's *Statement of provenance* in the front matter of numerous publications and his website – are primarily attempts at disarming public and government suspicion. Specific and valid acquisition facts, though fragmentary and dispersed, may be “mined” from information packaged in scholarship, private correspondence, and collector records. Otherwise, data concerning traders, collectors, and objects, and the first modern appearance of objects can provide indications of provenance.

Sources to the Schøyen collection

For decades, Martin Schøyen has maintained that his collecting practices are legal and that he can document this. However, when asked by journalists, researchers, collaborating partners and government authorities, he has refused to provide documented, comprehensive information. In the present case of material from Iraq, Schøyen has publicly stated through his lawyers that he looks forward to collaborating. As noted above, he has not responded to requests for information from the Ministry of Culture and as of November 2021 and he has declined a police interview after the August 24, 2021 police operation.

Ideally, Martin Schøyen and his assistants (e.g., Jens Braarvig and Andrew George) should have provided, voluntarily and proactively, information through multiple decades. As they have chosen not to do so, the origins and ownership history of artefacts discussed in this report draws on sources that are produced by Schøyen or people involved with his collection, a few well-substantiated specific general studies, reports, legal documents and some informants:

- *Accessible sections of Martin Schøyen's printed catalogue from 1999, pp. 1-41, 97-98, 138-149.*
- *Sections of Martin Schøyen's online webpage that is based on the catalogue managed by the National Library until 2007. In 2004 and later occasions until 2007,*

Martin Schøyen removed and changed provenience and provenance statements concerning objects listed in these platforms. The entries have been reconstructed partially in a bachelor thesis by Daniel Harrouz (supervised by Professor Justnes, University of Agder) and searches through *Wayback*. Only some objects are found here.

- The *Schøyen Collection's (MSS) present website* presents a small selection of artefacts and has been altered through time. The entries that can be compared with older versions indirectly demonstrate what Schøyen deemed necessary to remove (mostly provenance data), how he perceives academic publications and conceivably some information attained from his suppliers.
- The *Cuneiform Digital Library Initiative (CDLI)* is a "joint project of the University of California, Los Angeles, the University of Oxford, and the Max Planck Institute for the History of Science, Berlin". "The Schøyen Collection joined the CDLI project by invitation" in 2006 (<https://www.schoyencollection.com/news/127-advanced-imaging-for-tablets-in-cdli-collection>). CDLI aims to provide a database over all known cuneiform texts. CDLI has 4421 cuneiform entries assigned to the Schøyen collection. Compared to the MSS-webpage, CDLI provides a more complete inventory, frequently with accurate object descriptions and photographs. Compared to Schøyen's private catalogue, it is searchable and has more up-to-date and accurate publication references.
- *Martin Schøyen's private catalogue* was supplied by Schøyen on a request from the police on August 24, 2021. The catalogue contains 5617 main entries with numerous sub-entries. The catalogue contains more information about provenance for the artefacts in the collection than any publicly accessible source. The most important information in the catalogue is whom Schøyen bought artefacts from, when the artefacts turned up at dealers and when Schøyen bought them. Other provenance information comes across as more generic, euphemistic or potentially fictitious. The latter is possibly the result of dealers or Schøyen's attempt to create acceptable provenances.
- The "*Inquiry into the provenance of 654 Aramaic incantation bowls delivered into the possession of UCL by. Or on the instruction of, Mr Martin Schøyen*" established by the Provost of UCL on February 14, 2005 and authored by Freeman, MacDonald & Renfrew (Freeman et al 2005). The report was suppressed through an out-of-court agreement between Schøyen and University College, London (UCL), but since made available through Wikileaks. Apart from information concerning the incantation bowls, the report is instructive concerning smuggler/dealers like Ghassan Rihani, Chris Martin, Quaritch, Katie Williams etc.
- *Publications of materials* found in the Schøyen Collection by Schøyen-affiliated researchers referred to in the text and listed at the end of this report. The most important are the volumes in *Cornell University Studies in Assyriology and Sumerology (CUSAS)*, and particularly the articles in CUSAS vol. 11 edited by George in 2011: *Cuneiform Royal Inscriptions and related texts in the Schøyen collection*.
- *Various reports, legal documents, correspondence, exhibition catalogues, interviews, and scholarly articles*. See listed references.
- *Informants* who monitor illicit trade and collecting have provided background information: Neil Brodie (dealers and collectors, published sources, Richard Elis' police report concerning Rihani), Samuel Hardy (auction houses), Årstein Justnes

(assessment of Schøyen catalogues), and Josephine Munch Rasmussen (potential sources). Lynda Albertson provided information about Ghassan Rihani, and the *Association for Research into Crimes against Art's* (ARCA) JANUS-files concerning the networks of Rihani and Schøyen.

Schøyen's "Statement of Provenance"

Schøyen and on occasion his collaborating researchers maintain he has provided adequate ownership history (e.g., George 2009: xii, Dahl 2020: xiv) and refer to various versions of his "Statement of Provenance" in the front matter of publications. The statement implies that it is an account of provenance: when the collection was assembled, that the artefacts derive from existing (old and therefore legitimate) collections, when the objects came on the market and the kind of contexts they derive from. Though elements assembled through other documents can be recognised piecemeal in the statements, the varying statements seem directed primarily at defusing suspicions and side-track inquiries:

- The statements are general and opaque, and do not permit specific objects to be related to specific source collections.
- The statements do not permit tracing the artefacts to initial contexts (provenience), contain coherent documentation of export circumstances or previous collection history (provenance), nor in some cases accurate dates for when Schøyen acquired artefacts.
- The information, e.g., collection chronologies, are at odds with other information even in the same volumes and in Schøyen's private catalogue.
- Significant information is missing, for example several of Schøyen's providers are not listed, i.a. Mark Wilson and Surena/Saeedi.
- The statements and their emphases change in the various volumes in terms of sources, collecting periods and geography. For example, Rihani is listed only as of 2009/CUSAS 10 and as of 2016/CUSAS32 collecting dates are moved from "late 1980's and 1990's to "collected mainly in the late 1980's, with additional items in the 1990" (which is an assertion not born out by any data).

Assessment of the collection and seized artefacts based on publications by collaborating Schøyen researchers

In academic volumes that publish material in collaboration with Schøyen, provenance accounts are mostly an initial *proforma* exercise. i.e., Schøyen's statements and opaque remarks in the prefaces or introductions. However, on occasion Schøyen's collaborating researchers inadvertently provide information in the introductory sections or in the main texts, whether out of academic necessity, in defence of contentious and criticised research practices, to flatter Schøyen or simply because they assume that their practices will have no consequences. Such passages directly or indirectly inform of Schøyen's collection practices. Some information is conceivably supplied by Schøyen, while in other cases the researchers are simply expressing insights shared in the cuneiform researcher community. Friberg (2007) and Westenholz (2014) are particularly candid concerning looting (euphemistically termed "recent excavations"), trafficking, the period when objects entered the market and source geography regarding the cuneiform material from Iraq, as well as researcher involvement. Friberg maintains that:

Although the great majority of the [400] mathematical cuneiform texts in the Schøyen Collection are new additions to the corpus, probably emanating from relatively recent

excavations in Iraq, the field plan text MS 1984 has been known for a very long time. (Friberg 2007:14).

... the metric algebra text MS 5112 and the icosahedron text MS 3896, can be dated ... just as the talent weight MS 4576 appears to be a Kassite imitation of a Sumerian weight stone. As for the provenance of these texts, Al-Rawi suggests that they were looted from Tell Muhammad, in Baghdad Al-Jadidah or, perhaps, from Haddad, ancient Meturan. (Friberg 2007:352-53).

Westenholz follows suit:

[Other pre-Ur III texts were]... copied over the years since 1999, as they came to my notice. They would be considered illicit tablets in some quarters.

... The great majority of the tablets that have been flooding the market recently were excavated during the embargo of Saddam Hussein's Iraq. The illicit excavations would seem to have been limited to the southern part of the country, that is, the ancient Sumerian heartland. Nearly all the pre-Ur III tablets I have seen can be traced to Adab, Umma/Zalab, Isin, Umm-el-Hafriyat, with only a sprinkling of tablets from other sites.

Most of the "illicit" tablets published here are known to me from a single dealer in London. We had to make an agreement that I could take the tablets to Denmark to treat them for conservation, I would then return them the following year, bringing another batch with me home. This is what I did in the years 1999-2002. Nothing was written down by the dealer; all was done on trust. Many were subsequently sold to la Banca d'Italia, one (270) to the Schøyen collection, while the present whereabouts of others are unknown. I later bought two tablets from different dealers.

..., most of these tablets are of the same sort as the ones in Banca d'Italia, the Cornell Collection, the Schøyen Collection and the Lippmann Collection in Real Academia de Historia, Madrid, to name just the major ones. Most of them come from centers within the Adab city state, including Adab itself; others from Isin, Umma, and Zabala; and yet others from Umm el-Hafriyat. Another enormous collection, which I haven't seen yet, is the Green Collection, now in the City Museum, Oklahoma.

..., I have worked on the assumption that when fragments of different tablets have been pasted together, this "repairwork" was done by the local excavators, not by middlemen in the trade network. Consequently, all the fragments of a given assembly would come from the same site. There is much evidence to support this assumption and none so far to refute it. (Westenholz 2014, xiii-xvii).

Several introductions to the Schøyen CUSAS and Springer volumes attempt to defend practices of researching material without provenance and in the process indicate that objects are looted and smuggled, particularly from Iraq. Some books go on to credit Schøyen for saving objects from destruction. Thus, counter to Schøyen's opaque statements, the introductory defence and praise of Schøyen implicitly indicate that the material does not stem from older collections, but is the result of recent looting, for example:

... we can rescue, preserve, and publish whatever legal or illicit remains of that cultural legacy have managed to survive this senseless destruction. ... present

significant contributions of new cuneiform sources, provenanced or otherwise (Owen's preface in Alster 2007: vii).

"Responsibility for publishing tablets that have no archaeological provenance has always been accepted by Assyriologists in the past, to salvage as much as possible from regrettable ancient and modern practice of looting. Recent changes in the law have led to the censorship of scholarly activity and created a black market for the distribution of looted material to looters and collectors. (Dalley 2009: ix).

A significant part of the clay tablets were raw clay tablets that were so fragile that Schøyen and his partners chose to bake them. In addition to the example described by Westenholz above, Dalley mentions 474 unbaked tablets, and explains:

Baking and soaking of selected tablets was carried out in intermittent batches. An example of excrecence of salt can be seen in the photo ..., which was taken before conservation. Under Martin Schøyen's care most of the tablets have now been baked and soaked for desalting. A few crumbled before baking and one or two self-destructed in the baking process. (Dalley 2009, ix).

Apart from ethics involved in destroying stolen tablets through "cowboy conservation", this is an indication that the fragile raw clay tablets have not been stored in and traded from private collections that predate the First World War. Instead, the clay tablets are products of recent looting excavations or are recent forgeries. The baking and other treatments conceivably inhibit some potential laboratory analyses of authenticity and provenience.

In sum, the direct and indirect testimonies of Schøyen researchers, whether based on general insider knowledge of the field or information supplied by Schøyen, indicates that the cuneiform materials in the MSS are frequently looted in Iraq, illicitly taken out of the country and illicitly traded. On the balance of evidence in this report, Schøyen's "Statement of Provenance" and other opaque contentions of legal practices primarily obscure the history of acquisition, conceivably with intent.

Schøyen dealers

Schøyen generally avoids publicly listing his major sources. Important information concerning his suppliers are the provenance sections removed by him from the 2004 to 2007 NB-catalogues, Schøyen's private catalogue and a few inadvertent admissions by Schøyen and his researchers. These demonstrate that Schøyen has been involved with some of the notorious names in antiquities trafficking like Ghassan Rihani, Chris Martin, Pars Antiques/Kathy Williams, Quaritch, Saeedi/Surena, Sam Fogg and Bruce Ferrini. Schøyen has also purchased, if to a lesser degree, from established auction houses like Christie's and Sotheby's, both caught auctioning/attempting to auction illicit antiquities -also from Iraq- on numerous occasions. In addition, there is some material sold through Annie Trotter, HP Krauss, Reeves, and two anonymous dealers. One of the latter is Mark Wilson.

Ghassan Rihani is listed as a collector in Schøyen's *Statement of provenance* as of the 2009. The Rihani family is a powerful institution in Jordan and possesses/ did possess a collection. However, Rihani is primarily recognised as a significant trafficker of antiquities since the 1980s. His *modus operandi* is described in Freeman et al. (2005) *Inquiry into the provenance of 654 Aramaic incantation bowls delivered into the possession of UCL by or on the*

instruction of, Mr Martin Schøyen. This report is presented below, but the highlights encompass artefacts looted in Iraq, smuggled to Jordan, ascribed false provenance, exported with jumbled ownership and export documents via Germany and Rihani's store in Switzerland to Britain. The artefacts were often sold on through dealers like Pars/Williams, Martin, and Wilson in London. Richard Ellis, head of the Scotland Yard Art Squad in the late 1990s, details further information about Rihani's involvement in the artefacts trade in a report (referenced with his permission). After the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait, the Kuwaiti Al Hamaizi's art collection was looted. Ghassan Rihani and his daughter Mona were the "key figure[s] in the sale of the collection ... in the international art market ...". A police operation intercepted the disposal of the collection and recovered significant values and Rihani was arrested. Investigations revealed that Rihani was the focal point for smuggling out of Jordan. He had established networks in Egypt, Iraq, and Jordan to provide artefacts. Members of Saddam's Hussein regime also used the network to off-load artefacts. Rihani received goods in Amman, took boxes with clothes to the airport in Amman, obtained customs clearance from a corrupt public servant and switched boxes before shipping them to his store in the Geneva free zone and/or have them sent/carried to i.a. London. On arrival, Rihani used agents like Chris Martin to retail objects. After the international sanctions imposed in 1990, Rihani continued export from Iraq. Rihani's involvement with Saddam Hussein's regime and his activities were reported to the UN Security Council in conjunction with Kuwait's compensation claims. Though deceased, a recent case involving Rihani is *The Gilgamesh Dream Tablet*, one of the 17000 artefacts being repatriated from the US to Iraq. Found in northern Iraq in 1953, the artefact turned up in London in or prior to 2001. Originally looted and then exported from Iraq, Rihani sold it in London for 50000 USD. It was sent to Dr. Renée Gallery Kovacs in 2003 and traded on multiple occasions up to the 2020 seizure. The latest (before the seizure) 1,67 million USD sale was brokered by Christie's, and in the meantime, the artefact had been furnished with forged provenance documents. The witness in this case pursued by the United States Attorney for the Eastern District of New York testified that she "knew Rihani as a source of supply for Middle Eastern antiquities who obtained antiquities directly from the Middle East". "The Antiquities Dealer and an expert in cuneiform (the "Cuneiform Expert")³ visited Rihani's London apartment. During this visit, they met with one of Rihani's family members and viewed the cuneiform tablets on the floor. The tablets had not been conserved" (cited from complaint, United States District Court, Eastern District of New York, SLR:BDM:KKO F. #2019V02611). Rihani (Ghassan al-Rehani) also figures in the District Attorney of New York's *Statement of Facts* of December 3, 2021 concerning the *Reinhardt case*. Here, based on seized documents and various testimonies, Rihani is described as "Ghassan al-Rehani (a/k/a Hassan Ricani), a Jordanian antiquities trafficker and smuggler well-known to Jordanian and Israeli law-enforcement authorities" who smuggles looted materials from Israel, the Palestinian Areas and Jordan to Switzerland, Britain, and the US. (pp. 98, 99, 102-3). Interestingly, the cases of Reinhardt and the Gilgamesh Dream Tablet coincide in time and share numerous other characteristics with Schøyen's purchases of incantation bowls and cuneiform artefacts from Rihani in London.

Another important Schøyen supplier was *Chris Martin*. In documents concerning Rihani, Martin is indicated as a retailer for Rihani when material arrived in London. Artefacts briskly changed hands, presumably based on established distribution networks and conceivably to

³ The witness, Assyriologist Dr. Renée Gallery Kovacs and numismatist Frank Louis Kovacs III.

generate provenance paperwork. Another Schøyen supplier *Katie Williams/Pars Antiques* seems to have operated in a similar fashion, if on a more moderate scale. *Quaritch* seems to have similar ties to Rihani.

Sam Fogg has been a significant Schøyen supplier and has a reputation for handling smuggled artefacts, i.a. from Iraq. An early example is his dealings with material from Afghanistan, some also sold to Schøyen. A recent example is that on May 24, 2018 the district attorney forwarded a motion against Rupert Wace and Sam Fogg to “to turn over the subject Persian Guard Relief to representatives of the Islamic Republic of Iran.” In July 2018 the Court ordered the relief seized, which it was in October 2018.

Mark Wilson was a major Schøyen supplier, potentially on par with Rihani-Martin. Wilson seems to be a wealthy amateur cuneiform researcher loosely affiliated with UCLA, probably based on his benefaction to the institution. Though mentioned a couple of times on the Schøyen website as an expert, as a dealer he has remained anonymous in public documents both for those investigating illicit trade in artefacts and the general cuneiform field. He is the “anonymous dealer” referred to in Westenholz 2014. Wilson is a major “retailer” who received a quantity of material in the first half of 2004 and quickly resells mid-2004, though he has also handled material on earlier and later occasions. The material he acquired (whether on order or just quickly sold on) is portrayed as coming from *Cumberland Clark collection, Bournemouth (1920s-1941) and heirs*. Cumberland was a cuneiform collector killed during WW2. Referencing him leaves the impression of an old collection, even though the “collection” through the “heirs” is probably involved with the trade into the 1990s. That the reference to Cumberland Clark masks late acquisitions is indicated by the discussion of MS 2368, that demonstrates collecting after 1958. The Cumberland Clark Collection’s involvement in illicit trade is indicated by Friberg (2007) in his discussion of MS 2855 (below). Friberg is careful to list the mathematical artefacts *that are legal* - MS 2855 is not among these. Thus, Cumberland Clark may contain objects originating in an older collection (e.g., perhaps the 25 donated to UCLA by an “anonymous donor” to form the “Cumberland Clark Cuneiform Collection”?), but the collection (whoever the owner might be) mainly seems to be an instrument for quickly circulating artefacts around 1990, to create a semblance of provenance and disarm suspicion. A high-profile deal involving Wilson is the lower part of MS 2063 “The Tower of Babel Stele” (the upper part involves Rihani). Wilson is also involved with MS 4576 a stone weight with an inscription in Sumerian. Friberg 2007 comments that the “great majority of the [400] mathematical cuneiform texts in the Schøyen Collection are new additions to the corpus, probably emanating from relatively recent excavations in Iraq, ...”, and that “... MS 4576 appears to be a Kassite imitation of a Sumerian weight stone. As for the provenance of these texts, Al-Rawi suggests that they were looted from Tell Muhammad, in Baghdad Al-Jadidah or, perhaps, from Haddad, ancient Meturan.” Friberg’s reference source to Al-Rawi is not explicated but seems to be an unpublished text. Al-Rawi also furnished a hand-drawn image published in Friberg 2007:129, which conceivably was made in understanding with the dealer: Mark Wilson. There are other Wilson-Westenholz-Schøyen connections: “Most of the “illicit” tablets published here are known to me from a single dealer in London. We had to make an agreement that I could take the tablets to Denmark to treat them for conservation... I would then return them the following year, bringing another batch with me home. This is what I did in the years 1999-2002. Nothing was written down by the dealer; all was done on trust. Many were

subsequently sold to la Banca d'Italia, one to the Schøyen collection, while the present whereabouts of others are unknown. I later bought two tablets from different dealers." The object in question is Westenholz's 270 = MS 3186. According to Schøyen's catalogue, he purchased MS 3186 from Mark Wilson in June 1994. Westenholz's catalogue indicates that the tablet was in London and made available for study by Schøyen in 2000 (Westenholz 2014: xvii). In sum, Mark Wilson conceivably is one of the anonymous people behind donation of artefacts to UCLA, dealings of illicit Iraqi materials in London and funding of Schøyen publications.

Bruce Ferrini had a reputation of unscrupulous dealings with looted material as well as separating parts of manuscripts for sale. He also supplied Schøyen with looted and smuggled artefacts, and leaked faxes between himself and Schøyen where Schøyen details contact with cave looters in Pakistan. *Ahmed Saeedi* is synonymous with *Surena*, involved in rapid sales of objects (also within his own networks) without a credible provenance around 2000. He has figured in US customs investigations. Finally, at least two of the confiscated objects are looted in Afghanistan. Schøyen purchased these through Mark Wilson, while further provenance history is opaque (detailed below). It might be noted that Schøyen has traded significant material looted from Afghanistan and potentially Pakistan directly from looters and smugglers through London, as well as through intermediaries like Sam Fogg. On the balance of evidence, one probable frontline supplier is *Zahid Perez Butt*. The "Butt Network" is named in the 2019 Felony Arrest warrant issued by the criminal court of New York for dealer Subhash Kapoor. According to the warrant, Butt supplies "the international art market with stolen antiquities from countries including, but not limited to, Afghanistan, Pakistan and India." A witness NRK interviewed alleged that Zahid Perez Butt not only supplied Schøyen but was suspected of selling weapons and other hardware to the Taliban (Flyum 2005, NRK 2005).

The referred to source collections

In, for example, the *Statement of Provenance* as well as the general introduction to *Magical literature* (<https://www.schoyencollection.com/magical-literature-introduction>, checked January 2022) Schøyen maintains material is largely derived from old collections. In conjunction with the incantation bowls Schøyen maintains:

Therefore the largest collections today have all been built over a long time. ...; and the Schøyen Collection's 654 over more than 55 years by two generations of the Rihani family in Irbid and Amman in Jordan.

A more accurate portrayal would be that Ghassan Rihani's children have been involved in and inherited his looting and smuggling operation.

Schøyen's general and blanket statements are not substantiated in publicly accessible sources, and indeed are refuted on numerous occasions (e.g., Freeman et al. 2005). Most collection references are chronologically wide or open-ended, and some information is contradictory (see Crouse, below). Locations are diffuse. It is difficult to assess the legitimacy of the referred to collections, when Schøyen and his partners do not provide accurate and documented information. The practice of providing misquiding or opaque provenance is a strong indication of illicit trade and acquisition.

The private catalogues copied during the police operation on August 24, 2021 provide some examples:

- 1. Ningirsu temple, Lagash (2141-2122 BC.-); 2. Rihani collection, Irbid (ca. 1935) and Amman, Jordan (before 1965-1988), and London (1988-1994); 3. Chris Martin, London, October 1994
- 1. *Cumberland Clark collection, Bournemouth (1920s-1941) and heirs; 2. Mark Wilson, Southampton (1987-1994), acquired June 1994*
- 1. *Temple of Shara(?) Umma (ca. 2385 BC.); 2. British soldier on active duty in the Middle East during World War II, UK (1945-1996); 3. Pars Antiques, London, October 1997*
- 1. *King Idattu I of Shimashki, Anshan and Elam (ca. 2000 BC.); 2. The Surena collection, Genève and London (ca. 1970-2000); 3. Ahmad Saeedi Antiques, London, June 2000.*
- 1. *Martha Crouse collection, Hong Kong and New England, USA (1920s-1980s); 2. Pars Antiques, London, June 1989.*

Rihani, Martins, Wilson, Pars, Suremi/Saaedi are identified as major dealers of looted artefacts. In reviewing the impounded objects and the rest of the Schøyen catalogue, a frequent collection reference is “Martha Crouse collection, Hong Kong and New England, USA”. There is divergent information in the private Schøyen catalogue concerning Crouse. The collection is initially listed as active in “(-1980s).” Entries MS 4899 to 4921 in the Schøyen catalogue give the chronological frame 1988-1990 – a period of extensive trafficking, e.g., by Rihani. The discrepancies indicate attempts at constructing collection chronologies, while the open-ended and imprecise chronology seems designed to indicate an association to “the greatest collectors in earlier times”, i.e., older collections. However, the objects largely seem to arrive from the 1980’s and on and circulate quickly among dealers and collectors. The result is an obfuscation of the date of acquisition and provenance (by dealers and/or Schøyen), whether the intent is to entice sales or for collectors to mask dubious acquisitions.

In the provenance information connected to several artefacts, the Schøyen-catalogue refers to anonymous or “private collections”, most notably MS 2063 (Nebuchadnezzar Stele): “..., an the lower part: Kohanim Sollektion, Paris and London (1959-). Which passed to a private collection, Germany (-1998), and thence to Mark Wilson” The District Attorney of New York’s (DANY) *Statement of Facts of the Reinhardt case* December 3, 2021 reviewed such practices. On p.11-12 the DANY notes: “... *an unprovenanced antiquity on the international art market is often an indication that it has been looted, dealers and auction houses frequently mask this absence of ownership history with generic phrases such as “ex private Swiss collection” or “from a private U.S. collection.” Dealers and auction houses claim they do so to protect the anonymity of the seller or prevent buyers from circumventing the middleman’s commission. In fact, it is well-documented that such vapid and unverifiable provenance is simply a facile attempt to avoid arousing the suspicion of law enforcement authorities and others.*”

II. 4322 other cuneiform objects originating from Iraq and other countries

The scope and mandate of the present report are the objects impounded on August 24, 2021 in reference to the Iraqi authorities request. In reviewing the objects and the wider body of literature, the patterns of acquisition for the impounded objects do not significantly differ from other cuneiform artefacts in the Schøyen collection. Apart from material originating in Iraq, there are objects from Iran, Turkey, Syria, and Afghanistan.

Documenting the above is a major undertaking, but some searches indicate the extent of the material and issues. Schøyen's private catalogue is a pdf comprised of part searchable text and part non-searchable image, so a review here would have to be manual. A search in CDLI under "Collection" for "Schøyen" gives 4421 cuneiforms, indicating that in excess of a further 4300 cuneiform objects are found in the Schøyen collection. The published CUSAS and Springer volumes, the CDLI-base and Schøyen's catalogue indicate that the same issues found in conjunction with the impounded cuneiform artefacts pertain to most of these artefacts as well. After consulting the relevant government authorities, measures to secure the material presently held by Schøyen should be considered.

III. Summary of conclusion and recommendations for artefacts impounded August 24, 2021 and assessed in IV.

In chapter IV each object impounded on August 24, 2021 is assessed and an individual recommendation is made. A summary of the results is:

- 1) *The 656 incantation bowls* are looted and illegally smuggled out of Iraq. There is no evidence that they are from an older collection. Assessments:
 1. The bowl MS 1911 presently held at the Museum of Cultural History, should be returned to Iraq.
 2. Schøyen is required to produce the second missing bowl. This bowl should be returned to Iraq.
 3. Iraqi and British authorities should be informed of the 654 bowls in London.
- 2) *With some exceptions listed in points 3 to 12 below, the cuneiform material seized August 24, 2021* derives from Iraq. There is no documentation of export licenses from Iraq. The significant part of the material was handled through Rihani, Fogg, Martin and Wilson. There is no documentation of when the materials were removed in relation to relevant Iraqi legislation, Security Council resolutions and international conventions, but the general background and the specific information indicates a significant timeline from the late 1980s into the 1990s. Assessments:
 1. Schøyen has failed to provide documentation of legal removal from Iraq and the evidence on balance otherwise indicates modern looting, smuggling and illicit trading. The objects should be returned to Iraq.
- 3) *MS 711* was potentially removed from Iraq before 1917 and later re-exported from France.
 1. Martin Schøyen is required to supply necessary provenance documents.
 2. If such documents indicate that the object was exported from Iraq in the 1800's it can have been legally collected.

3. Issues of re-export from France should be clarified by supplying receipts and export documents.
 4. If authentic documents cannot be supplied, the objects should be returned to Iraq.
- 4) *MS 1876/1 & MS 1876/2* are from Iraq and turn up on the market in 1994, if excavated around 1950 it is not known how and when they were stolen.
- Assessments:
1. Schøyen has failed to provide documentation of legal removal from Iraq and the evidence on balance otherwise indicates modern looting, smuggling and illicit trading. The objects should be returned to Iraq.
 2. Iraq's authorities should be advised concerning *MS 1876/3* – British Museum registration number 1994-II-8, I.
 3. The theft of excavated material from the Innana temple at Zabala, excavated in Ibzaih should be further investigated.
- 5) *MS 1895* originates from the Erlenmeyer Collection.
1. Schøyen is to supply full and authenticated documentation of the ownership history.
 2. If the object came on to the collector's market before relevant Iraqi legislation or with a legal export license and after consultation with appropriate Iraqi authorities the object should be returned to Schøyen.
 3. Failing to provide documentation or on providing documentation that does not prove legal removal from Iraq, the object should be returned to Iraq.
- 6) *MS 1915* is looted and smuggled between the 1980s and 1994, conceivably after 1991, and partially destroyed through "conservation".
1. Schøyen has failed to provide documentation of legal removal from Iraq and the evidence on balance otherwise indicates modern looting, smuggling and illicit trading. The objects should be returned to Iraq.
 2. Schøyen supplies testimony as to those involved with the destructive "conservation".
 3. Steps involving the individuals and institutions that carried out the destructive "conservation" of ancient artefacts belonging to Iraq should be detailed.
- 7) *MS 2848*, most likely initial provenience is Iraq, removed between 1944 and 1996.
1. Schøyen should provide the sources for his contentions concerning provenience.
 2. Failing to provide documentation or on providing documentation that does not prove legal removal from Iraq, the object should be returned to Iraq.
- 8) *MS 2800* is presently exhibited at the Katedralskolen in Oslo. Steps to secure the object there, should be taken.

- 9) *MS 2879* may derive from either Iraq or Iran.
 1. Schøyen should provide documentation of when and by whom the tablet was initially acquired, any information about where it was found, and a copy of a legal export license.
 2. Failing to provide documents demonstrating legal export and acquisition, the tablet should be held back at a suitable facility.
 3. Consultations with experts not affiliated with the Schøyen group, as well as authorities in Iraq and Iran should be held.

- 10) *MS 1787*, *MS 3205*, *MS 4476* & *MS 4555* are removed from Iran potentially in violation of the country's *National Heritage Protection Act* of November 3, 1930.

Assessments:

 1. Schøyen has failed to provide documentation of legal removal from Iran and the evidence on balance otherwise indicates modern looting, smuggling and illicit trading.
 2. The objects should be held back, and Iranian authorities should be consulted.
 3. After the above, a decision concerning the return of the objects to Iran should be made.

- 11) *MS 4536/1* was removed from Syria between 1975 and the early 1990s.
 1. Schøyen is required to provide without delay documentation concerning the ownership history and find spot of the artefact.
 2. The object should be kept in holding, and the Syrian authorities consulted.

- 12) *MS 4536/2* & *4536/3* was looted in and smuggled out of Afghanistan and in to the UK shortly before 2001 and/or 2004.
 1. Schøyen is required to provide without delay documentation concerning the ownership history and find spot of the object.
 2. The object should be kept in holding, and the Afghani authorities and UNESCO should be consulted.

- 13) *MS 5106* was removed from Iraq between 1903 and 1989.
 - a. Schøyen is required to supply without delay all documents associated with the piece to demonstrate when and how it was removed from Iraq, a legal export license and ownership history.
 - b. Based on documented information, a final decision should be made.
 - c. Failing to provide to provide adequate documentation of legal removal from Iraq, the object should be returned to Iraq.

- 12) *MS 3185* looted in Turkey shortly before 1994.
 - a. Schøyen is required to supply all documents associated with the piece to demonstrate when and how it was removed from Turkey.
 - b. Turkish authorities should be consulted in regard to a return of stolen artefacts.

Police seizure from the Martin Schøyen Collection 24.8.2021, assessment of each object

During the search, a total of 83 of the requested objects were identified and seized, cf. Police report on search / seizure, dated 27.8.2021 (Lok. Ark. No. 129 / 20-60).

This chapter reviews each object targeted for seizure on August 24, 2021 and listed in George, A.R. 2011. *Cuneiform royal inscriptions and related texts in the Schøyen collection* (CUSAS 17). Relevant provenance and provenience information is reviewed and assessed, a conclusion is drawn, and a recommendation is presented.

Assessments and recommendations in the report are based on a technical inspection / assessment, and an extensive background research based on available information from the Schøyen archives (web-pages and non-public catalogues) and literature on the existing documentation with regard to provenience and provenance.

The report cannot be considered as a confirmation of the authenticity of the objects.

List of objects:

MS 3267 (George 14)

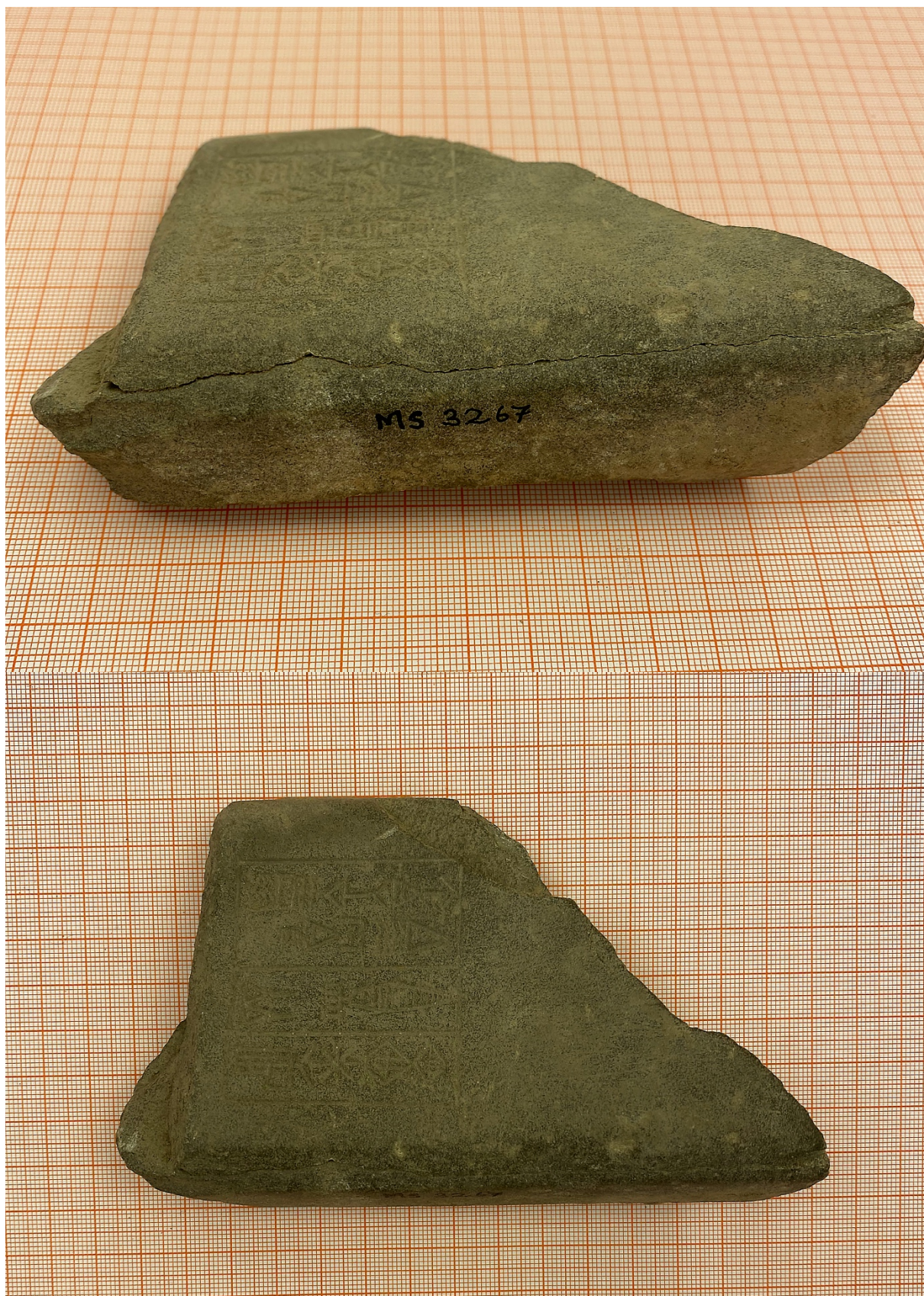
Fragment, yellowish sandstone. Coll. No. in black ink. 140x85x35

Inscription in Sumerian. CDLI lists provenience as “Umma (mod. Tell Jokha) ?” in modern Iraq. CDLI’s source is not clear but is probably based on the interpretation of the text. The object is not found on the current MSS webpage, but was listed in the 2004 NB-base and is not among the entries removed that year. Schøyen’s private catalogue and Steinkeller (2011:18) give no provenience. Schøyen gives the provenance to Cumberland Clark collection, Bournemouth (1920s-1941) and heirs and Martha Crouse collection, Hong Kong and New England, USA (-1980s); 3. Pars Antiques, London, June 1989, but it is uncertain when Schøyen acquired the object. Cumberland Clark cannot be used to ascertain an old acquisition (see MS 2368) or rule out recent looting (MS 2855). Crouse is otherwise listed as 1988-1990 (MS 4899-4921) and there is an association to Pars. The first publication referred to is Frayne 1993, but this refers to sources that also discuss the prince Saratigubism, not the object. The first academic reference is Steinkeller 2011:18.

Assessment. The object derives from southern Iraq. The lacunas in the available information about when and how the object was initially acquired, as well as acquired by Schøyen raises issues. It is not clear when Schøyen acquired the object, the Pars sale in 1989 represents the initial appearance of the artefact, the first public record is 2011. This indicates that it was looted and smuggled out of Iraq moderately recently, probably slightly before June 1989.

Recommendation.

1. Schøyen has failed to provide documentation of legal removal from Iraq and the evidence on balance otherwise indicates modern looting, smuggling and illicit trading. The object should be returned to Iraq.



MS 2871 (George 44)

Burnt clay. Heavy inclinations. Coll. No. In black ink. 120x40

Old Babylonian on clay "nail". CDLI gives the provenience as "uncertain (mod. uncertain)", and it not listed in the MSS-webpage, but was in the 2004 NB-catalogue and not among entries removed or changed 2004. There is no provenance information in Schøyen's private catalogue. The text indicates Sumer and the city of Larsa (George 2011:96). Other known find contexts for the text are Larsa (7 exemplars) and one exemplar from Umm al-Wawiya. Schøyen's private catalogue gives provenance as Cumberland Clark collection, Bournemouth (1920s-1941) and heirs and Mark Wilson, Southampton (1987-1994), acquired June 1994. CDLI lists Frayne 1990 as primary publication, but this reference is to comparable texts, not MS 2871. Frayne seems unaware of the text in 1990, and the first publication is George 2011 (96-97).

Assessment. The text and object's nature indicate an origin in southern Iraq, associated with Larsa. The date of when the tablet appears on the market supports an association to Iraq. If the provenance is not fabricated, the reference to a Cumberland Clark collection does not supply information about how and when the tablet arrived in Britain and does not indicate an older collection (see MS 2368), nor does it exclude an illicit acquisition (ref. MS 2855). The lack of references in 1990 and the appearance June 1994 also suggests it was looted in and smuggled out of Iraq between the late 1980s and early 1994.

Recommendation.

- 14) Schøyen has failed to provide documentation of legal removal from Iraq and the evidence on balance otherwise indicates modern looting, smuggling and illicit trading. The object should be returned to Iraq.





MS 4476 (George 18)

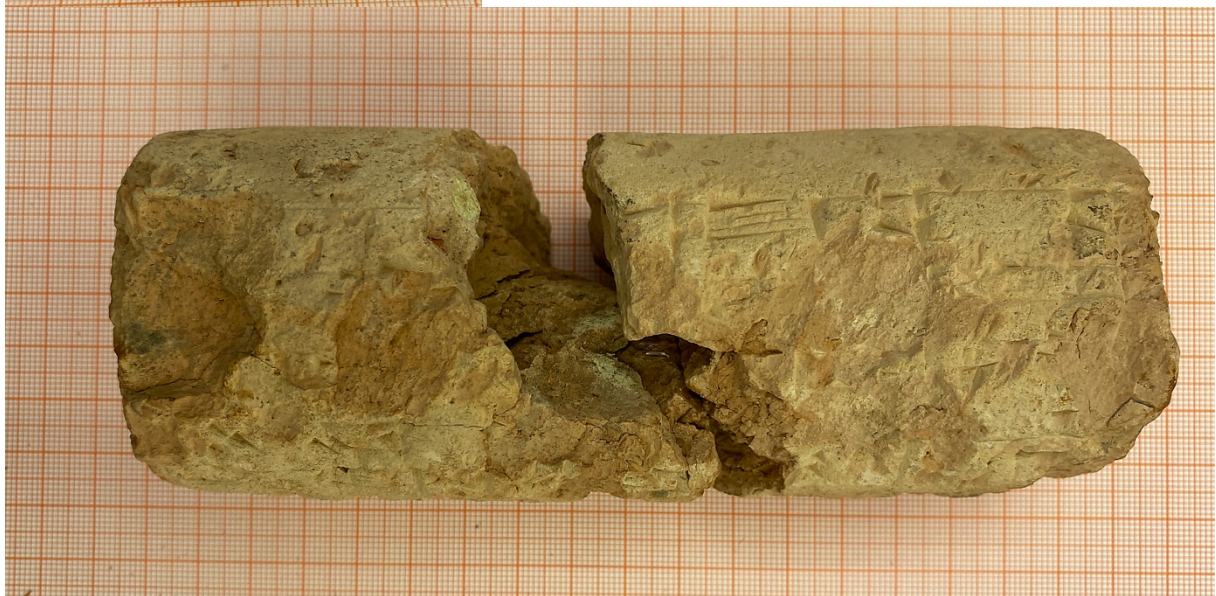
Bronze bowl. Damaged rim/edge. Coll. No. in black ink. 200x40

Sumerian inscription. CDLI gives the provenience as “uncertain (mod. uncertain)”. The provenance section in the current MSS-webpage is empty, but in the description section it is attributed to Elam, South-west Iran. The object is listed in the NB-base under “Persian, Greek and Byzantine History” as of December 2002, and CDLI lists the 2004 catalogue as the initial source for the entry. Steinkeller 2011(:21) says the provenance is unknown, but from the text states that an origin in Susa is unlikely. The December 2002 NB-catalogue gives a provenance of “1. King Idaddu, of Simashki, Anshan and Elam, South-west Iran (2000-1950 BC); 2. Private Collection, London (1965-)”. The provenance is removed between April and November 2004. In Schøyen’s private catalogue provenance is given as “1. King Idattu I of Shimashki, Anshan and Elam (ca. 2000 BC.); 2. The Surena collection, Genève and London (ca. 1970-2000); 3. Ahmad Saeedi Antiques, London, June 2000”. There are discrepancies between the provenance entries’ chronology. Surena and Saeedi are Ahmad Saeedi ([https://btw-zoeken.nl/8N7- Ahmad+Saeedi+%7C+Surena+Ancient+ART+&+Numismatic](https://btw-zoeken.nl/8N7-Ahmad+Saeedi+%7C+Surena+Ancient+ART+&+Numismatic)) is rumoured to have figured in a US customs investigation in the early 2000s. When Schøyen acquired the artefact is not stated, but the time frame is sometime before December 2002 (turns up in NB-catalogue). A CDLI-reference to Frayne 1990 is probably to the text, and not referenced in the publication of the artefact in Steinkeller 2011:21, preliminary publication in Steinkeller 2007:221-222).

Assessment. The text itself indicates an origin in present day Iran, like MS 4555 also sold through Saeedi. The provenance information seems contrived to cover genuine provenance, but accessible data indicates that the object turns up in Britain through Ahmed Saeedi sometime between 1965/70 and 2002. The object is potentially removed from Iran in violation of the country's *National Heritage Protection Act* of November 3, 1930.

Recommendation.

1. Schøyen has failed to provide documentation of legal removal from Iran and the evidence on balance otherwise indicates modern looting, smuggling and illicit trading.
2. The objects should be held back, and Iranian authorities should be consulted.
3. After the above, a decision concerning the return of the objects to Iran should be made





MS 2890 (George 32)

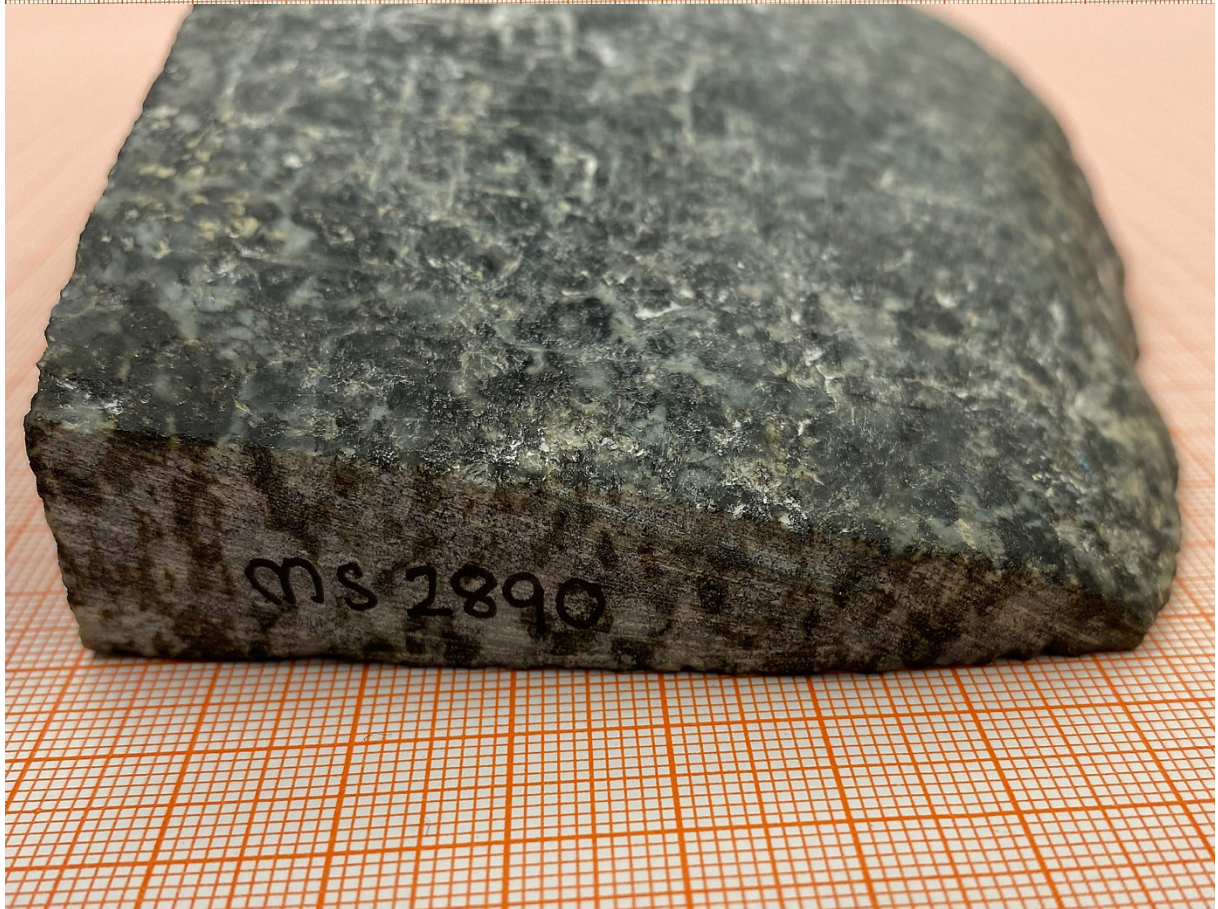
Grey inclined stone. Machine cut on three sides. Coll. No. in black ink. 210x100x40

Sumerian text. CDLI gives the provenience as “uncertain (mod. uncertain)”. It is not listed on the MSS-webpage, but was in the 2004 NB-catalogue and was not among the entries removed in 2004. Schøyen’s private catalogue gives Ningirsu temple, Lagash. It is not obvious if this builds on information from the dealer (Mark Wilson), or from George’s (2011:54) rendering of the text as a commemoration of the building at Ningirsu. Schøyen’s private catalogue list provenance as “Cumberland Clark collection, Bournemouth (1920s-1941) and heirs; 3. Mark Wilson, Southampton (1987-1994), acquired June 1994”. CDLI lists Edzard 1997 as primary reference, but this is to a text edition. A secondary reference to George 2011, which is the first publication of the object.

Assessment. The text indicates an origin in southern Iraq, and the date of when the stone appears on the market supports this interpretation. If the provenance is not fabricated, the reference to a Cumberland Clark collection does not supply information about how and when the tablet arrived in Britain and does not indicate an older collection (see MS 2368) and does not exclude an illicit acquisition (see MS 2855). The appearance June 1994 also suggests it was looted in and smuggled out of Iraq slightly in advance of it turning up on the market.

Recommendation.

1. Schøyen has failed to provide documentation of legal removal from Iraq and the evidence on balance otherwise indicates modern looting, smuggling and illicit trading. The object should be returned to Iraq.



MS 2795 (2800 in Police report) (George 69)

Burnt clay. Fragment, top r. corner. Perforated from three sides. Coll. No. in black ink + "No. 1". 69x87x35. NB! In the storage box it is noted by Schøyen that MS 2800 is on exhibition on the Norwegian "Katedralskolen" (a high school in Oslo) from 2017. Thus, the seizure is of MS 2795 which is also part of CUSAS-17 (George 2011).

(This assessment is for MS 2800 which is presently exhibited at Katedralskolen, Oslo, Norway): Assyrian inscription. CDLI gives the provenience as "uncertain (mod. uncertain)". It is not in the present MSS-webpage but was in the 2004 NB-catalogue and not among the entries removed or changed in June 2004. Schøyen's private catalogue gives a provenience of the Royal Library, Assyria. As this cannot be deduced from the academic publication (Frame 2011:146) the information might come from the looter/smuggler/dealer, or a liberal interpretation on Schøyen's part. Schøyen's private catalogue gives provenance as: Cumberland Clark collection, Bournemouth (1920s-1941) and heirs; 3. Mark Wilson, Southampton (1987-1994), acquired June 1994. The first academic publication is Frame 2011:74.

Assessment. The tablet stems from Assyria, and Schøyen has potentially unpublished information of assertions relating it to a Royal Library in Assyria, northern Iraq. The date of when it appears on the market supports Iraq as the country of origin. If the provenance is not fabricated, the reference to a Cumberland Clark collection does not supply information about how and when the tablet arrived in Britain and does not indicate an older collection (see MS 2368) and does not exclude an illicit acquisition (ref. MS 2855). The appearance June 1994 suggest it was looted in and smuggled out of Iraq after 1991.

Recommendation.

1. Ms 2800 should be secured from the Norwegian Katedralskolen in Oslo.
2. Schøyen has failed to provide documentation of legal removal from Iraq and the evidence on balance otherwise indicates modern looting, smuggling and illicit trading. The object should be returned to Iraq.

failed







MS 3287 (George 102)

Burnt clay. Black inclination on reverse side. Coll. No. in black ink on two sides. 55x80x20

Sumerian inscription. CDLI gives the provenience as “uncertain (mod. uncertain)”. It is not listed on the MSS-webpage or in the entries removed in 2004, but according to CDLI it was probably in the 2004 NB-database. Schøyen’s catalogue gives the provenience as Larsa, but it cannot be determined if this is based on George’s text interpretation (2011:209 “... written in or near Larsa”) or information provided by the looter/dealer. The provenance is given as “Provenance: 1. Cumberland Clark collection, Bournemouth (1920s-1941) and heirs; 2. Martha Crouse collection, Hong Kong and New England, USA (-1980s); 3. Pars Antiques, London, June 1989.” When and how Schøyen acquired the object is not explicated. Cumberland Clark cannot be used to ascertain an old acquisition (see MS 2368) or rule out recent looting (see MS 2855). As Crouse otherwise is listed as 1988-1990 (MS 4899-4921) and there is an association to Pars, 1989 is the central chronological reference. The first publication is George 2011(:209).

Assessment. The object stems from Iraq. The information in Schøyen’s private catalogue is inadequate in terms of provenance. The lacunas in the available information about when and how the object initially turned up, as well as acquired by Schøyen indicate a recent looting and smuggling. On the balance of the evidence, the artefact is looted/stolen around 1989.

Recommendation.

1. Schøyen has failed to provide documentation of legal removal from Iraq and the evidence on balance otherwise indicates modern looting, smuggling and illicit trading. The object should be returned to Iraq.





MS 2879 (George 91)

Orange stone. Pierced with no abruptness in drill hole. Coll. No. On attached yellow tab. 33x28x13

Carnelian with inscription in Akkadian. CDLI gives the provenience as “uncertain (mod. uncertain)”. It is not listed in the MSS-webpage or entries removed 2004. Under provenance information in Schøyen’s private catalogue King Shutur-Nahhunte, Southwest Iran is listed, but this is based on the text as Vallat (2011:191) translated it: a gift to the god Uirsu at the Gate of Anzan (in present day Iran). The ownership history is given (in the private catalogue) as: Cumberland Clark collection, Bournemouth (1920s-1941) and heirs; 3. Mark Wilson, Southampton (1987-1994), acquired June 1994. The first publication is Vallat 2011.

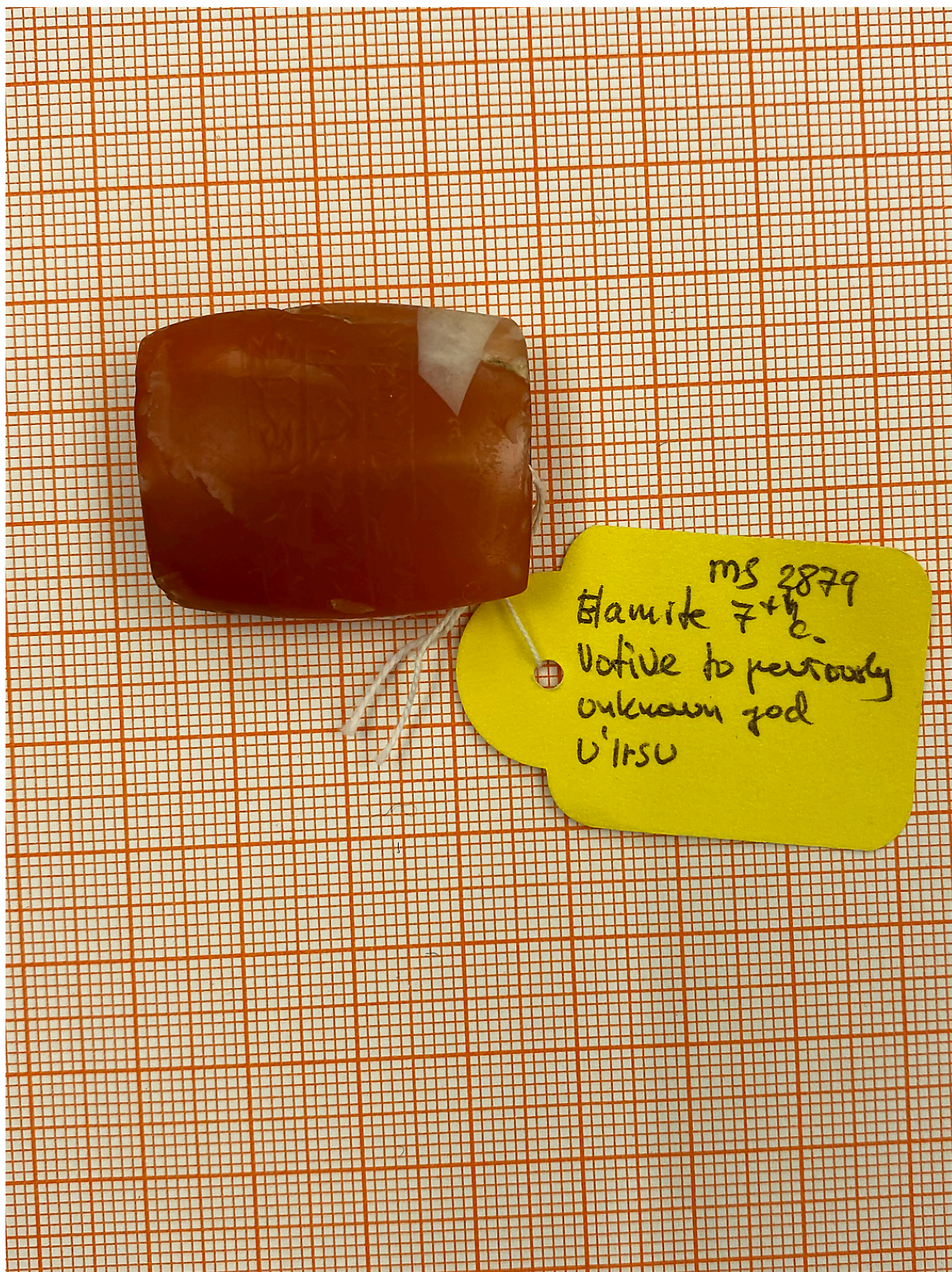
Assessment. The date of when the tablet appears on the market supports an association to Iraq. If the provenance is not fabricated, the reference to a Cumberland Clark collection does not supply information about how and when the tablet arrived in Britain and does not indicate an older collection (see MS 2368), nor does it exclude an illicit acquisition (ref. MS 2855). The appearance June 1994 also suggests it was looted in and smuggled out of Iraq, while the text creates an association to Iran. The information available indicates it was removed illegally from either Iraq or Iran. Given the dates that give a positive anchorage for when the object turns up on the market, the object is conceivably removed in breach of Iraq’s legislation, Iran’s National Heritage Protection Act of November 3, 1930, and is (if from Iraq) in breach of Security Council resolutions.

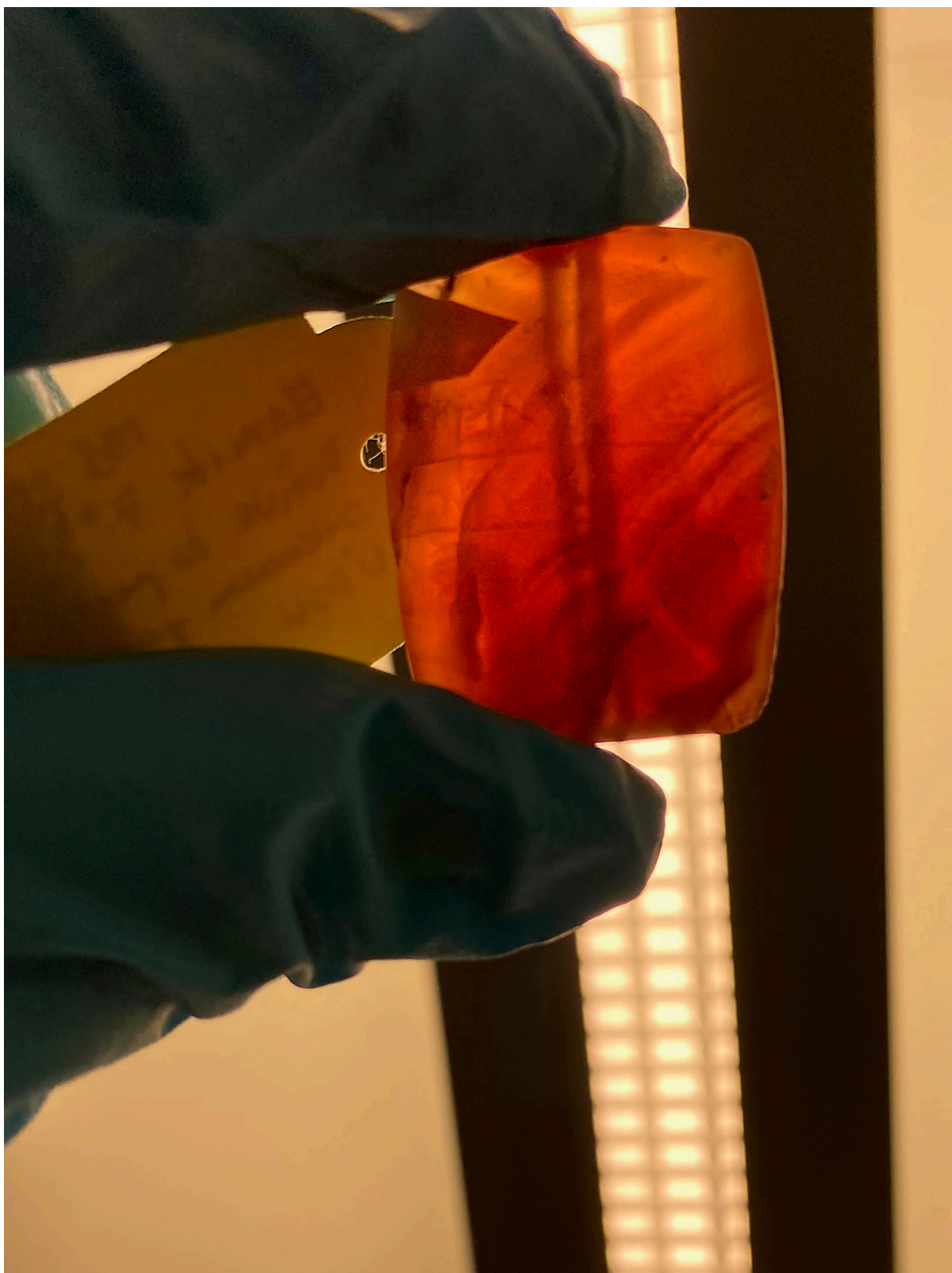
Recommendation.

- 1) Schøyen should provide documentation of when and by whom the tablet was initially acquired, any information about was found, and a copy of a legal export license.
- 2) Failing to provide documents demonstrating legal export and acquisition, the tablet should be held back at a suitable facility.
- 3) Consultations with experts not affiliated with the Schøyen group, as well as authorities in Iraq and Iran should be held.



MS 2829
Blawie & Co.
Office to present
C. 1150
C. 1150





MS 2786/2 (George 85)

Agate disc. Drilled piecing. Coll. No. in black ink. 35x12

The following also includes MS 2786/1:

Disc with inscription in Akkadian. CDLI gives the provenience as “uncertain (mod. uncertain)”. They are not in the present MSS-webpage, but were in the 2004 NB-base, and not among the entries removed or altered in June 2004. Schøyen’s private catalogue states a provenience of “Nebuchadnezzar II”. Provenance in Schøyen’s private catalogues is “Sotheby’s New York 5 June 1999, lot 104”. The catalogue from Sotheby’s has not been obtained. Apart from an as-yet unpublished entry in RINBE1, the first publication listed is by George 2011(:184).

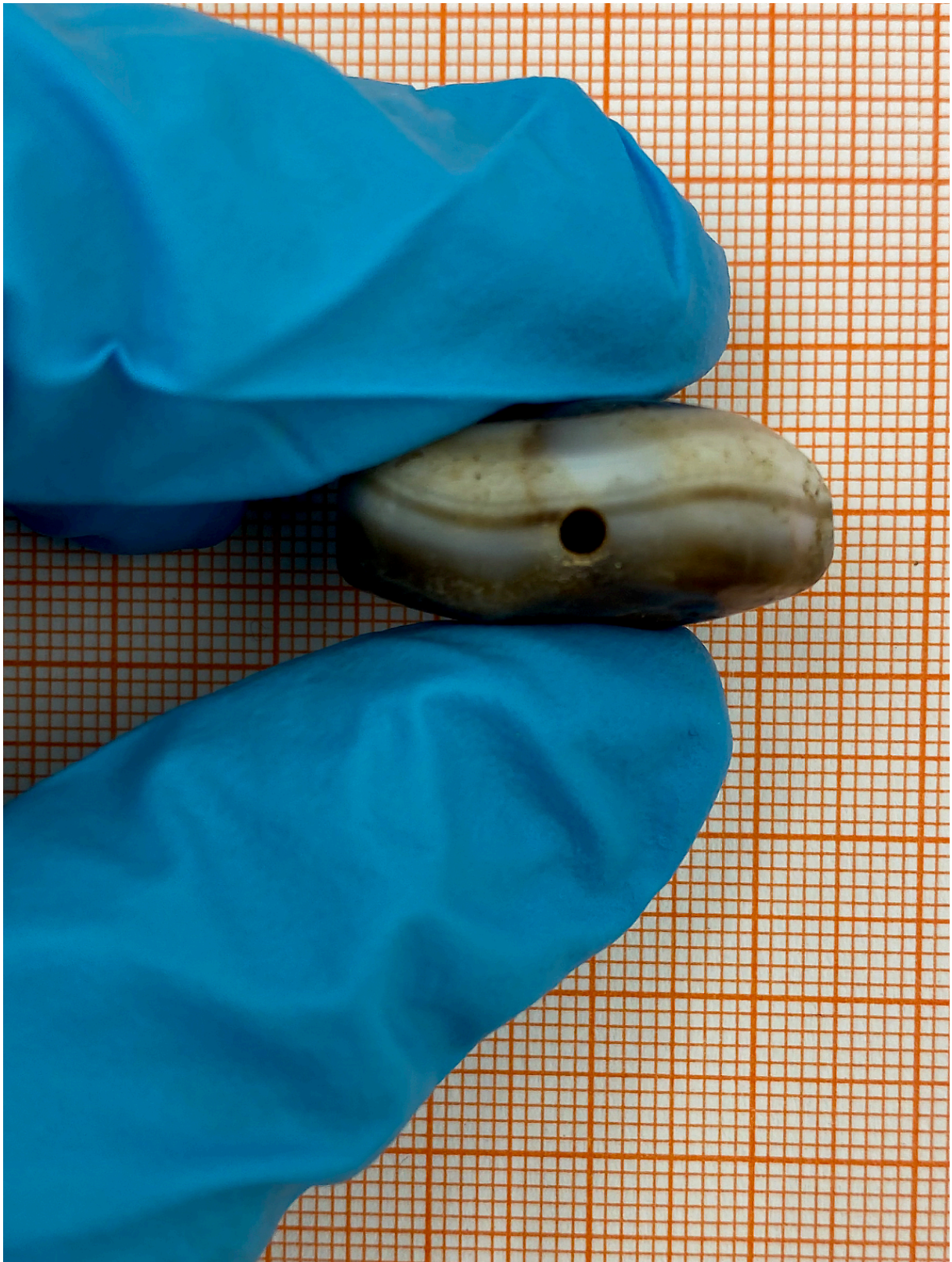
Assessment. The objects association with Nebuchadnezzar indicates Babylon (Iraq), though the Neo-Babylonian empire has a significantly greater extension than modern Iraq. There is little provenance information, and the chronology for it turning up on the market indicates it is looted in Iraq.

Recommendation.

- 1) Schøyen is required to supply all documents associated with the pieces to demonstrate when and how it was removed from Iraq, a legal export license and ownership history.
- 2) Failing to provide documentation or on providing documentation that does not prove legal removal from Iraq, the objects should be returned to Iraq.







MS 1880 (George 55)

Clay tablet. Damaged and repair on corner. Coll. No. in black ink. 65x48x20

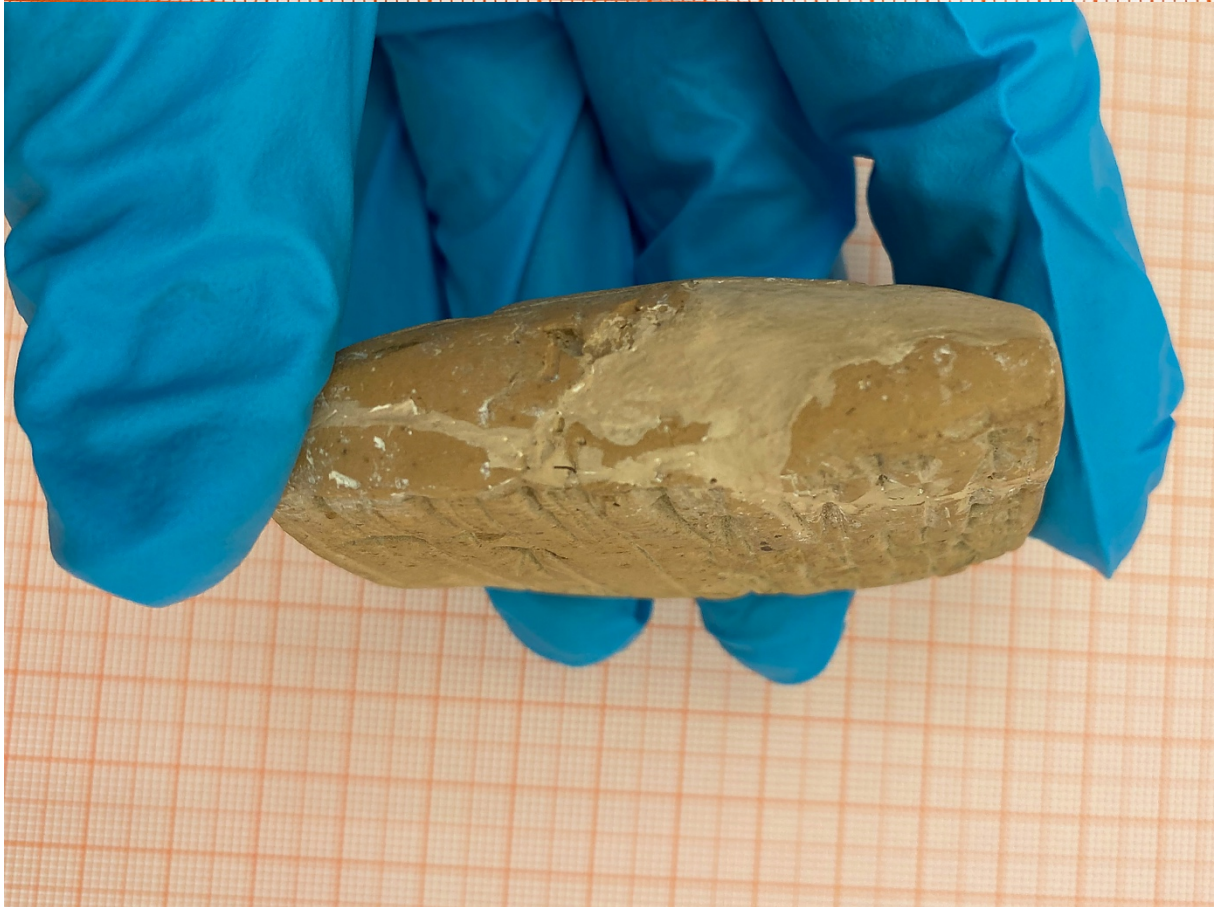
Clay tablet in Sumerian. CDLI lists provenance as uncertain (mod. uncertain). CDLI gives the 2004 NB-catalogue as its initial source, and it is not among the removed or altered entries in 2004. MS 1880 is not listed on the present MSS-website. Schøyen's private catalogue lists provenience as "Royal palace of Sin-Kashid, Uruk", but this probably stems from George's (2011:115) discussion of the text itself. Schøyen's private catalogue lists provenance as associated with the dealers Charles Ede, London (1983-1994) cat. 16, *Writing & Lettering in Antiquity* (1994), no. 32 and Sam Fogg, London, June 1994. CDLI refers to a primary publication in Frayne 1990 (:444-447), but this reference is to comparable texts not the Schøyen object. The Schøyen object or reference to former owner Charles Ede is not found in Frayne 1990, and the object was not known by Frayne in early 1990. The first reference is thus George 2011:115.

Assessment: The accessible sources do not provide indications of ownership history prior to Ede's auction in 1994. The first academic reference is in George 2011. Sam Fogg has a record of handling unprovenanced artefacts. Probably, the object was looted in and smuggled out of Iraq between the late 1980s and early 1990s.

Recommendation.

3. Schøyen has failed to provide documentation of legal removal from Iraq and the evidence on balance otherwise indicates modern looting, smuggling and illicit trading. The object should be returned to Iraq.

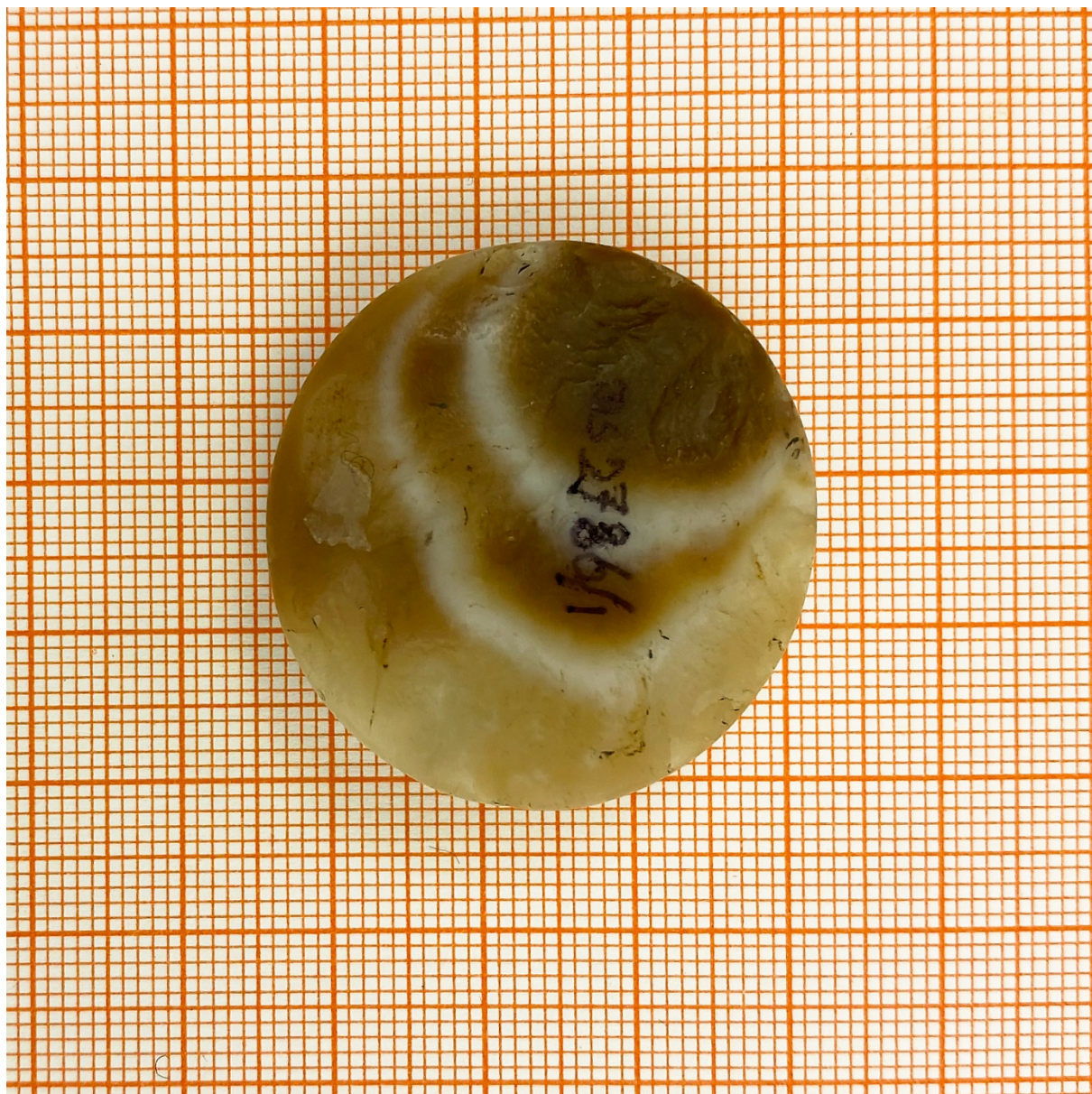




MS 2786/1 (George 84)

Agate disk. Pierced. Coll. No. in black ink. 35x12

For assessment and recommendation, cf. 2786/2 above.







MS 3210 (George 61)

Clay, heavily burned (secondary treatment?). Coll. No. in black ink. 86x58x27

Babylonian inscription. CDLI gives the provenience as “uncertain (mod. uncertain)”. It is not listed on the MSS-webpage or among the entries removed in 2004, but according to CDLI it was in the 2004 NB-database. Neither Schøyen’s catalogue nor George 2001(:117) provide specifics concerning the tablet’s provenience. The content indicates Babylon, i.e. modern Iraq. Schøyen gives the provenance as Cumberland Clark collection, Bournemouth (1920s-1941) and heirs; 2. Mark Wilson, Southampton (1987-1994), acquired June 1994. If the provenance is not fabricated or manipulated, the reference to a Cumberland Clark collection does not supply information about how and when the tablet arrived in Britain and does not indicate an older collection (see MS 2368), nor does it exclude an illicit acquisition (see MS 2855). The only academic reference is George 2011:117. Both Schøyen and George indicate the inscription is particular (Schøyen: “previously unknown”), indicating a recent appearance.

Assessment. The tablet derives from Iraq. There is no documented record before Schøyen’s acquisition and George’s 2011 publication. All this indicates recent looting and smuggling out of Iraq.

Recommendation.

1. Schøyen has failed to provide documentation of legal removal from Iraq and the evidence on balance otherwise indicates modern looting, smuggling and illicit trading. The object should be returned to Iraq.







MS 3266 (George 3)

Grey sandstone, fragment of vase or bowl. Coll. No. in black ink. on both sides. 112x110x11

Inscription in Sumerian. CDLI gives the provenience as “uncertain (mod. uncertain)”. It is not listed on the MSS-webpage or among the entries removed in 2004, but according to CDLI was in the 2004 NB-database. Neither Schøyen’s catalogue nor Steinkeller (2011:2) provide specifics concerning the tablet’s provenience. The text indicates Sumer and modern-day Iraq. Schøyen gives the provenance to Cumberland Clark collection, Bournemouth (1920s-1941) and heirs and Martha Crouse collection, Hong Kong and New England, USA (-1980s); 3. Pars Antiques, London, June 1989. It is uncertain when Schøyen acquired the object. Cumberland Clark cannot be used to ascertain an old acquisition (see MS 2368) or rule out recent looting (see MS 2855). As Crouse otherwise is listed as 1988-1990 (MS 4899-4921) and there is an association to Pars, this provenance is of limited value. The first publication is Steinkeller 2011:2.

Assessment. The object derives from southern Iraq. The first public record is potentially 1989, the first publication is 2011, indicating that it was looted and smuggled out of Iraq moderately recently, probably after 1988.

Recommendation.

1. Schøyen has failed to provide documentation of legal removal from Iraq and the evidence on balance otherwise indicates modern looting, smuggling and illicit trading. The object should be returned to Iraq.



MS 3224 (George 1)

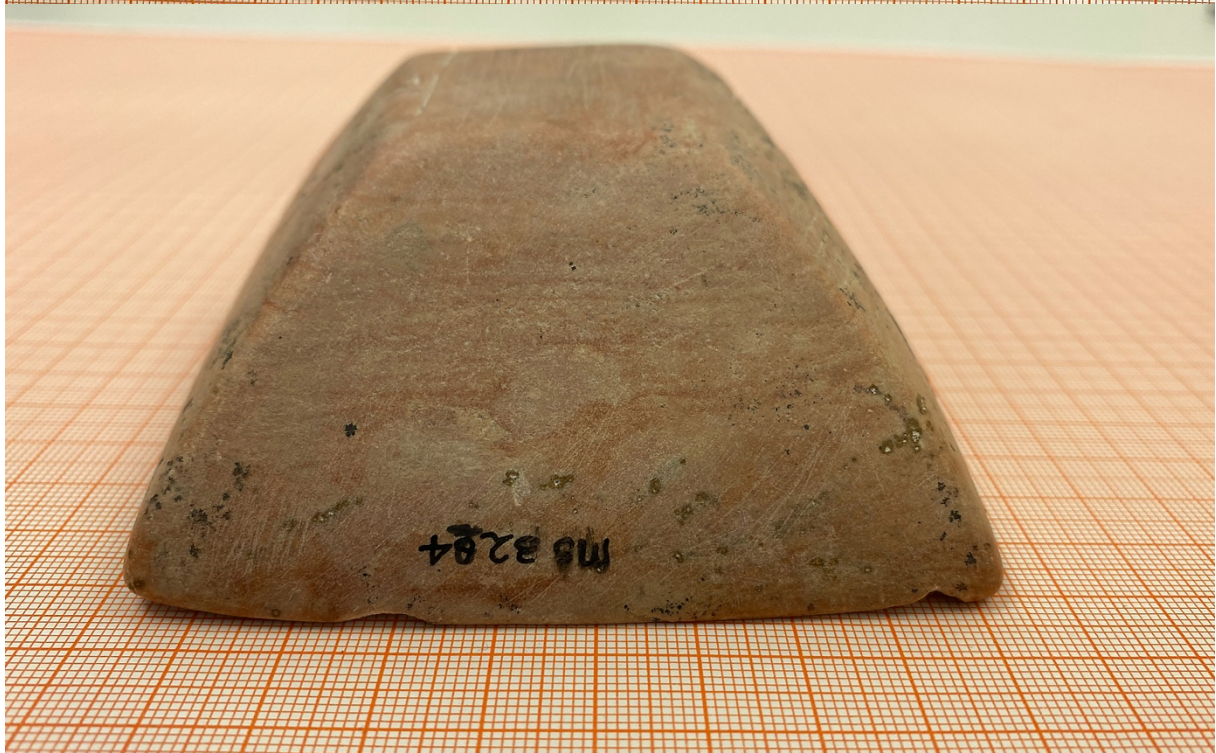
Pink stone. Fragment. Coll. No. in black ink. 100x100x40

Sumerian inscription. CDLI gives the provenience as “uncertain (mod. uncertain)”. It is not listed on the MSS-webpage and is not among the entries removed in 2004, and it does not seem to have been in the NB-database in 2004. Neither Schøyen’s private catalogue nor Steinkeller (2011:1) provide provenience, but the general context is Sumerian, southern Iraq. Schøyen’s private catalogue gives the provenance as “Martha Crouse collection, Hong Kong and New England, USA (1920s-1980s); 2. Pars Antiques, London, June 1989”, but it is uncertain when Schøyen acquired the object. As Crouse otherwise is listed as 1988-1990 (MS 4899-4921) and there is an association to Pars, it is uncertain if this information is relevant or accurate. The first publication is Steinkeller 2011 – which also represents the first public appearance.

Assessment. The object derives from southern Iraq. The first public record is 2011, indicating that it was looted and smuggled out of Iraq moderately recently, probably after 1988, at the earliest.

Recommendation.

2. Schøyen has failed to provide documentation of legal removal from Iraq and the evidence on balance otherwise indicates modern looting, smuggling and illicit trading. The object should be returned to Iraq.





MS 3268 (George 54)

Alabaster fragment, jar. Coll. No. in black ink. 90x48x7

Inscription in Sumerian. CDLI gives the provenience as “uncertain (mod. uncertain)”. It is not listed on the MSS-webpage or among the entries removed in 2004, but was in the 2004 NB-database.

According to George (2011:108, discussing three textually related tablets), “Larsa is an obvious candidate for the provenience of the three tablets [MS 2983, 3409, 3289] ...”. He does not explicate whether this logic extends to the bowl fragment, but it is reasonable to assume a provenience to southern Iraq. Schøyen’s catalogue postulates Larsa. The only provenience is found in Schøyen’s private catalogue: “Provenience: 1. Cumberland Clark collection, Bournemouth (1920s-1941) and heirs; 2. Martha Crouse collection, Hong Kong and New England, USA (-1980s); 3. Pars Antiques, London, June 1989.” When and how Schøyen acquired the object is not explicated. Cumberland Clark cannot be used to ascertain an old acquisition (see MS 2368) or rule out recent looting (see MS 2855). As Crouse otherwise is listed as 1988-1990 (MS 4899-4921) and there is an association to Pars, 1989 represents the chronological reference. The first publication is George 2011(114).

Assessment. The object stems from Iraq. The lacunas in the available information about when and how the object was initially turns up on the market, as well as acquired by Schøyen raises issues indicates that 1989 is the reference point. The object is potentially looted/stolen slightly before June 1989.

Recommendation.

1. Schøyen has failed to provide documentation of legal removal from Iraq and the evidence on balance otherwise indicates modern looting, smuggling and illicit trading. The object should be returned to Iraq.





MS 3265 (George 2)

Alabaster fragment, vase. Coll. No. in black ink. 75x95x10

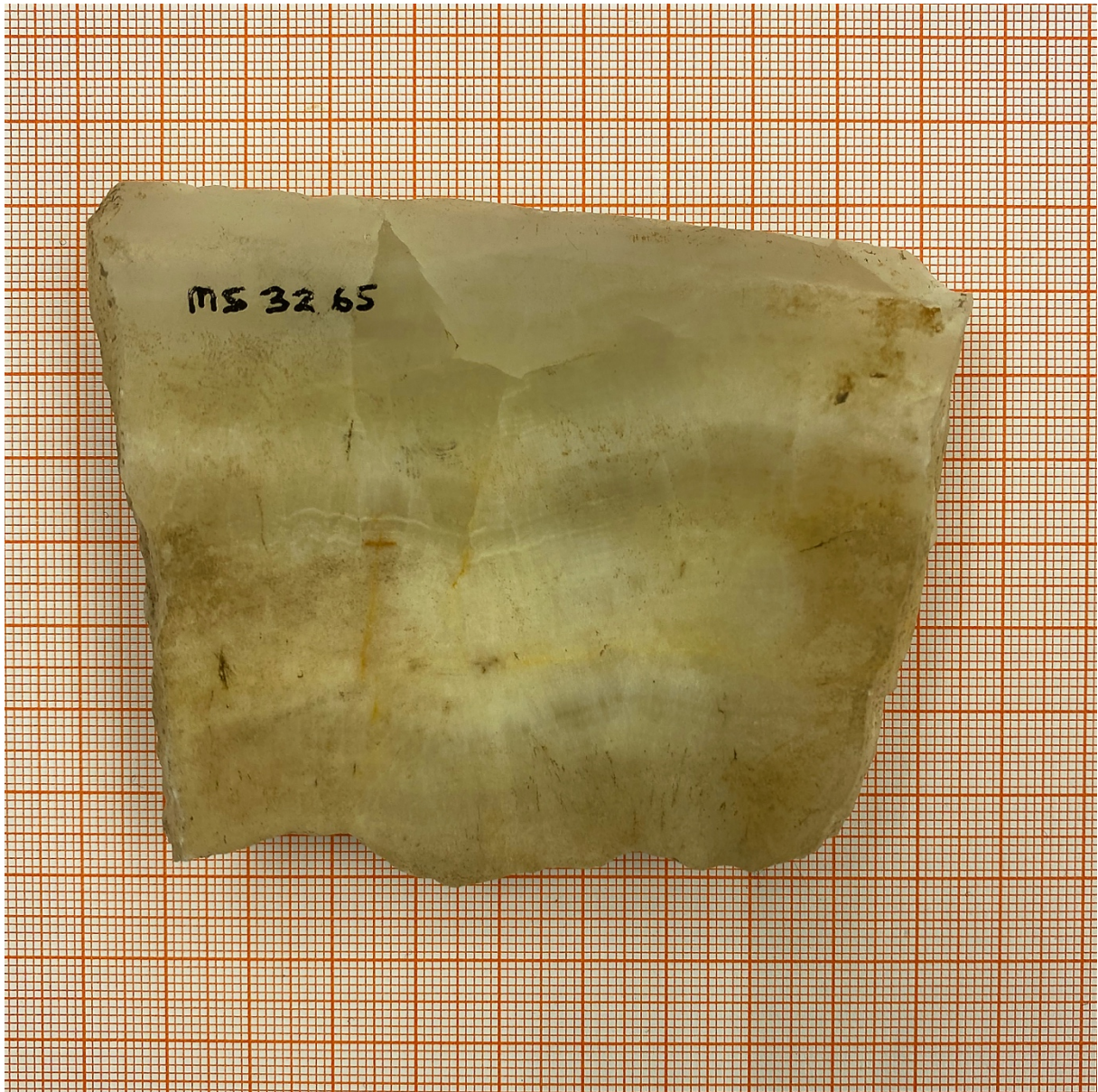
Inscription in Sumerian. CDLI gives the provenience as “uncertain (mod. uncertain)”. It is not listed on the MSS-webpage or among the entries removed in 2004, but according to CDLI it was in the 2004 NB-database. Neither Schøyen’s catalogue nor Steinkeller (2011:2) provide specifics concerning the tablet’s provenience. The text indicates Sumer and modern-day Iraq. Schøyen gives the provenance to Cumberland Clark collection, Bournemouth (1920s-1941) and heirs and Martha Crouse collection, Hong Kong and New England, USA (-1980s); 3. Pars Antiques, London, June 1989, but it is uncertain when Schøyen acquired the object. Cumberland Clark cannot be used to ascertain an old acquisition (see MS 2368) or rule out recent looting (see MS 2855). As Crouse otherwise is listed as 1988-1990 (MS 4899-4921) and there is an association to Pars, it is uncertain what this listing represents. The first publication is Steinkeller 2011:2.

Assessment. The object derives from southern Iraq. June 1989 is the first public reference and the first publication record is 2011, indicating that it was looted and smuggled out of Iraq moderately recently, probably after 1988.

Recommendation.

1. Schøyen has failed to provide documentation of legal removal from Iraq and the evidence on balance otherwise indicates modern looting, smuggling and illicit trading. The object should be returned to Iraq.





MS 3269 (George 64)

Black stone, fragment (of statue). Coll. No. in black ink. 130x110x50

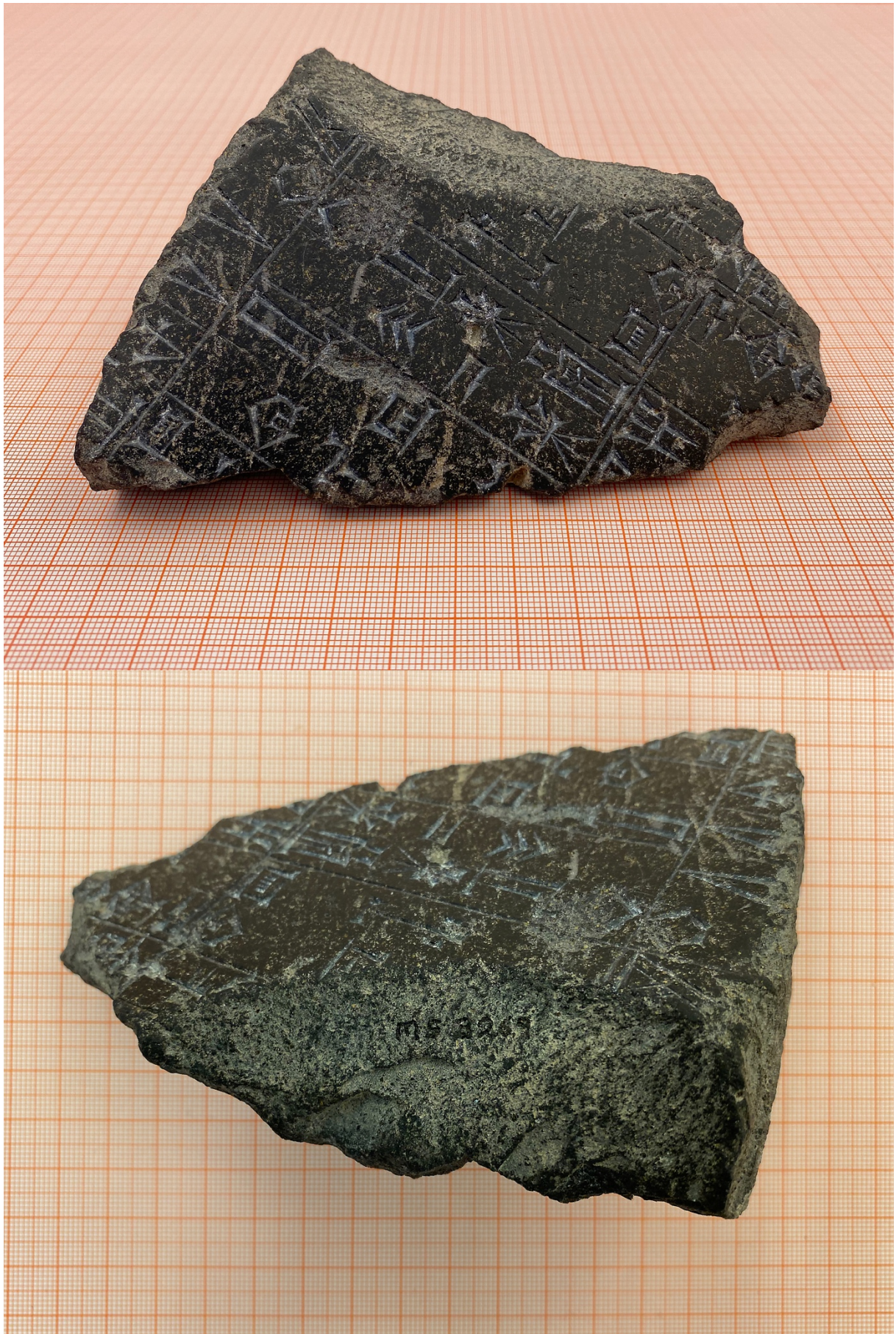
Inscription in Akkadian and Sumerian. CDLI gives the provenience as “uncertain (mod. uncertain)”. It is not listed on the MSS-webpage or the entries removed in 2004, but according to CDLI was in the 2004 NB-database. The text (as discussed by George 2011:121) indicates the object derives from Iraq, similar objects deriving from Kish and Ur. Schøyen gives provenance as “1. Cumberland Clark collection, Bournemouth (1920s-1941) and heirs; 2. Martha Crouse collection, Hong Kong and New England, USA (-1980s); 3. Pars Antiques, London, June 1989”. When and how Schøyen acquired the object is not explicated. Cumberland Clark cannot be used to ascertain an old acquisition (se MS 2368) or rule out recent looting (MS 2855). As Crouse otherwise is listed as 1988-1990 (MS 4899-4921) and there is an association to Pars, 1989 is the chronological key. The first publication is George 2011.

Assessment. The object stems from Iraq. The lacunas in the available information about when and how the object was initially acquired, as well as acquired by Schøyen raises issues, indicates a recent

and illicit arrival on the market. The object is on the balance of the evidence looted/stolen around 1989.

Recommendation.

2. Schøyen has failed to provide documentation of legal removal from Iraq and the evidence on balance otherwise indicates modern looting, smuggling and illicit trading. The object should be returned to Iraq.



MS 2426 (George 6)

Limestone cone. Recent incision/damage on top, traces of repair(?) on upper side. Coll. No. in black ink. 120x75

Dedicatory inscription. CDLI gives the provenience as “uncertain (mod. uncertain)”, The present MSS-webpage gives no provenience. It is one of the entries removed in June 2004 from the NB-base, and here provenience is listed as “Temple of Shara?, Umma”, which is also given in Schøyen’s private catalogue. It turns up in the 2006 NB-base without provenience information apart from Umma, but with a reference to Wilson. The provenience in both the entry removed from the NB-catalogue in 2004 and Schøyen’s private catalogue is “British soldier on active duty in the Middle East during World War II, UK (1945-1996); 3. Pars Antiques, London, October 1997”. The first public reference is the Pars sale, then Frayne 2008(:372-374) and Steinkeller 2011(:6). Interestingly, Steinkeller had access to the piece in 1999, and communicated its content to Frayne at that time, indicating that it was unknown to Frayne before that time..

Assessment: The reference to WW2 is conceivably detour-information, but if true the totality of information provided above indicates the cone was removed from Iraq sometime between May 1941 and 1997. The fact that it became known to the scholarly community suggests it appears on the market in the 1990s. It thus was removed in breach of Iraqi legislation.

Recommendation.

1. Schøyen has failed to provide documentation of legal removal from Iraq and the evidence on balance otherwise indicates modern looting, smuggling and illicit trading. The object should be returned to Iraq.







MS 3028 (George 65)

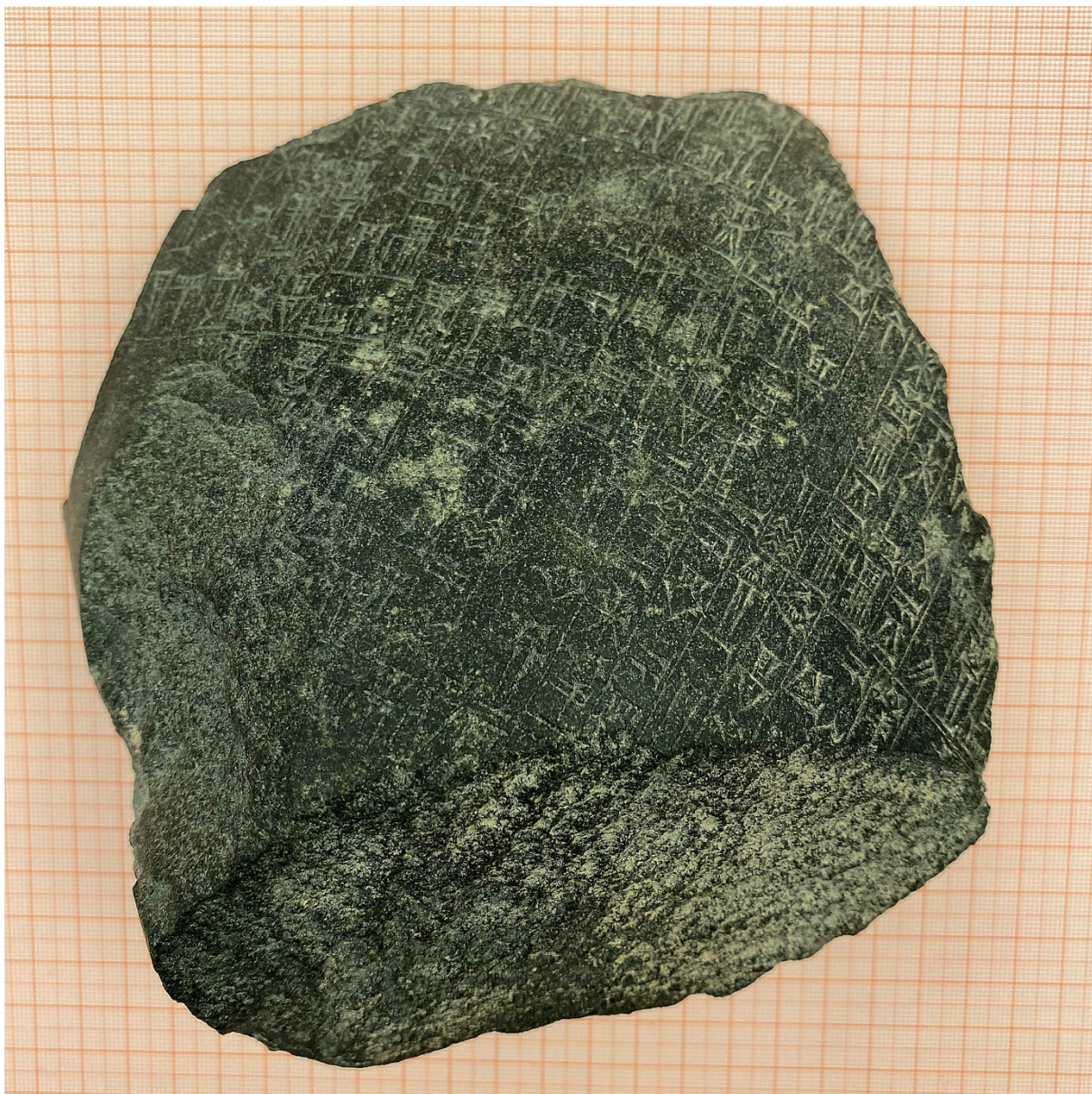
Black stone, fragment of statue(?). Coll. No. in black ink, two times, and black ink on white paint once. 150x150x70

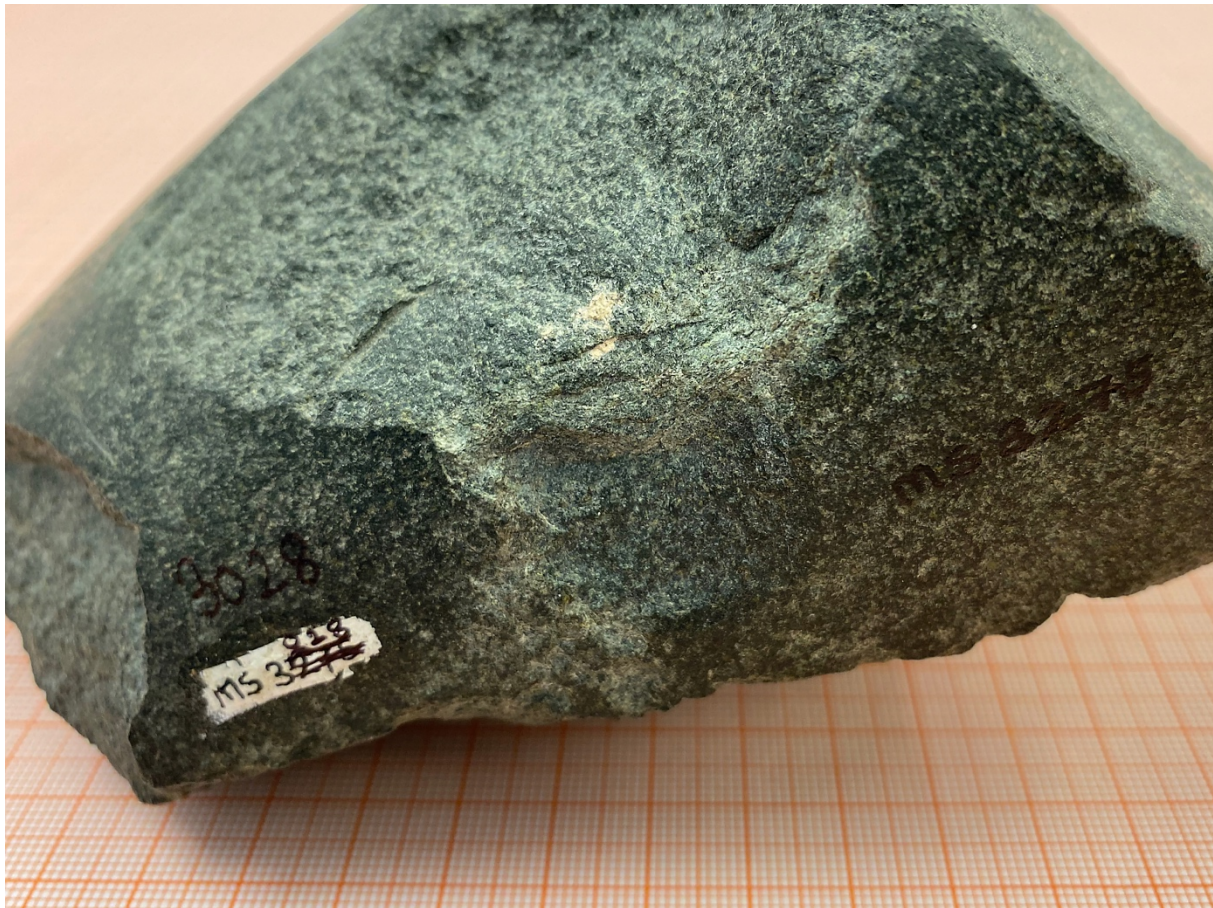
Sumerian inscription. CDLI gives the provenience as “uncertain (mod. uncertain)”. It is not listed on the MSS-webpage, but according to CDLI was in the 2004 NB-catalogue. It was not among the entries removed or changed in 2004. Schøyen’s private catalogue does not provide provenience. The content of the Sumerian text indicates contexts in southern Iraq, particularly Nippur. George (2011:122) compares the text to a statue fragment from Aqar Quf, a Babylonian city in Iraq. The provenance in Schøyen’s private catalogue is: Cumberland Clark collection, Bournemouth (1920s-1941) and heirs and Martha Crouse collection, Hong Kong and New England, USA (-1980s) and 3. Pars Antiques, London, June 1989. If the provenance is not fabricated, the reference to a Cumberland Clark collection does not supply information about how and when the tablet arrived in Britain and does not indicate an older collection (see MS 2368), nor does it exclude an illicit acquisition (see MS 2855). The reference to Martha Crouse is at odds with other chronologies (e.g., MS 4899-4921) of her collecting up to 1990. The first academic reference is George 2011:122.

Assessment. The fragment in all probability stems from Iraq. If the provenance is not fabricated, the reference to a Cumberland Clark collection does not supply information about how and when the tablet arrived in Britain and does not indicate an older collection (see MS 2368), nor does it exclude an illicit acquisition (see MS 2855). The provenance from the private Schøyen catalogue indicates that the piece may have been smuggled out of Iraq before 1991, but after 1917 and probably after 1924 and 1936 - but the information is sketchy. The reference to Martha Crouse is at odds with other chronologies (e.g., MS 4899- 4921) of her collecting up to 1990. The first academic reference in George 2011:122. A late arrival is suggested by the first public record in 2011.

Recommendation.

1. Schøyen has failed to provide documentation of legal removal from Iraq and the evidence on balance otherwise indicates modern looting, smuggling and illicit trading. The object should be returned to Iraq.





MS 2870/2 (George 83)

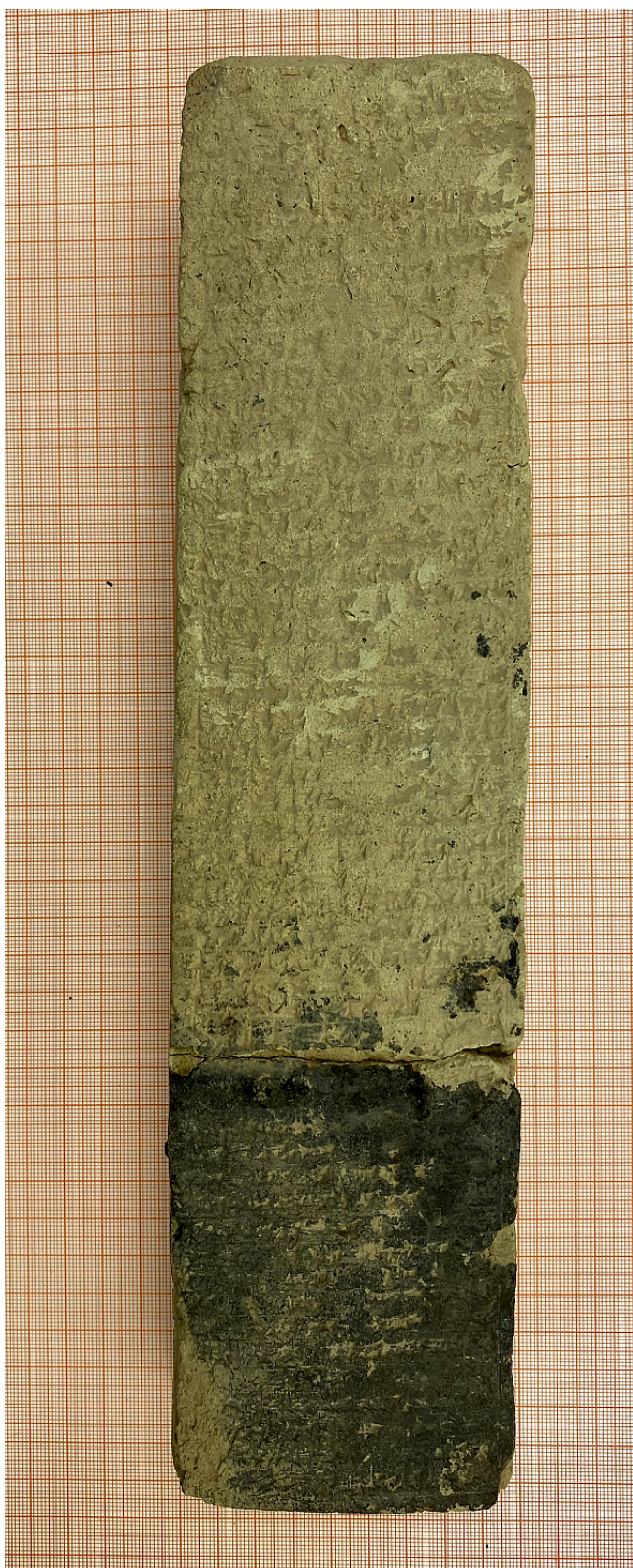
Clay brick. Broken, and glued as repair. Modern cut. Coll. No. in black ink. 320x60x80

Brick with inscription in Neo-Babylonian. CDLI gives the provenience as “uncertain (mod. uncertain)”, the current MSS-webpage does not list these artefacts (/1 & /2), according to CDLI they were listed in the 2004 NB-catalogue, but they are not among entries removed or changed in 2004. In Schøyen’s private catalogue provenience is given as Shamash temple, Larsa (based on George 2011:182?). The only provenance information is in Schøyen’s private catalogue: Cumberland Clark collection, Bournemouth (1920s-1941) and heirs; 3. Mark Wilson, Southampton (1987-1994), acquired June 1994. It is first published by George (2011:182). CDLI lists a secondary publication in Berger (1973:225), but this is to comparable texts in the British Museum.

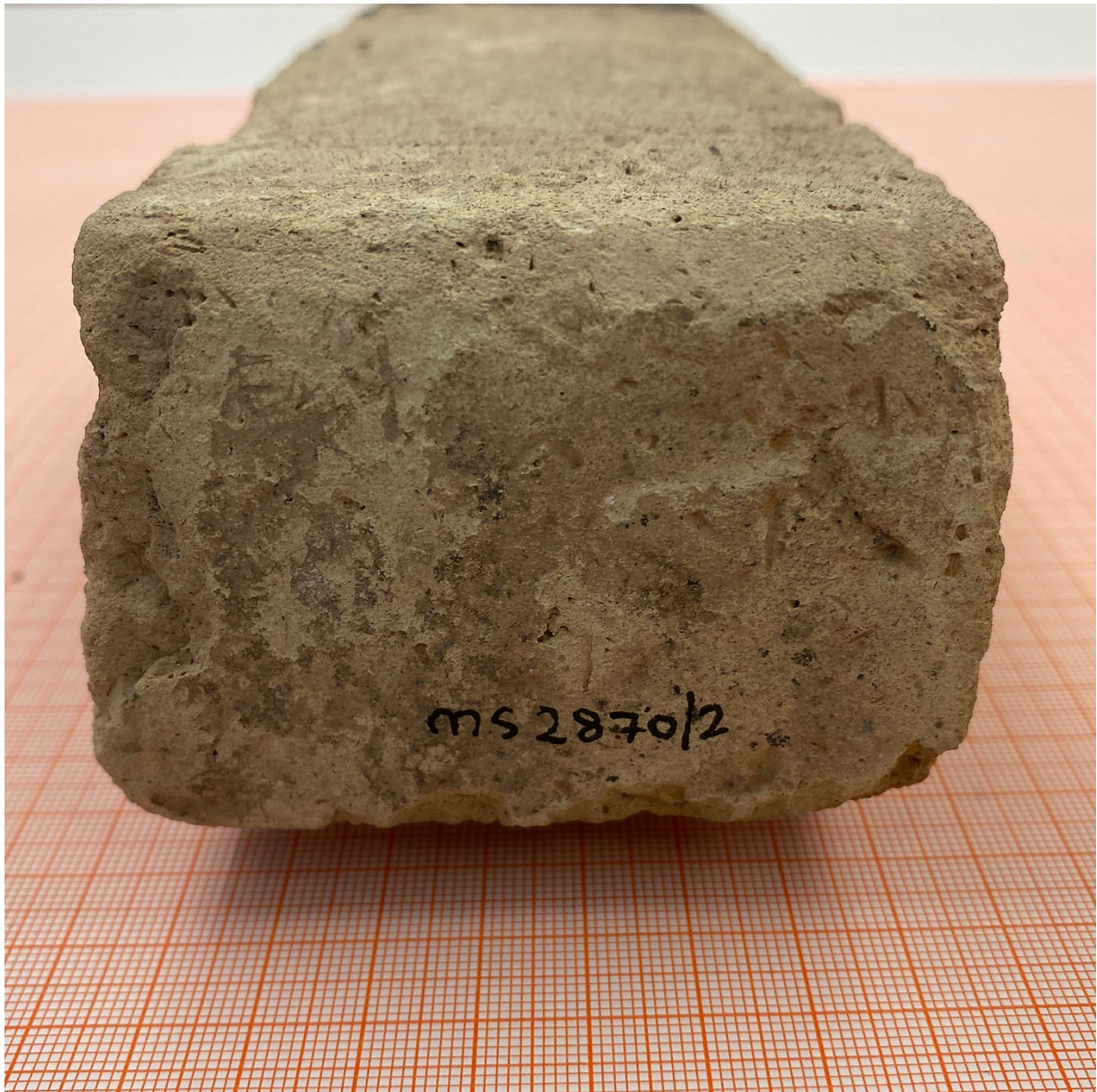
Assessment. The text and objects’ nature indicate an origin in southern Iraq, and the date of when the tablet appears on the market supports this interpretation. If the provenance is not fabricated, the reference to a Cumberland Clark collection does not supply information about how and when the tablet arrived in Britain and does not indicate an older collection (see MS 2368) and does not exclude an illicit acquisition (ref. MS 2855). The appearance June 1994 also suggests it was looted in and smuggled out of Iraq after 1991.

Recommendation.

1. Schøyen has failed to provide documentation of legal removal from Iraq and the evidence on balance otherwise indicates modern looting, smuggling and illicit trading. The object should be returned to Iraq.







MS 2870/1 (George 82)

Clay brick. Modern cut. Coll. No. in black ink. 320x60x80

Cf. 2870/2 above for assessment and recommendation.



MS 1877 (George 29)

Clay brick. Modern cut. Coll. No. in black ink. on two sides. 310x180x70

Brick with inscription in Sumerian. CDLI lists provenience as “uncertain (mod. uncertain)”. CDLI lists the NB 2004 catalogue as its initial source, and it does not figure in removed or altered versions of the NB-catalogue in 2004. The present MSS-website provides no provenience. Schøyen’s private catalogue states: “1. E-ninnu temple, Girsu, Lagash (2141-2122 BC.-); 2. Rihani collection, Irbid (ca. 1935) and Amman, Jordan (before 1965-1988), and London (1988-1994); 3. Chris Martin, London

(1994); 4. Sam Fogg, London, June 1994.” It is not clear when Schøyen acquired the artefact. Edzard 1997 refers to the general text, the first publication is George 2011:53.

Assessment. The brick is from Iraq, probably Girsu. It turns up on the market in 1994. All the involved have reputations for dealing in illicit artefacts. It was in all probability looted in the early 1990s, smuggled to Jordan and exported with Rihani’s Jordanian “export license” between 1991 and 1994.

Recommendation.

1. Schøyen has failed to provide documentation of legal removal from Iraq and the evidence on balance otherwise indicates modern looting, smuggling and illicit trading. The object should be returned to Iraq.



MS 1936 (George 33)

Clay brick. Coll. No. in black ink. 210x300x70

Brick with Sumerian inscription. CDLI gives the provenance as “uncertain (mod. uncertain). According to CDLI it is in the 2004 NB-base, but it is not among entries removed or altered in 2004. It is not listed in the MSS-webpage. Schøyen’s private catalogue states Ningishzida temple, Girsu (southern

Iraq), which is probably based on George's (2011:55) rendition of the inscription. George gives Sarzec's excavations at Telloh (Girsu) in 1907 as the source of these bricks. Schøyen's private catalogue gives this provenance information: Rihani collection, Irbid (ca.1935) and Amman, Jordan (before 1965-1988), and London (1988-1994) and Chris Martin, London, October 1994. It is not clear when Schøyen took possession. CDLI gives a primary publication to Edzard 1997, but this is concerned with the text. The first publication of the Schøyen brick is George 2011:55.

Assessment. The brick derives from southern Iraq, probably Tell Telloh. It has no ownership history predating Rihani and is probably smuggled out of Iraq to Jordan and the UK by Rihani. There is no record of the brick before October 1994. It was looted and smuggled between the 1980s and 1994, conceivably after 1991.

Recommendation.

1. Schøyen has failed to provide documentation of legal removal from Iraq and the evidence on balance otherwise indicates modern looting, smuggling and illicit trading. The object should be returned to Iraq.



MS 1876/2 (George 59)

Clay brick. Cut with modern tool (circle saw/). Coll. No. in black ink. on two sides. 180x100x90

Brick, inscription in Babylonian. CDLI lists provenience as “uncertain (mod. uncertain)”. Neither the 2006 catalogue nor the current MSS-webpage list provenance. NB-catalogue removed June 2004 states MS 1976/1 is from the Innana temple at Zabala, excavated in Ibzaih (ca. 1950?). George (2011:116) that blocks with the inscription are excavated in Tell Bismaya (Adab) and Tell Ibzaikh

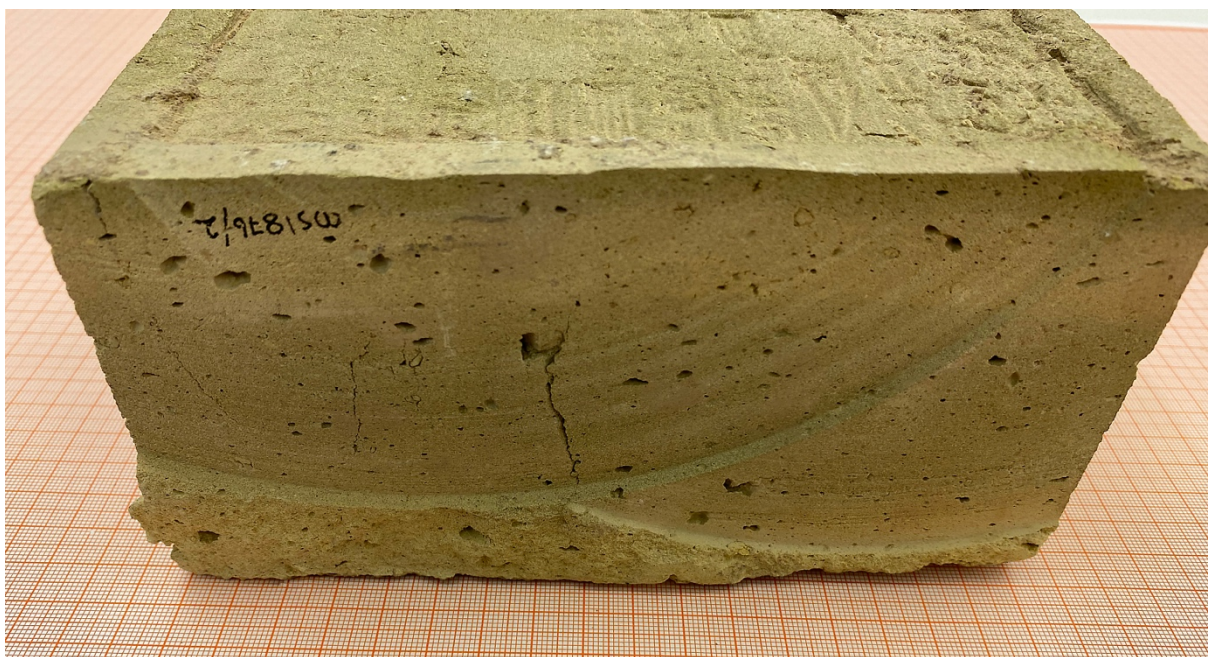
(Zabalam). According to the MSS-webpage, nine bricks are found in Baghdad Museum. The NB-catalogue removed June 2004 states it has been owned by dealer Sam Fogg. Schøyen's private catalogue gives the provenance of MS 1876/2 to be the same as MA 1876/1, and this is "1. Innana Temple, Zabalam (Tell Ibzaikh); 2. Rihani collection, Irbid (ca. 1935) and Amman, Jordan (before 1965-1988), and London (1988-1994); 3. Chris Martin, London (1994); 4. Sam Fogg, London, June 1994". CDLI maintains a first publication in 1990 by Frayne, which initially would support an older circulation of the object. Frayne, however, is concerned with the general inscription and these Schøyen manuscripts were not in and not known to Frayne (1990:353-354). The first publication is George 2011.

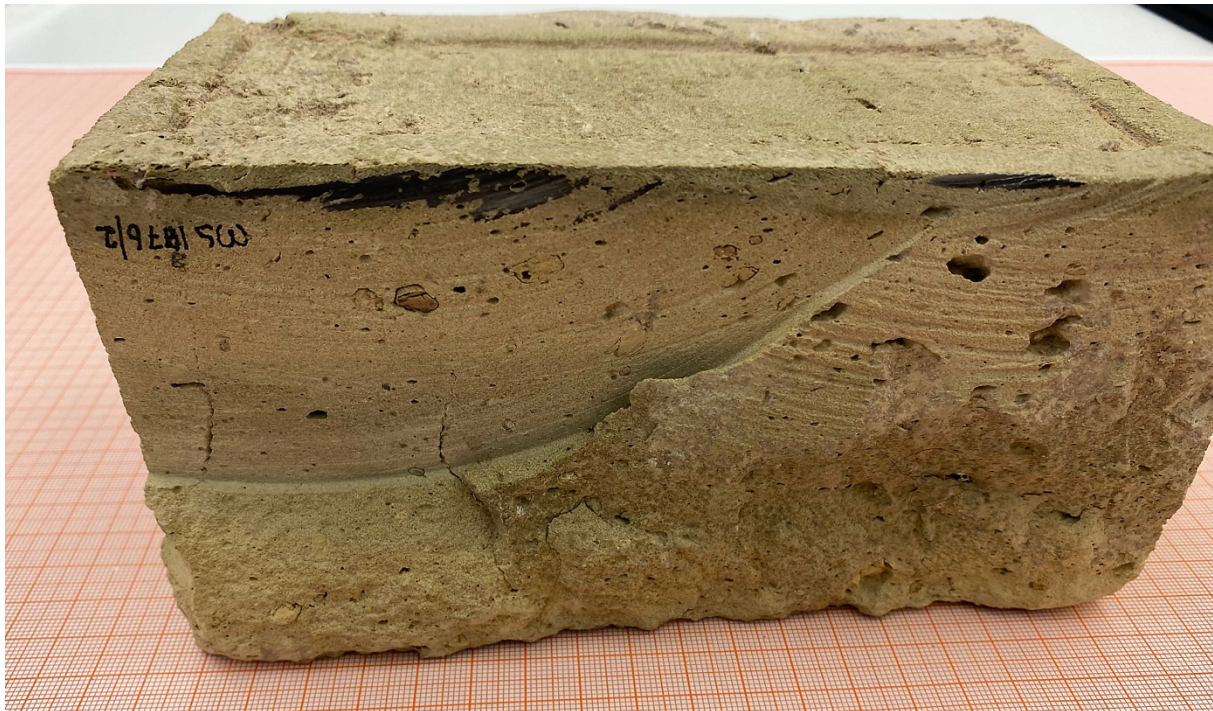
Assessment: The bricks are from Iraq and turn up on the market in 1994, if excavated around 1950, it is not known how and when they were stolen. They are potentially cut in conjunction with looting. The artefacts are rapidly traded between notorious actors on the illicit artefact market, and probably smuggled out Iraq the early 1990s, with Rihani's Jordanian "export license". This pertains to MS 1876/3 donated to the British Museum in 1994, https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/W_1994-1108-1.

Recommendation.

1. Schøyen has failed to provide documentation of legal removal from Iraq and the evidence on balance otherwise indicates modern looting, smuggling and illicit trading. The objects should be returned to Iraq.
2. Iraq's authorities should be advised concerning MS 1876/3 – British Museum registration number 1994-II-8, I.
3. The theft of excavated material from the Innana temple at Zabala, excavated in Ibzaikh should be further investigated.







MS 1878 (George 34)

Clay brick. Cut with modern tool. Coll. No. in black ink. 170x190x60

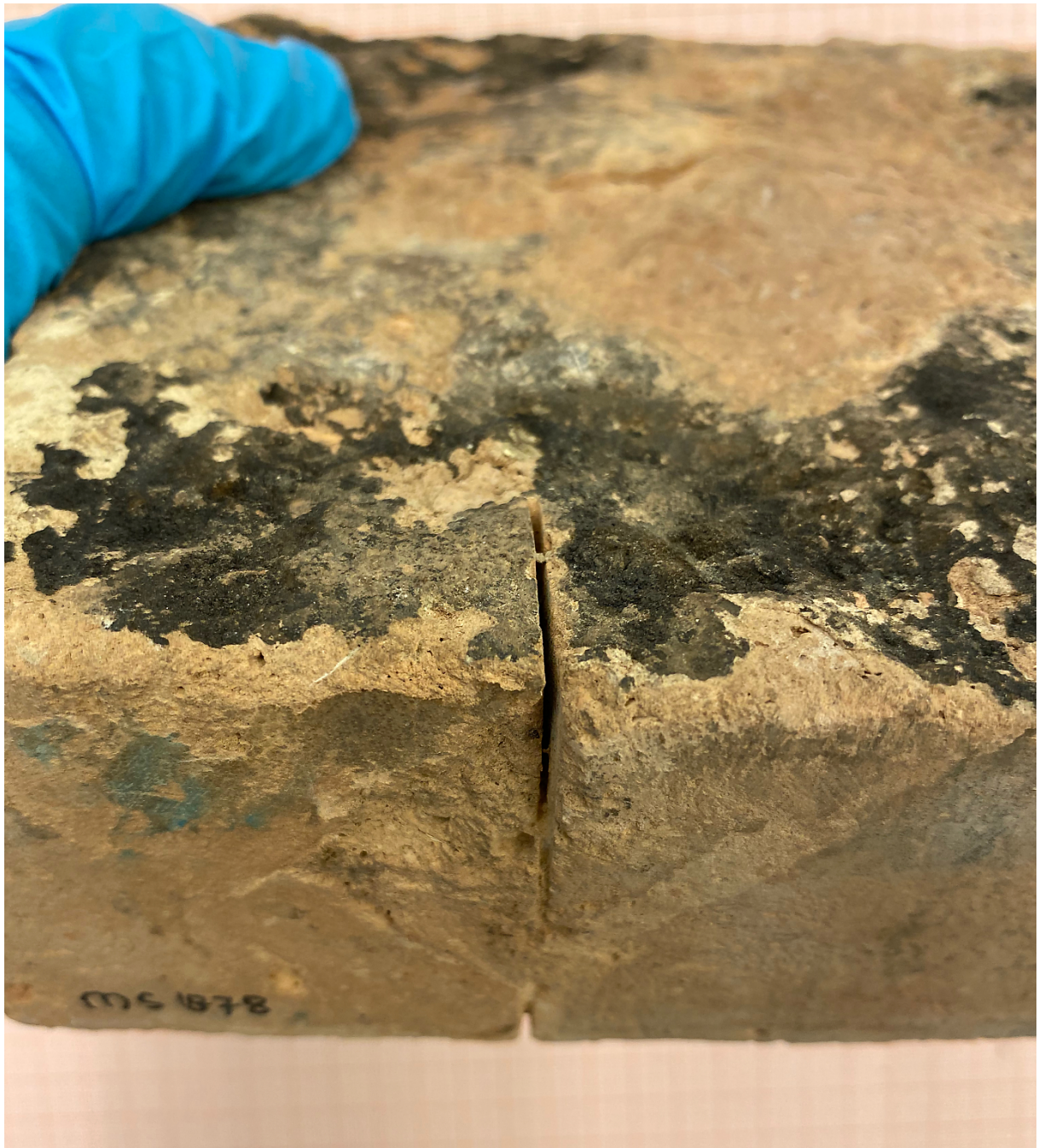
Brick with block print inscription in Neo-Sumerian. CDLI lists provenience as “uncertain (mod. uncertain)”. CDLI lists the NB-2004 catalogue as its initial source, and it does not figure in removed or altered versions of the NB-catalogue in 2004. The present MSS-website provides no provenience. According to George (2011:55) similar bricks derive from numerous cities in Sumer (Iraq). According to Schøyen’s private catalogue, the object stems from “1. Rihani collection, Irbid (ca. 1935) and Amman, Jordan (before 1965-1988), and London (1988-1994); 2. Chris Martin, London (1994); 3. Sam Fogg, London, June 1994”. Frayne 1997 deals with the text, not the Schøyen artefact. The first publication is George 2011.

Assessment. Rihani, Martin, Fogg and Schøyen all have reputations for trading in illicit artefacts. The brick is from Iraq, turns up on the market in 1994, the first reference is 2011. All the involved have a history of dealing with illicit artefacts. MS 1878 was in all probability looted between 1990 and 1994 and exported from Iraq via Jordan by Rihani.

Recommendation.

1. Schøyen has failed to provide documentation of legal removal from Iraq and the evidence on balance otherwise indicates modern looting, smuggling and illicit trading. The objects should be returned to Iraq.

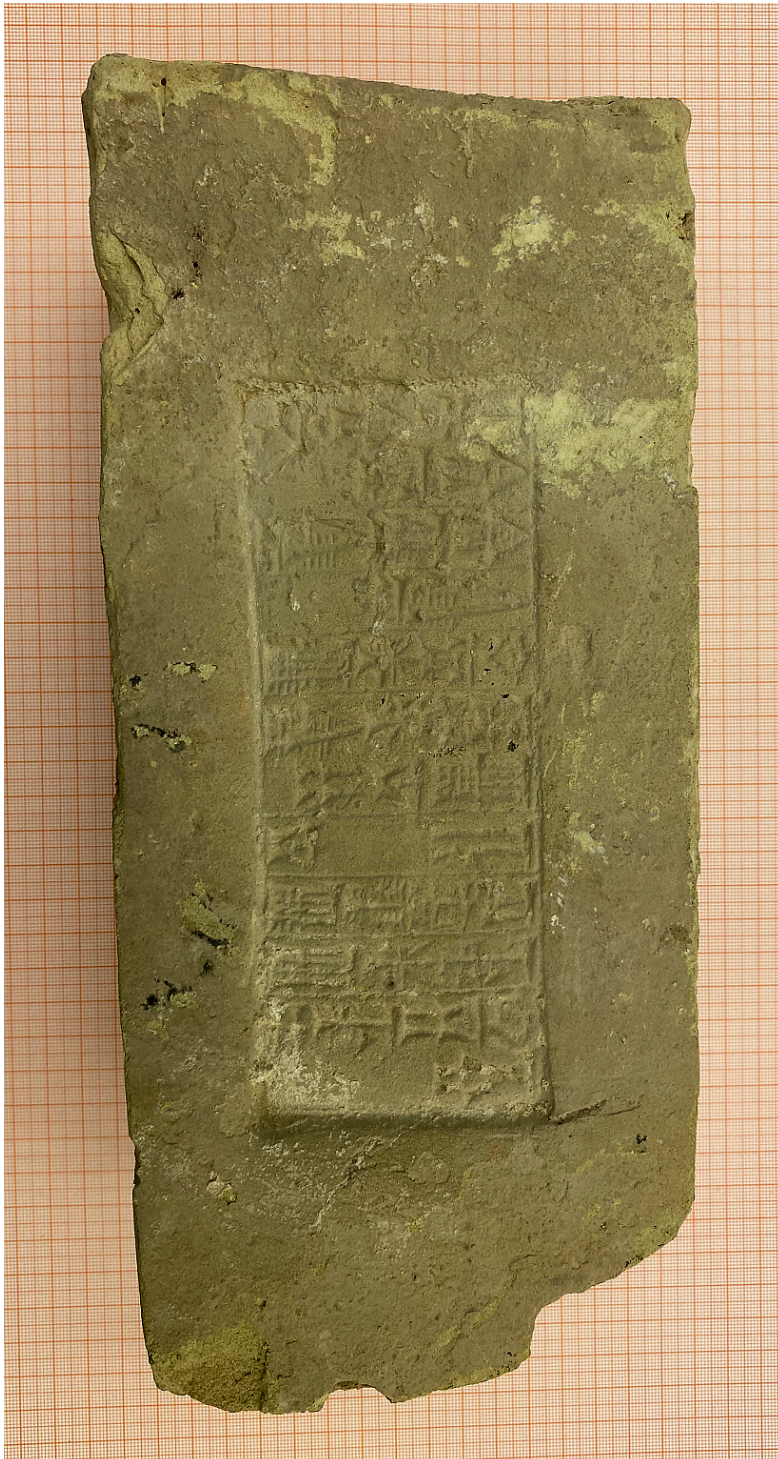






MS 1876/1 (George 58)

Clay brick. Cut with modern tool. Blue color trace from cutting. Coll. No. in black ink. 290x130x90
For assessment, see MS 1876/2.







MS 1935 (George 41)

Clay brick. Coll. No. in black ink on two sides. 160x330x80

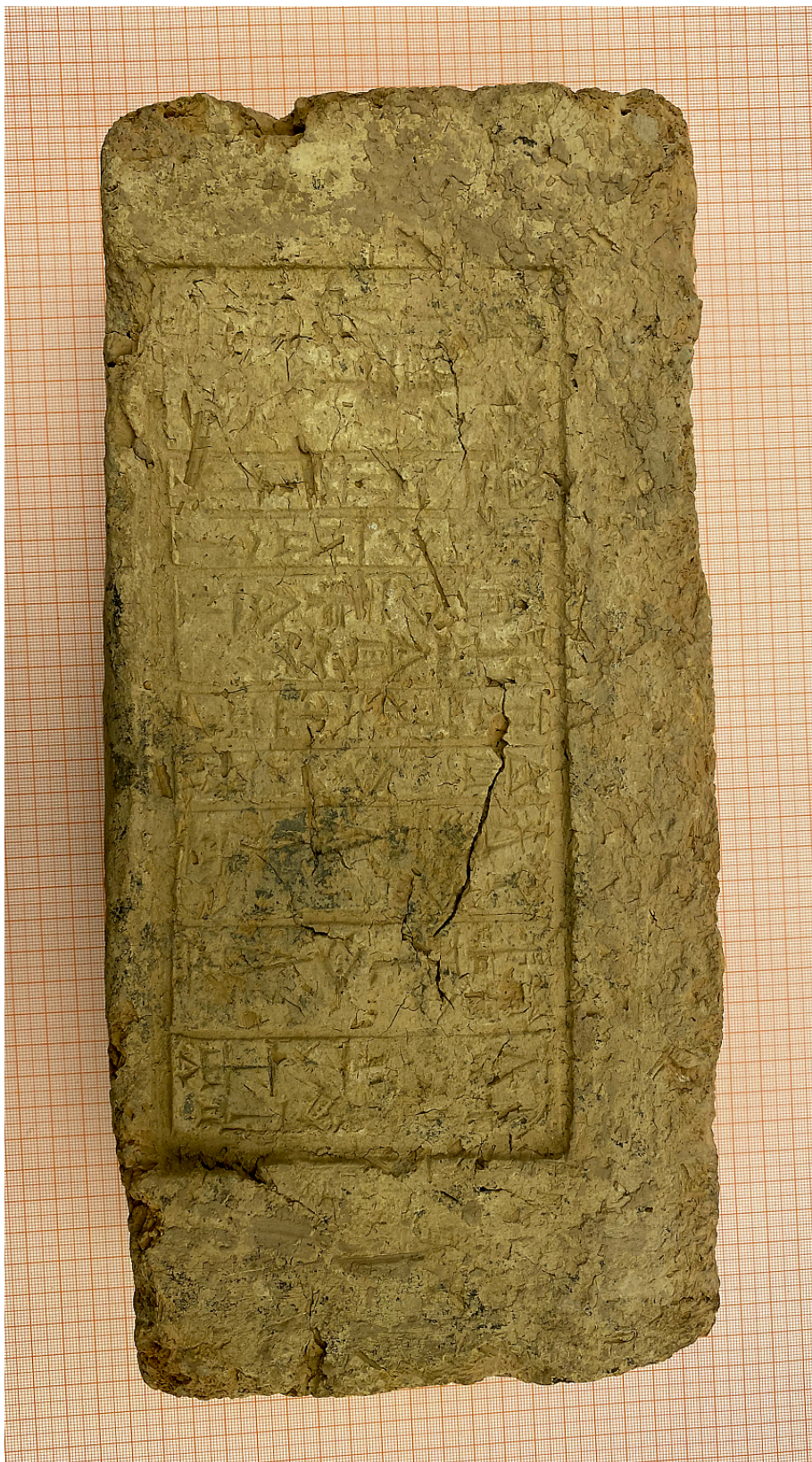
Brick with Sumerian inscription. CDLI gives the provenance as “uncertain (mod. uncertain)”.

According to CDLI it is in the 2004 NB-base but is not among entries removed or altered in 2004. It is not listed in the current MSS-webpage. Schøyen’s private catalogue states the findspot at the Inanna Temple in Isin, though it is not clear if this is based on information from looter and smugglers supplied by Schøyen’s dealers, or an assumption based on the text review. George (2011:93) based on Frayne (1990:69) maintains that where similar bricks are archaeologically recovered, they stem from Isin or Nippur, i.e., southern Iraq. Schøyen lists previous owners as Rihani collection, Irbid (ca. 1935) and Amman, Jordan (before 1965-1988), and London (1988-1995) and Chris Martin, London, October 1994. CDLI gives Frayne 1990 as first publication, but this brick is not in Frayne’s catalogue, so the reference is to text edition. The first publication is George 2011:93.

Assessment. The brick derives from southern Iraq. It has no ownership history predating Rihani, is probably smuggled out of Iraq via Jordan by Rihani. There is no record of the brick before October 1994. It was looted and smuggled between the 1980s and 1994, conceivably after 1991.

Recommendation.

1. Schøyen has failed to provide documentation of legal removal from Iraq and the evidence on balance otherwise indicates modern looting, smuggling and illicit trading. The object should be returned to Iraq.





MS 4585 (George 42)

Clay barrel. Coll. No. in black ink. 97x43

Sumerian inscription. CDLI gives the provenience as “uncertain (mod. uncertain)”. According to CDLI it was listed in the 2004 NB-catalogue. It is not listed in the MSS-webpage, or the entries removed in 2004. Neither George 2011:94 or Schøyen’s private catalogue provide direct provenience information, however Schøyen’s description is “MS in Neo-Sumerian on clay, Isin, Babylonia”. The reference to Isin is probably lifted from George’s discussion, “[t]he ideological message ... suits best a palace in his capital. Isin, and Isin is on the grounds a more likely provenance [sic] than Nippur.” Schøyen’s private catalogue gives the provenance as “1. Cumberland Clark collection, Bournemouth (1920s-1941) and heirs; 2. Mark Wilson, Southampton (1987-1994), acquired June 1994.” The primary reference in Frayne 1990:84-85 is to a comparable object, not MS 4585. The first academic publication is George 2011:94.

Assessment: MS 4585 stems from southern Iraq. As with numerous previously discussed objects, the Schøyen catalogue's provenance references do not supply information about how and when the tablet arrived in Britain, they do not indicate an older collection (see MS 2368), and they may be associated with illicit acquisitions (ref. MS 2855). MS 4536/1 & /2 and MS 4576 further substantiate that references to Cumberland and Wilson do not represent legitimate acquisitions. All indications indicate that the objects are looted after 1991 and smuggled to Britain between 1991 and 1994.

Recommendation.

1. Schøyen has failed to provide documentation of legal removal from Iraq and the evidence on balance otherwise indicates modern looting, smuggling and illicit trading. The objects should be returned to Iraq.





MS 4720 (George 78)

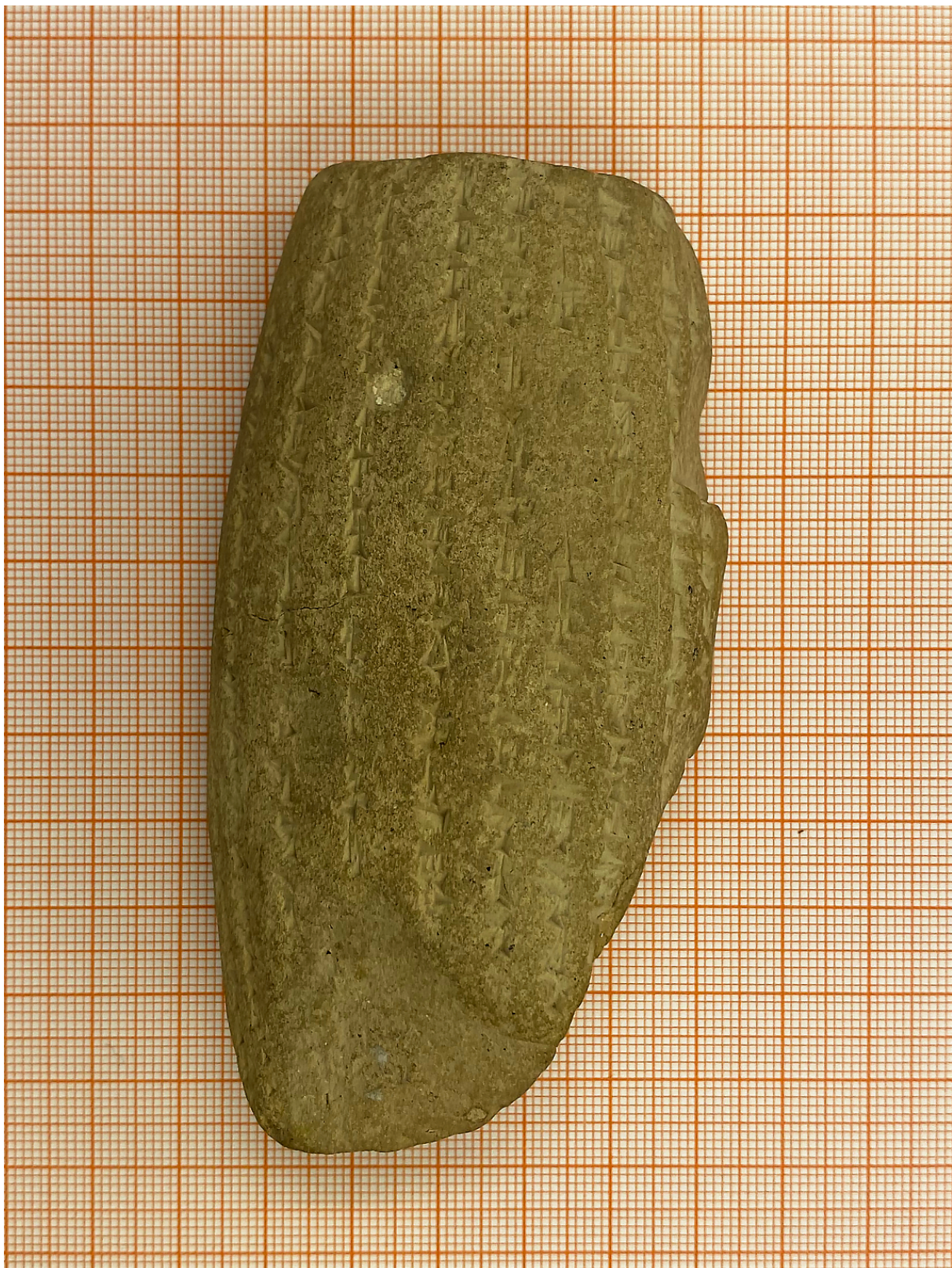
Clay cylinder. Coll. No. in black ink, two times. 100x57

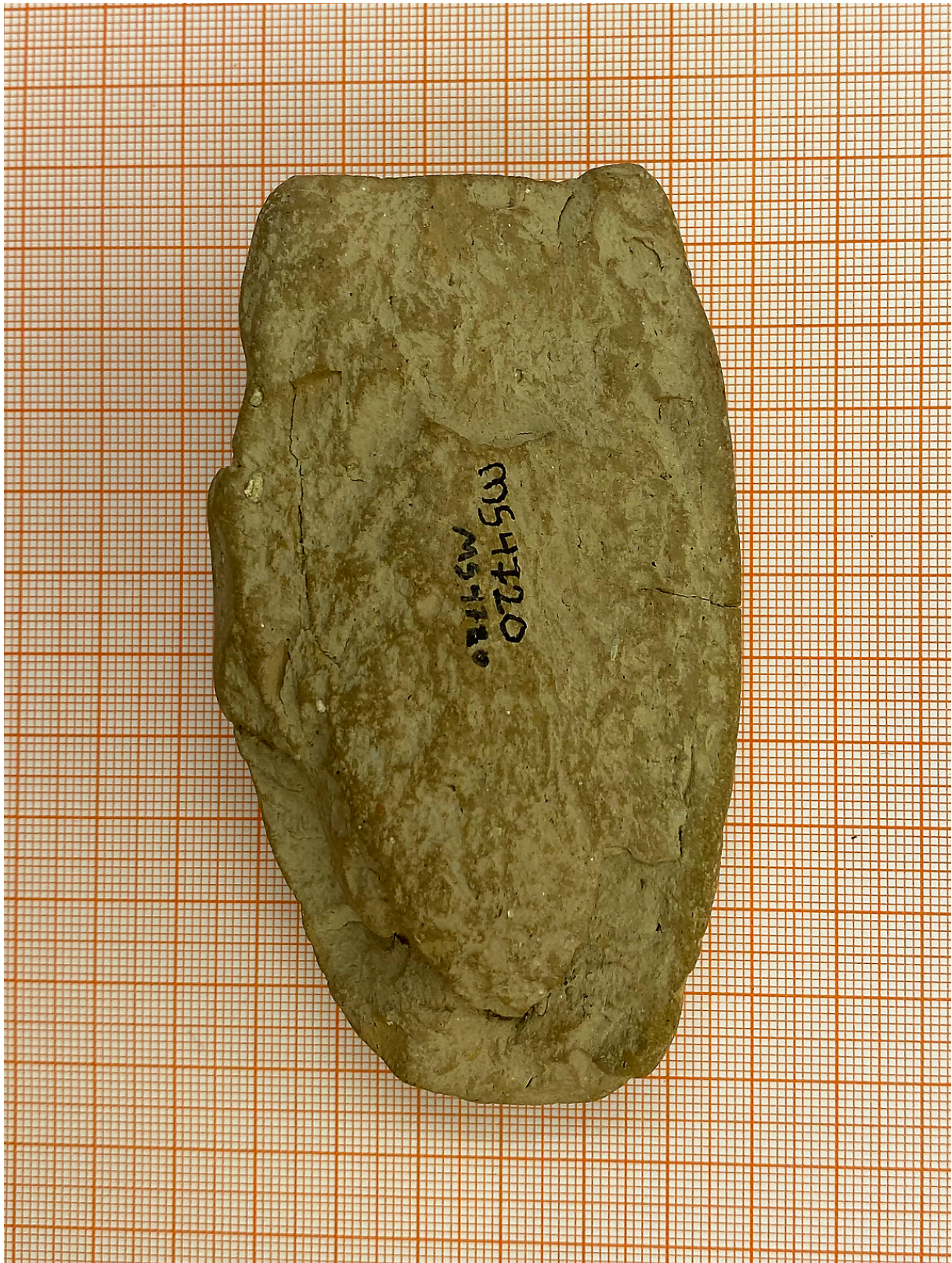
Akkadian inscription (in Babylonian script). CDLI gives the provenience as “uncertain (mod. uncertain)”. According to CDLI it was listed in the 2004 NB-catalogue. It is not listed in the present MSS-webpage or the entries removed in 2004. Schøyen’s private catalogue does not provide provenience but the description is “MS in Neo-Babylonian on stone, Diyala region, Babylonia”. The reference to Diyala is based on a comparison of the text with another prism in Baghdad Museum (a 1977-78 surface find from Diyala, eastern Iraq). It cannot be ruled out that the prism has a finding history like the piece in Baghdad, but stolen and illicitly removed from Iraq, and that Schøyen has been supplied with this information by his looters/smugglers/dealers. Schøyen’s private catalogue gives the provenance “1. Kohanim collection, Tehran, Paris and London (1959-); 2. Martha Crouse collection, Hong Kong and New England, USA (-1980s); 3. Pars Antiques, London, May 1990”. It is not known when Schøyen acquired the object. As Crouse otherwise is listed as 1988-1990 (MS 4899-4921) and there is an association to Pars, 1990 is the timeframe. The primary publication is George 2011:178. An earlier secondary reference in Kessler 2003-4 is to the prism in Baghdad Museum.

Assessment. The piece stems from Iraq, potentially Diyala, sanctuary to the city of Lagash in southern Iraq. The first modern chronological point is 1990 in reference to Pars. It is not known when Schøyen acquired it. It cannot be determined when it was found and removed from Iraq, but on the balance of available information, it can be concluded that it entered the market after 1959, probably around 1990.

Recommendation.

1. Schøyen has failed to provide documentation of legal removal from Iraq and the evidence on balance otherwise indicates modern looting, smuggling and illicit trading. The objects should be returned to Iraq.





MS 4741 (George 39)

Clay cone. Coll. No. in black ink on bottom and top. 136x45

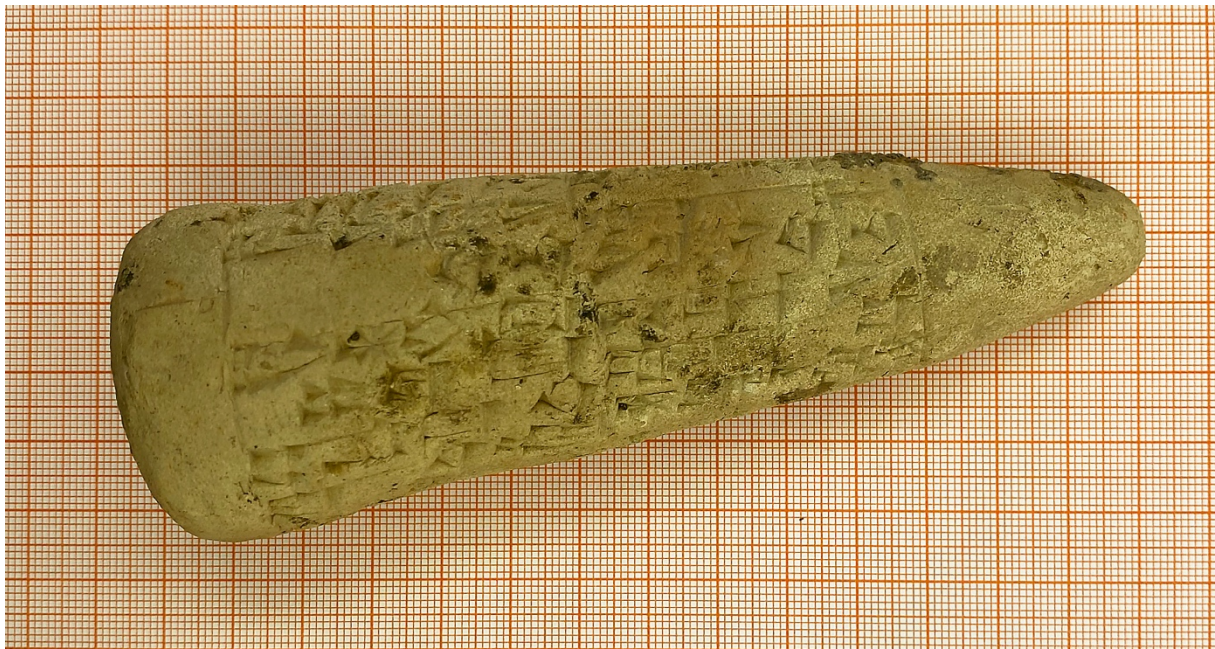
Sumerian inscription. CDLI gives the provenience as “uncertain (mod. uncertain)”. According to CDLI it was listed in the 2004 NB-catalogue. It is not listed in the present MSS-webpage or among the

entries removed in 2004. Schøyen's private catalogue gives a provenience Temple of Gula wall, Isin". The Isin reference might be based on information from the smugglers/dealers concerning where the object was stolen but is conceivably in reference to George's (2011:90-91) review of the text and comparable finds resulting from authentic excavations. The catalogue lists a provenience of "2. Terry Eva antiquity collection, UK (1960s-); 3. Martha Crouse collection, Hong Kong and New England, USA (-1980s); 4. Pars Antiques, London, June 1989". It is not known when Schøyen acquired the object. As Crouse otherwise is listed as 1988-1990 (MS 4899-4921) and there is an association to Pars the relevance of previous owners is reasonably questioned, also because of Pars Antiques' history of dubious transactions. 1989 is the relevant timeframe. Both CDLI and George refer to a publication by Frayne (1990: 31-32), but this is to the text editions, not the artefact. MS 4741 is not listed in Frayne's catalogue and was by all measures unknown to him as of his dated foreword of March 1990. George notes that the first publication of the *text* (acquired on the "antiquities market" and now at Yale University) is in 1937, and that "[m]any further exemplars have been reported since 1990, including eight excavated at Isin by the German expedition in 1986 (...), ...". The academic publication is George 2011:90.

Assessment. The piece stems from Iraq, probably Isin. It is not known when Schøyen acquired the object, and the provenance information seems to be a partial construction. Though it cannot be decided whether the piece was stolen/looted after 1991, it was unknown to Frayne around 1990. There is no public trace before the reference to Pars 1989 and the publication 2011, which potentially means it entered the market around 1989. On the balance of available information, it can be concluded that it entered the market after 1960, probably towards 1990.

Recommendation.

1. Schøyen has failed to provide documentation of legal removal from Iraq and the evidence on balance otherwise indicates modern looting, smuggling and illicit trading. The objects should be returned to Iraq.





MS 4981 (George 63)

Limestone tablet, partly damaged. Coll. No. in black ink on two edges. 45x35x10

Sumerian inscription. CDLI gives the provenience as “uncertain (mod. uncertain)”. It is not listed in the present MSS-webpage, or the entries removed in 2004. According to CDLI it was listed in the 2004 NB-catalogue. Schøyen’s private catalogue states in the physical description, “probably Larsa”, which is conceivably a liberal rendition of George’s (2011:120 conclusion. Probably this store tablet should be ascribed to one or other of these rulers of Larsa”, but Schøyen may conceivably had information directly from his suppliers. Schøyen’s catalogue gives provenance as “1. Kohanim

collection, Tehran, Paris and London (1959-); 2. Martha Crouse collection, Hong Kong and New England, USA (-1980s); 3. Pars Antiques, London, May 1990". As Crouse otherwise is listed as 1988-1990 (MS 4899-4921) and there is an association to Pars, the relevance of previous owners is reasonably questioned. It is not clear when Schøyen acquired the artifact. 1990 is the timeframe. CDLI gives a primary publication in George 2011:120.

Assessment. The artifact stems from Iraq. It is not known when Schøyen acquired the object, and the provenance information is possibly a construction. As the evidence stands it entered the market around 1990.

Recommendation.

1. Schøyen has failed to provide documentation of legal removal from Iraq and the evidence on balance otherwise indicates modern looting, smuggling and illicit trading. The objects should be returned to Iraq.







MS 4749 (George 60)

Clay brick. Supposedly one of the “blocks cut from three bricks”. Coll. No. in black ink. Porous surface due to damage by moist (attested at the time of seizure, cf. Police report). The item has been air-dried and is stored in an open box. 175x98x30

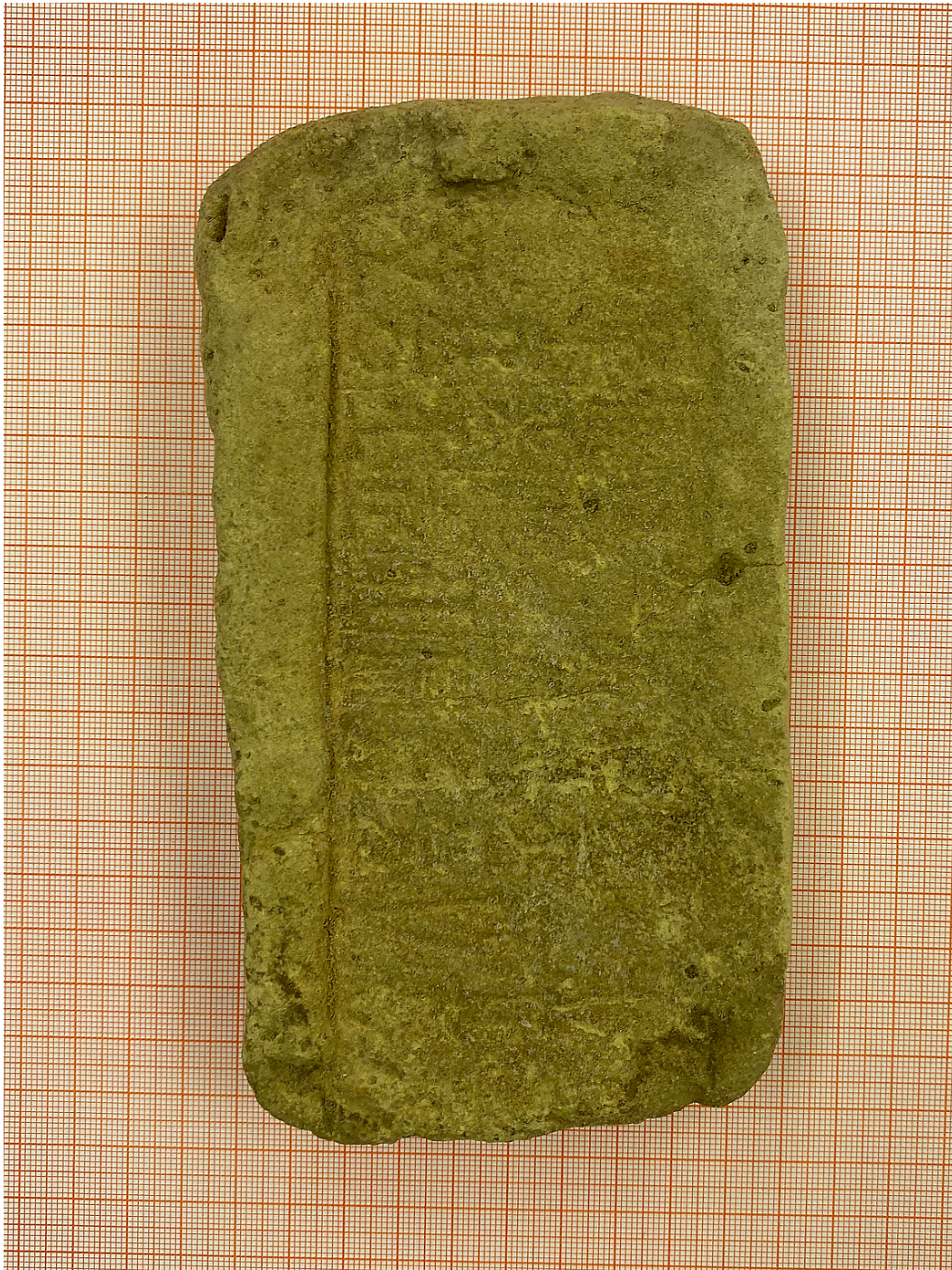
Sumerian inscription. CDLI gives the provenience as “uncertain (mod. uncertain)”. According to CDLI it was listed in the 2004 NB-catalogue. It is not listed in the present MSS-webpage or among the entries removed in 2004. In Schøyen’s private catalogue the provenience (under “provenience”) is listed as Ishtar temple in Zabalam (Tell Ibzaik). The private catalogue gives this recent provenience: “2. Terry Eva antiquity collection, UK (1960s-); 3. Martha Crouse collection, Hong Kong and New England, USA (-1980s); 4. Pars Antiques, London, June 1989.” As Crouse otherwise is listed as 1988-1990 (MS 4899-4921) and there is an association to Pars, the relevance of previous owners is reasonably questioned, also because of Pars Antiques’ history of dubious transactions. 1989 represents the timeframe. It is not clear when Schøyen acquired the artifact. CDLI gives a primary

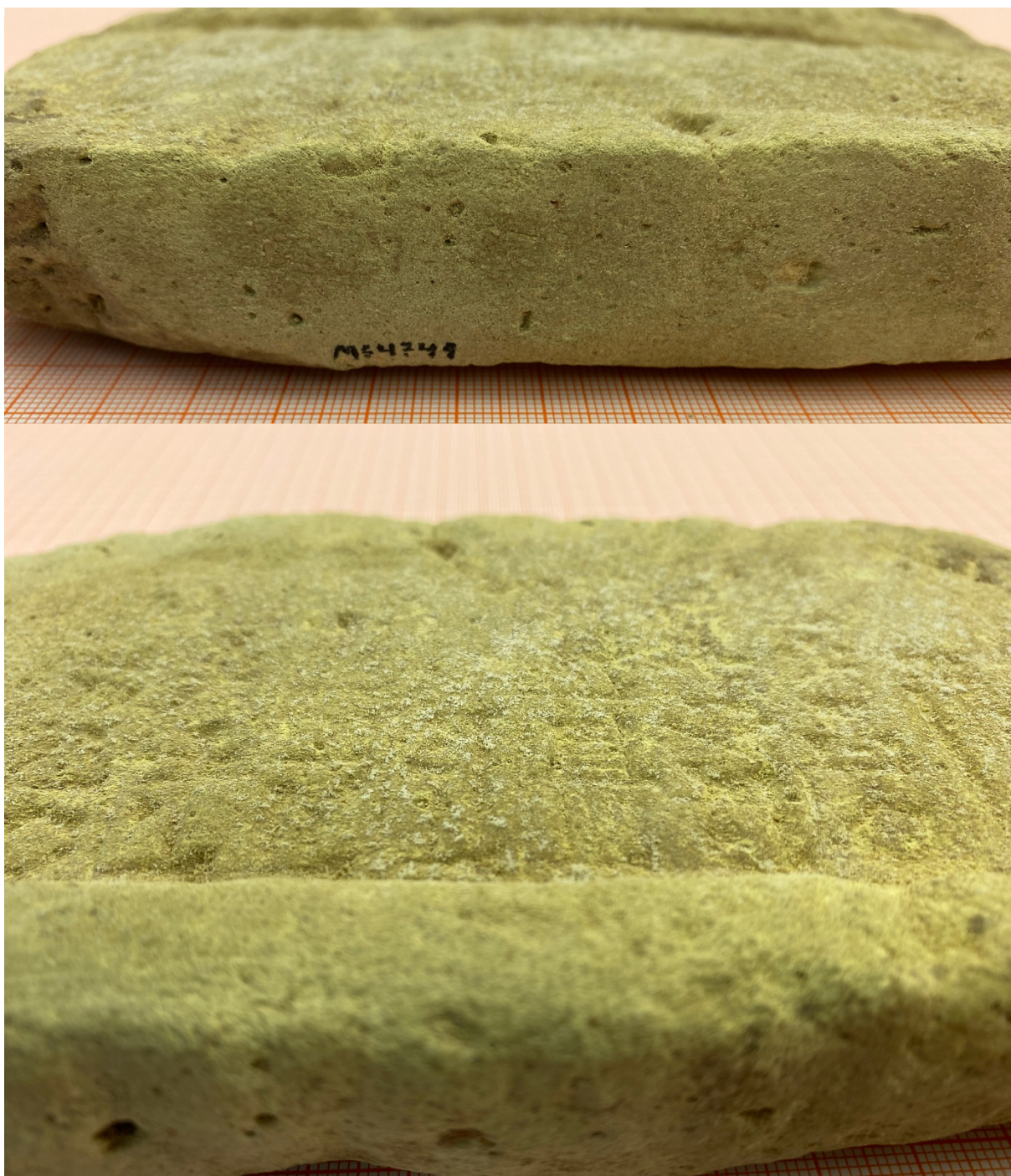
publication in Frayne 1990 (:352), but this is editing of these inscriptions, not the present artifact. MS 4749 is not listed in Frayne 1990. The academic publication is George 2011:116.

Assessment. The artifact stems from Iraq. It is not known when Schøyen acquired the object, and the provenance information is partially a construction. It entered the market around 1989. On the balance of available information, it can be concluded that it entered the market after 1960, probably towards 1989.

Recommendation.

2. Schøyen has failed to provide documentation of legal removal from Iraq and the evidence on balance otherwise indicates modern looting, smuggling and illicit trading. The objects should be returned to Iraq.





MS 4759 (George 67)

Clay potsherd. Coll. No. in black ink. 145x135x10

Sumerian inscription. CDLI gives the provenience as “uncertain (mod. uncertain)”. According to CDLI it was listed in the 2004 NB-catalogue. It is not listed in the present MSS-webpage or among the entries removed in 2004. Schøyen’s private catalogue gives a description including “probably Larsa or Uruk”, conceivably a distillation with some interpretative liberties from the text (George 2011:124), or it was perhaps supplied by the looter/dealer. No actual provenience is given. Provenance is “1. Terry Eva antiquity collection, UK (1960s-); 2. Martha Crouse collection, Hong Kong and New England,

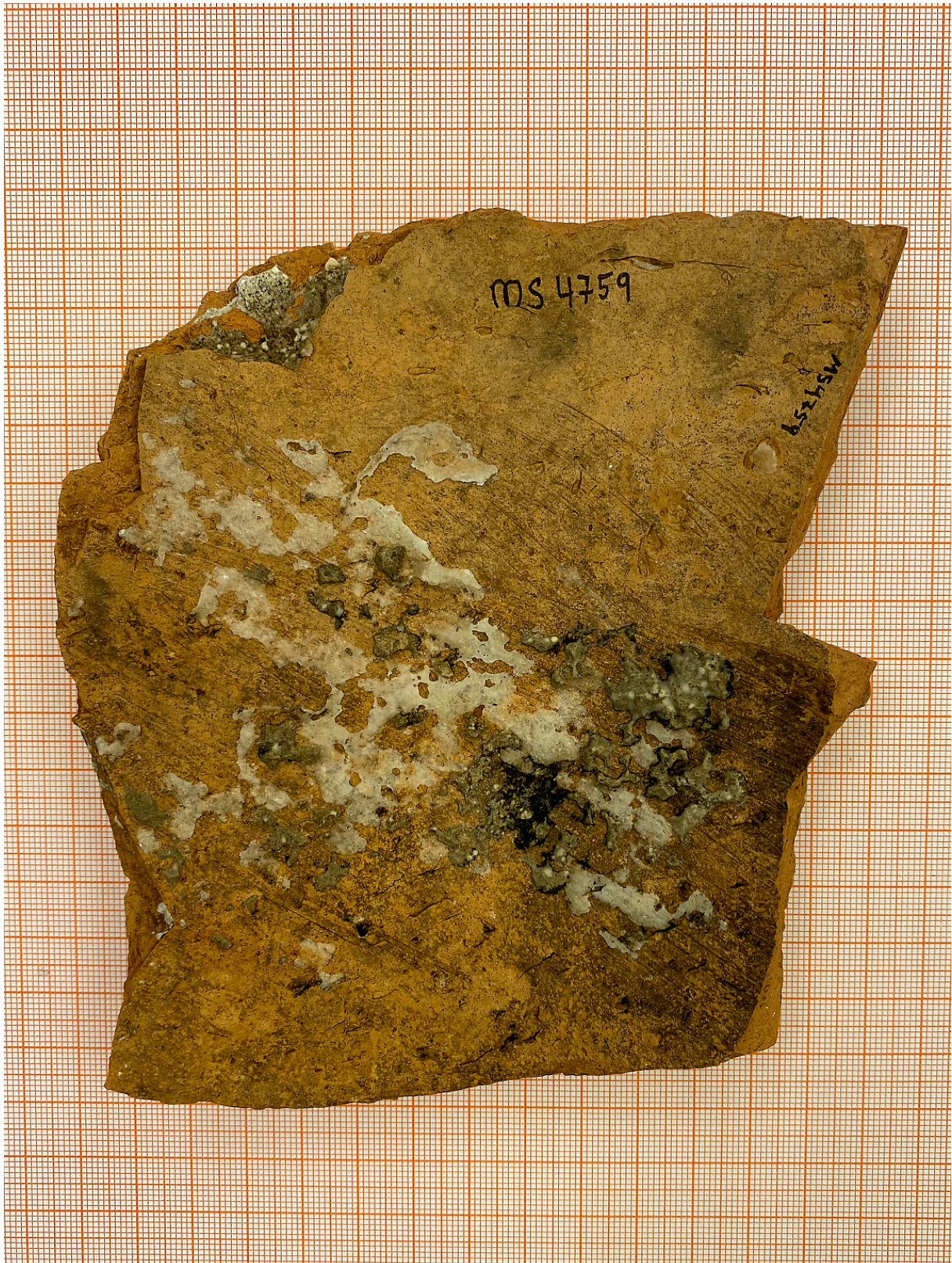
USA (-1980s); 3. Pars Antiques, London, June 1989". It is not known when Schøyen acquired the object. As Crouse otherwise is listed as 1988-1990 (MS 4899-4921) and there is an association to Pars, the timeframe is c. 1989. The academic publication is George 2011:125.

Assessment. The artifact stems from Iraq. It is not known when Schøyen acquired the object, and the provenance information contains constructions. The piece was stolen/looted and entered the market around 1989, as the evidence stands now.

Recommendation.

1. Schøyen has failed to provide documentation of legal removal from Iraq and the evidence on balance otherwise indicates modern looting, smuggling and illicit trading. The objects should be returned to Iraq.





MS 4983 (George 7)

Clay brick. Modern cut. Coll. No. in black ink on two sides. 93x102x55

Sumerian inscription. CDLI gives the provenience as “uncertain (mod. uncertain)”. In the present MSS-webpage MS 4983 appears only as a cross-reference in MS 4556 and MS 2426. According to

CDLI it was listed in the 2004 NB-catalogue. It is not among the entries removed in 2004. Schøyen's private catalogue states "Umma" in the physical description. This may be based on information in Steinkeller 2011(6-7) or based on information supplied by Frayne in 1999. The provenance in Schøyen's private catalogue is: 1. Kohanim collection, Tehran, Paris and London (1959-); 2. Martha Crouse collection, Hong Kong and New England, USA (-1980s); 3. Pars Antiques, London, May 1990. The relevance of previous owners is reasonably questioned, also because of Pars Antiques' history of dubious transactions. It is not clear when Schøyen acquired the artifact. 1990 is the relevant timeframe. Frayne 2007 is listed as primary publication, followed by Steinkeller 2011. *Assessment.* The artifact stems from Iraq. It is not known when Schøyen acquired the object, and the provenance information is partially a construction. As the evidence stands there it turns up around 1990.

Recommendation.

1. Schøyen has failed to provide documentation of legal removal from Iraq and the evidence on balance otherwise indicates modern looting, smuggling and illicit trading. The objects should be returned to Iraq.





MS 4765 (George 45)

Clay cone. Deep cracks and damaged top. Traces of secondary burning(?). Coll. No. in black ink.
170x70

Sumerian inscription. CDLI gives the provenience as “uncertain (mod. uncertain)”. According to CDLI it was listed in the 2004 NB-catalogue. It is not listed in the present MSS-webpage or among the entries removed in 2004. Schøyen’s private catalogue states the physical description “probably Larsa, Babylonia”. This is conceivably distilled with some interpretative liberties from the text interpretation (George 2011:124), or it was perhaps supplied by the looter/dealer. No explicit provenance is given. Provenience is given as “1. Terry Eva antiquity collection, UK (1960s-); 2. Martha Crouse collection,

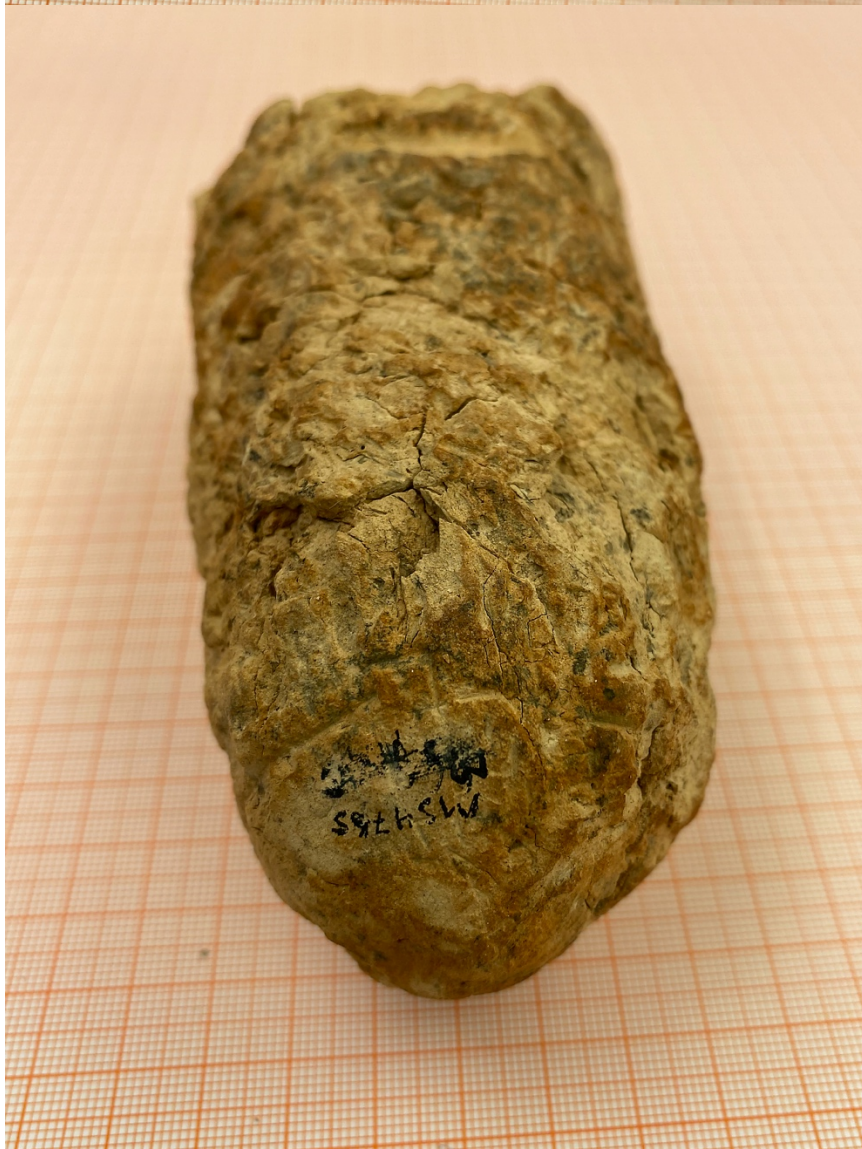
Hong Kong and New England, USA (-1980s); 3. Pars Antiques, London, June 1989.” Schøyen does not state when he acquired it. As Crouse otherwise is listed as 1988-1990 (MS 4899-4921) and there is an association to Pars, the relevance of previous owners is reasonably questioned, and 1989 is the timeframe. The artifact is not listed in Frayne’s 1990 (:164) editing of these inscriptions, and probably not known to him. The academic publication is George 2011:97-99.

Assessment. The artifact stems from Iraq. It is not known when Schøyen acquired the object, and the provenance information is partially a construction. As the evidence stands it turned up around 1989. On the balance of available information, it can be concluded that it entered the market after 1960, probably around 1989.

Recommendation.

- 1 Schøyen has failed to provide documentation of legal removal from Iraq and the evidence on balance otherwise indicates modern looting, smuggling and illicit trading. The objects should be returned to Iraq.







MS 4716 (George 38)

Clay cone. Coll. No. in black ink. 105x60

Akkadian inscription. CDLI gives the provenience as “uncertain (mod. uncertain)”. It is not listed on the present MSS-webpage or among the entries removed in 2004. According to CDLI it was listed in the 2004 NB-catalogue. Schøyen’s private catalogue has a description that refers to Isin in present day Iraq, conceivably based on George 2011:89. George’s indication is based on interpretation of the text. Provenance: 1. Kohanim collection, Tehran, Paris and London (1959-); 2. Martha Crouse collection, Hong Kong and New England, USA (-1980s); 3. Pars Antiques, London, May 1990. As Crouse otherwise is listed as 1988-1990 (MS 4899-4921) and there is an association to Pars, indicating 1990 as the timeframe. The first academic reference is George 2011:90.

Assessment. MS 4716 originates from southern Iraq. It was potentially removed from Iraq and entered the market after 1959, probably around 1990.

Recommendation.

1. Schøyen has failed to provide documentation of legal removal from Iraq and the evidence on balance otherwise indicates modern looting, smuggling and illicit trading. The objects should be returned to Iraq.





MS 4718 (George 23)

Clay cone, partly damaged top. Coll. No. in black ink on top and bottom. 115x60

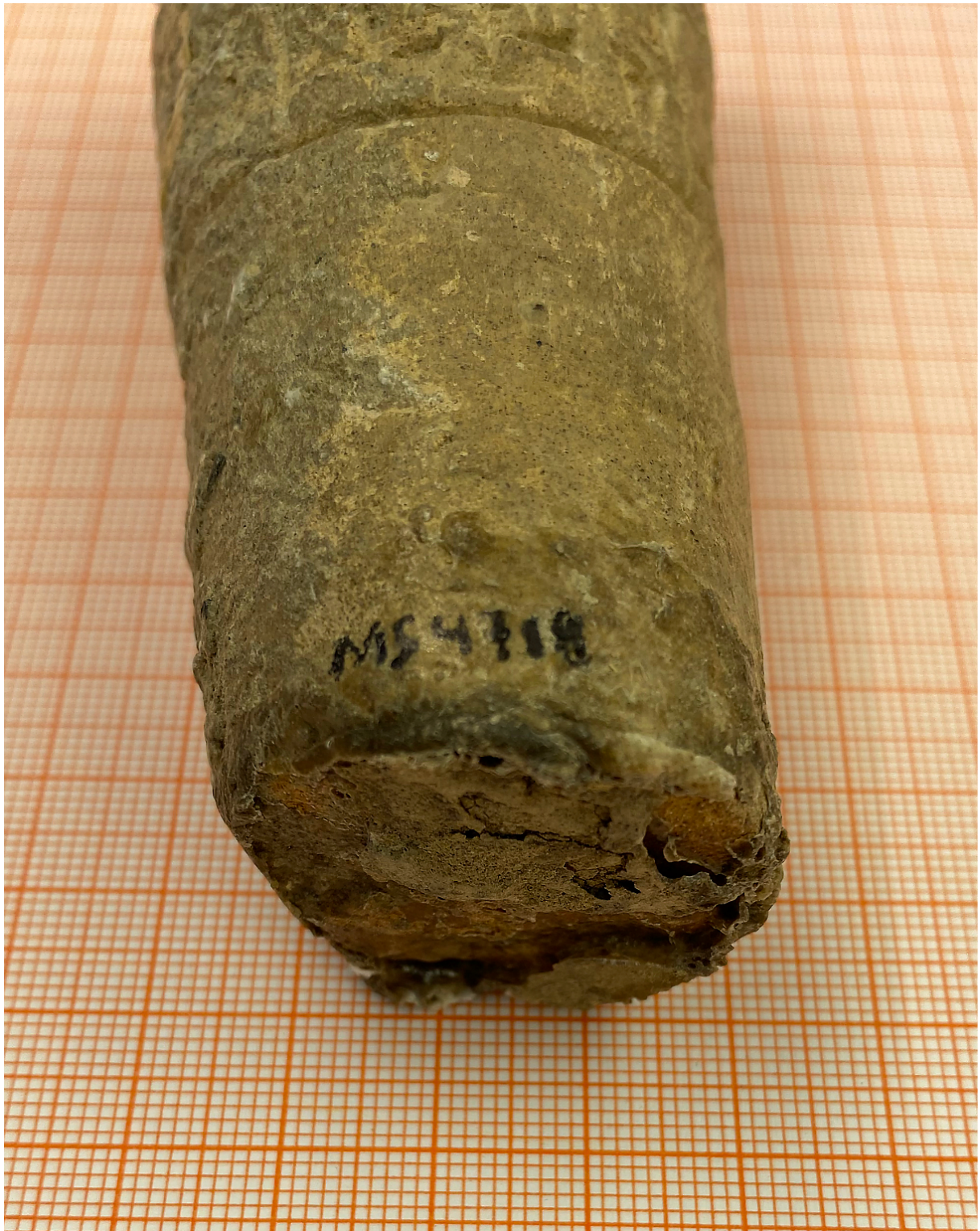
Sumerian inscription. CDLI gives a provenience as “Girsu (mod. Tello)?”, though it is unclear why. According to CDLI it was listed in the 2004 NB-catalogue. It is not listed in the present MSS-webpage or among the entries removed in 2004. Schøyen’s private catalogue refers to “Inanna’s temple, Badtibira (Pattibira), Lagash”. This is probably based on a use of George’s interpretation of the text, where he states this is the original “provenience” [sic]. The text and comparative finds indicate a provenience of southern Iraq. Schøyen’s private catalogue lists the following provenience, “2. Kohanim collection, Tehran, Paris and London (1959-); 3. Martha Crouse collection, Hong Kong and New England, USA (-1980s); 4. Pars Antiques, London, May 1990”. It is not known when Schøyen acquired the artefact. As Crouse otherwise is listed as 1988-1990 (MS 4899-4921) and there is an association to Pars, 1990 is the timeframe. CDLI refers to a publication by Frayne 2007, which is to reference texts, not MS 4718. The first academic reference is to George 2011:49-50.

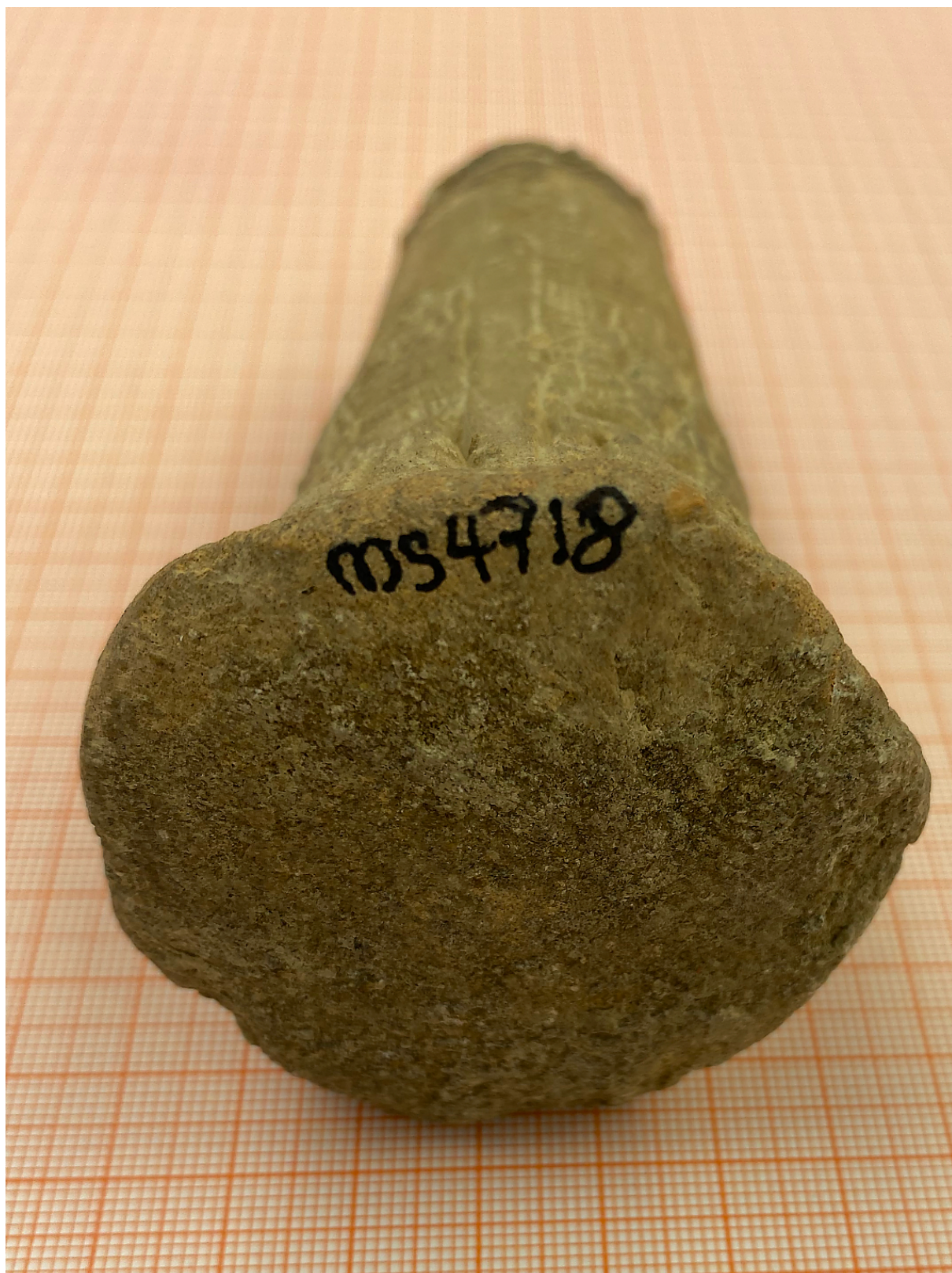
Assessment. The piece stems from southern Iraq, potentially Girsu, sanctuary to the city of Lagash in southern Iraq. The first modern chronological point is 1990 in reference to Pars. If this is accurate, it can still not be determined when it was dug up and removed from Iraq. The piece was potentially unknown to Frayne when he published the 2007 volume, indicating it does not originate from an older collection. It is not known when Schøyen acquired it. In all probability the piece was looted/stolen and removed from Iraq after relevant legislation was passed. The first academic reference is George 2011, also indicating a late looting/theft and smuggling from Iraq. It can be concluded that it entered the market after 1959, probably around 1990.

Recommendation.

1. Schøyen has failed to provide documentation of legal removal from Iraq and the evidence on balance otherwise indicates modern looting, smuggling and illicit trading. The objects should be returned to Iraq.







MS 4719 (George 27)

Clay cone. Coll. No. in black ink on top. 127x57

Sumerian inscription. CDLI gives the provenience as “uncertain (mod. uncertain)”. It is not listed in the present MSS-webpage or among the entries removed in 2004. According to CDLI it was listed in the 2004 NB-catalogue. Schøyen’s private catalogue provides provenience Ningirsu temple in Girsu (Tello), Lagash, and describes the object “MS in Sumerian on clay, Lagash”. This seems to be based on a text interpretation (George 2011:52). Schøyen’s private catalogue gives the provenance “2.

Kohanim collection, Tehran, Paris and London (1959-); 3. Martha Crouse collection, Hong Kong and New England, USA (-1980s); 4. Pars Antiques, London, May 1990.” It is not known when Schøyen acquired the object. As Crouse otherwise is listed as 1988-1990 (MS 4899-4921) and there is an association to Pars, 1990 is the timeframe. In CDLI Edzard 1997 is listed as primary reference, but this seems to be to the text edition, not the object. The text is published in George 2011:52.

Assessment. The piece stems from southern Iraq, potentially Girsu, sanctuary to the city of Lagash in southern Iraq. The first modern chronological point is 1990 in reference to Pars. It is not known when Schøyen acquired it. It cannot be determined exactly when it was dug up and removed from Iraq, but it is probable that the piece was looted/stolen and removed from Iraq after relevant legislation was passed. A reference to Edzard 1997 is not explicitly concerned with MS 4719. The first academic reference is George 2011:52, also indicating a late looting/theft and smuggling from Iraq. It can be concluded that it entered the market around 1990.

Recommendation.

1. Schøyen has failed to provide documentation of legal removal from Iraq and the evidence on balance otherwise indicates modern looting, smuggling and illicit trading. The objects should be returned to Iraq.









MS 4717 (George 25)

Clay cone. Tip missing. Coll. No. in black ink on top. 120x75

Sumerian inscription. CDLI gives the provenience as “uncertain (mod. uncertain)”. It is not listed in the present MSS-webpage or among the entries removed in 2004. According to CDLI it was listed in

the 2004 NB-catalogue. Schøyen's private catalogue gives a provenience to the Bau Temple, Urukug in Girsu, excavated by Sarzec and Cros 1877-1909. It is not clear if Schøyen has this information from his smuggler/dealer, but it potentially is taken from conjecture in George 2011:51. Here, George refers to a brick with a similar inscription excavated at the sanctuary Bau, Urukug in Girsu in 1929-31 and another cone published in 1907 that "must have come to light" during excavations 1877-1900 or 1903-9. He reasons that other cones were *possibly* found under the same circumstances, including MS 4717. Either Schøyen has held back important information from George, George distrusts Schøyen's information or Schøyen has inaccurately reused George's conjecture. Schøyen's private catalogue give this additional provenance: Martha Crouse collection, Hong Kong and New England, USA (1920s-1980s) and Pars Antiques, London, May 1990. It is not known when Schøyen acquired the artefact. As Crouse otherwise is listed as 1988-1990 (MS 4899-4921) and there is an association to Pars, 1990 is the timeframe. The first academic reference is George 2011:51.

Assessment. The piece stems from southern Iraq, potentially Girsu. The first modern chronological point is 1990. When it was dug up and removed from Iraq cannot be determined, and as the reference to excavations in 1877-1909 are not substantiated or elaborated, it is probable that the piece was looted/stolen and removed from Iraq after relevant legislation was passed. The first academic reference is George 2011, indicating a late looting/theft and smuggling from Iraq. It can be concluded that it entered the market after 1960, probably around 1990.

Recommendation.

1. Schøyen has failed to provide documentation of legal removal from Iraq and the evidence on balance otherwise indicates modern looting, smuggling and illicit trading. The objects should be returned to Iraq.







MS 4766 (George 50)

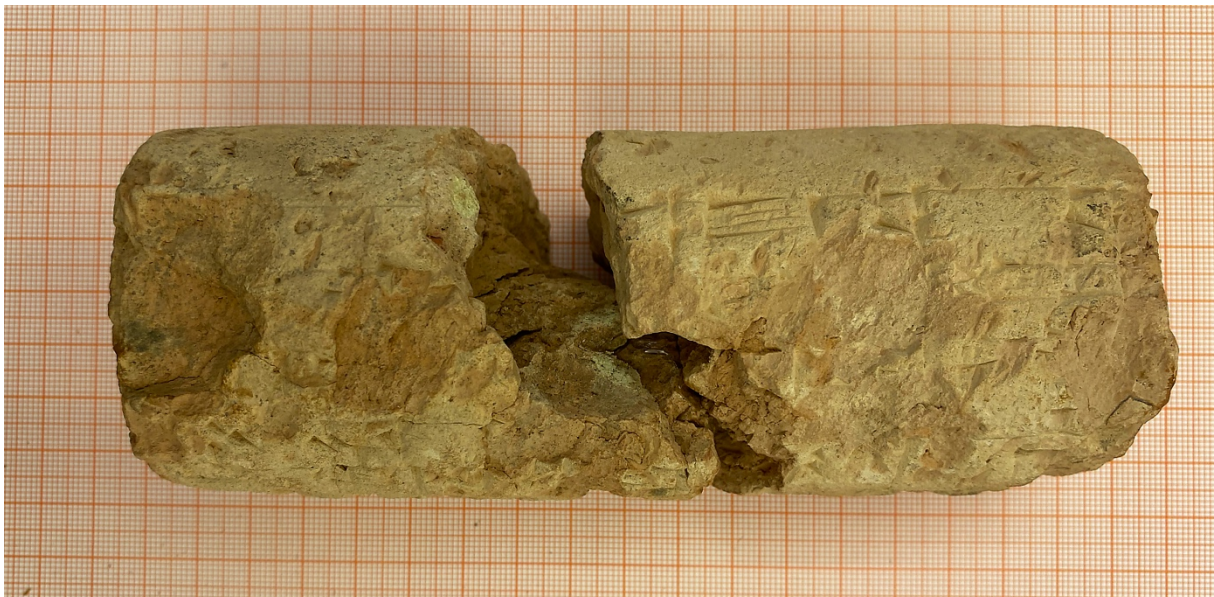
Clay cylinder. Two parts glued together. Coll. No. in black ink. 148x60

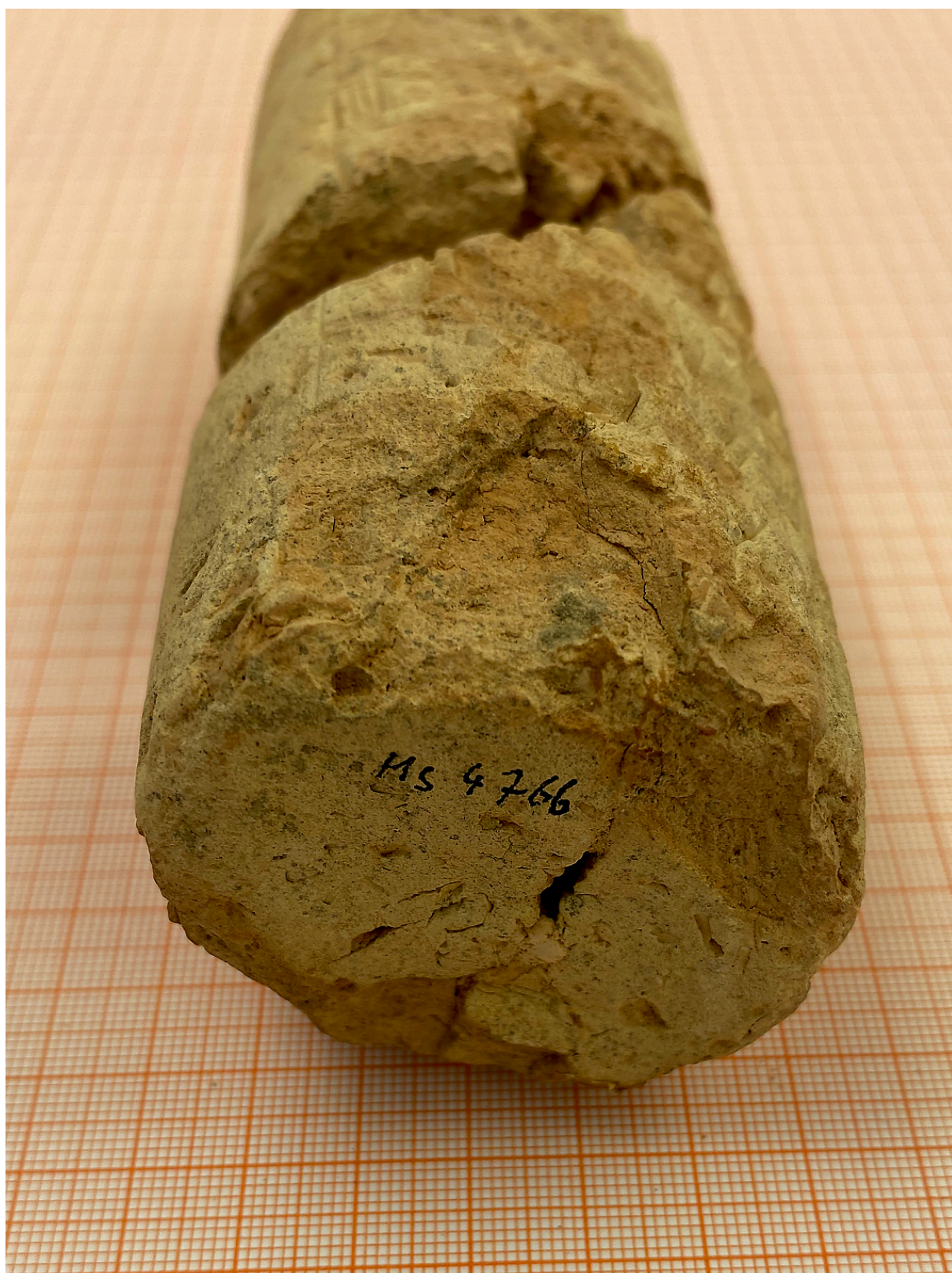
Sumerian inscription. CDLI gives the provenience as “uncertain (mod. uncertain)”. According to CDLI it was listed in the 2004 NB-catalogue. It is not listed in the present MSS-webpage or among the entries removed in 2004. Schøyen’s private catalogue states the physical description “MS in Sumerian on clay, Larsa”. The provenience (under “provenience”) in Schøyen’s private catalogue “E-babar Temple of Utu, Larsa”, which probably is based on George’s (2011:106) interpretation of the text. Otherwise, “2. Terry Eva antiquity collection, UK (1960s-); 3. Martha Crouse collection, Hong Kong and New England, USA (-1980s); 4. Pars Antiques, London, June 1989”. As Crouse otherwise is listed as 1988-1990 (MS 4899-4921) and there is an association to Pars the relevance of previous owners is reasonably questioned, also because of Pars Antiques’ history of dubious transactions, and 1989 is the timeframe. It is not clear when Schøyen acquired the artifact. CDLI gives a primary publication in Frayne 1990 (:188-89), but this is editing of these inscriptions, not the present artifact. MS 4766 is not listed in Frayne 1990. The academic publication is George 2011:97-99.

Assessment. The artifact stems from Iraq. It is not known when Schøyen acquired the object, and the provenance information is partially a construction. The artefact was probably looted, smuggled and initially traded around 1989. On the balance of available information, it can be concluded that it entered the market after 1960, probably around 1989.

Recommendation.

1. Schøyen has failed to provide documentation of legal removal from Iraq and the evidence on balance otherwise indicates modern looting, smuggling and illicit trading. The objects should be returned to Iraq.







'MS 4555 (George 90)

Bronze dagger. Akkadian. Probably from present day Iran. Coll. No. in black ink. 420x33x23

Elamite inscription. CDLI gives the provenience as “uncertain (mod. uncertain)”. According to CDLI it was listed in the 2004 NB-catalogue. It is not listed on the MSS-webpage or the entries removed in 2004. There is no provenience information in Schøyen’s private catalogue or Vallat’s (2011:190) article. The dagger itself refers to Shutruk-Nahhunte and Elam, i.e., modern Iran. In Schøyen’s catalogue provenance is given as “1. King Shutruk-Nahhunte I, Elam, Iran (ca. 1185-1155 BC.); 2. Rihani collection, Irbid (ca. 1935) and Amman, Jordan (before 1965-1988), and London (1988-); 3. Saeedi Antiques, London, March. 2001.” Rihani’s practices are discussed at greater length above. Ahmad Saeedi was rumoured to have been subject to a US-customs investigation in the early 2000s. The first scholarly publication is Vallat 2011:190.

Assessment. None of the accessible documentation provides genuine provenience information. Given the timeframe it is conceivably looted in Iraq, while the dagger itself points to Elam and modern Iran. As the evidence stands now, Iran is the most likely source. The provenance lists to notorious dealers, Rihani and Saeedi. The dagger probably turns up in London somewhat before early 2001, and there is ample reason to suspect it is exported to London in breach with Iranian antiquities legislation, the November 3, 1930 National Heritage Protection Act.

Recommendation.

1. Schøyen has failed to provide documentation of legal removal from Iran and the evidence on balance otherwise indicates modern looting, smuggling and illicit trading.
2. The objects should be held back and Iranian authorities should be consulted.
3. After the above, a decision concerning the return of the objects to Iran should be made.







MS 4536/3 (George 93)

Alabaster jar fragment. Coll. No in black ink on bottom edge on the inside. 380x140

Inscription in Old Persian, Elamite, Akkadian and hieroglyphic Egyptian. CDLI gives the provenience as “uncertain (mod. uncertain)”. CDLI list the 2004 NB catalogue as a source, but the entry is not among those removed or altered in 2004. The current MSS-webpage mentions 4536/3 only in a cross reference to 4536/1. Vallat (2011:192) provides no provenience or provenance. The 2006 catalogue states: “..., as well as MS 4536/3, were found on the empire's eastern border, in Northern Afghanistan”. Schøyen's private catalogue lists no explicit provenience, but his description details “MS in Old Persian, Elamite, Neo-Babylonian and Egyptian on alabaster, Afghanistan, 485-465 BC., ...”. The reference to Afghanistan seems unmotivated as part of the description and is conceivably an inadvertent reference to information provided by the dealer. The looting, smuggling and acquisition history is potentially comparable to MS 4536/2. Provenance in the private catalogue is again given as “1. Cumberland Clark collection, Bournemouth (1920s-1941) and heirs; 2. Mark Wilson, Southampton (1987-1994), acquired June 1994.”. The Schøyen catalogue's provenance references do not supply information about how and when the tablet arrived in Britain, they do not indicate an older collection (see MS 2368), and they may be associated with illicit acquisitions (see MS 2855). MS 4536/1 & /2 further indicate that references to Cumberland and Wilson do not represent legal acquisitions. CDLI gives a reference to Kent 1953, but this is to comparable objects, not MS 4536/3. The first academic publication is Vallat 2011(:192).

Assessment. The object seems to come onto the market at the same time as 4536/1 and 4536/2 and sold through the same dealer. The catalogue references (2006 & private) descriptive reference indicates it, like 4536/2, stems from Afghanistan. The history of the object seems to start in 2004. Considering the discussion of 4536/2, the object seems to be looted in Afghanistan shortly before 2004. And smuggled to Britain and traded through Wilson.

Recommendation.

1. Schøyen is required to provide without delay documentation concerning the ownership history and find spot of the object.
2. The object should be kept in holding, and the Afghani authorities and UNESCO should be consulted.





MS 3289 (George 53)

Clay tablet. Coll. No. in black ink. 108x65x25

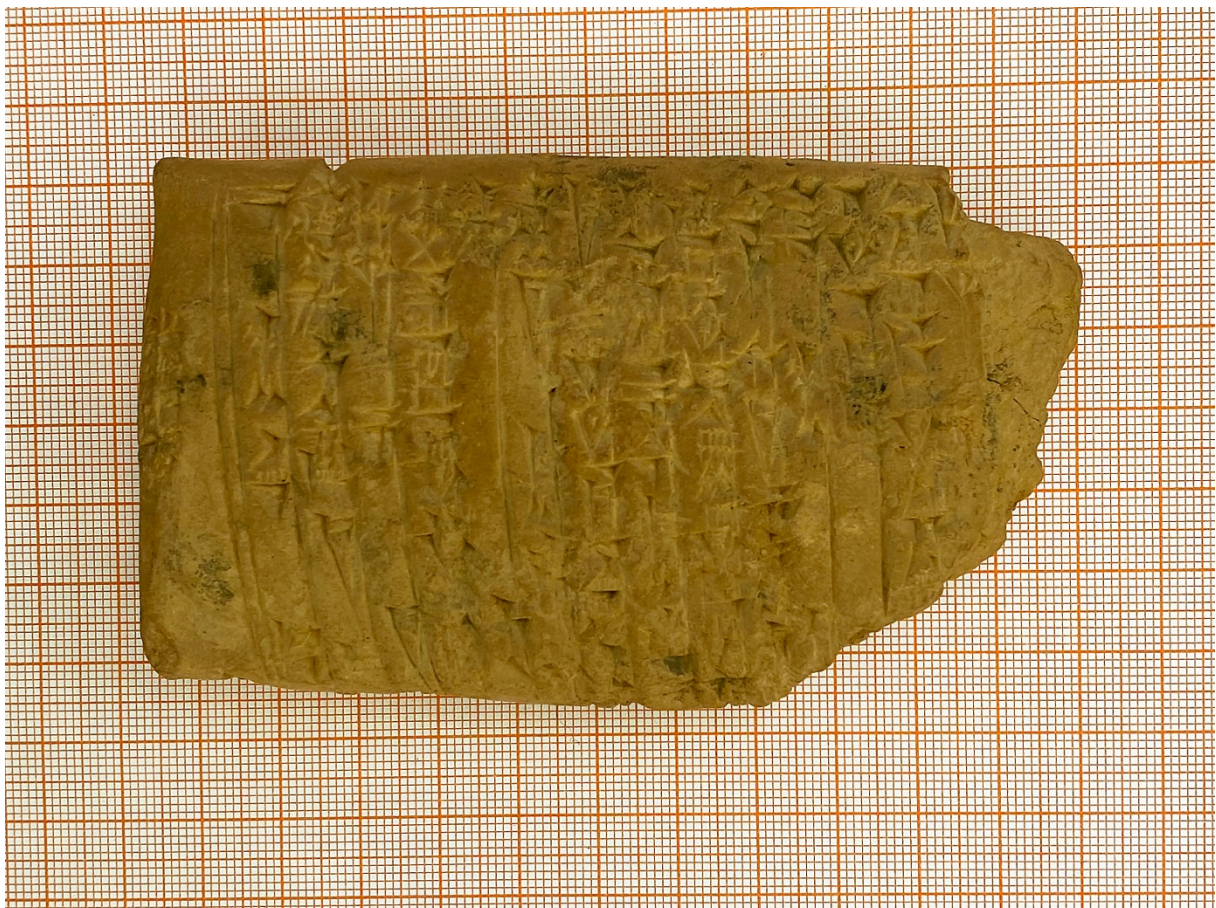
Neo-Sumerian inscription. CDLI gives the provenience as “uncertain (mod. uncertain)”. It is not listed in the MSS-webpage or among the entries removed in 2004 but according to CDLI it was in the 2004 NB-database. Schøyen indicates a provenience to Larsa, whether this is based on information from

dealers, or the textual context as elucidated in George 2011(:113) is unclear. The provenance is given as “Provenance: 1. Cumberland Clark collection, Bournemouth (1920s-1941) and heirs; 2. Martha Crouse collection, Hong Kong and New England, USA (-1980s); 3. Pars Antiques, London, June 1989”. When and how Schøyen acquired the object is not explicated. As Crouse otherwise is listed as 1988-1990 (MS 4899-4921) and there is an association to Pars, 1989 is the fixed time point. Cumberland Clark cannot be used to ascertain an old acquisition (see MS 2368) or rule out recent looting (see MS 2855). The first publication is George 2011(:209).

Assessment. The object stems from Iraq. The information in Schøyen’s private catalogue is inadequate in terms of provenance. The lacunas in the available information about when and how the object was initially acquired, as well as acquired by Schøyen indicates a timeframe around 1989. The object is potentially looted/stolen around 1989.

Recommendation.

1. Schøyen has failed to provide documentation of legal removal from Iraq and the evidence on balance otherwise indicates modern looting, smuggling and illicit trading. The object should be returned to Iraq.





MS 2983 (George 51)

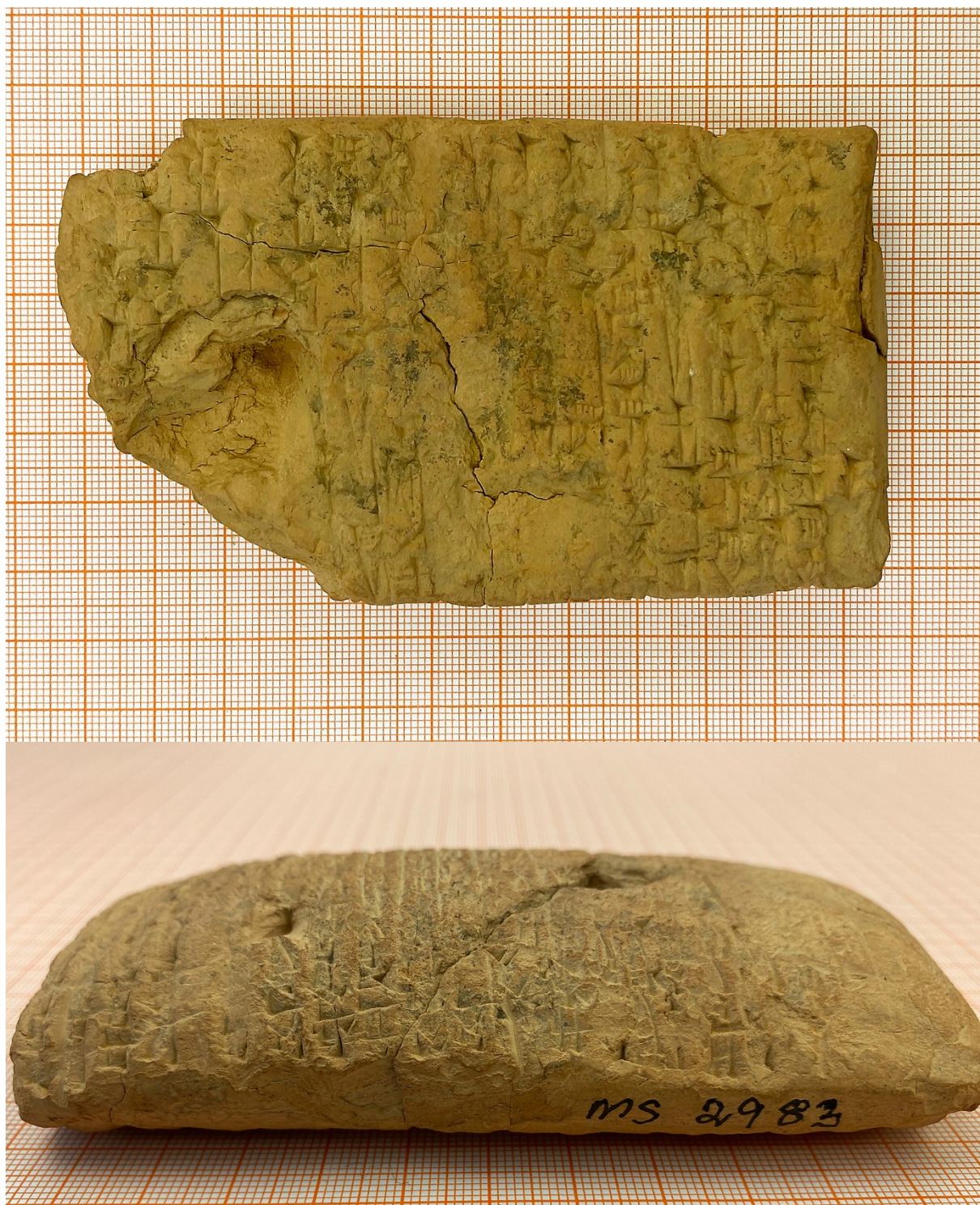
Clay tablet. Broken in several pieces, glued together. Burned secondary(?). Coll. No. in black ink. 120x60x25

Inscription in Neo-Sumerian. CDLI gives the provenience as “uncertain (mod. uncertain)”. It is not listed in the current MSS-webpage but was in the 2004 NB-catalogue and is not in the entries removed/edited in 2004. Schøyen’s private catalogue gives no provenience. George’s rendition (2011:108) associates the tablet with Larsa or Nippur (Southern Iraq). The only provenience information is found in Schøyen’s private catalogue: Rihani collection, Irbid (ca. 1935) and Amman, Jordan (before 1965-1988), and London (1988-) and Chris Martin, London, January 2000. The association with Rihani and date indicates it is looted in Iraq and smuggled through Jordan to London (potentially via Switzerland) and sold through dealer Chris Martin. On balance, the object is looted and smuggled out of Iraq after relevant Iraqi legislation was passed, probably between the 1980s and 2000. It is first published in George 2011:108.

Assessment. The tablet derives from southern Iraq, probably Larsa or Nippur. It has no ownership history predating Rihani, is probably looted and smuggled around 1990 by Rihani and sold through London dealer Martin to Schøyen. There is no record of the tablet before January 2000, in publications 2011.

Recommendation.

1. Schøyen has failed to provide documentation of legal removal from Iraq and the evidence on balance otherwise indicates modern looting, smuggling and illicit trading. The object should be returned to Iraq.







MS 3409 (George 52)

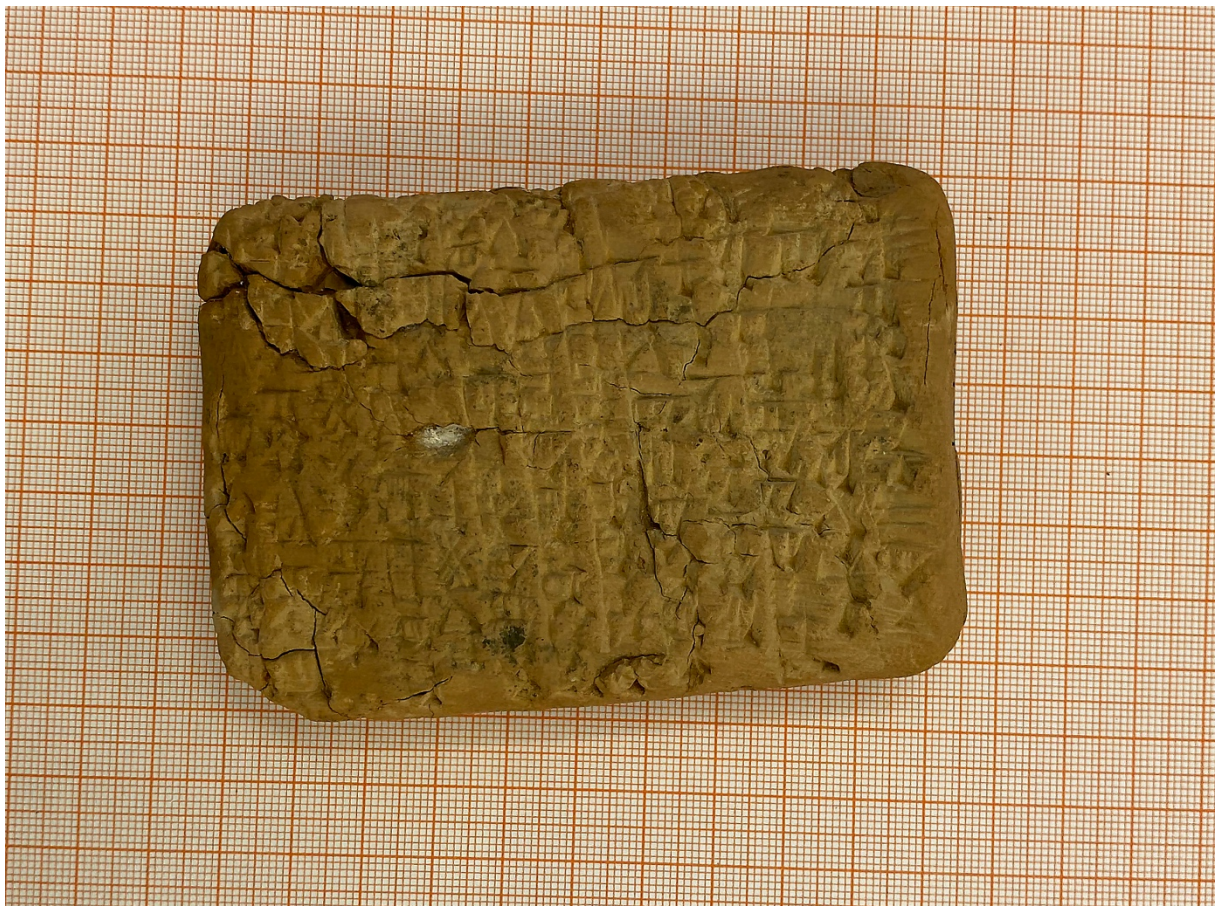
Clay tablet. Broken in several pieces, glued together. Coll. No. in black ink. 98x70x27

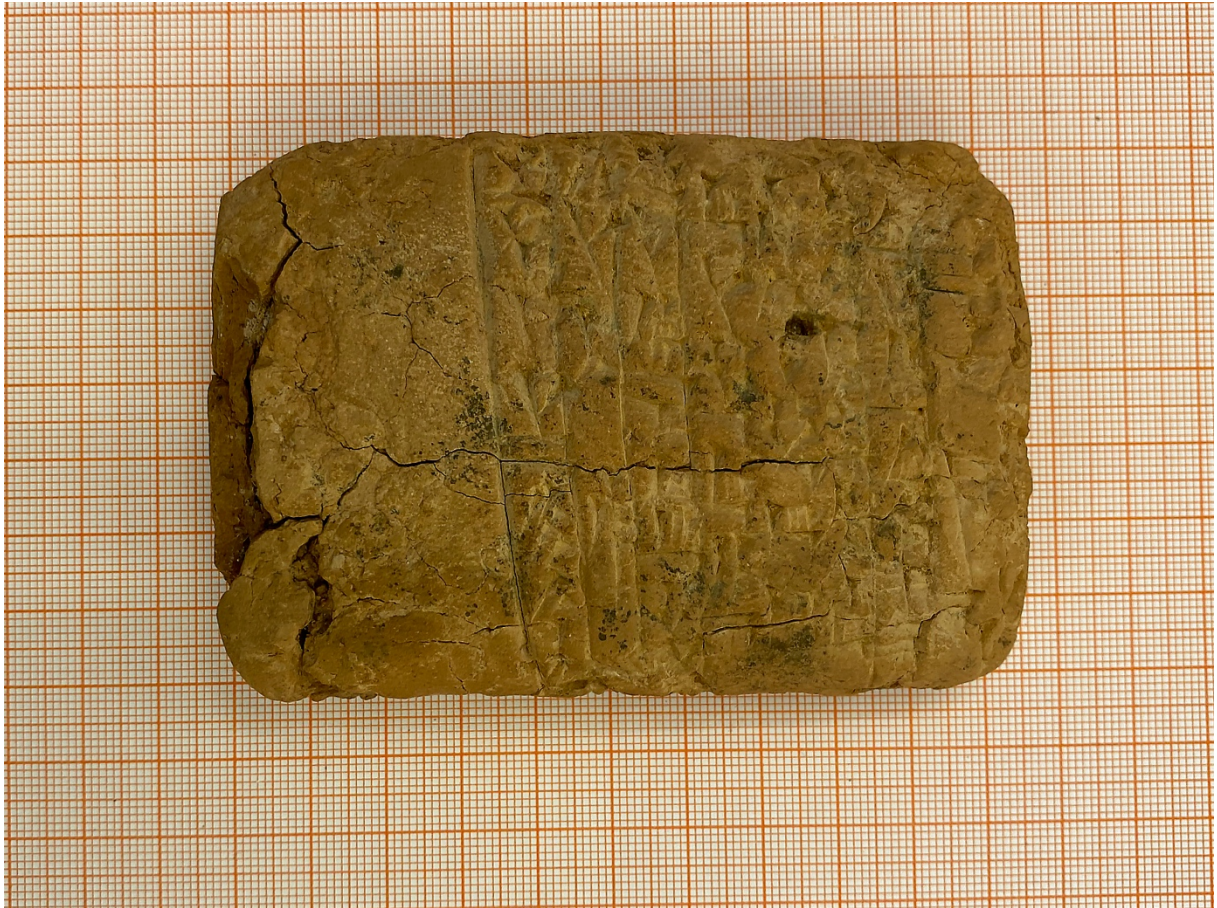
Sumerian inscription. CDLI gives the provenience as “uncertain (mod. uncertain)”. It is not listed on the MSS-webpage or among the entries removed in 2004, but according to CDLI it was in the 2004 NB-database. The provenance is given as “Provenance: 1. Cumberland Clark collection, Bournemouth (1920s-1941) and heirs; 2. Martha Crouse collection, Hong Kong and New England, USA (-1980s); 3. Pars Antiques, London, June 1989.” When and how Schøyen acquired the object is not explicated. Cumberland Clark cannot be used to ascertain an old acquisition (see MS 2368) or rule out recent looting (see MS 2855). Crouse is otherwise listed as 1988-1990 (MS 4899-4921) and there is an association to Pars, which indicates a date around 1989. The first publication is George 2011(:110).

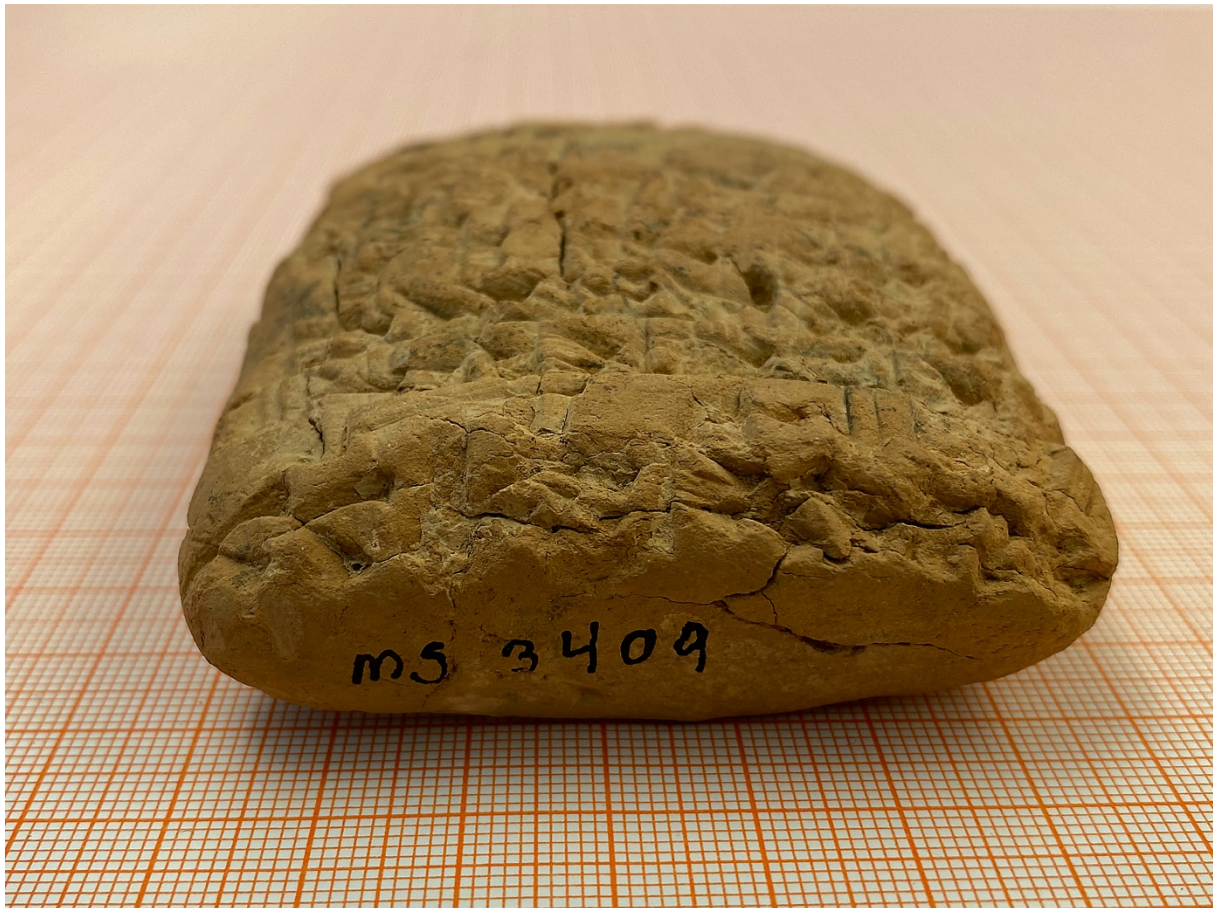
Assessment. The object stems from Iraq. The information in Schøyen’s private catalogue is inadequate in terms of provenance. However, the lacunas in the available information about when and how the object was initially acquired, as well as acquired by Schøyen, indicates it turns up around 1989. The object is probably looted/stolen around 1989.

Recommendation.

1. Schøyen has failed to provide documentation of legal removal from Iraq and the evidence on balance otherwise indicates modern looting, smuggling and illicit trading. The object should be returned to Iraq.







MS 3429 (George 99)

Clay tablet. One-sided. Modern cut. Burned secondary(?). Coll. No. in black ink. 102x65x20

Old Babylonian inscription. CDLI gives the provenience as “uncertain (mod. uncertain)”. It is not listed on the MSS-webpage or among the entries removed in 2004. The original catalogue source is a direct entry into the CDLI-base in 2006, indicating it was not known until immediately before the CDLI-entry. The provenance is given as “Provenance: 1. Cumberland Clark collection, Bournemouth (1920s-1941) and heirs; 2. Martha Crouse collection, Hong Kong and New England, USA (-1980s); 3. Pars Antiques, London, June 1989”. George (2011:204) notes that a “modern addition of clay crudely moulded by hand to form a convex surface. This clay remains firmly attached, even after baking, and it has been thought prudent not to remove it.” The fragment was pried from a larger piece, and the alterations were thought by George to be an attempt to pass the object off as complete. The modern cutting, need to bake the raw clay, the attached clay and the remaining indications of manipulations for marketing purposes indicate that the tablet would have recently entered the market (looted and smuggled), but also raises concerns pertaining to authenticity. When and how Schøyen acquired the object is not explicated. Cumberland Clark cannot be used to ascertain an old acquisition (see MS 2368) or rule out recent looting (MS 2855). As Crouse otherwise is listed as 1988-1990 (MS 4899-see 4921) and there is an association to Pars, indicating it turned up around 1989. The first publication is George 2011(:110).

Assessment. The object stems from Iraq. The information in Schøyen’s private catalogue is inadequate in terms of provenance. The alterations of the object (including what seems to be baking conducted by George or Schøyen), the lacunas in the available information about when and how the

object initially entered the market, as well as acquired by Schøyen gives a timeframe around 1989. Likewise, the recent baking and the attached “modern” clay might indicate recent appearance on the market. The artefact was looted and smuggled around 1989.

Recommendation.

1. Schøyen has failed to provide documentation of legal removal from Iraq and the evidence on balance otherwise indicates modern looting, smuggling and illicit trading. The object should be returned to Iraq.





MS 2855 (George 96)

Clay tablet. Damaged and glued. Coll. No. in black ink. 80x65x27

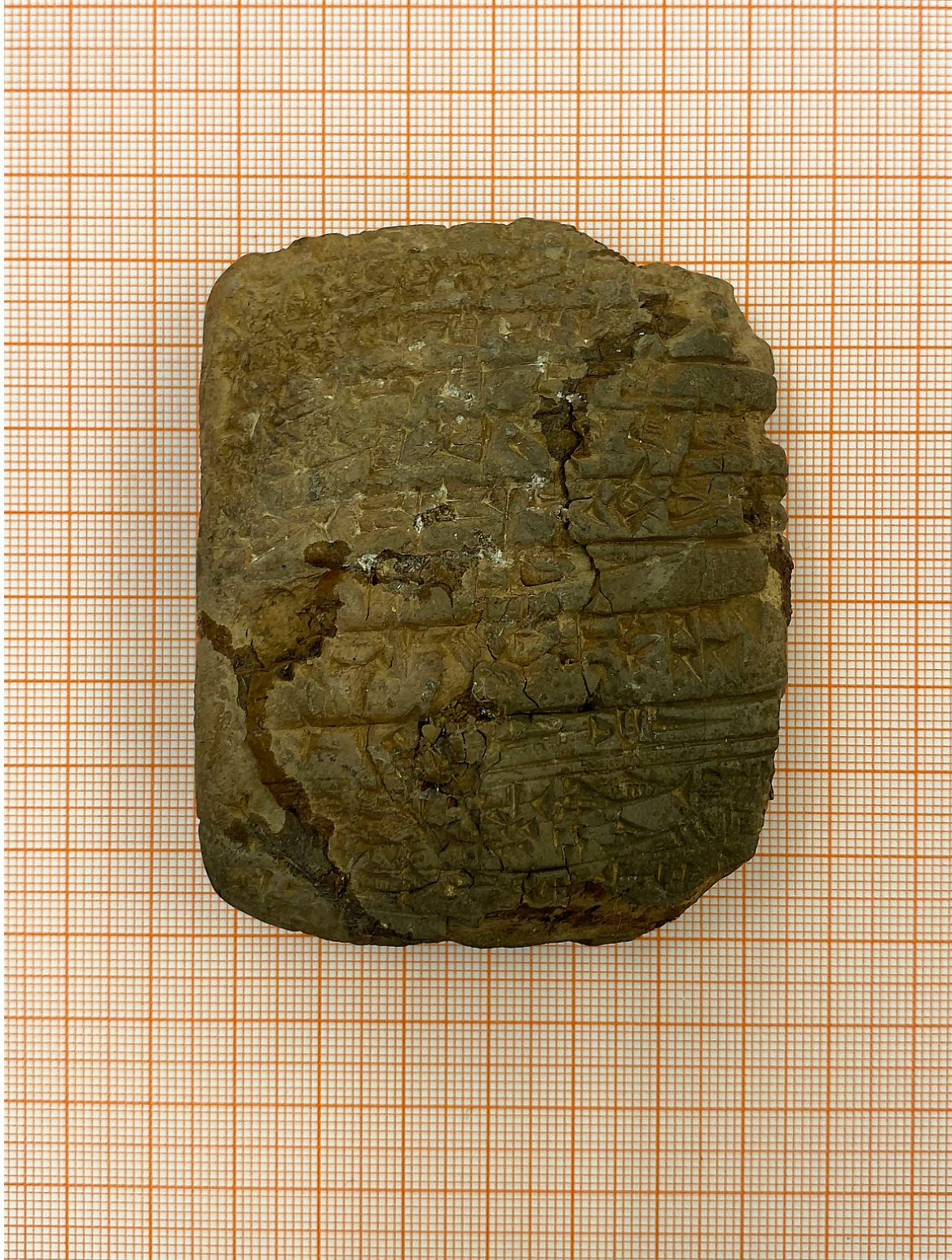
Tablet with inscriptions in Sumerian and Old Babylonian addition. CDLI gives the provenience as “uncertain (mod. uncertain)”. It was in the 1999 Schøyen catalogue and the 2004 NB-catalogue and not among entries removed or changed. The current MSS-webpage and Schøyen’s private catalogue provide no provenience information. The 1999 catalogue gives provenience as “1. ..., Babylonia; 2. Private Collection, England (1938-1999), acquired June 1999”. This information is removed in the 2006-catalogue. Schøyen’s private catalogue gives provenience as: “1. Cumberland Clark collection, Bournemouth (1920s-1941) and heirs; 2. Mark Wilson, Southampton (1987-1994), acquired June 1994.” The first publication is in Friberg 2007 (:236-244). Despite including Schøyen’s *Statement of provenance*, in reference to 400 Schøyen texts in the book Friberg states (if in euphemistic terms) that they are looted and smuggled: “*Although the great majority of the mathematical cuneiform texts in the Schøyen Collection are new additions to the corpus, probably emanating from relatively recent excavations in Iraq, the field plan text MS 1984 has been known for a very long time*”. MS 2855 is not among the few tablets that Friberg stresses come from an older collection. The text is otherwise published in George 2011(:199-200).

Assessment. The text indicates an origin in Iraq, and the date of when the tablet appears on the market supports this interpretation. The different years of acquisition (1994 and 1999) might indicate a confused provenience narrative. The reference to a Cumberland Clark collection does not supply information about how and when the tablet arrived in Britain and does not indicate an older collection (see MS 2368). The appearance June 1994 or 1999 also suggests it was looted in and

smuggled out of Iraq after 1991. This contention is supported by assertions by Schøyen researcher Friberg.

Recommendation.

1. Schøyen has failed to provide documentation of legal removal from Iraq and the evidence on balance otherwise indicates modern looting, smuggling and illicit trading. The object should be returned to Iraq.







MS 2818 (George 10)

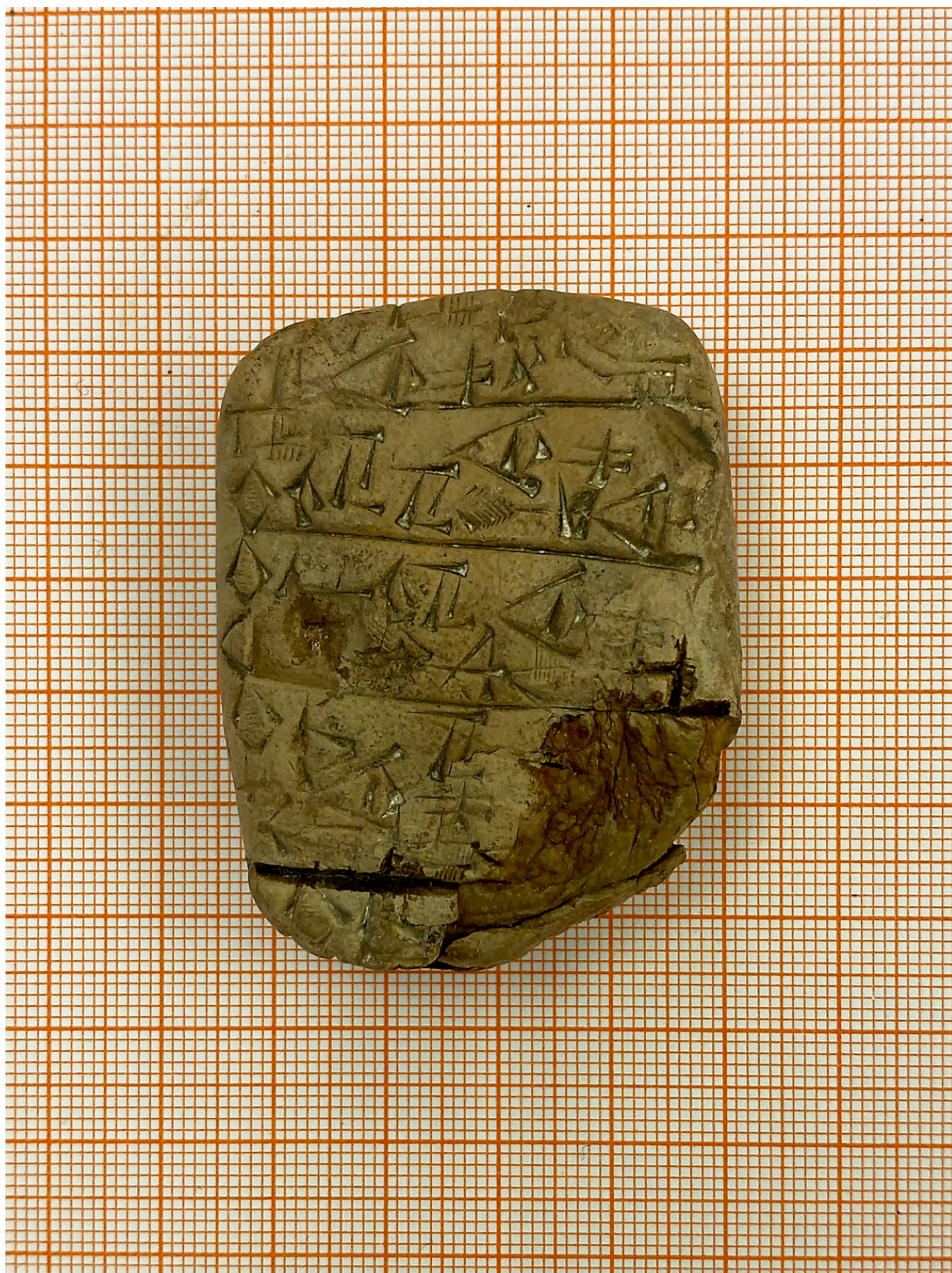
Clay tablet. Partly damaged and glued. Coll. No. in black ink. 55x40x20

Tablet with inscription in Sumerian. CDLI gives the provenience as Adab (mod. Bismaya), the present MSS-webpage provides no information. According to CDLI it is listed in the 2004 NB-base. It is not among entries removed in June 2004. Schøyen's private catalogue gives no provenience. The text is concerned with Adab (Steinkeller 2011:11), and conceivably stems from that area. Schøyen's private catalogue gives this provenience: Cumberland Clark collection, Bournemouth (1920s-1941) and heirs and Mark Wilson, Southampton (1987-1994), acquired June 1994.

Assessment. The tablet stems from Iraq. The reference to a Cumberland Clark collection does not supply information about how and when the tablet arrived in Britain and does not indicate an older collection (see MS 2368) and does not exclude an illicit acquisition (see MS 2855). The first appearance is June 1994 with Schøyen's purchase, followed by Pompino et al. 2006(:55) and academic publication 2011 by Steinkeller. The artefact entered the market after the 1920's, but specific history starts in 1994. It was conceivably looted and smuggled around 1990.

Recommendation.

1. Schøyen has failed to provide documentation of legal removal from Iraq and the evidence on balance otherwise indicates modern looting, smuggling and illicit trading. The object should be returned to Iraq.







MS 2814 (George 22)

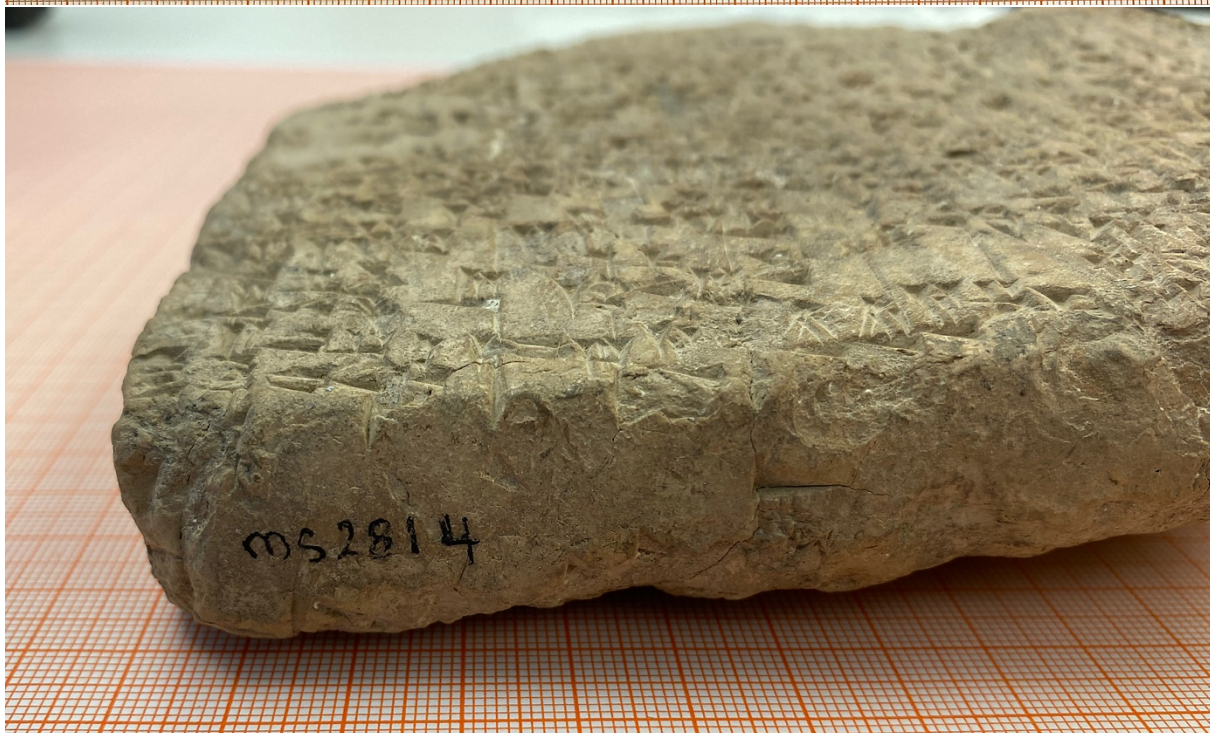
Clay tablet, fragment. Coll. No. in black ink. 148x140x32

Tablet with inscriptions in Sumerian and Old Babylonian. CDLI gives the provenience as “uncertain (mod. uncertain)”, the current MSS-webpage provides no provenience information. The tablet was in the 2004 NB-catalogue but is not listed among the entries removed or changed in June 2004. The 2006 version is without provenience information. Schøyen’s private catalogue gives no provenience but refers to text-based associations from Wilcke (2011:29-47) to Babylonian Lagash. Schøyen’s private catalogue lists provenience “1. Cumberland Clark collection, Bournemouth (1920s-1941) and heirs; 2. Mark Wilson, Southampton (1987-1994), acquired June 1994”. The tablet was exhibited at the *Tigris 25th anniversary exhibition* at the Kon-Tiki Museum, Oslo, 2003. Published by Wilcke in George 2011.

Assessment. The text indicates an origin in Iraq, and the date of when the tablet appears on the market supports this interpretation. If the provenience is not fabricated, the reference to a Cumberland Clark collection does not supply information about how and when the tablet arrived in Britain and does not indicate an older collection (see MS 2368) and does not exclude an illicit acquisition (see MS 2855). The appearance June 1994 suggest it was looted in and smuggled out of Iraq after 1991.

Recommendation.

1. Schøyen has failed to provide documentation of legal removal from Iraq and the evidence on balance otherwise indicates modern looting, smuggling and illicit trading. The object should be returned to Iraq.



MS 3396 (George 8)

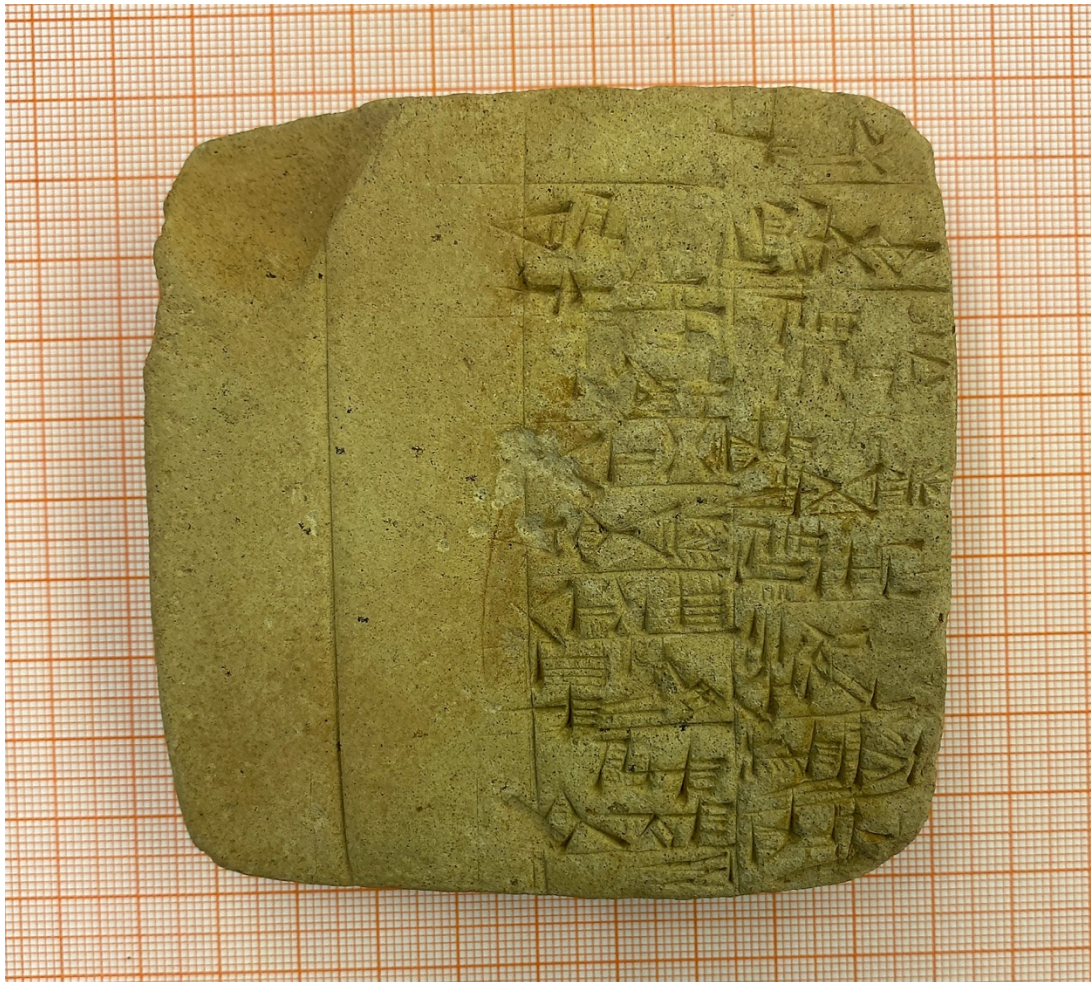
Clay tablet. Coll. No. in black ink. 89x89x25

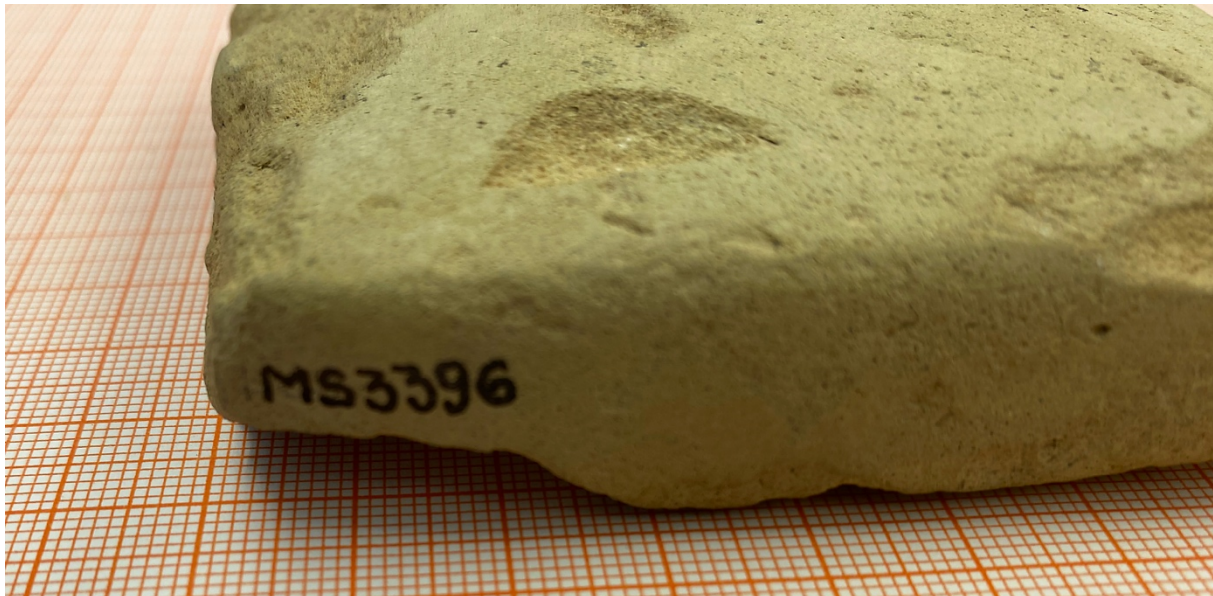
Sumerian inscription. CDLI gives Umma (mod. Tell Jokha) as provenience, perhaps based on information in the 2004 NB-catalogue. Based on the textual context Steinkeller (2011:8) suggests connections to Durum – which Schøyen’s private catalogue reiterates. The tablet is not listed on the present MS-webpage, or among the entries removed in 2004, but according to CDLI it was in the 2004 NB-database. The provenance is given as “Provenance: 1. Cumberland Clark collection, Bournemouth (1920s-1941) and heirs; 2. Martha Crouse collection, Hong Kong and New England, USA (-1980s); 3. Pars Antiques, London, June 1989.” When and how Schøyen acquired the object is not explicated. Cumberland Clark cannot be used to ascertain an old acquisition (see MS 2368) or rule out recent looting (see MS 2855). As Crouse otherwise is elsewhere listed as 1988-1990 (MS 4899-4921) and there is an association to Pars, 1989 is the fixed time point. The first publication is Steinkeller 2011(:8).

Assessment. The object stems from Iraq. The information in Schøyen’s private catalogue is inadequate in terms of provenance. However, the lacunas in the available information about when and how the object was initially acquired, also by Schøyen, indicates it turns up around 1989. The object is probably looted/stolen around 1989.

Recommendation.

1. Schøyen has failed to provide documentation of legal removal from Iraq and the evidence on balance otherwise indicates modern looting, smuggling and illicit trading. The object should be returned to Iraq.





MS 2764 (George 16)

Marble brick stamp. Coll. No. in black ink. 185x100x35

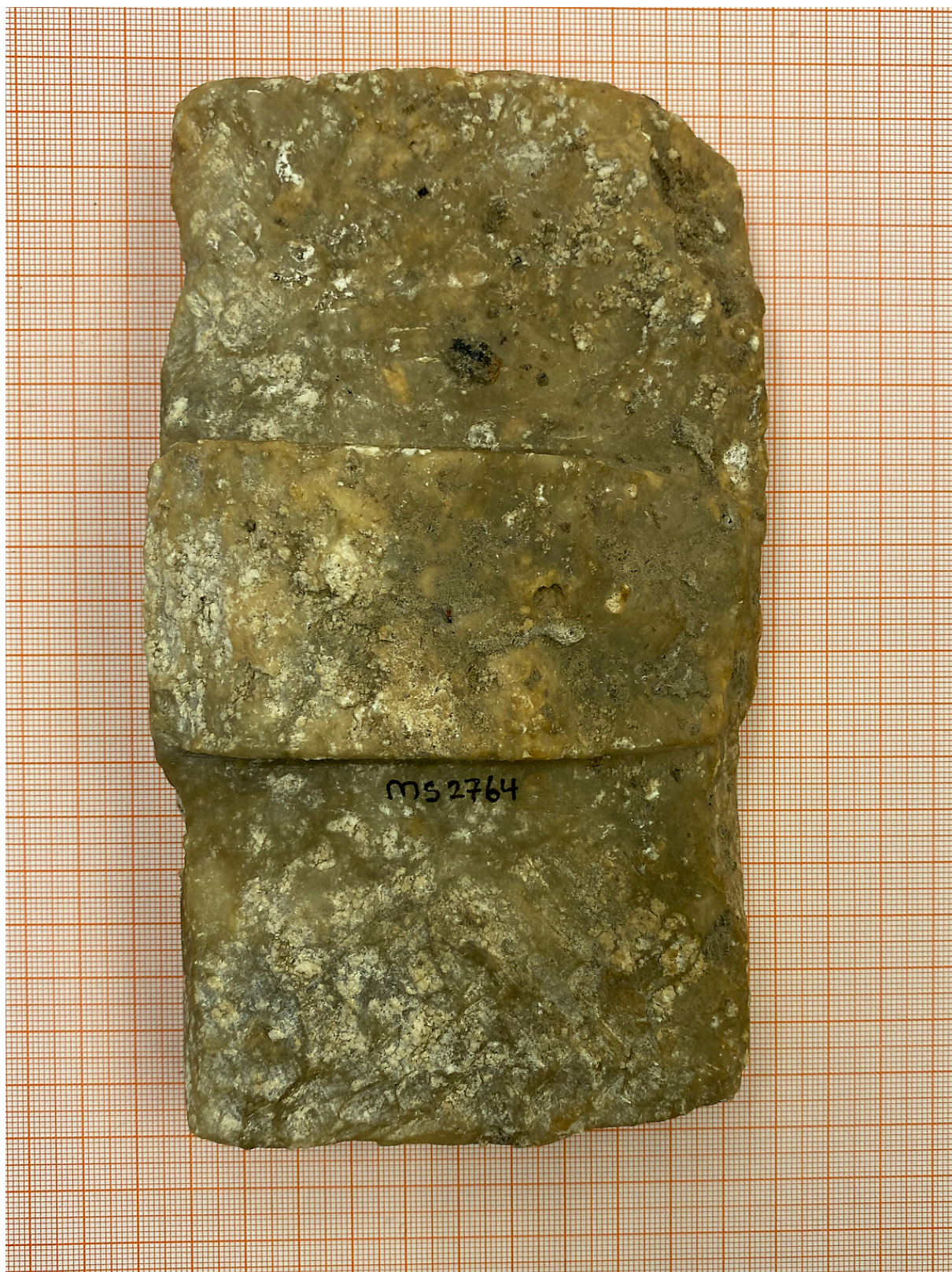
Stamp with Sumerian inscription. CDLI gives the provenience as “uncertain (mod. uncertain)”, the present MSS-webpage does not provide provenience. It was listed in the 2004 NB-base and is not among the entries removed or altered in June 2004. Schøyen’s private catalogue provenience as “building administration of King Amar-Sin”, i.e., Ur in southern Iraq. The source for this assertion is not clear but might be an elaboration on the Frayne text edition from 1997 or details (if potentially fictitious) supplied by the dealer, smuggler, or looter. Steinkeller (2011:20) merely notes that it corresponds to a standard building inscription of Amar-Suen. The only provenience information is in Schøyen’s private catalogue: “Private collection, Switzerland (ca 1950-98); 3. Bruce Ferrini, *A Selection of Cuneiform Tablets, Cylinder Seals, Medieval & Renaissance Illuminated Manuscripts & Objects*, exhibited at TEFAF Maastricht 12-21 March 1999, his CU32”. The first publication is in Frayne 1997, later Steinkeller 2011:20.

Assessment. The stamp in all probability originates in southern Iraq. Given the vague provenance, Ferrini’s dubious reputation, the chronology of when it turns up on the market and that Schøyen seems to potentially have information supplied by the looting-dealer network, it is probably looted in the 1990’s and certainly after 1949.

Recommendation.

1. Schøyen has failed to provide documentation of legal removal from Iraq and the evidence on balance otherwise indicates modern looting, smuggling and illicit trading. The object should be returned to Iraq.





MS 3185 (George 95)

Bronze tablet, originally pierced as pendant. Coll. No. in black ink. 47x27x3

Urartian inscription. CDLI gives the provenience as “uncertain (mod. uncertain)”. It is a direct CDLI entry in 2006, it is not listed on the MSS-webpage or the entries removed in 2004. Schøyen’s private catalogue does not provide provenience. The association with Urartu indicates a provenience in eastern Anatolia, Iran, Iraq or Armenia. The private Schøyen catalogue indicates a provenance to “1. Cumberland Clark collection, Bournemouth (1920s-1941) and heirs; 2. Mark Wilson, Southampton (1987-1994); 3. Private collection, London (1994-2001); 4. Christie’s, South Kensington, London 25 April 2001, lot 17; 5. Mark Wilson, Southampton, May 2001”. The artefact seems to arrive on the market in the 1980s-early 1990s and then pass between multiple owners until 2001, notably anonymous and twice Mark Wilson. It is not known when Schøyen acquired the artefact, and the provenance pattern indicates Wilson was potentially acting as Schøyen’s agent in the early 2000s. The first publication of the tablet is Weeden 2011:193.

Assessment. The association with Urartu indicates the tablet can come from several countries. The geography speaks to it being looted in Turkey shortly before 1994.

Recommendation.

1. Schøyen is required to supply all documents associated with the piece to demonstrate when and how it was removed from Turkey.
2. Turkish authorities should be consulted in regard to a return of the stolen artefact.





MS 3183 (George 21)

Clay tablet. Partly cracked and damaged. Secondary burned (?) and glued. Coll. No. in black ink. 55x74x30

Old Babylonian inscription. CDLI gives the provenience as “uncertain (mod. uncertain)”. It is a direct CDLI entry in 2006, not listed in the current MSS-webpage or the entries removed in 2004. Schøyen’s private catalogue does not provide provenience. Steinkeller’s (2011:28) text rendition indicates that it stems from southern Iraq. The private Schøyen catalogue lists provenience as Cumberland Clark collection, Bournemouth (1920s-1941) and heirs and Mark Wilson, Southampton (1987-1994), acquired June 1994. CDLI gives the first publication as Frayne 1997, but this is to the text not the object. The first academic publication is the CDLI-base in 2006, followed by Steinkeller 2011:28. *Assessment.* The object probably stems from southern Iraq. If the provenience is not fabricated, the reference to Cumberland Clark collection does not supply information about how and when the tablet arrived in Britain and does not indicate an older collection (see MS 2368), nor does it exclude an illicit acquisition (see MS 2855). The provenience from the private Schøyen catalogue indicates that the piece may have been smuggled out of Iraq before 1991, but after 1917 and probably in the 1980s early 1990s as it is not known to Frayne in 1997. Having been acquired June 1994 and first published in 2006, the piece is potentially looted between the 1980s to 1994.

Recommendation.

2. Schøyen has failed to provide documentation of legal removal from Iraq and the evidence on balance otherwise indicates modern looting, smuggling and illicit trading. The object should be returned to Iraq.





MS 3206 (George 20)

Clay tablet. Dark brown and glossy, secondary burned (?). Coll. No. in black ink. 108x67x30

Inscription in Sumerian. CDLI gives the provenience as “uncertain (mod. uncertain)”. It is not listed in the MSS-webpage or the entries removed in 2004, but according to CDLI was listed in the 2004 NB-catalogue. Schøyen’s private catalogue does not provide provenience. Comparisons and the text interpretation indicate a provenience to southern Iraq, acquired with a batch of other objects (including, according to Steinkeller 2011:25, MS 3208, MS 3209/1/2/3, MS 3218). MS 3206 conceivably has a similar Babylonian origin (and looting/smuggling history). Schøyen’s catalogue lists provenance as Cumberland Clark collection, Bournemouth (1920s-1941) and heirs and Mark Wilson, Southampton (1987-1994), acquired by Schøyen June 1994. If the provenance is not fabricated or manipulated, the reference to the Cumberland Clark collection does not supply information about how and when the tablet arrived in Britain and does not indicate an older collection (see MS 2368), nor does it exclude an illicit acquisition (see MS 2855). The first publication reference in CDLI is to Frayne 1997, but this is to comparative inscriptions, not MS 3206. The first publication is Steinkeller 2011. Based on the information, it conceivably entered the market early 1990s.

Assessment. The object derives from southern Iraq. There are no indications of the object before 1994, followed by the first publication in 2011. The circumstances indicate it was looted in and smuggled out of Iraq between before June 1994, probably after 1991.

Recommendation.

1. Schøyen has failed to provide documentation of legal removal from Iraq and the evidence on balance otherwise indicates modern looting, smuggling and illicit trading. The object should be returned to Iraq.





MS 3205 (George 87)

Silver vessel, fragment. Two parts taped together. Coll. No. in black ink on top and on inside at bottom. Not disassembled during inspection. 128x80

Inscription in Elamite. CDLI gives the provenience as “uncertain (mod. uncertain)”. It is not listed on the MSS-webpage or among the entries removed in 2004, but according to CDLI was listed in the 2004 NB-catalogue. The Schøyen catalogue does not provide provenience. The inscription (and reference inscriptions) refers to Susa in Iran. Schøyen’s private catalogue gives provenance “Cumberland Clark collection, Bournemouth (1920s-1941) and heirs; [...] Mark Wilson, Southampton (1987-1994), acquired June 1994.” The fragment was not among 19 known Linear Elamite inscriptions in Vallat 1986, and the first publication is Vallat 2011. It was probably looted and entered the market between 1986 and 1994.

Assessment. The subject matter points to a tie to Iran (if in antiquity). If the provenance is not fabricated or manipulated, the reference to a Cumberland Clark collection does not supply information about how and when the tablet arrived in Britain and does not indicate an older collection, but does indicate an illicit acquisition. The publications by Vallat 1986 and 2001 and the acquisition in 1994 indicate the likely time frame for when the object was looted/stolen in Iran, smuggled and entered the market to after 1986 and before June 1994. The evidence indicates that the artefact was removed from Iran in breach of Iran’s November 3, 1930 National Heritage Protection Act.

1. Schøyen has failed to provide documentation of legal removal from Iran and the evidence on balance otherwise indicates modern looting, smuggling and illicit trading.
 - a. The object should be held back and Iranian authorities should be consulted.
 - b. After the above, a decision concerning the return of the object to Iran should be made





MS 1846/5 (George 43)

Clay cone. Top, burned secondary (cf. MS 1846/4). Coll. No. in black ink. 80x47

Manuscript in Sumerian, clay cone. CDLI lists provenience as “Isin (mod. Bahriyat) ?». George maintains that most exemplars of this inscription come from Isin, but one is from Nippur, both southern Iraq. 1846/5 is not listed on the present MSS-webpage. CDLI gives the 2006 NB-catalogue as catalogue source, MS 1846/5 is not among entries changed in 2004. Schøyen’s private catalogue indirectly indicates Isin. The private catalogue gives the provenance “1. Cumberland Clark collection, Bournemouth (1920s-1941) and heirs; 2. Mark Wilson, Southampton (1987-1994), acquired June 1994”. CDLI lists a first reference to Frayne 1990, but this is to comparative objects, and MS 1846/5 is not listed by Frayne. The first publication listed in Schøyen’s private catalogue is George 2011.

Assessment: The object originates from Iraq. The reference to a Cumberland Clark collection does not supply information about how and when the tablet arrived in Britain and does not indicate an older collection (see MS 2368) and does not exclude an illicit acquisition (see MS 2855). The object was removed from Iraq after the late 1950s. Schøyen’s private catalogue maintains it was acquired by Wilson around 1990 and quickly sold to Schøyen. The first public reference is 2011. It is likely that it was looted from and smuggled out of Iraq in the early 1990s.

Recommendation.

2. Schøyen has failed to provide documentation of legal removal from Iraq and the evidence on balance otherwise indicates modern looting, smuggling and illicit trading. The object should be returned to Iraq.







MS 1846/4 (George 77)

Clay cylinder (cf. MS 1846/5). Fragment. Coll. No. in black ink. 95x60

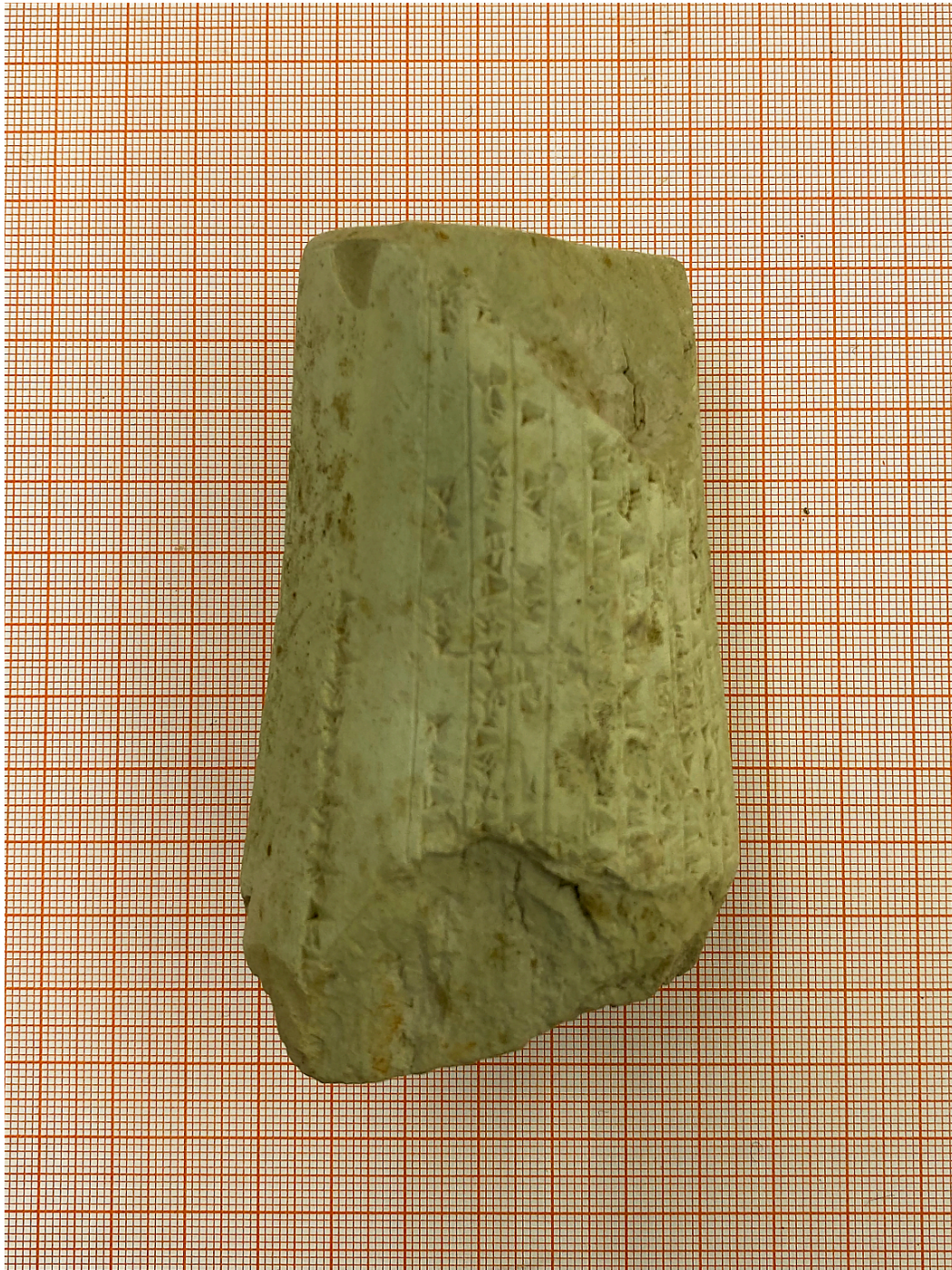
Manuscript in Neo-Babylonian, lower half of clay cylinder. CDLI list the provenience as “uncertain (mod. uncertain)”. CDLI gives the 2006 NB-catalogue as its catalogue source, MS 1846/4 is not among entries changed in 2004. It is not listed in the present MSS-webpage. George’s (2011:171-72) discussion of the text indicates it originates from Babylon. Schøyen’s private catalogue lists provenance as “1. Cumberland Clark collection, Bournemouth (1920s-1941) and heirs; 2. Mark Wilson, Southampton (1987-1994), acquired June 1994”. The first public appearance is George 2011 (:171-72).

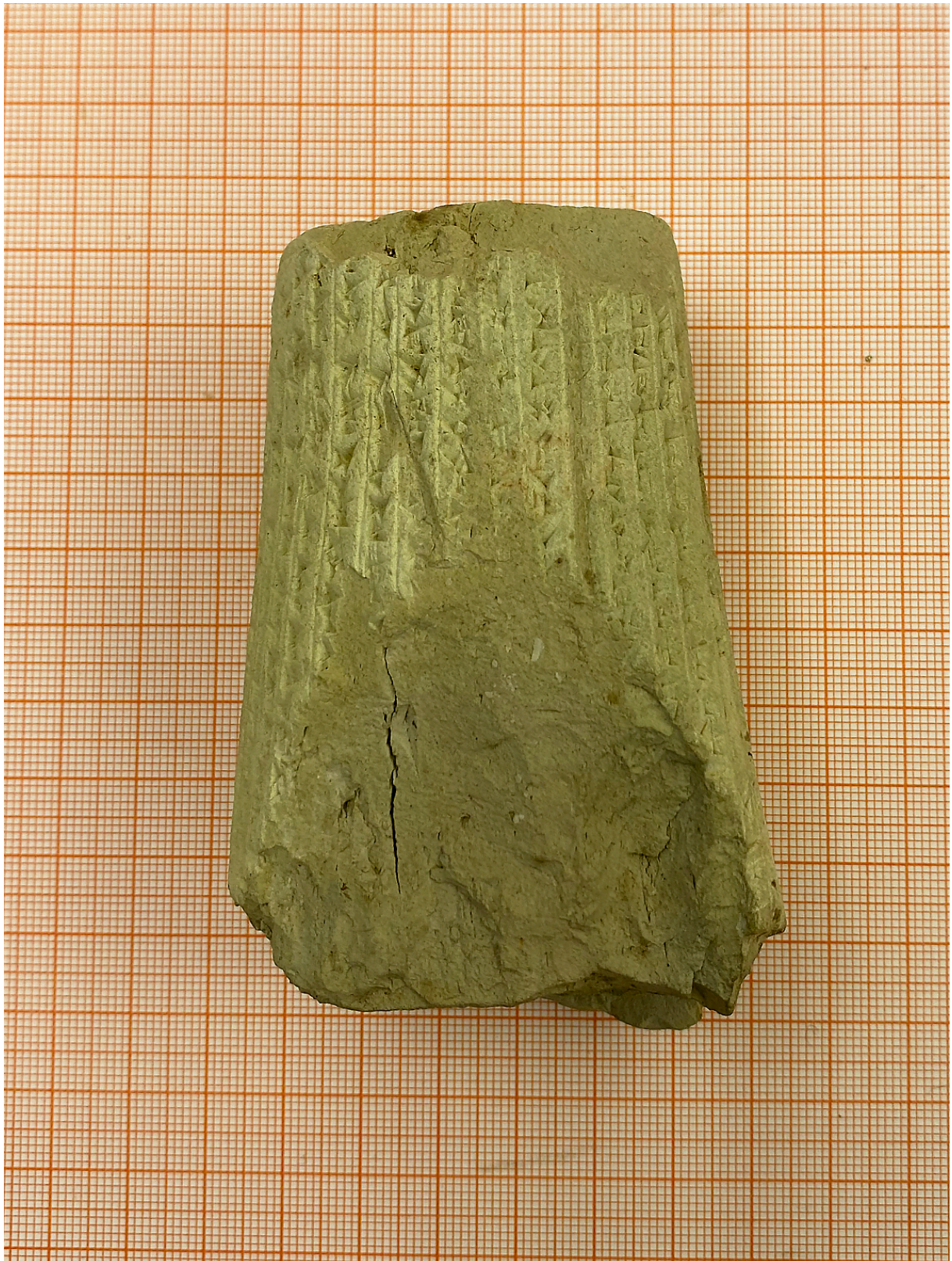
Assessment: The object originates from Iraq. The first public references are 1994. The reference to a Cumberland Clark collection does not supply information about how and when the tablet arrived in Britain and does not indicate an older collection (see MS 2368) and does not exclude an illicit acquisition (ref. MS 2855). The Cumberland Clark reference indicates the object was removed after

the late 1950s. Schøyen's private catalogue maintains it was acquired by Wilson around 1990 and sold to Schøyen in 1994, and then enters the market and rapidly changes owners. Both Wilson and Schøyen are involved in illicit trade. It is likely that it was looted from and smuggled out of Iraq in the early 1990s.

Recommendation.

- 1 Schøyen has failed to provide documentation of legal removal from Iraq and the evidence on balance otherwise indicates modern looting, smuggling and illicit trading. The object should be returned to Iraq.







MS 1869 (George 40)

Clay cone. Coll. No. in black ink. 110x50

Old Babylonian inscription. CDLI list the provenience as “uncertain (mod. uncertain)”. CDLI gives the 2004 NB-base as its first source, and the object is not in the removed or altered in the 2004-07 NB-catalogues. It is not in the present MSS-webpage. Schøyen’s private catalogue maintains that the piece is from the royal palace of Lipit-Ishtar, Isin, but this is probably based on George’s (2011:92) assessment of the text and geography of other finds. Schøyen’s private catalogue list previous owners as “Cumberland Clark collection, Bournemouth (1920s-1941) and heirs; 3. Mark Wilson, Southampton (1987-1994), acquired June 1994”. It cannot be determined when the piece entered the collector’s market, or when Schøyen acquired it. The initial reference to Frayne 1990 is to the general text, while a reference to the object itself appears in Steinkeller 2011:92.

Assessment. The cone derives from Iraq. The reference to the Cumberland Clark collection does not supply information about how and when the tablet arrived in Britain and does not indicate an older collection (see MS 2368) and does not exclude an illicit acquisition (see MS 2855). Schøyen’s private catalogue indicates that Wilson acquired and quickly sold on to Schøyen in 1994, indicating exchanges after the artefact entered the UK. Steinkeller 2011 is the first public reference. This indicates that the object was looted and smuggled out of Iraq at the earliest in the late 1950s, but in all probability around 1990.

Recommendation.

Schøyen has failed to provide documentation of legal removal from Iraq and the evidence on balance otherwise indicates modern looting, smuggling and illicit trading. The objects should be returned to Iraq.







MS 2180 (George 73)

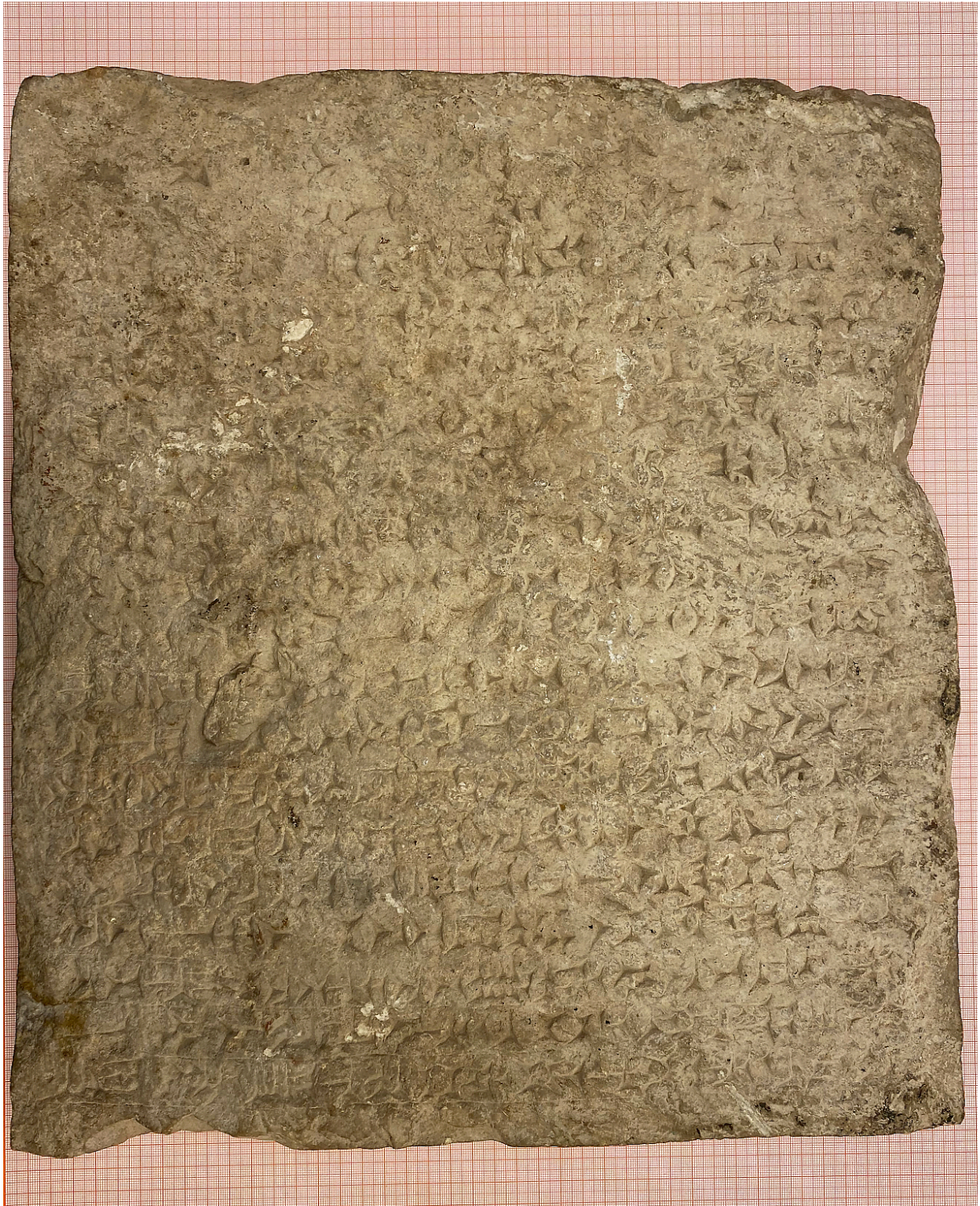
Limestone slab. Modern cut. Coll. No. in black ink + "Hist. O". 470x420x40

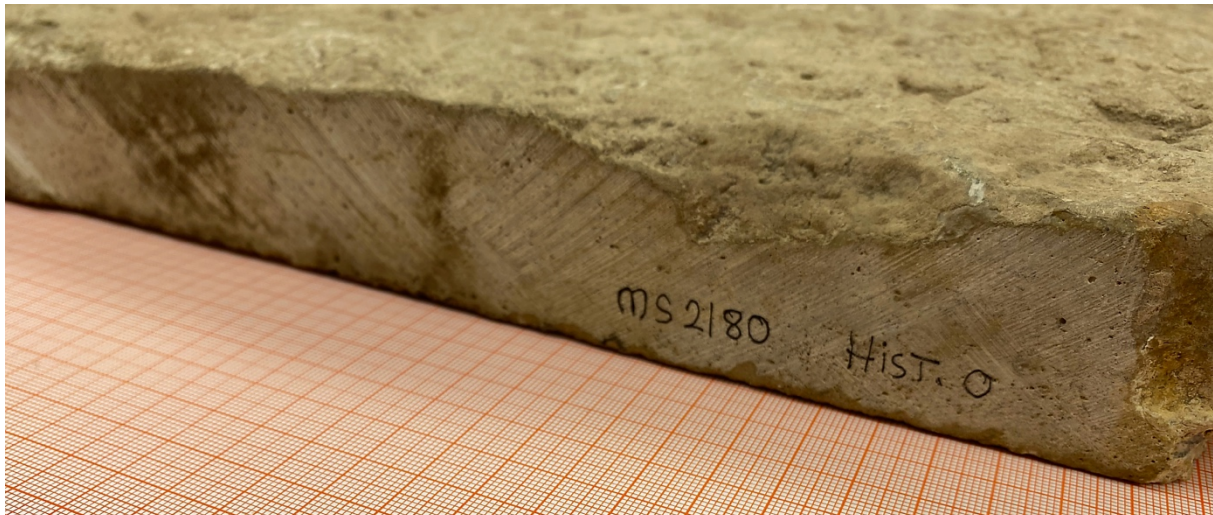
Slab with Akkadian inscription. CDLI list provenience as "Nineveh (mod. Kuyunjik)", which was also found in the 2006 catalogue. Schøyen's private catalogues specifies it to the courtyard of the Ezida temple, as does information in removed entries removed June 2004 from the NB-catalogue. The present MSS-webpage lacks provenance. The NB-catalogue information removed in 2004 gives the Cumberland Clark collection, Bournemouth (1920s-1941) and heirs as sole ownership information, while Schøyen's private catalogues states "2. Leonard Simmonds collection, UK (1944-1987) and heirs; 3. Pars Antiques, London, June 1999." It is not clear when Schøyen took possession. CDLI list a primary publication as Novotny, Jamie & Jeffers, Joshua 2018, while Schøyen (and second publishing according to CDLI) refers to Frame 2011(:144). CDLI also lists Layard (1851), but this is to other stones found during Layard's excavations in the 1840's.

Assessment. The object originates from Iraq. There are issues with the changing provenance. If the provenances are not fabricated, the reference to a Cumberland Clark collection does not supply information about how and when the tablet arrived in Britain and does not indicate an older collection (see MS 2368) and does not exclude an illicit acquisition (see MS 2855). Likewise, the Simmonds reference does not demonstrate how or when the tablet arrived in Britain and does not indicate an older collection – a maximum boundary is 1944. There is no chronologically specified ownership before June 1999, it is not known when Schøyen acquired it after that date. As it is associated with Pars Antiques there is reason for concern. It cannot be determined whether the shifting references to obscure, former owners are mistakes or an attempt at doctoring a fictitious provenance is an indication of *“vapid and unverifiable provenance is simply a facile attempt to avoid arousing the suspicion of law enforcement authorities and others”* (The District Attorney of New York’s (DANY) *Statement of Facts* of the *Reinhardt case* December 3, 2021, 11-12. The reference to the Ezida temple conceivably rests on information from the text published by Frame (2011:144), but Schøyen might have information (shared with Frame?) from the looter/dealer. The object was looted and smuggled after 1944, probably in the 1980s or 90s.

Recommendation.

1. Schøyen has failed to provide documentation of legal removal from Iraq and the evidence on balance otherwise indicates modern looting, smuggling and illicit trading. The object should be returned to Iraq.





MS 1815/3 (George 81)

Clay brick. Modern cut. Coll. No. in black ink. 200x220x80

Brick with block print, Archaic Babylonian. CDLI lists provenience as “uncertain (mod. uncertain)”. George (2011:181) attributes bricks with this text to Babylon, the MSS-webpage refers to excavation of a ziggurat “north of Esagila, the temple of Marduk, also mentioned in the inscription”. This is conceivably based on information provided to Schøyen through the supplier network but may be an extrapolation from the text. None of the above sources contains provenance information. Schøyen’s private catalogue gives recent provenance as Cumberland Clark Collection, Bournemouth (1920s-1941) and heirs; and Mark Wilson, Southampton (1987-1994); acquired June 1994. The first public reference is exhibition *Bibliofilklubben 75 år. Jubileumsutstilling Bok og Samler*, Universitetsbiblioteket, 1997 and the XVI Congress of the International Organization for the study of the Old Testament, Faculty of Law Library, University of Oslo, 1998. The first publication reference in CDLI is George 2011. A reference to Berger 1973 is to the text and similar bricks, not the specific bricks in the Schøyen collection.

Assessment: The object originates from Iraq. The first public reference is the 1997 exhibition. The reference to a Cumberland Clark collection does not supply information about how and when the tablet arrived in Britain and does not indicate an older collection (see MS 2368) and does not exclude an illicit acquisition (ref. MS 2855). The Cumberland Clark reference indicates the object was likely removed after the late 1950s. As Schøyen’s private catalogue maintains it was acquired by Wilson around 1990 and sold to Schøyen in 1994, it seems to enter the market and rapidly change owners in the early 1990s. It is likely that it was looted from and smuggled out of Iraq in the early 1990s.

Recommendation.

- 1 Schøyen has failed to provide documentation of legal removal from Iraq and the evidence on balance otherwise indicates modern looting, smuggling and illicit trading. The object should be returned to Iraq.





MS 1914 (George 35)

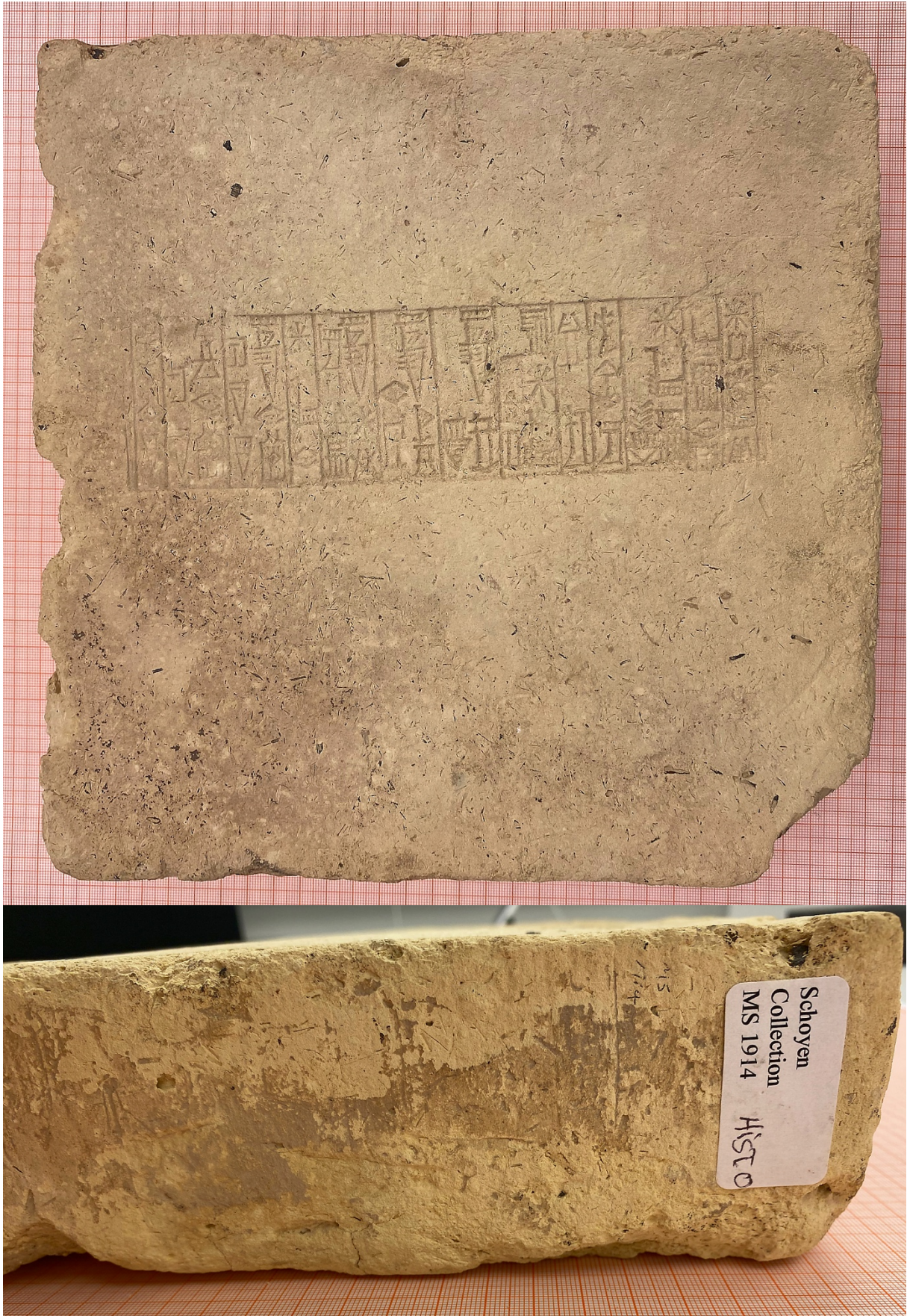
Clay brick. Coll. No. in black ink and on white tab ("Schøyen Collection. Hist. O"). 270x260x70

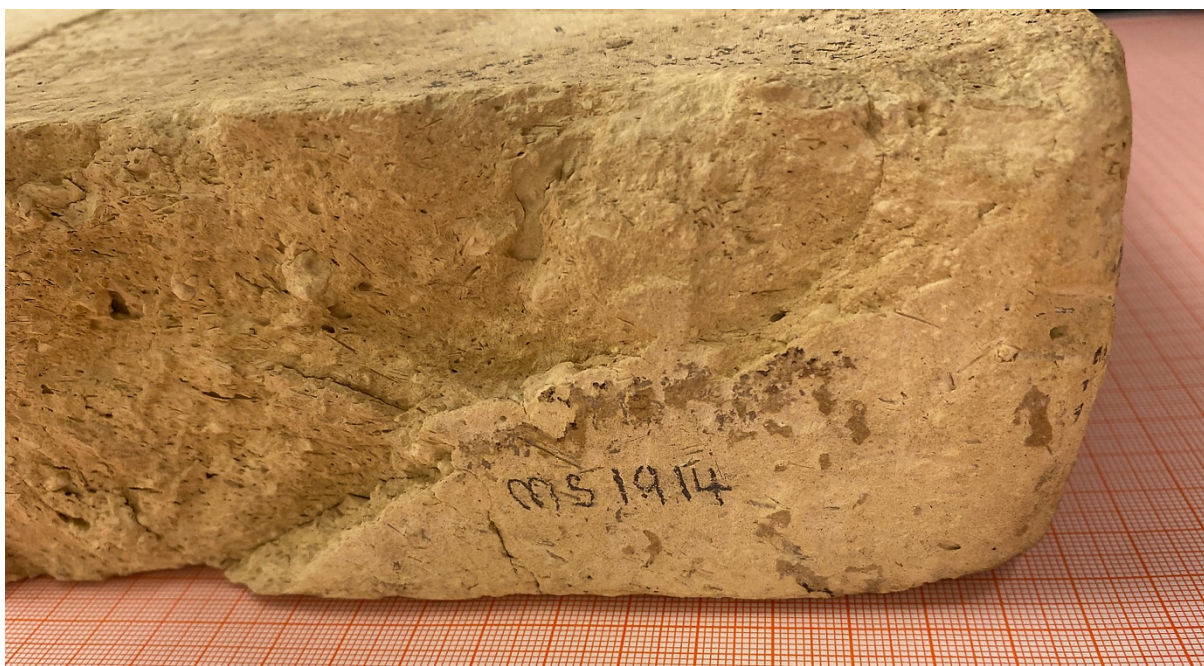
Brick, inscription in Neo-Sumerian. CDLI list provenience as "uncertain (mod. uncertain)". CDLI give the 2004 NB-catalogue as its initial source, but MS 1914 is not among the removed altered information in 2004. It is not listed on the present MSS-webpage. Schøyen's private catalogue gives the place of origin as Enki temple, Eridu, Sumer. This probably relates to George's (2011:56) general presentation of the text type found on multiple bricks. Schøyen's private catalogue states the provenance as "Cumberland Clark Collection, Bournemouth (1920s-1941), and heirs; 3. Mark Wilson, Southampton (1987-1994), acquired June 1994". The first public reference is to Frayne 1997, but this is to similar inscriptions, not the object. George 2011:56 is the first public reference.

Assessment. The piece stems from Iraq. The reference to a Cumberland Clark collection does not supply information about how and when the tablet arrived in Britain and does not indicate an older collection (see MS 2368) and does not exclude an illicit acquisition (ref. MS 2855). What can be positively determined is the object surfaces on the market in 1994 and is published 2011. Information supplied here does not allow an assessment of the object's provenance predating 1994. Probably it was looted in and smuggled out of Iraq after 1991 and before 2003.

Recommendation.

- 1) Schøyen has failed to provide documentation of legal removal from Iraq and the evidence on balance otherwise indicates modern looting, smuggling and illicit trading. The object should be returned to Iraq.





MS 1911/1

Incantation bowl. Coll. No. in black ink + with pencil near bottom. Tab with "3". 175x175x130

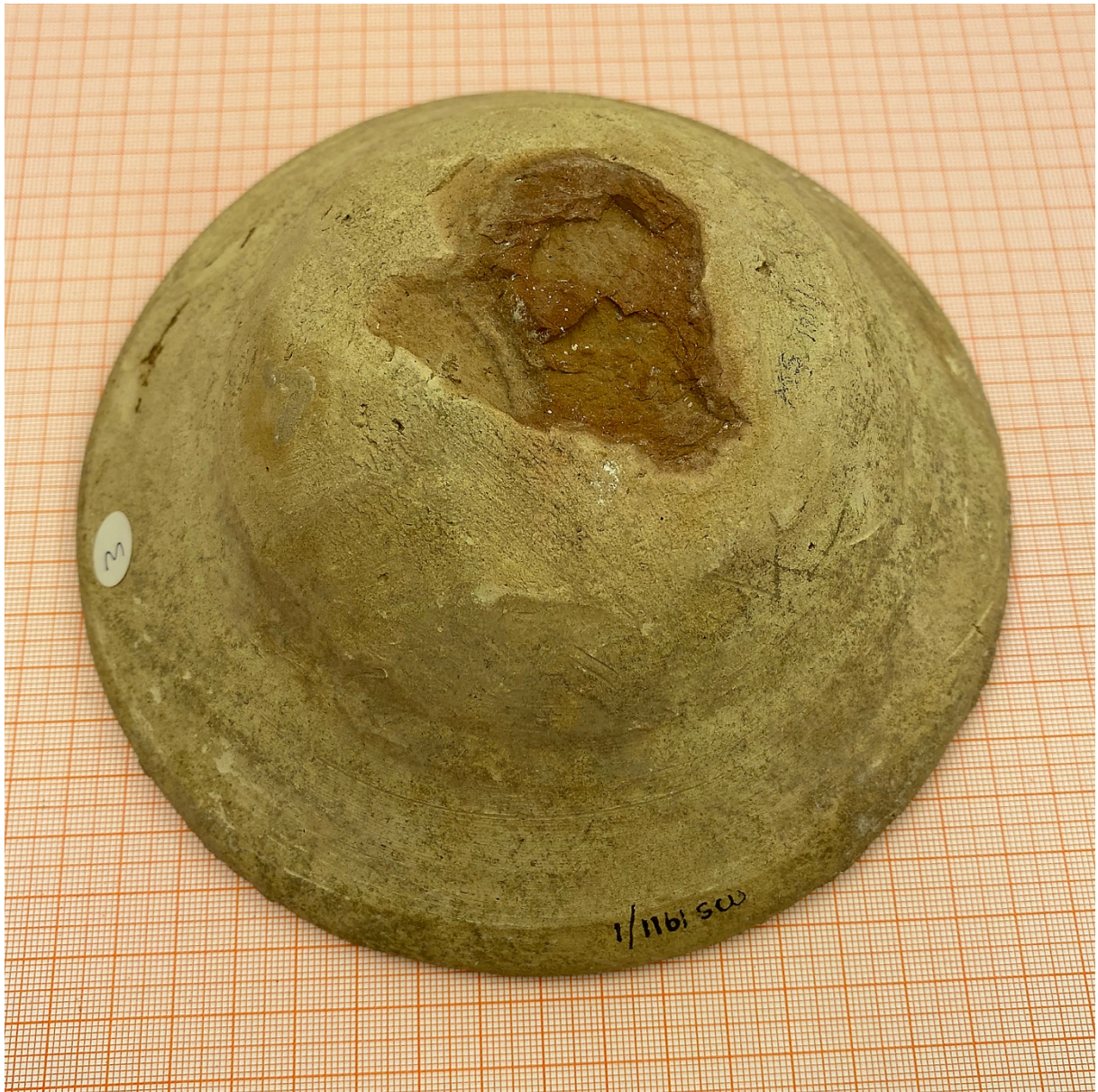
The provenance in Schøyen's private catalogue is "1. Hosa'ya son of Hatai, and Hadadoi, son of Kil (5th-6th c.); 2. Private collection, UK(1935-94); 3. Annie Trotter, London (1994); 4. Nicholas Reeves, London (1994); 5. Quaritch, London, August 1994.

Assessment. The bowl derives from Iraq. There is no evidence that this bowl is exported in accordance with Iraqi legislation. It is probably exported after 2001, and certainly after 1936. In short, this report concurs with Freeman et al. that the 656 bowls are looted in Iraq, probably not long before they turn up in London in 1994. They are property of the Iraqi government and there is no evidence of legal export from Iraq.

Recommendation.

- 1) The bowl MS 1911/1, presently held at the Museum of Cultural History, is returned to Iraq.
- 2) Schøyen is required to produce the second missing bowl. This bowl should be returned to Iraq.
- 3) Iraqi and British authorities should be informed of the 654 bowls in London.











MS 5106 (George 24)

Clay brick stamp. Coll. No. in black ink. 130x130x100

Akkadian inscription. CDLI gives the provenience as “uncertain (mod. uncertain)”. According to Daniel Harrouz it enters the collection February 2003, but the provenience is removed in April 2004. The original provenience is “Leonard Simmons Collection, England (1944-1987) and heirs”. The present MSS-webpage gives no provenience. Schøyen’s private catalogue gives the provenance as “1. Excavated by Edgar Banks at Tell Bismaya (1903); 2. Leonard Simmonds collection, UK (1944-1987) and heirs; 3. Mark Wilson, Southampton, acquired November 1989”. Under “Context” Schøyen has entered “There are 3 more brick stamps of Naram-Sîn with the same text known: one in the Oriental Institute of University of Chicago (which was excavated by Edgar Banks in Tell Bismaya (Adab) in 1903), one in Kalamazoo public library, Michigan (originating from Adab), and a tiny fragment in the British Museum (D.R. Frayne, *The Royal Inscriptions of Mesopotamia, Early Periods, Vol. 2, Sargonic and Gutian Periods, 2334-2113 BC.*, University of Toronto Press, 1993, pp. 120-21). Frayne notes that Banks reported finding 3 such stamps at Tell Bismaya. George reports that MS 5106 could well be the long-missing third exemplar.” George 2011:50 reiterates Frayne’s report of three original stamps found during the excavation, but that one is “long missing”. He maintains MS 5106 might be the missing fragment. It is unclear whether Schøyen’s version is a rendition of George’s theory, or if he also has testimonies from his suppliers. The provenance in Schøyen’s catalogue is read to mean Schøyen acquired the artifact in 1989. The first academic publication is Frayne 1993, followed by George 2011:50.

Assessment. The artifact derives from Iraq, potentially from Banks’ excavations at Tell Bismaya/Adab in 1903. It is not known when and how the artifact was removed/stolen from an excavation context, removed from Iraq, and entered Britain. Given Mark Wilson’s many and suspicious dealings, the reference to Simmons should be documented. The object is conceivably removed sometime after 1903 and up to Schøyen’s purchase in 1989.

Recommendation.

1. Schøyen has failed to provide documentation of legal removal from Iraq and the evidence on balance otherwise indicates modern looting, smuggling and illicit trading. The objects should be returned to Iraq.







MS 4536/2 (George 94)

Alabaster jar. Coll. No. in black ink at bottom. 220x120

Inscription in Old Persian, Elamite, Akkadian and hieroglyphic Egyptian. CDLI gives the provenience as “uncertain (mod. uncertain)”, the current MSS-webpage mentions 4536/2 only in a cross reference to 4536/1. CDLI list the 2004 NB catalogue as a source, but the entry is not among those removed or altered in 2004. Schøyen’s private catalogue lists no provenience. However, the passage from the 2006 NB-catalogue says: “... MS 4536/2, with the royal inscription of Artaxerxes, as well as MS 4536/3, were found on the empire's eastern border, in Northern Afghanistan.” In Schøyen’s private catalogue, provenience is given as “1. Cumberland Clark collection, Bournemouth (1920s-1941) and heirs; 2. Mark Wilson, Southampton (1987-1994), acquired June 1994”. Vallat (2011:192) maintains that the jar was published in 2001 by Schmitt, who stated it was held in an anonymous private collection. Comparison of the figure in Schmitt (2001:193) with that in George (2011:pl. LXVII) indicates that it is the same jar. Schmitt writes concerning this jar that a “further exemplar of such alabastrons with Artaxerxes inscriptions have now become known. It is located (ostensibly in

England) in private hands and is to have been found recently in the region of Äi Xänum. This seems, confronted with the finds of such vessels in Äi Xänum (...) absolutely credible.” (Schmitt 2001:193, transl. from German by CP). In Schmitt’s accompanying footnote 17: “I am obliged to thank the for me unknown collector for the right to publish, which O. Bopearachchi has mediated; I thank him and N. Sims-Williams for further data and information.” (transl. from German by Prescott). Who the anonymous collector might be is not known. Given Schøyen’s pattern of seeking recognition and that he purchased it in 2004, it is conceivably not him. It could be Wilson (ref. MS 4576 & MS 3186). Omund Bopearachchi is a numismatist (trained in the US, working at CNRS in France), specialising in [Indo-Greek](#) and [Greco-Bactrian](#) coinage, which points to a Bactrian origin for the jar. There are obviously credibility problems, also here, with the sparse information gleaned from Schøyen-related publications and his catalogue. Schmitt’s information seems to be the most credible, and if correct:

- The jar was acquired shortly before 2001,
- It is not from an old British collection but a recent find made around Äi Xänum (Ai Khanum) near the confluence of the [Amu-Darja](#) (Oxus) and Kunduz ([Kokcha](#)) rivers, north of Kunduz in today’s Afghanistan.
- This indicates a recent looting excavation.
- None of the involved are concerned with how the object was smuggled from Afghanistan to Britain. If the object follows the patterns of other looted and smuggled materials from Pakistan and Afghanistan that Schøyen has traded in between c. 1995-2004, it was looted, transported to Pakistan, and smuggled to London. Here, it seems to have been “retailed” by Mark Wilson, but Schøyen has on other occasions also dealt directly with smugglers in London and looters’ agents in Pakistan. The first academic reference is to Schmitt 2001 and later to Vallat 2011.

Assessment. The confused history of the provenance information indicates attempts at creating provenance, whether by looters/smugglers, dealer Wilson or Schøyen. The object turns up with Wilson and is sold on to Schøyen within a short period in 2004. Wilson seems to recur as an intermediary, front or retailer for objects with a diffuse and incomplete ownership history. Though the object could have conceivably been looted in western Syria like 4536/1 or southern Iraq (like much of Schøyen’s cuneiform material), the information in Schmitt 2001 indicates the object was looted in and smuggled out of Afghanistan and to the UK shortly before 2001.

Recommendation.

1. Schøyen is required to provide without delay documentation concerning the ownership history and find spot of the object.
2. The object should be kept in holding, and the Afghani authorities and UNESCO should be consulted.







MS 2399 (George 13)

Clay cone, hollow. Coll. No. in black ink at bottom. 420x130

Cone with inscription in Sumerian. CDLI lists the provenience as «Adab (mod. Bismaya) ?”, the current MSS-webpage and the 2004 base does not list the object. Schøyen’s private catalogue specifies the provenience to be “Damgalnunna temple”. This is conceivably based on inferences from the text’s interpretation (Steinkeller 2011:15), not information from finders or dealers. Provenance information is found in Schøyen’s private catalogue: Cumberland Clark collection, Bournemouth (1920s-1941) and heirs and Mark Wilson, Southampton (1987-1994), acquired June 1994. CDLI list the primary publication as Frayne 2007 (sometimes given as Frayne 2008), a secondary publication in Steinkeller 2011:15-17, also Biga & Klein 2005. The latter seems to be concerned with another object with a comparable text.

Assessment. The cone stems from southern Iraq. The reference to Cumberland Clark does not supply information about how and when the tablet arrived in Britain and does not indicate an older collection (see MS 2368) and does not exclude an illicit acquisition (ref. MS 2855). Schøyen maintains he acquired the object in June 1994, the first published reference is Frayne 2007. There is no evidence for a pre-1991 arrival on the market, and the piece is probably looted and exported around 1990.

Recommendation.

1. Schøyen has failed to provide documentation of legal removal from Iraq and the evidence on balance otherwise indicates modern looting, smuggling and illicit trading. The object should be returned to Iraq.







MS 2063 (George 76)

Black stone stele. Broken in two parts (third and lowest part missing). Small fragment loose on top edge (it was broken at the time of seizure as documented in the Police report). Coll. No. and "The Schøyen Collection" in black ink on top edge. Total size of both parts: 470x250x110

"*The Tower of Babel Stele*". Initially it should be stated that given the undocumented, incomplete, and inconsistent information provided by Martin Schøyen and the circumstances described by George (2011:153-170), it cannot be ruled out that the stele is a forgery. In the text below it is a premise that the stele is authentic. Relevant sources of information are found in former versions of the NB-catalogue from 1999 revised sometime before 2004 as traced by Daniel Harrouz and finally removed in 2006 or 2007. Furthermore, the CDLI-base, the present MSS webpage, Martin Schøyen's private catalogue and George 2011:153-169. The CDLI-base simply lists Babylon as provenience, with the NB 2004 catalogue provided as an initial source. The present MSS-webpage does not provide any provenance or context information- none of the information found in the 1999, 2004 and 2006 NB-base are found on the MSS-webpage. The webpage now reiterates elements of George's (2011) article.

The context and provenance in the 1999 NB-catalogue read:

Context: The lower part of the stele with account of further building works on other temples, is in a religious institution in U.S.A. The stele was broken into 3-4 pieces in antiquity, and found in a special hiding chamber in 1917 at Robert Koldewey's excavations of the site of the tower of babel. Its importance was immediately recognised. A photograph was taken with 3 archaeologists standing next to the stele. With the imminent danger of war breaking out in the area, they decided to rescue it and took it out of the war zone. Two pieces were taken to Germany, the third piece to U.S.A.

Now the 2 most important parts are reunited in The Schøyen Collection.

Provenance: 1. Nebuchadnezzar II (604-562 BC) or his building administration, Babylon (....); Robert Koldewey, Excavated close to the Ziggurat, (1917): 3. Two private collections, Germany (ca-1917-1995/99), acquired Oct. 1995 and May 1999.

The context and provenance in the NB-base read until June 2004:

Context: The missing part of the stele's back, was in a religious institution in U.S.A., the present whereabouts unknown. The stele was found in a special hiding chamber, broken into

3 parts in antiquity, at Robert Koldewey's excavations of the site of the Tower of Babel in 1917. Its importance was immediately recognised. A photograph was taken with 3 archaeologists standing next to the stele. With the imminent danger of war breaking out in the area, they decided to rescue it, and each archaeologist carried one part out of the war zone. One part was taken to Germany, one part to Jordan and then London, the third part to U.S.A.

Now the 2 most important parts are reunited in The Schøyen collection.

For bricks from the Tower of Babel, stamped with Nebuchadnezzar's name, used during the rebuilding, see MS 1815/1-3. For the only other known architect's plan of a known temple, see MS 3031.

Original provenience= 1. Nebuchadnezzar II (604-562 BC) or his building administration, Babylon (6th c. BC); 2. Robert Koldewey, excavated close to the Ziggurat, (1917); 3. Two private collections, Germany (c. 1917-1995/1999).

The provenience in the NB base June 2006 read:

Context: The missing part of the stele's back, was in a religious institution in U.S.A., the present whereabouts unknown. The stele was found in a special hiding chamber, broken into 3 parts in antiquity, at Robert Koldewey's excavations of the site of the Tower of Babel in 1917. Its importance was immediately recognised. A photograph was taken with 3 archaeologists standing next to the stele. With the imminent danger of war breaking out in the area, they decided to rescue it, and each archaeologist carried one part out of the war zone. One part was taken to Germany, one part to Jordan and then London, the third part to U.S.A.

Now the 2 most important parts are reunited in The Schøyen collection.

As there are no publicly accessible photos, sources or documents ⁴ it is likely that Schøyen's suppliers furnished him with the stories, indicating that he possesses further documents (if forgeries). The George 2011 article contains no references to the information in the 1999, 2004 or 2006 NB-catalogues. This is not likely to be because he did not have access to and know about it, or that during the meetings with Schøyen the information was held back. It seems George does not have faith in the stories, and indeed credibly argues against them without directly referring to them. Schøyen strongly modifies his 1999-2006 stories in his private catalogue (see below), which indicates that he was convinced by George that the stories are erroneous or that it is unfortunate to reiterate them publicly. In his private catalogue written after George 2011, he concludes: *there can be no firm answers to these various possibilities*. George's article deliberates about whether the stele could have been linked to incursions by Alexander the Great or the Persians in antiquity. The latter, which seems to be favoured by George, remains conjecture as there are no reports of finding the stele in connection with de Morgan's or subsequent excavations at Susa from 1897 to 1914. Moving up in time, George runs through possible situations where the stele could have been found or reported: looting after 1886, Koldewey's Babylon excavations (1899-1917), and Schmid's and Schmidt's studies of the Ziggurat's infrastructure in 1962 and 1968. It does not appear in excavation reports/publications or other publications between 1913 and 2002. Here Weissbach's publication of *"every piece of cuneiform inscription then known as evidence for the building's history, and no mention is made of any stele"* should be noted (in Wetzel's 1938 excavation report, George 2011:184). Nor has a find been reported from Susa. George maintains, reasonably, that a find of this nature would have been reported, could not have been suppressed, and indeed would have held a prominent place in any publication or collection. It is unconceivable that the numerous archaeologists, collectors, researchers, and visitors who would have experienced the fragments over nearly 100 years would have remained silent.

The present MSS-webpage lists exhibits of the stele starting in 1997, and as noted by George, the first appearance or reference since antiquity (or the fragments left a modern forger's workshop):

⁴ Websites in the earlier 2000s reiterate versions of the stories, and though they have few or no source references, they all probably build on the NB-base.

Rounded top part only: 1. The Bibliophile Society of Norway's 75th anniversary. Bibliofilklubben 75 år. Jubileumsutstilling Bok og Samler, Universitetsbiblioteket 27.2 - 26.4.1997; 2. XVI Congress of the International Organization for the study of the Old Testament. Faculty of Law Library, University of Oslo, 29 July - 7 August 1998; 3. Tigris 25th anniversary exhibition. The Kon-Tiki Museum, Oslo, 30.1. - 15.9.2003

Schøyen's private catalogue reiterates George 2011, but also contains provenance information not presented in public sources:

Provenance: 1. Nebuchadnezzar II (604-562 BC.) or his building administration, Babylon (6th c. BC.); 2. Possibly Xerxes, Susa (483-465) and followers; 3. Found in two parts, possibly in Susa or elsewhere in Iran before ca. 1935; with the upper part: Rihani collection, Irbid (ca. 1935) and Amman (ca. 1965-1988), and London (1988-1995), acquired October 1995; and the lower part: Kohanim Collection, Tehran, Paris and London (1959-), which passed to a private Collection, Germany (-1998), and thence to Mark Wilson, Southampton(1999), acquired May 1999.

It is notable that when exploring the Xerxes Susa-hypothesis, George makes no reference to a purchase through the Kohanim Collection in Teheran – and solely entertains an origin at Susa as a hypothesis. Schøyen's reference is therefore conceivably based on George's speculations. Rihani is a notorious antiquities trafficker (i.a. Kuwait & Iraq to Jordan, Switzerland and London). Wilson is less known as a dealer but is active as an intermediary/ retailer in London in the 2000's, quickly moving objects that turn up in London. According to CDLI, a publication by Weiershäuser, Frauke & Novotny, Jamie is scheduled for 2022, while da Riva is listed as secondary publication. Finally, MS 2063 represents a continuous production of provenance histories from 1999 to the present, with small and major revisions and parallel stories, containing numerous of the tell-tale indications of forgery, looting, smuggling and illicit trade. The provenances conceivably cater both to commercial ends within the industry, enticing customers and creating an appearance of legality or acceptable morality, but also a stab at obscuring origins.

Assessment. The reference to an older Kohanim Collection and "private collection" in Germany, as the issue stands now and in light of information removed and added at various stages, indicates fabrication of provenance in attempt at to create acceptable ownership histories and spin the looting and theft of the three section as acceptable. The reference to Kohanim collection and the anonymous German collection seems incomplete and not credible is further undermined by George's reasoning. *There is no credible discovery and ownership history before the two fragments turn up with Rihani and Wilson in the second half of the 1990s.* The information associated with Rihani indicates that the upper fragment was looted, probably in Iraq sometime after 1991, smuggled to Jordan and transported (via Switzerland?) to London. Likewise, the reference to Wilson (an active and dubious dealer and academic) and the vague (and not credible) ownership history in conjunction with the lower piece indicates looting, smuggling and stabs at the construction of provenance history, if slightly later than the upper piece. The two pieces were potentially found during looting episodes and brought to the market through two *networks*.

Assessment: In light of

- missing documentation from Schøyen,
- the inconsistencies of and lack of logic inherent to the numerous accounts,
- that the two parts turn up on the market in 1995 and 1999,
- turn up in the NB-catalogue in 1999,
- that the first public record of one part turns up at an exhibition in 1997
- and that both were exhibited in 2003,

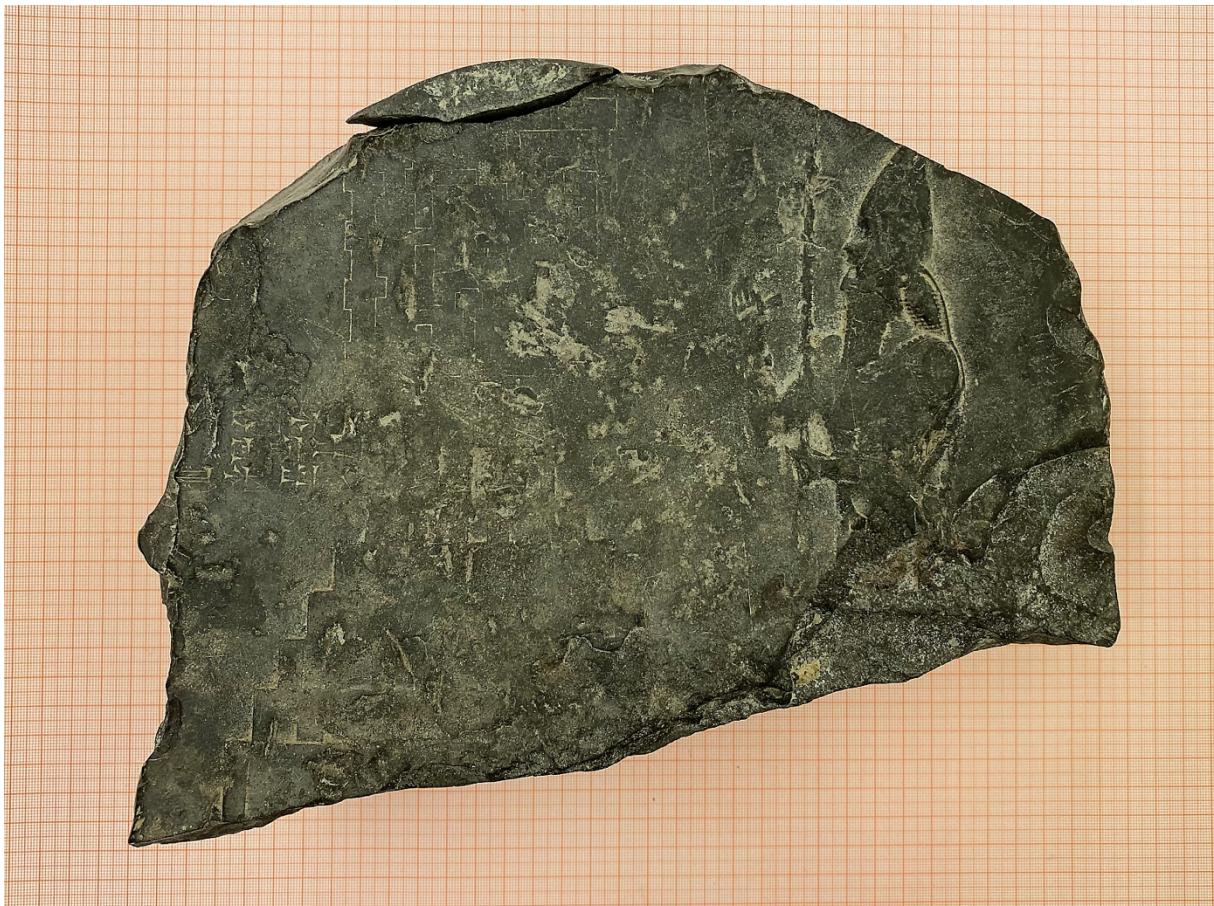
the balance of available evidence sustains the following assessment:

- 1) Martin Schøyen's information is incomplete and inconsistent.

- 2) Based on the objects themselves, the only certain geographical reference is Babil/Babylon, Iraq. This is the probable findspot for all fragments of the stele.
- 3) There is no documented, modern history before 1997 and 1999.
- 4) The upper fragment in all probability was illegally transported out of Iraq to Jordan and then (via Switzerland?) to London and acquired by Schøyen in 1995.
- 5) The lower fragment was in all probability looted around the same time and turned up in London in 1999.
- 6) There are no indications of a legal export license from Iraq.
- 7) The fragments were probably removed from Iraq around the mid-1990s.
- 8) It is not proven that the fragments are authentic.

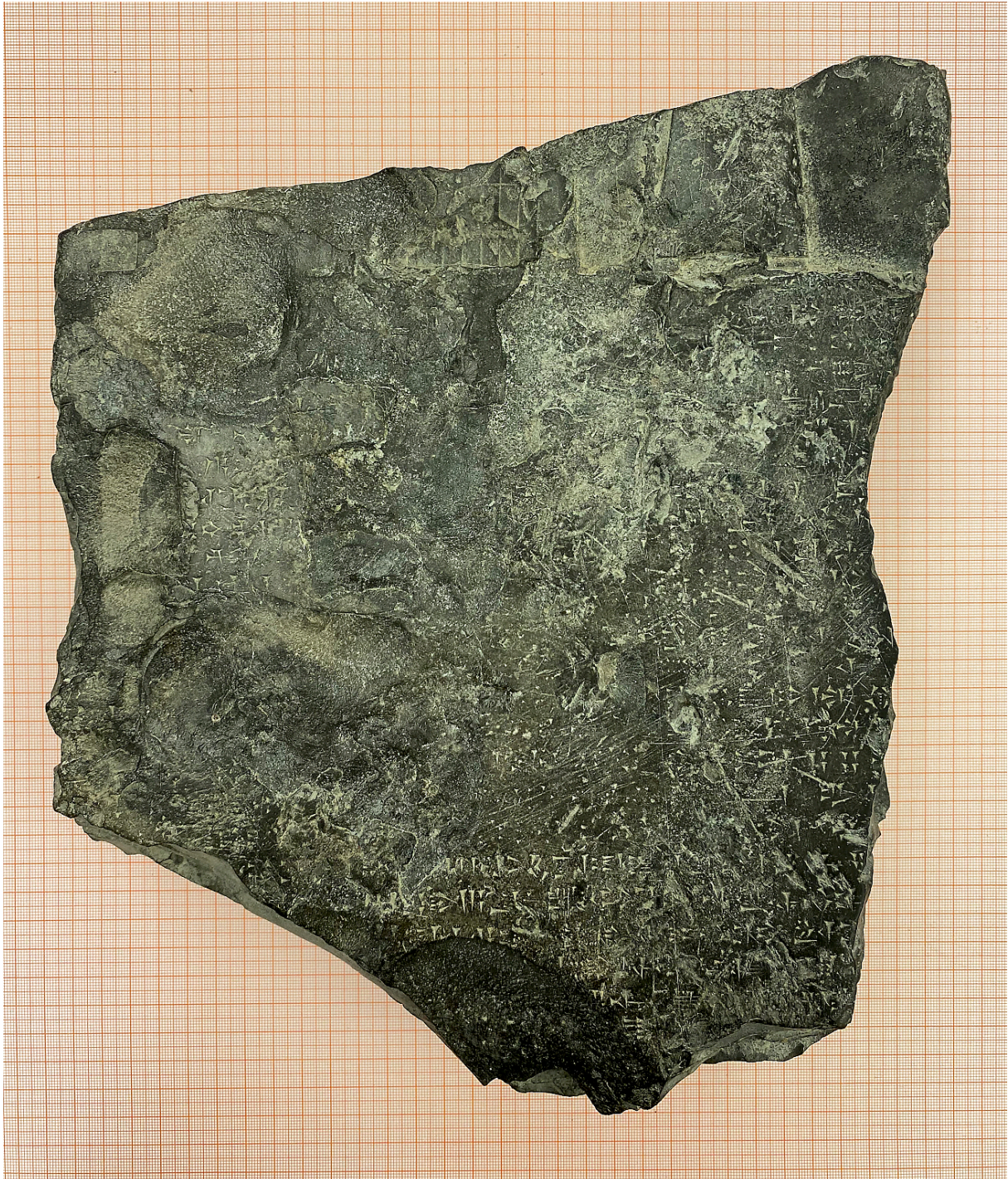
Recommendation.

- 1) Schøyen has failed to provide documentation of legal removal from Iraq and the evidence on balance otherwise indicates modern looting, smuggling and illicit trading. The object should be returned to Iraq.









MS 711 (George 70)

Basalt slab. Broken in two parts. Part of square paper label mostly removed on the back. Coll. No. in black ink on three sides + "Hist. O". Modern cut. 430x260x25

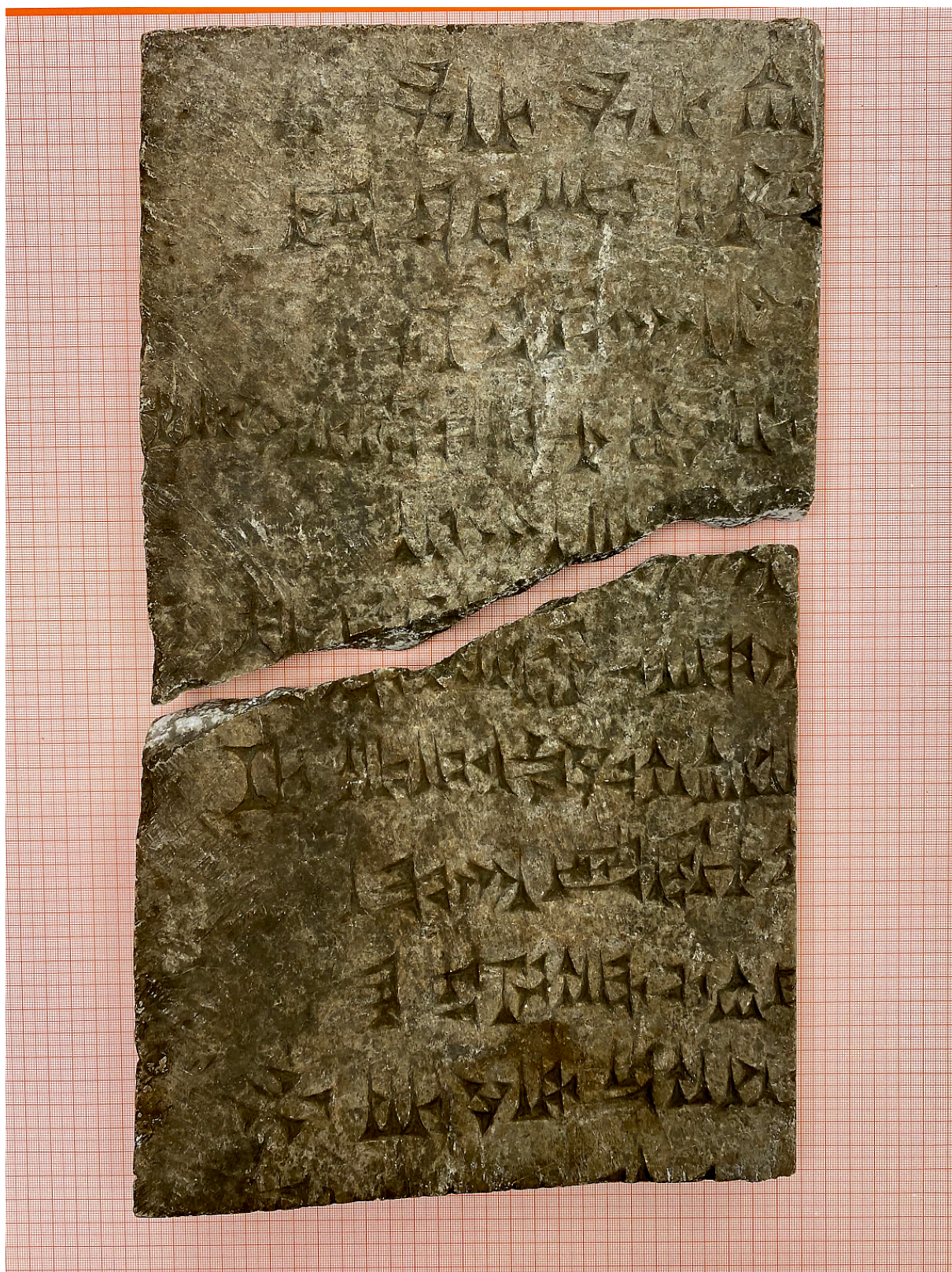
Royal inscription of Assurnassirpalk II. CDLI lists provenience as "Kalhu" ("Calah" - Nimrud). In the present MSS-webpage the provenience section is empty. The NB catalogue removed 2004 refers to an excavation by Layard in the mid-1800s, deposition in the Jesuit Library, Paris (until 1988), Time Machine Co., New York (1988) and Bruce Ferrini (1990). The 2006 NB/catalogue gives more detailed

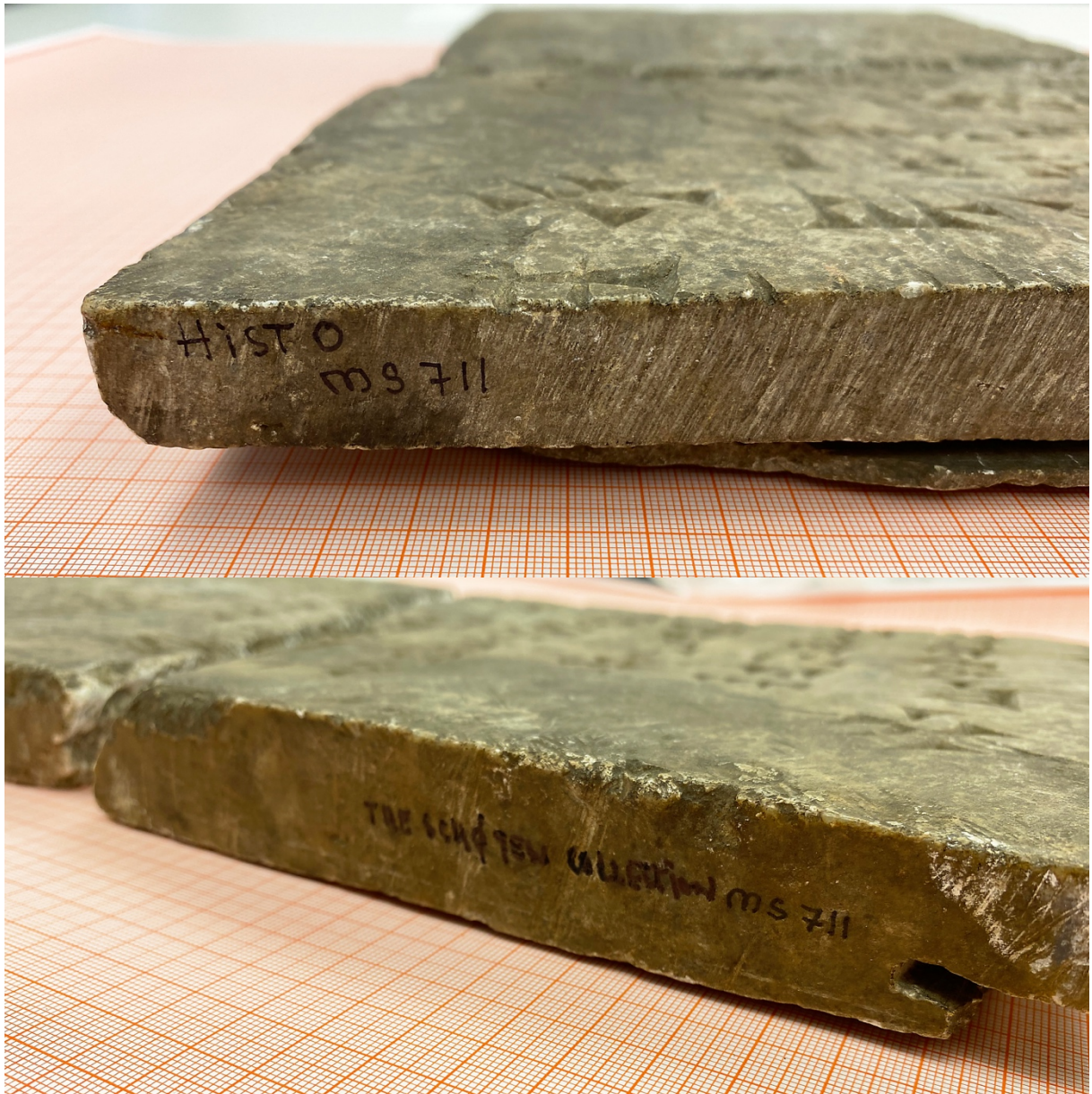
provenience, “From the East Wing of the Palace, room I”. The provenance information in Schøyen’s private catalogue: “1. King Assurnasirpal II, Nimrod, Assyria (...); 2. King Salmanassar III, Nimrod, Assyria (...), and followers until King Sin-sar-iskun, when finally destroyed by the Scythians; 4. Calah site (...); excavated by the French archaeologist Sir Austin Henry Layard /1845-1851); 7. Library of the Jesuits (until 1988); 8. Time Machine Co. New York (1988); 9. Bruce Ferrini, Akron Ohio, November 1990”. None of these ostensible previous owners are listed in the “Statement of provenance” in George 2011(: viii-ix), where MS 711 is published. Frame (2011:136) refers to Layard’s excavations at Nineveh. MSS lists no publication before Frame’s article in George 2011. CDLI and Frame 2011 refer to a first publication by Grayson 1991, but this is to the general text content, not the MS 711 artefact. Frame 2011:136 states that MS 799 was formerly in the Jesuit Library, Paris and “supposedly” found by Layard at Nineveh (mid 1800s). There is no substantiation of how the piece was found, removed from Iraq, how it entered into a Jesuit Library and from there entered the private market to Time Machine co. and then Bruce Ferrini. There is no mention of export permits from France, and it is not clear when it was purchased by Schøyen, though the information indicates the latter to be between 1990-2011. The detailed information in Schøyen’s catalogue indicates he has received information from dealers, but the scepticism expressed by Frame indicates this might represent an embellishment, if by the dealers or Schøyen.

Assessment. MS 711 has a provenience to Iraq, near present day Mosul. The first public record is 1991, and ownership details and documentation of asserted previous owners are not supplied. The information is consistent of an older collection, but it is notable that no previous owners are listed in Schøyen’s general provenance statement. Given this and the dubious reputation of the dealers and collectors involved, further documentation must be requested. If the object was found and exported in the 1800’s, it is potentially legally collected, though it is unclear whether the re-export from France was furnished with export documents.

Recommendation.

- 1) Martin Schøyen is required to supply necessary provenance documents.
- 2) If such documents indicated that the object was exported from Iraq in the 1800’s it can have been legally collected.
- 3) Issues of re-export from France should be clarified.
- 4) If authentic documents cannot be supplied, the objects should be returned to Iraq.









MS 1937 (George 30)

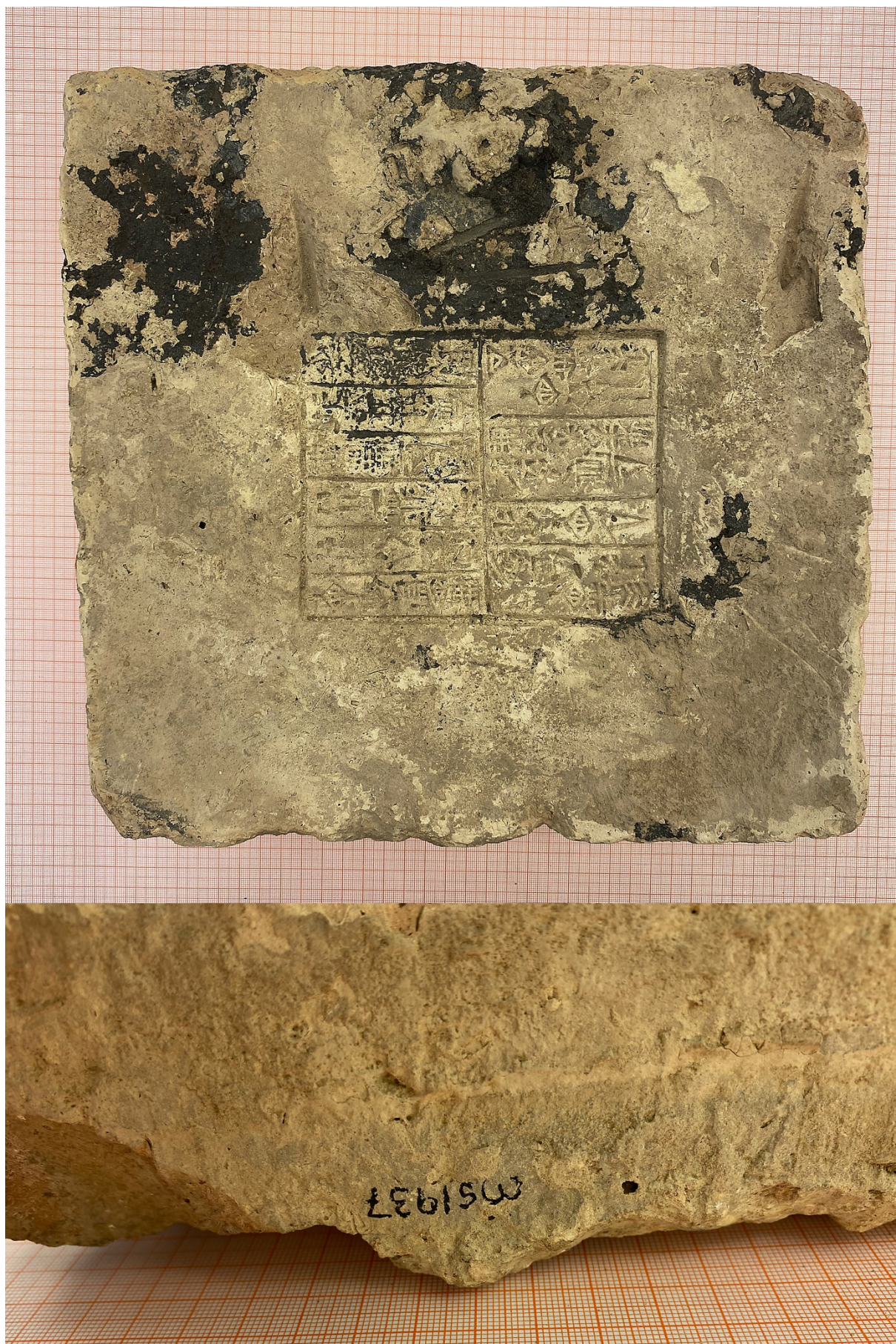
Clay brick. Coll. No. in black ink. 320x320x70

Brick with block print in Sumerian. CDLI lists provenience as “uncertain (mod. uncertain)”. The present MSS-website provides no provenience or provenance information. Originally in the NB-catalogue, the entry was removed in April 2004. Provenance in the December 2003 version of the NB-catalogue is Ningirsu Temple, Lagash; Rihani, Jordan (before 1965-1994) & London (1988-). George (2011:52) says such inscriptions are recovered at Tell Telloh, Adab and Bad-tibira – southern Iraq and are now scattered in collections. Schøyen’s private catalogue lists: “1. Ningirsu temple, Lagash (2141-2122 BC.-); 2. Rihani collection, Irbid (ca. 1935) and Amman, Jordan (before 1965-1988), and London (1988-1994); 3. Chris Martin, London, October 1994”. It is not clear when Schøyen acquired MS 1937, conceivably October 1994 at the earliest. First publication according to CDLI is Edzard 1997, but this is to an editing of the general text. The first publication is George 2011:53.

Assessment. The brick is from Iraq and turns up on the market in 1994, the first academic reference is 2011. All the involved dealers/collectors are well known from the illicit trade in archaeological artefacts. The brick is, on balance, looted in Iraq, smuggled to Jordan, and exported with Rihani’s “license” in the early 1990s.

Recommendation.

- 2) Schøyen has failed to provide documentation of legal removal from Iraq and the evidence on balance otherwise indicates modern looting, smuggling and illicit trading. The object should be returned to Iraq.



MS 1815/1 (George 79)

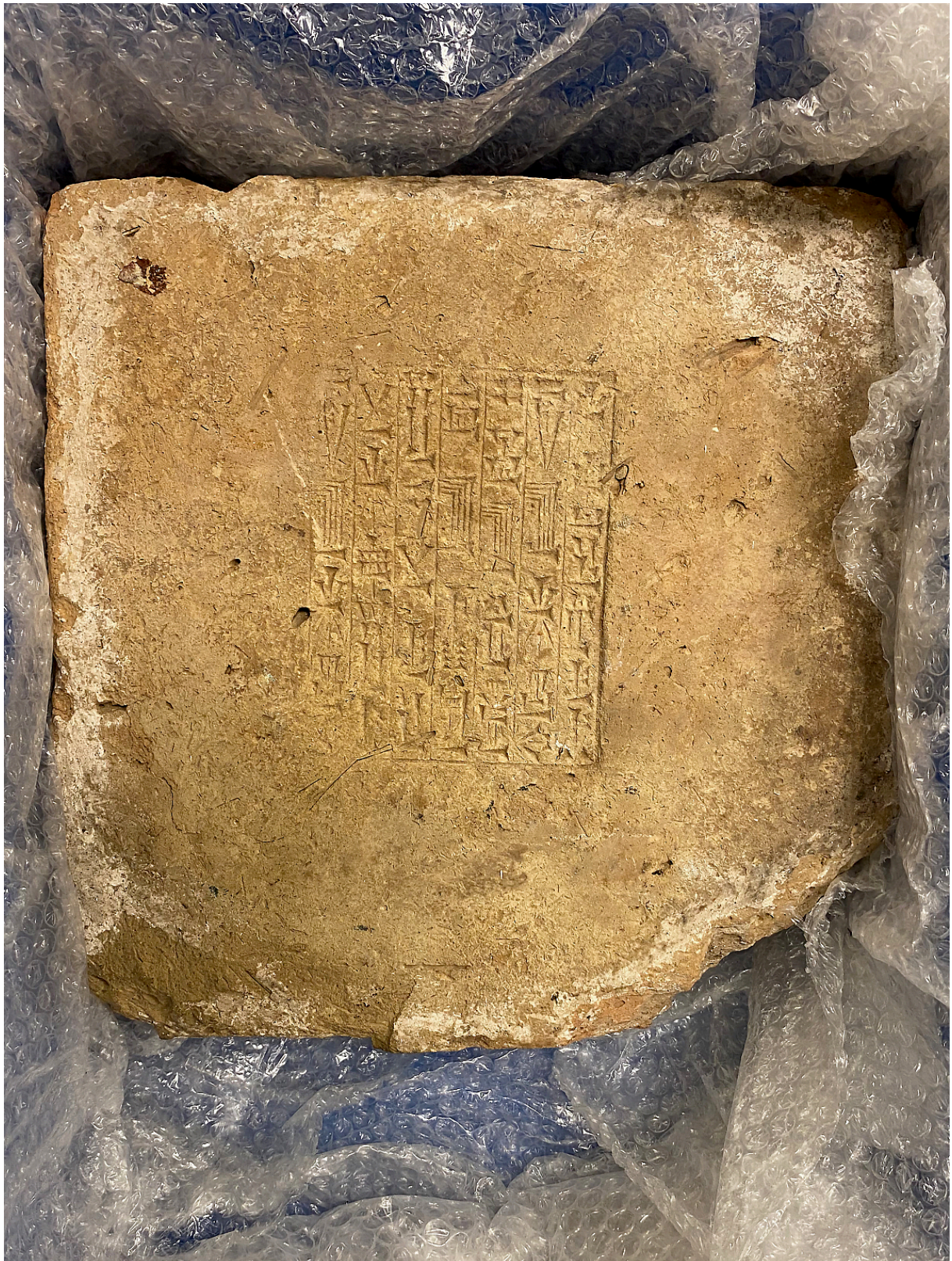
Clay brick. Coll. No. in black ink. 330x330x90

Brick with block print, Neo-Babylonian. CDLI lists provenience as “uncertain (mod. uncertain)”. It is noteworthy that George says “..., all three bricks in the Schøyen can be added to the 52 exemplars of Backstein ... already located in 1973”, indicating the Schøyen bricks were not known before 1973. The provenance history is altered through time. Before December 2003 the object was attributed to Bernard Quaritch Ltd., London, after December 3, 2003 it read “1. Private Collection France (ca.1975-1993); 2. Aux Tresors Perdu, Paris (1994); 3. Bernard Quaritch Ltd., London.” The provenance entry was removed April 2004. Schøyen’s private catalogue maintains that the brick was excavated by Robert Koldewey (1913), then in a private collection, France (ca. 1975-1993), Aux Tresors Perdu, Paris (1994) and Quaritch, London, April 1994”. The gap between 1913 and 1994 is not explained, nor is a potential theft from the 1913 excavation (if the object stems from that source). Quaritch had associations with Rihani around the 1990s, purchased and sold objects that were illicitly procured, for example incantation bowls (e.g., Freeman et al. 2005:19). George (2011:181) attributes bricks with this text to Babylon, the MSS-webpage refers to excavation of a ziggurat “north of Esagila, the temple of Marduk, also mentioned in the inscription”. Though there are probably some perceptions derived from the text, it seems Schøyen has information from his suppliers. The first public reference is exhibition *Bibliofilkklubben 75 år. Jubileumsutstilling Bok og Samler, Universitetsbiblioteket, 1997, XVI Congress of the International Organization for the study of the Old Testament. Faculty of Law Library, University of Oslo, 1998*. A CDLI-reference to Berger’s catalogue 1973(:179-202) is to the text and similar bricks, not the specific bricks in the Schøyen collection. The first publication reference is George 2011(:181).

Assessment: The artefact stems from Iraq and is potentially stolen from an excavation or excavation collection. When and how this happened cannot be ascertained, though Schøyen potentially has relevant information. The object was not known in 1973 and turns up in public in 1994, which indicates that it was stolen and potentially smuggled out of Iraq between the 1970s and early 1990s. The provenance chronology is fragmented, and multiple revised entries might indicate attempt at engineering provenance information. The opaque ownership history and association with Quaritch indicate dubious provenance. As it turns up as late as 1993, the data indicates the brick is exported from Iraq in the early 1990s.

Recommendation.

1. Schøyen has failed to provide documentation of legal removal from Iraq and the evidence on balance otherwise indicates modern looting, smuggling and illicit trading. The object should be returned to Iraq.



MS 1791/1 (George 26)

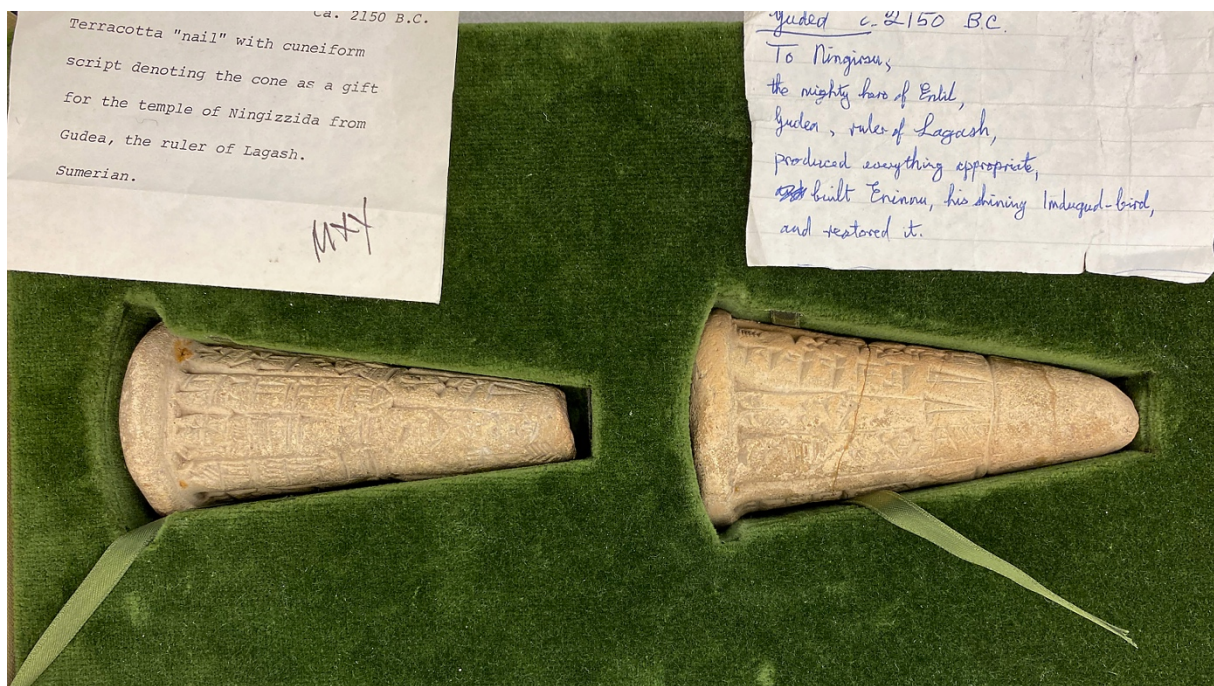
Clay cone. (Also in seizure: 1791/2). Mounted in book. 110x58

Manuscript in Sumerian, clay cone. CDLI lists provenience as “uncertain (mod. uncertain)”. CDLI gives the NB-2004 catalogue as its initial source and 1791/1 is not listed among entries with removed and altered provenances. George (2011:52) says such inscriptions recovered at Tell Telloh, Adab and Bad-tibira. i.e. southern Iraq, are scattered in collections. There is no primary entry in the present MSS-site, only a cross-reference to the text under the entry for MS 1937. Schøyen’s private catalogue gives this provenance: 1. E-Ninnu Temple, Lagash (2141-2122 BC.-); 2. H.P. Kraus, New York, December 1993. It is not detailed when Schøyen acquired MS 1791/1. This indicates that Schøyen was provided with information concerning where the artefact was looted or the history of theft from an excavation. The text is edited in Edzard 1997, but this reference does not seem to encompass the exemplars held by. The first academic publication is in George 2011, indicating that the artefact surfaced between the early 1990s and 2011.

Assessment: MS 1791/1 stems from Iraq. Apart from Kraus 1993, there is no modern provenance information before 2011. The information indicates MS 1791/1 was looted in and smuggled out of Iraq in the 1990s- early 2000s.

Recommendation.

1. Schøyen has failed to provide documentation of legal removal from Iraq and the evidence on balance otherwise indicates modern looting, smuggling and illicit trading. The object should be returned to Iraq.



MS 2368 (George 72)

Clay cylinder, fragment. Mounted in book. Coll. No. In black ink. 120x62

Cylinder with inscription in Akkadian. CDLI lists provenience as “Kalhu (mod. Nimrud)”, the present MSS-webpage provides no information. Frame contends that “MS 2368 and the Moussaief fragment – pieces with no known provenance – came from that city” (Kalhu), based on a comparison with a piece found on that site. The entry removed from the NB-catalogue in June 2004 refers to the Palace of Sargon II in Nimrud, and then a temple or a palace in Babylonia. Schøyen’s private catalogue refers simply to Sargon II’s palace. This may be based on information provided by dealers/smugglers. It should be noted that Frame does not reiterate this information but speculates on whether MS 2368 is part of the same stone as four other fragments arising from the 1890s to modern surface finds, including the piece without provenance held by Moussaieff. The NB-entry removed in 2004 gives a private collection in Zürich (from 1958) as provenance, the 2006 NB-entry lacks provenance information, while Schøyen’s private catalogue gives 2. Cumberland Clark collection, Bournemouth (1920s-1941) and heirs; 3. Private collection, Zürich, Switzerland (1958-); 4. Mark Wilson, Southampton (1987-1994), acquired June 1994. It indicates that Cumberland Clark collection, Bournemouth collects up to an unknown time after 1958, and cannot be used as an indication of an older collection. Switzerland is a transit country for illicit antiquities, also for Ghassan Rihani. The first specific ownership date is June 1994. An image is reproduced Hill & Walton 2009, while the first publication is Frame in George 2011(:138-143), followed by Frame 2020.

Assessment. The object originates in Iraq. The reference to a Cumberland Clark collection does not supply information about how and when the tablet arrived in Britain and does not indicate an older collection, indeed the reference to Zürich indicates that it would have entered Cumberland after 1958. The reference does not exclude an illicit acquisition (ref. MS 2855). There are several issues with the provenance information, whether this is due to information being held back or distorted. The first public appearance is 2004, the first publication is 2009. 1958 is the oldest possible date, however given the concentration of dates around 1990, it was probably looted in and smuggled out of Iraq around his time.

Recommendation.

1. Schøyen has failed to provide documentation of legal removal from Iraq and the evidence on balance otherwise indicates modern looting, smuggling and illicit trading. The object should be returned to Iraq.





MS 2078 (George 88)

Chalcedony plaque. Mounted in book. Coll. No. In black ink. 40x53x9

Plaque with inscription in Babylonian. CDLI gives the provenance as “uncertain (mod. uncertain)”. The CDLI reference is to the 2004 NB-catalogue. MS 2078 is not found on the present MSS-webpage nor is it in NB-entries removed or altered in June 2004. Schøyen’s private catalogue provides no provenience information, but gives provenances as Cumberland Clark collection, Bournemouth (1920s-1941) and heirs and Mark Wilson, Southampton (1987-1994) and that Schøyen acquired it June 1994. The first publication is Vallat 2011(:188-189).

Assessment. The object stems from Iraq. The reference to a Cumberland Clark collection does not supply information about how and when the tablet arrived in Britain and does not indicate an older collection (see MS 2368) and does not exclude an illicit acquisition (see MS 2855). Information supplied here does not indicate a provenance predating 1994. Wilson acquired the object and quickly

sold it on in 1994. The first publication reference is 2011. It was in all probability looted in and smuggled out of Iraq around 1990.

Recommendation.

- 1) Schøyen has failed to provide documentation of legal removal from Iraq and the evidence on balance otherwise indicates modern looting, smuggling and illicit trading. The object should be returned to Iraq.





MS 1699 (George 36)

Bitumen mortar, fragment. Mounted in book. 66x50

Impression in Neo-Sumerian on bitumen from a brick. CDLI gives provenance as “uncertain (mod. uncertain)”. MS 1699 is not listed in the current MSS pages. CDLI’s original source is the 2004 NB-catalogue, and MS 1699 is not among the altered 2004-entries. George 2011:57 compares MS1699 to fragments from Eridu (Tell Abu Shahrain, Dhi Qar, Iraq). Schøyen’s private catalogue maintains the provenance: “1. Cultic temple of the Apsû, built by King Amar-Su’en to the benefit of the god Enki (21st c. BC.); 2. Lady Milne, Oxford (ca. 1960-1993); 3. Christie’s 7 July 1993, lot 171/4.” George lists no specific provenance information but compares the piece to five fragments acquired by the British Museum in 1859. The first publication is Frayne 1997 according to CDLI, but this is a reference to comparable inscriptions, and the object is not listed in Frayne. The first publication is thus George 2011(:57).

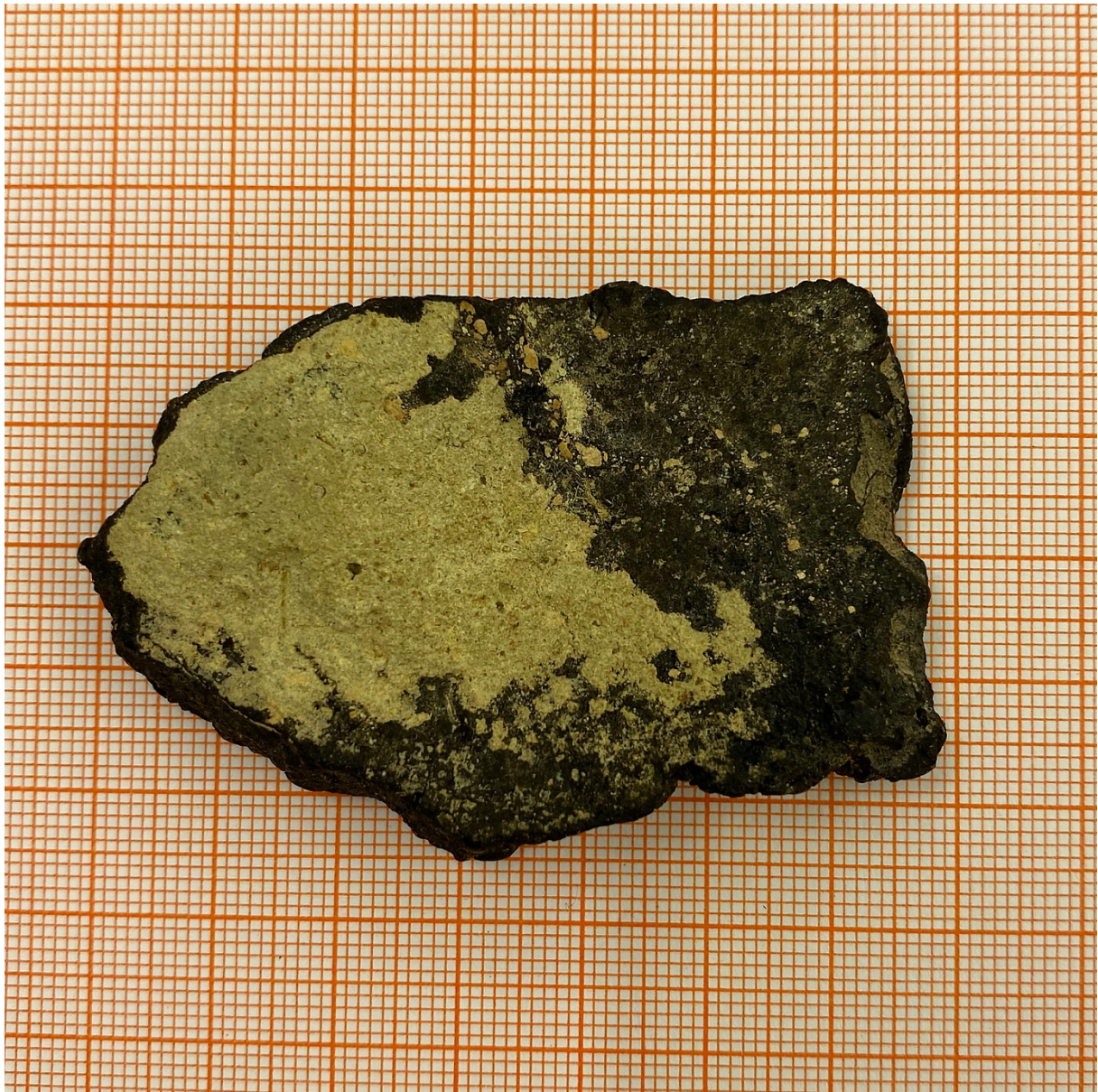
Assessment: MS 1699 has an initial provenience to southern Iraq. If previously in a collection of Lady Milne, based on the information in Schøyen, the object is acquired after 1960, possibly as late as

1993. Without documented history before July 1993 (auction at Christie's) it is potentially a piece acquired after the First Gulf War, i.e., looted and smuggled out of Iraq between 1991 and 1993.

Recommendation.

1. Schøyen has failed to provide documentation of legal removal from Iraq and the evidence on balance otherwise indicates modern looting, smuggling and illicit trading. The objects should be returned to Iraq.





MS 1915 (George 101)

Clay tablet. Partly destroyed. Secondary burned. Photograph of the damaged side enclosed in the box/book. Mounted in book. 90x49x20

Tablet with Sumerian inscription. CDLI gives the provenance as “uncertain (mod. uncertain)”, George (2011:207) mentions similar texts at Ur and Isin. In the preface of his 2020 volume Dahl says the provenience of most of the 244 texts presented are from the province of Umma, though other provinces are represented. In his presentation of MS 1915 he states (2020:38) that “[a]lthough nothing is known for certain about the provenience of this text, it is possible to speculate that it was written in Umma, ...”. CDLI gives the NB-2004 catalogue as the initial source, but the tablet is not listed in the present MS-webpage nor among those with removed or altered provenance information in 2004. Schøyen’s private catalogue does not list provenience, but provenance is attributed to the Rihani collection, Irbid (ca. 1935) and Amman, Jordan (before 1965-1988), and London (1988-) and Chris J. Martin, London, September 1994. The first publication is George 2011, followed by Dahl

2020. George notes that the tablet *was formerly perfectly preserved but much of the surface of the obverse disintegrated through the action of mineral salts when the tablet was baked*, i.e. the tablet was raw clay when acquired. This indicates it has not been in a private collection or on the collector's market for an extended period.

Assessment: The tablet stems from southern Iraq. It has no ownership history predating Rihani, and is probably smuggled out of Iraq via Jordan by him. There is no record of the brick before September 1994. It was looted and smuggled between the 1980s and 1994, conceivably after 1991. The object was raw clay, partially destroyed through "conservation" (baking). All these factors indicate that the tablet is freshly excavated, looted and smuggled between the 1980s and 1994, conceivably after 1991. It is unclear who should be held responsible for the destruction, but George and Schøyen, as well as Braarvig and Dahl, were probably all involved.

Recommendation.

- a. Schøyen has failed to provide documentation of legal removal from Iraq and the evidence on balance otherwise indicates modern looting, smuggling and illicit trading. The objects should be returned to Iraq.
- b. Schøyen supplies testimony as to those involved with the destructive "conservation".
- c. Steps involving the individuals and institutions that carried out the destructive "conservation" of ancient artefacts belonging to Iraq should be detailed.





MS 1790 (George 57)

Clay cone. Mounted in book. Coll. No. In black ink. 64x 34

Sumerian manuscript, clay cone, Uruk, Sumer. CDLI lists provenience as “uncertain (mod. uncertain)”. It is not listed on the current MSS webpage. CDLI refers to the 2004 NB-catalogue, and MS 1790 is not among the entries altered in 2004. George (2011:115) maintains the archaeological context, based on finds of similar objects is Uruk, in southern Iraq. This is probably the basis for assertion in Schøyen’s private catalogue that Uruk is the find spot. Further provenance is listed as “Alex G. Malloy, New York, cat. *Writings of Mankind*, Spring 1990, lot 11” and then “H.P. Kraus, New York, December 1993”. The first publication record listed in CDLI is Frayne 1990, but this is to similar inscriptions, not the object. The first academic reference is George 2011.

Assessment: The object is probably from Uruk in Iraq. Information of the excavation and export from Iraq, as well as owners before 1990 auction are lacking. It is noteworthy that Frayne 1990 was unaware of MS 1790. This indicates that the object was looted in and smuggled out of Iraq around 1990.

Recommendation.

- 1. Schøyen has failed to provide documentation of legal removal from Iraq and the evidence on balance otherwise indicates modern looting, smuggling and illicit trading. The object should be returned to Iraq.**







MS 1895 (George 31)

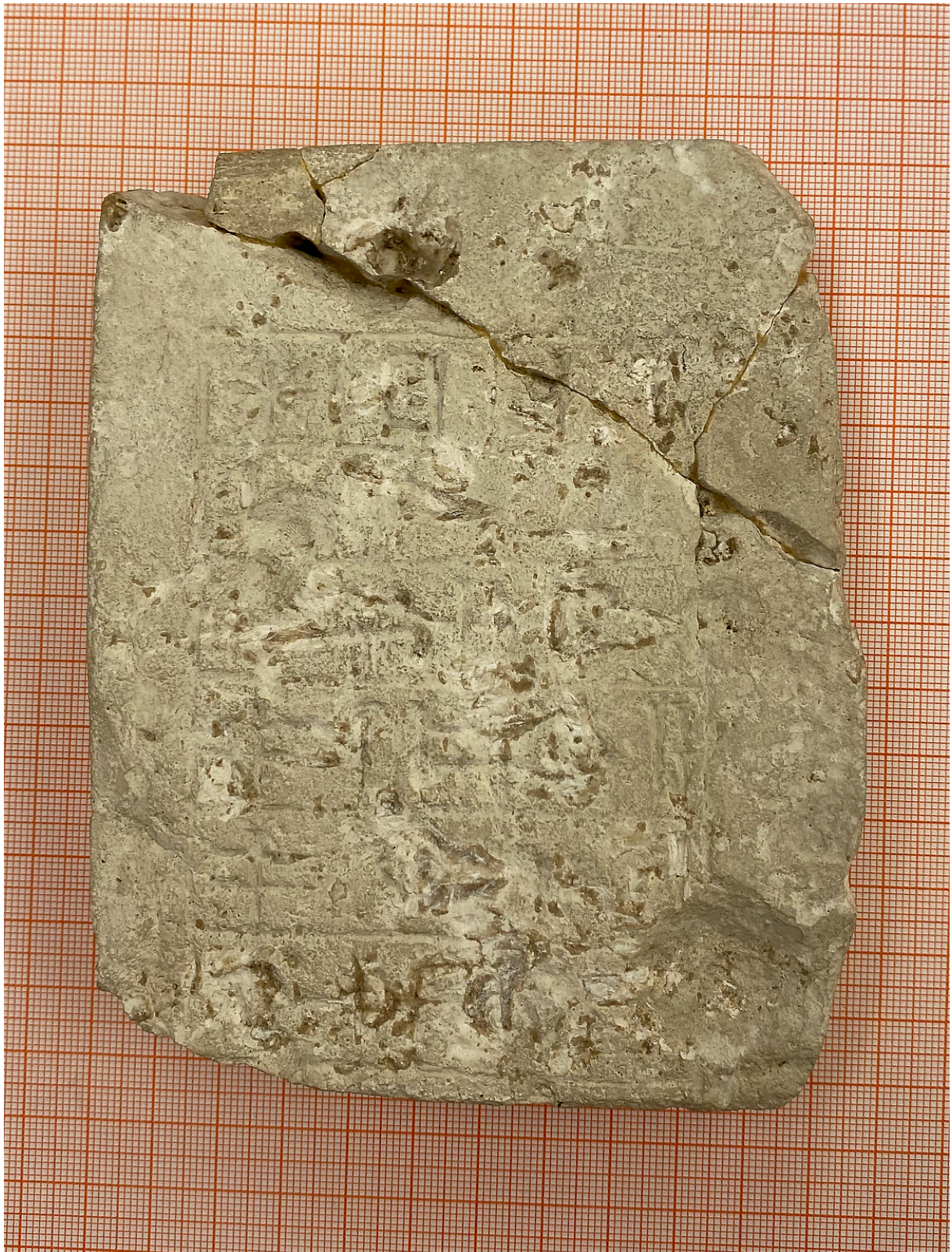
White limestone, fragment. Broken in three parts, glued together. Modern cut. Mounted in book. Coll. No. In black ink + "115" written with pencil. 134x106x28

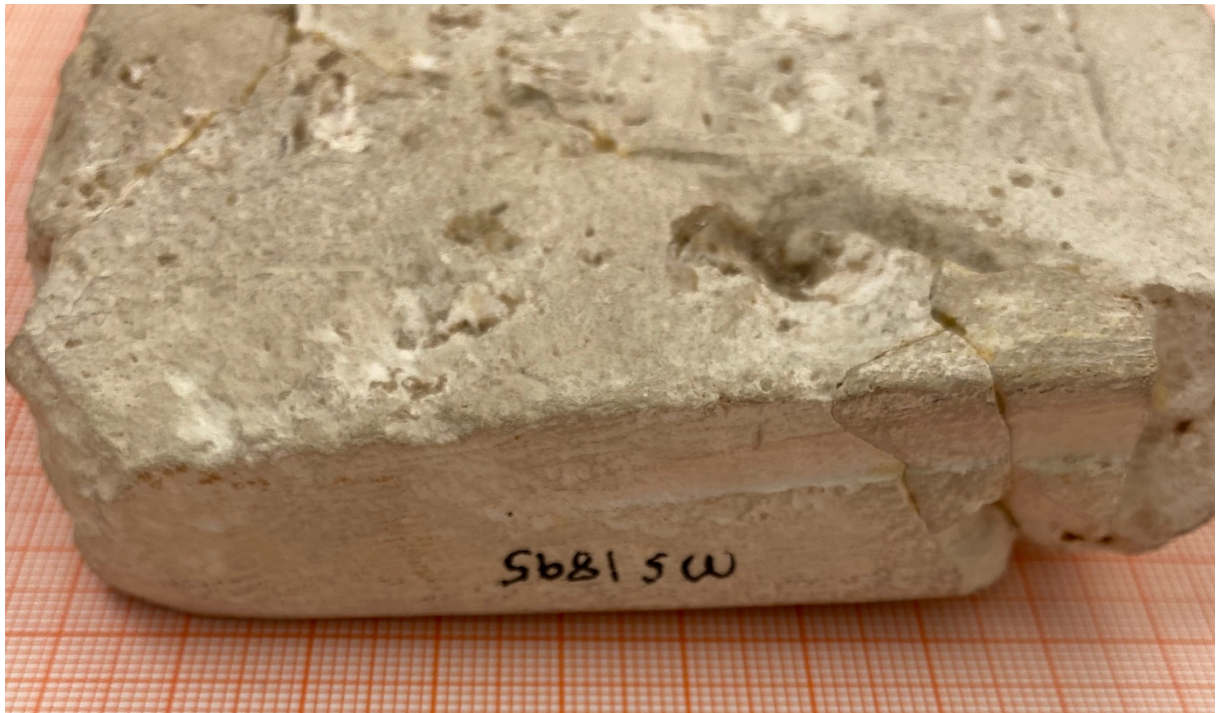
Inscription in Sumerian. CDLI lists provenience as "uncertain (mod. uncertain)", it is not described in the 2004-07 NB-base or recent version of the MSS-webpage. Schøyen's private catalogue says the object derives from Nindara temple, Girsu, Lagash. The only provenance information is found in Schøyen's private catalogue: "1. Nindara temple, Girsu, Lagash (2141-2122 BC.); 2. Erlenmeyer Collection, Basel (ca. 1935-1988); 3. Erlenmeyer Foundation, Basel (1981-1988); 4. Christie's 13 December 1988, lot 59; 5. Christie's 6 July 1994, lot 137A". Publication dates listed in CDLI are Edzard 1997 (text edition?) and George 2011.

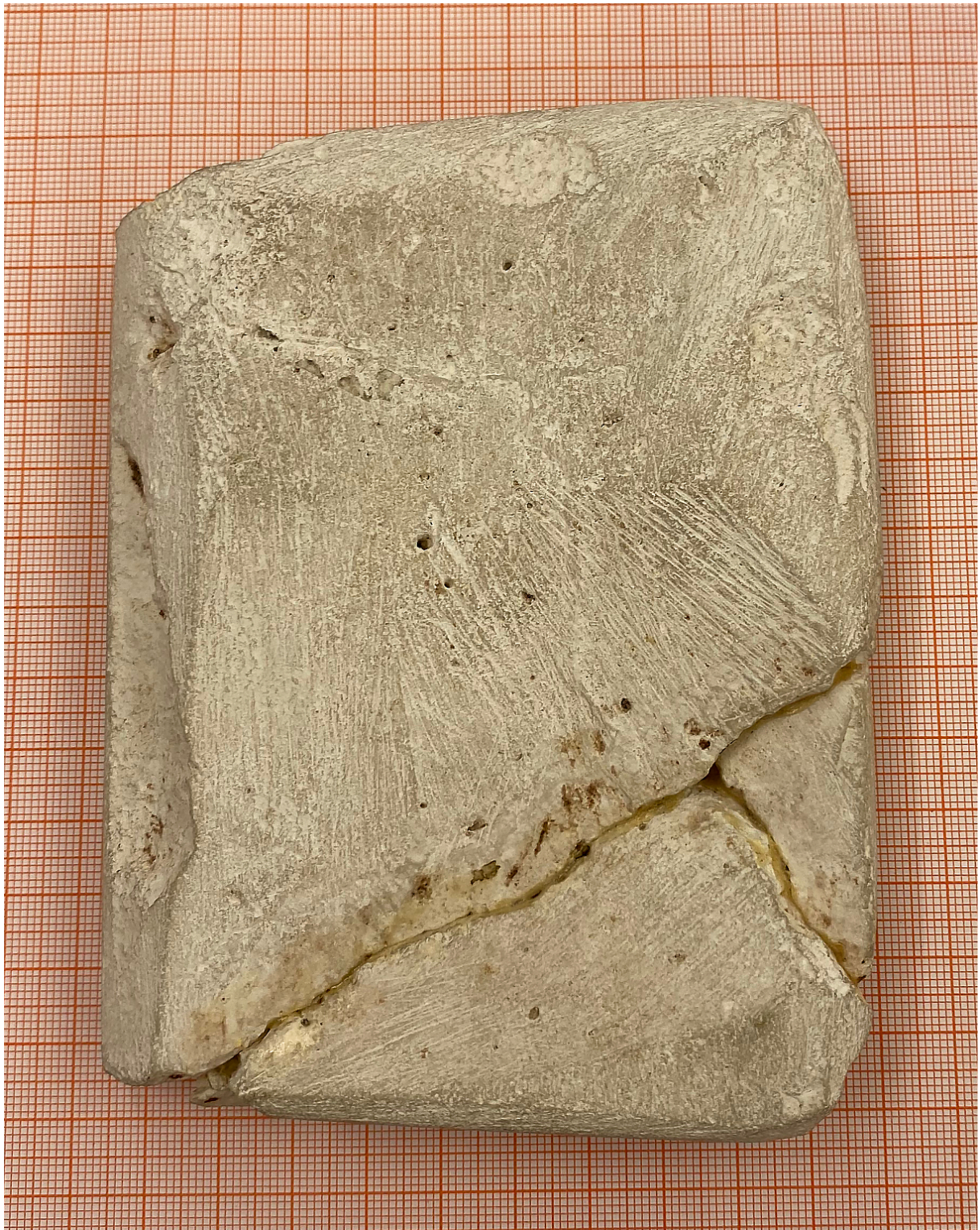
Assessment. The fragment is from Iraq. The Erlenmeyer collection is assumed to be a legitimate collection. The dates indicate that the object may have been traded and collected for some time, most likely after the Iraq's Antiquities Law of 1936. As such, it is conceivably removed illegally from Iraq.

Recommendation.

- 1) Schøyen is to supply full and authenticated documentation of the ownership history.
- 2) If the object came on to the collector's market before relevant Iraqi legislation or with a legal export license, after consultation with appropriate Iraqi authorities the object should be returned to Schøyen.
- 3) Failing to provide documentation or on providing documentation that does not prove legal removal from Iraq, the object should be returned to Iraq.









MS 1988 (George 62)

Agate stone (eye-stone). Mounted in book. White tag "Christie's 2019. 7.12.94". 25x25

Agate, inscription in Babylonian. CDLI gives the provenance as "uncertain (mod. uncertain)". It is not listed in the MSS-webpage. CDLI listed the NB-2004 catalogue as the original source, but it is not among entries removed or altered in 2004. Schøyen's private catalogue gives first "provenance" as "King Kurigalzu, Babylonia", but this seems to be rendition of George's (2011:118) text interpretation. George states eye-stones have a wide archaeological distribution in southern Iraq (Babylon, Assyria and Luristan). The stone was purchased at Christie's 7 December 1994, lot 219. This is the only ownership history found in the Schøyen catalogues. There are no publications before George 2011:118-119.

Assessment. The piece originates from southern Iraq. There is no ownership history or reference to export license before December 1994. Though Christie's is an established auction house, they have been caught accepting illicitly acquired and exported archaeological materials procured by convicted smugglers as late as 2020. On balance, the eye-stone is looted in modern times.

Recommendation.

1. Schøyen has failed to provide documentation of legal removal from Iraq and the evidence on balance otherwise indicates modern looting, smuggling and illicit trading. The object should be returned to Iraq.





MS 2400 (George 15)

Black stone tablet. Bronze pin in hole on top. Pseudo-Arabic secondary text. Mounted in book.
95x60x15

Sumerian cuneiform and Arabic script, Sumerian. CDLI gives the provenance as “uncertain (mod. uncertain)”, the present MSS-webpage provides no information, while the entry removed from the 2004 NB-base gives the Ninkara temple, Lagash (2150 BCE), and a later Omayyad period owner (->750 AD). If based on the text itself, the ascription to “Ninkara is extremely slim” (Steinkeller 2011: 19), while the Omayyad ownership is presumably based on the “pseudo-Arabic” inscription on the edges and reverse. The object probably stems from the area around modern Telloh in south-eastern Iraq. Schøyen’s information might stem from the dealer or represent a liberal rendition of Steinkeller’s interpretation. The provenance in Schøyen’s private catalogue is initially the above ancient contexts, with modern provenances “3. Dehays collection, Jordan and Canada (1960s -1994); 4. Pars Antiques, London, acquired June 1994”. Steinkeller 2011:19 is the reference indirectly

provided by Schøyen, the secondary reference in CDLI. A primary reference is to Edzard 1997 (not referenced in Steinkeller 2011).

Assessment. The object stems from southern Iraq. The ownership history indicates a modern looting, smuggling and trading, all in the early 1990s.

Recommendation.

1. Schøyen has failed to provide documentation of legal removal from Iraq and the evidence on balance otherwise indicates modern looting, smuggling and illicit trading. The object should be returned to Iraq.







MS 2004 (George 68)

Clay tablet. Mounted in book. 198x145x35

Tablet, inscription in Middle Assyrian. CDLI gives the provenance as “uncertain (mod. uncertain)”, the present MSS-webpage provides no provenance information. The 2006 NB-catalogue was without provenance information. Entries removed in June 2004 from the NB-base maintain the tablet derives from the Royal Library at Ashur in Assyria (northern Iraq). It is not clear whether this is based on information from Schøyen’s dealer or whether it is an extrapolation from the text attributed to Tiglathpileser 1 (c. 1100 BCE) and Ashur. The provenance in the information removed from the NB catalogue 2004 refers to a “Private collection USA (-1968), Galley Ur, Tokyo (-1995) and Nicholas Reeves”. This information is repeated in Schøyen’s private catalogue, with the addition that Reeves held the object in London, 1995. The 1999 catalogue indicates that the US/private collection up to 1968 was Malakzadeh Mokri. Neither Mokri or Reeves are listed in Schøyen’s “statement of provenance” in George 2011. According to all sources, the artefact was exhibited in conjunction with the 1st International Memory of the World Conference, organised by the Norwegian Commission for UNESCO and the National Library of Norway at the Astrup Fearnley Museum of Modern Art, Oslo, 3 June - 14 July 1996. An image is reproduced in Walton et al. 2009 *Zondervan Illustrated Bible, Backgrounds, Commentary*. The first publication is Frame 2011 :127.

Assessment. The object stems from Iraq. There is no public record of the object before 1995. The reference to an anonymous collection can be to Malakzadeh Mokri, indicating that the artefact entered the market before or in 1968, but might typically indicate a constructed provenance of an object looted and smuggled around 1990. In sum, the artefact is removed from Iraq at the earliest around 1968, but probably in the first half of the 1990s.

Recommendation.

1. Schøyen has failed to provide documentation of legal removal from Iraq and the evidence on balance otherwise indicates modern looting, smuggling and illicit trading. The object should be returned to Iraq.



MS 4536/1 (George 92)

Alabaster jar. Coll. No. In black ink. 420x180

Inscription in Old Persian, Elamite, Akkadian and hieroglyphic Egyptian. CDLI gives the provenience as “uncertain (mod. uncertain)”, the provenance section in the current MSS-webpage is empty. The object was listed in the NB-base until 2004, and this is the initial source for the CDLI-entry (i.e. December 2004, immediately before the provenance entry was removed from the Schøyen webpage). Up to 2004 the information was altered on multiple occasions. In December 2002 provenance was given as “1. King Xerxes; the Persian Empire....; 2. Found in Western Syria; 3. C. Dodds Collection, England (1975-)”. In April 2003 the reference to Dodds was removed. In February 2004 a reference to “Cumberland Clark Collection, Bournemouth, England (1920’es-1945), and heirs” was added. In October 2004 all provenance entries were removed. In 2006 the following provenance is supplied: “While MS 4536/1, with the royal inscription of Xerxes, was found on the coast of Syria, MS 4536/2, with the royal inscription of Artaxerxes, as well as MS 4536/3, were found on the empire's eastern border, in Northern Afghanistan.” In Schøyen’s private catalogue a fourth owner has been added “Mark Wilson, Southampton (1987-1994), acquired June 1994.” This accentuates questions raised in connection with the Cumberland-reference and Wilson’s roll as a dealer attached to other objects. The public provenance seems fabricated or manipulated (by Wilson to convince Schøyen, or by/ in collaboration with Schøyen) to obfuscate a recent history of looting. As with numerous previously discussed objects, the Schøyen catalogue’s provenance references do not supply information about how and when the tablet arrived in Britain, they do not indicate an older collection (see MS 2368), and they may be associated with illicit acquisitions (see MS 2855). CDLI supplies a secondary reference to Kent 1953: 115 XVs, but this is to the *exemplaires de vases identiques*, not the Schøyen alabastron, according to Vallat 2011:192 - the first academic reference. *Assessment.* The confused history of the provenance information indicates attempts at creating provenance, whether by dealer Mark Wilson or Schøyen. This casts added doubt on other Cumberland and Wilson references. Like numerous others, the object seems to turn up with Wilson and is sold on to Schøyen within a short period in 2004. Wilson recurs as an intermediary for objects with a diffuse and incomplete ownership history. There is no academic reference to the object before 2011. This indicates a modern history of looting and smuggling, after 1975 and probably early 1990s. An issue is where the alabastron comes from. The reference to western Syria does not arise from the interpretation of the text or other academic sources, so it seems to represent the information provided by the dealer (Wilson). The artefact was removed from Syria between 1975 and the early 1990s.

Recommendation.

1. Schøyen is required to provide without delay documentation concerning the ownership history and find spot of the artefact.
2. The object should be kept in holding, and the Syrian authorities consulted.







MS 1787 (George 89)

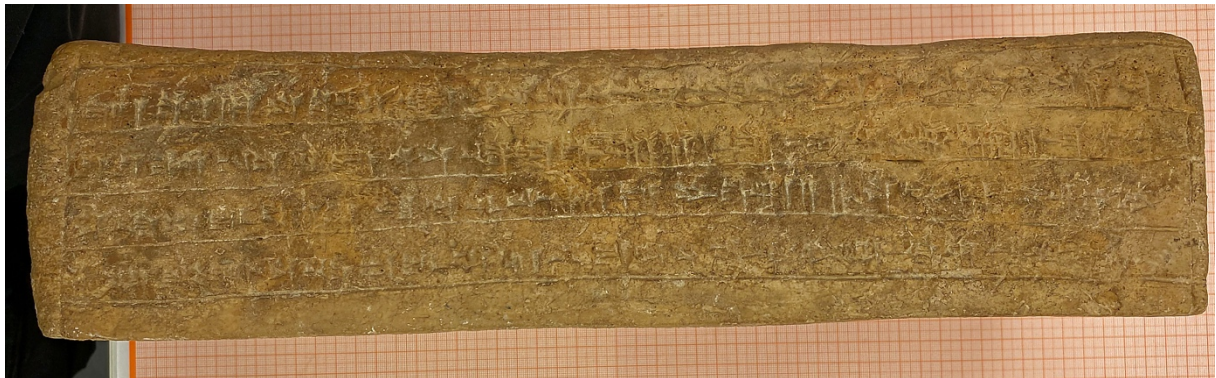
Clay brick. Coll. No in black ink. 390x180x100

Brick with inscription. CDLI lists it as “uncertain (mod. uncertain)”. Schøyen’s private catalogue lists provenience as “Palace of King Untash-Napirisha, Elam, Khuzistan, Iran”, reiterated from information published in Vallat 2011:189. Older references here are Ghirshman 1951-62, Steve 1967, but they are to comparable texts, not the Schøyen text. Provenance in Schøyen’s private catalogue is “1. Palace of King Untash-Napirisha, Elam, Khuzistan, Iran (13th c. BC-); 2. Sotheby’s 9 December 1993, lot 200”.

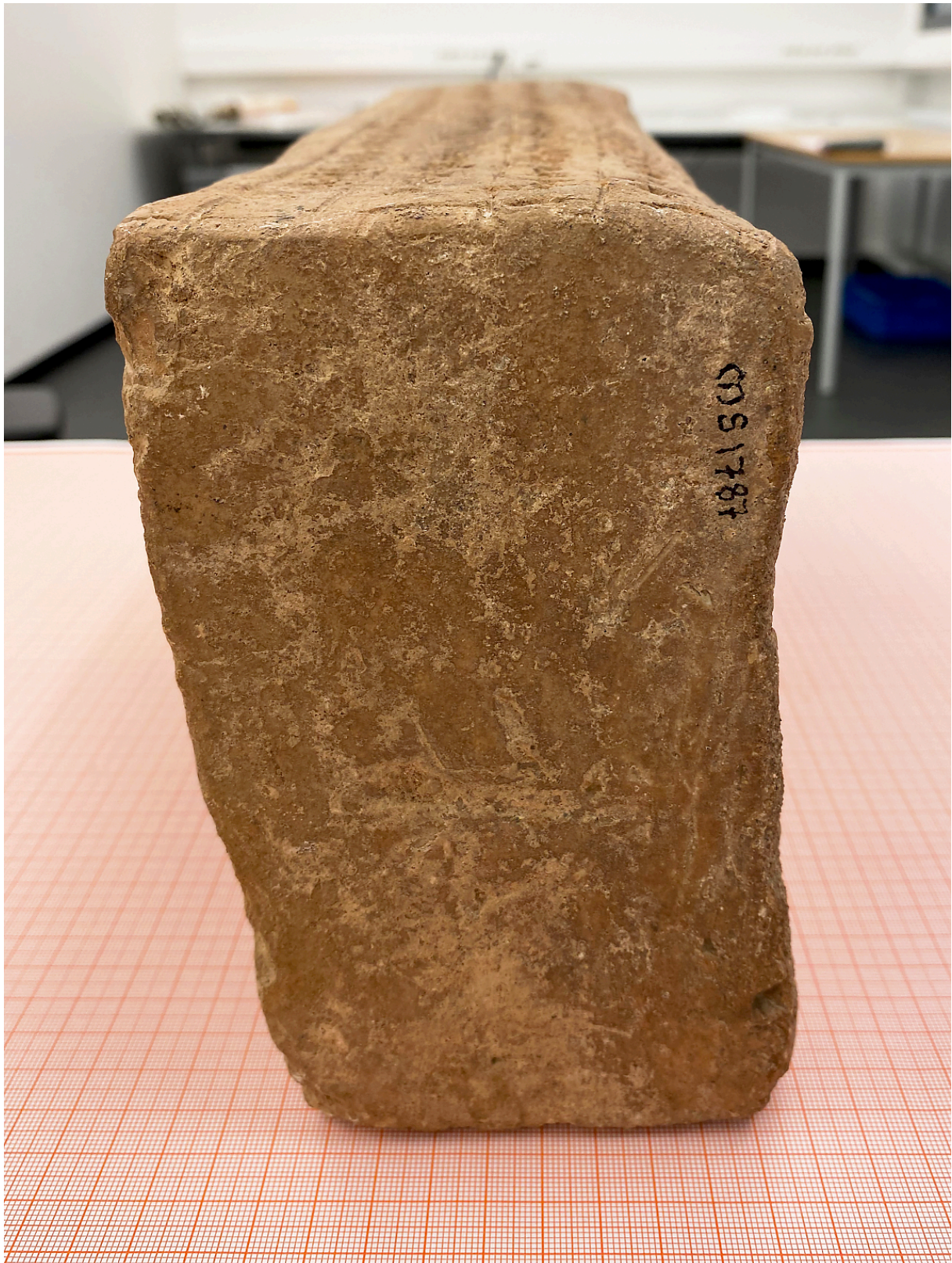
Assessment: The object stems from Iran. The only ownership history and the oldest public reference is the 1993 auction. The object is potentially removed from Iran in violation of the country’s *National Heritage Protection Act* of November 3, 1930.

Recommendation.

1. The object should be held back and Iranian authorities should be consulted.
2. After the above, a decision concerning the return of the object to Iran should be made







MS 1846/6 (George 5)

Marble/limestone fragment ("door socket"). Coll. No. In black ink. 240x40

Stone door socket with inscription in Sumerian. Steinkeller (in George 2011:5) indicates no explicit place of origin. CDLI states provenience as "Girsu (mod. Tello) ?» (in southern Iraq). It is not listed on

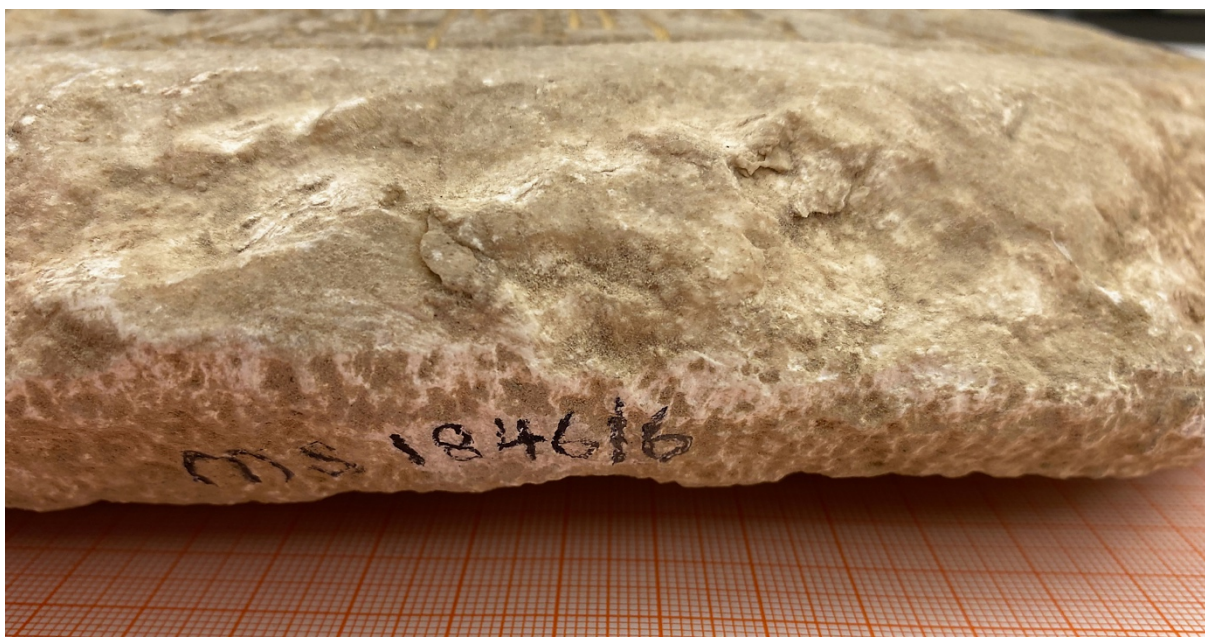
Schøyen's present webpage. CDLI gives the 2006 version of the NB catalogue as its first source, and it is not listed among entries removed or altered in 2004. Schøyen's private catalogue specifies provenience as "1. Emush(kalama) temple in Patibira (Bad-tibira)?" The reason for the divergence between CDLI and Schøyen is not clear, but CDLI cites a mis-reference to RIME 1.09.05.03, which is from Girsu. If not a clerical error, the divergence might arise from information Schøyen received from suppliers. The object originates in southern Iraq. In his private catalogue provenience is "2. Cumberland Clark collection, Bournemouth (1920s-1941) and heirs; 3. Mark Wilson, Southampton (1987-1994), acquired June 1994." CDLI lists the first reference to Frayne 2007, but this is to the text itself "well known from numerous other exemplars" (Steinkeller 2011:5), not the present object. The first academic reference to the object is thus Steinkeller 2011.

Assessment: The object originates from Iraq. The reference to a Cumberland Clark collection does not supply information about how and when the tablet arrived in Britain and does not indicate an older collection (see MS 2368) and does not exclude an illicit acquisition (see MS 2855). The object was likely removed from Iraq after the late 1950s. As Schøyen's private catalogue maintains, it was acquired by Wilson around 1990 and quickly sold to Schøyen. The first public reference is 2011. It is likely that it was looted from and smuggled out of Iraq in the late 1980s to early 1990s.

Recommendation.

1. Schøyen has failed to provide documentation of legal removal from Iraq and the evidence on balance otherwise indicates modern looting, smuggling and illicit trading. The object should be returned to Iraq.





MS 4576 (George 19)

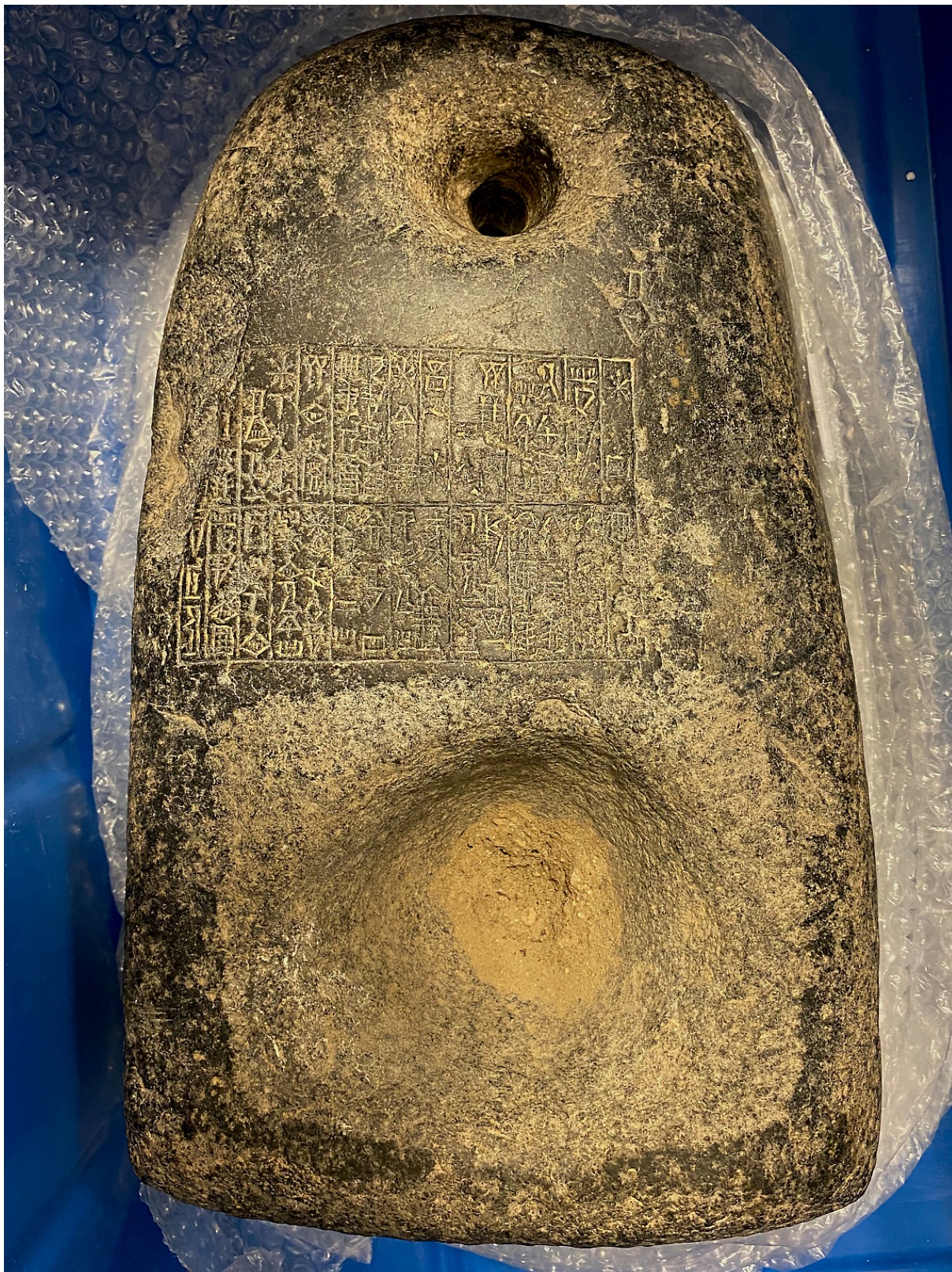
Black stone weight, reused as socket(?) (27.5 kg). Coll. No. In black ink. 380x230x150

Inscription in Sumerian. CDLI gives the provenience as “uncertain (mod. uncertain)”. The MSS-website lists the object but provides no direct provenience or provenance entry. However, the description here (and in Schøyen’s private catalogue) reads “MS in Neo Sumerian on stone, Umma, ...”. The description in the catalogue (and Steinkeller 2011:23) follows Friberg 2007:127, who briefly notes “[t]he inscription is addressed to Shara, the patron deity of the town Umma”. It is conceivable that this is the source of Schøyen’s reference to Umma, but he has also conceivably received information from the looter/dealer. The CDLI-base refers to the NB-catalogue in December 2014, while Daniel Harrouz found the catalogue entry was expanded February 2007 (before the collaboration between Schøyen and NB ended later in 2007), but that it at no time listed provenience (or provenance) in the catalogue. The only provenance information is found in Schøyen’s private catalogue, 1. Cumberland Clark collection, Bournemouth (1920s-1941) and heirs; 2. Mark Wilson, Southampton (1987-1994), acquired June 1994.” The initial publication is in Friberg 2007, who comments that the “*great majority of the [400] mathematical cuneiform texts in the Schøyen Collection are new additions to the corpus, probably emanating from relatively recent excavations in Iraq, ...*”. He explicates where i.a. MS 4576 is looted, “*... just as the talent weight MS 4576 appears to be a Kassite imitation of a Sumerian weight stone. As for the provenance of these texts, Al-Rawi suggests that they were looted from Tell Muhammad, in Baghdad Al-Jadidah or, perhaps, from Haddad, ancient Meturan.*” Friberg’s reference source to Al-Rawi is not explicated but seems to be an unpublished text. Al-Rawi also furnished a hand-drawn image published in Friberg 2007:129. The first academic publication is thus Friberg 2007, followed by Steinkeller 2011:23.

Assessment. MS 4576 stems from southern Iraq. As with numerous previously discussed objects, the Schøyen catalogue’s provenance references do not supply information about how and when the tablet arrived in Britain, they do not indicate an older collection (see MS 2368), and they may be associated with illicit acquisitions (ref. MS 2855). MS 4536/1 & /2 further substantiate that references to Cumberland and Wilson do not represent legitimate acquisitions. After acquiring this piece, it was studied by Al-Rawi and Friberg who hold no doubts about it recently being looted in Iraq – and by extension illicitly smuggled out of Iraq, probably between 1991 and 1994.

Recommendation.

1. Schøyen has failed to provide documentation of legal removal from Iraq and the evidence on balance otherwise indicates modern looting, smuggling and illicit trading. The objects should be returned to Iraq.



MS 2848 (George 75)

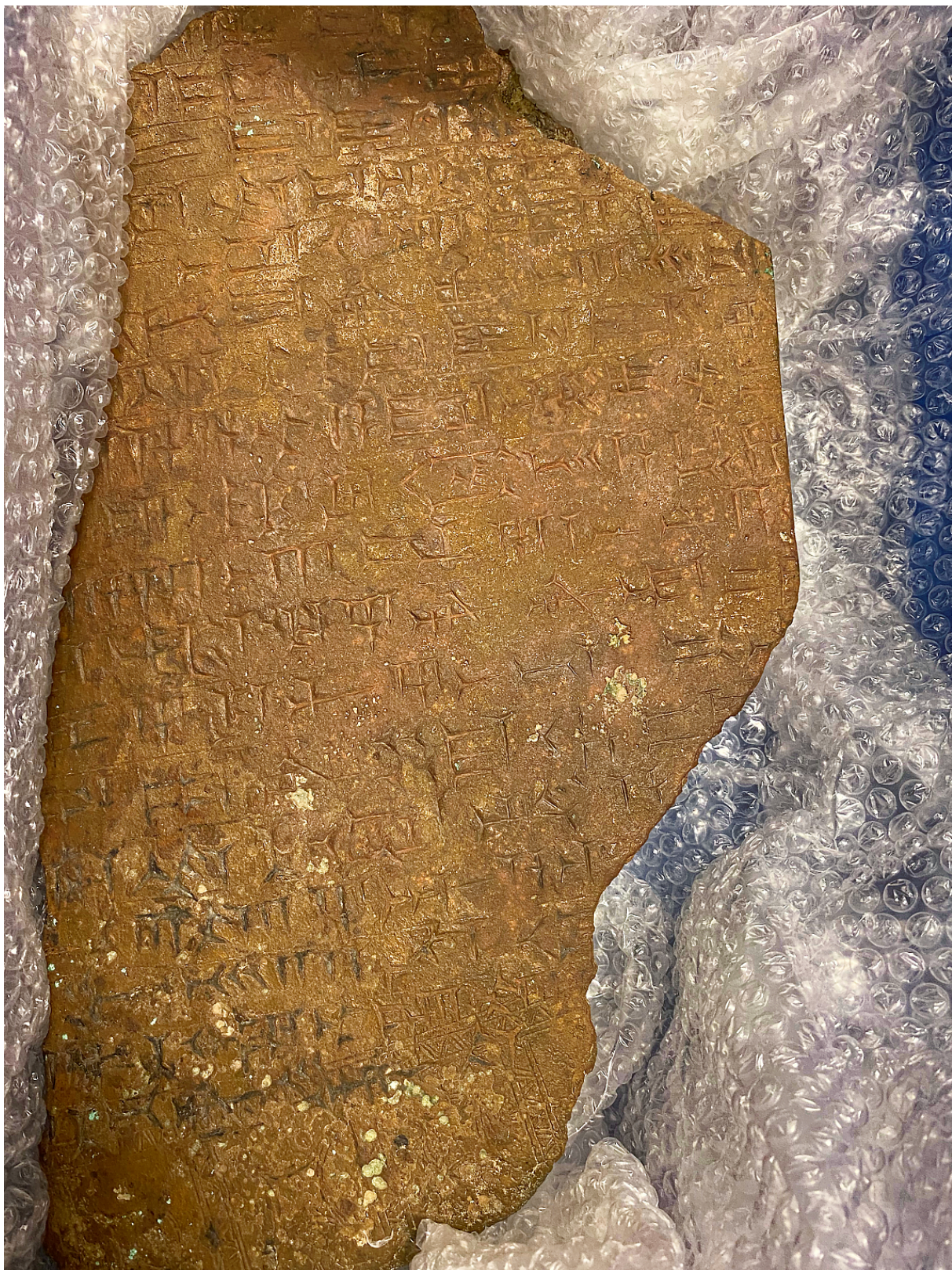
Bronze fragment, sculpture (from the lower part of figure's skirt?). Coll. No. In black ink. 420x250x45 to 100

Bronze, inscription in Neo-Akkadian. CDLI gives the provenience as "uncertain (mod. uncertain)", neither the present MSS-webpage nor the NB entry removed in June 2004 or the 2006 NB catalogue provide provenience. Schøyen's private catalogue provenience is: King Adad-Nirari III(?), Assyria and war booty by the Babylonians or Persians and broken up into 1 Talent pieces. The sources for Schøyen's contentions are not clear. Though Frame 2011(:149-152) refers to the melting down of Neo-Assyrian metal statues, he makes no reference to Schøyen's information, and thus was neither Schøyen's source nor was Schøyen a source for Frame. Provenience in the entry removed in 2004 is given as a "Private Collection, England (1940'ies-)", while the private catalogue lists "Leonard Simmonds collection (1944-1987) and heirs, UK; 2. Pars Antiques, London, June 1996". The first publication is Frame 2011.

Assessment. The place of origin, based on the accessible information and the assertion of Assyrian war booty, is Assyria. This potentially represents a large section of present-day Iraq and neighbouring countries but given modern circumstances the most likely provenience is Iraq. There is no public record before June 1996, and the reference to Simmonds -if genuine- is chronologically opaque. The "private collection" is a red flag, and Pars has a dubious reputation. Based on the accessible information, the artefact was initially removed from Iraq between 1944 and 1987, potentially up to Pars' sale in 1996.

Recommendation.

- 1) Schøyen should provide the sources for his contentions concerning provenience.
- 2) Schøyen is required to supply without delay all documents associated with the piece to demonstrate when and how it was removed from Iraq, a legal export license and ownership history.
- 3) On Schøyen's providing documentation, a re-evaluation of provenience should be made.
- 4) Failing to provide documentation or on providing documentation that does not prove legal removal from Iraq, the object should be returned to Iraq.



IV. Provenience and provenance of Incantation bowls in the possession of Martin Schøyen

Background

The Iraqi request for assistance included 654 “incantation bowls”. The actual number of incantation bowls is however 656. One bowl was impounded (MS 1911/1). According to Schøyen (in conversation with Sestøl August 24, 2021) 654 are stored at Schøyen’s property in London. One bowl is unaccounted for.

Apart from Martin Schøyen, Shlomo Moussaieff has been a major private collector, probably supplied from the same dealer – Ghassan Rihani. Freeman et al. concluded that there is no evidence of excavated bowls outside of Iraq. Müller-Kessler’s analysis of bowls indicate (some?) bowls are produced together and have a common archaeological find spot (provenience), Sura and Pumbeditha in Iraq, which is also in the area identified by NRK in conjunction with the documentary *Skriftsamleren* (Müller-Kessler in Brodie 2017, ref. NRK 2005). This indicates they come from a restricted area in Iraq. They are described as “surface finds” i.a. by Schøyen, but from an archaeological vantage did have a context that is now destroyed (Brodie 2014:172-73).

The Schøyen webpage has asserted that “the bowls were exported from Jordan, and not from Iraq, and already in 1988,” and as noted above held to be the result of a long collecting effort by the Rihani family, and thus “were also part of an old established collection that was not put together in recent years, as has [been] implied, but was built up over many years by two generations of collectors in Jordan well before 1965 (in the 1930s) and was granted a valid export license by the Jordanian authorities in 1988. The Schøyen Collection rejects any imputation of wrongdoing as wrong-headed and unwarranted.” Schøyen has on occasion referred to the July 2007 statement and agreement between UCL and Schøyen (<https://www.ucl.ac.uk/news/2007/jun/joint-statement-ucl-and-schoyen-collection-aramaic-incantation-bowls>) as a corroboration on the legality of the bowl collection. This statement is between two parties caught in questionable practices, not a factual or legal report on the collection of bowls. As such it is agreement of convenience for the two involved parties to avoid further embarrassment. In 2007, the main party, Iraq, was slowly emerging from the devastating wars and was not able to exert claims.

Freeman et al 2005

The Freeman et al report is a cautious and conservative, but thorough review of the incantation bowls held by Schøyen. The report draws on available written sources, and in addition Schøyen, Williams and Martin were interviewed. The report concluded:

- The bowls were in Iraq when the 1936 antiquities law came into force, and thus are property of the Iraqi State.
- Export of the bowls from Iraq “would have rendered them the property of the state of Iraq”.
- The bowls were removed from Iraq after 6th of August 1990. This means the export was illegal and as was the import to the UK after June 14, 2003, potentially 1990.
- The bowls were unlawfully removed from Iraq, are the product of criminal dealings and should be returned to Iraq.
- The passage through Jordan does not legalise their removal from Iraq.
- Schøyen cannot convincingly lay claim to the bowls.

The report systematically reviews the chaotic, practically absurd, information and testimonies about export permits, dates, meetings, missing invoices, and document copies to assess inconsistent claims from the dealers and Schøyen. Rihani’s “gift letter” and export license are shown to be used in a manipulated fashion, and are of little bearing for the objects acquired by Schøyen. There is nothing to suggest the collection was acquired over long period of time, the first evidence of sale to Schøyen is in 2004.

In conjunction with this report, Schøyen’s private catalogue has been searched for “incantation” to identify acquisition dates. As the catalogue is a pdf with limited search possibilities (sections that are

images of text and 3979 pages), the search is not extensive. However, all the returned results were between 1994 and 1998. The majority in 1994 commonly involved quickly changing hands between Rihani, Trotter, Reeves, Quaritch and Martin. This is parallel with the inquiry's conclusion "... whatever the exact date of exportation (if any) of the bowls from Jordan, they did not arrive in England until after 1990, and the first evidence of the Schøyen bowls is an invoice from Trotter to Reeves 13/7/94."

MS 1911/1 Incantation bowl is the single confiscated bowl. The provenance in Schøyen's private catalogue is "1. Hosa'ya son of Hatai, and Hadadoi, son of Kil (5th-6th c.); 2. Private collection, UK(1935-94); 3. Annie Trotter, London (1994); 4. Nicholas Reeves, London (1994); 5. Quaritch, London, August 1994.

Assessment. The bowl derives from Iraq. There is no evidence that this bowl is exported in accordance with Iraqi legislation. It is probably exported after 2001, and certainly after 1936.

Assessment and Recommendation for the incantation bowls.

Assessment. In short, this report concurs with Freeman et al. that the 656 bowls are looted in Iraq, probably not long before they turn up in London in 1994. They are property of the Iraqi government and there is no evidence of legal export from Iraq.

- 1) The bowl MS 1911/1, presently held at the Museum of Cultural History, is returned to Iraq.
- 2) Schøyen is required to produce the second missing bowl. This bowl should be returned to Iraq.
- 3) Iraqi and British authorities should be informed of the 654 bowls in London.

March 6, 2022

**Museum of Cultural History
University of Oslo**

**Håkon Glørstad
Museum Director**

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