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DIGITAL CORPUS OF CUNEIFORM LEXICAL TEXTS

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<http://oracc.org/dcclt>

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Funding from the Stahl Endowment in 2018 was used for adding more material to the Digital Corpus of Cuneiform Lexical Lists (DCCLT), in particular the first millennium list of hides and leather objects (known as Ura 11) and the list of metals and metal objects (known as Ura 12). Lexical texts are lists of words and lists of cuneiform signs that were used by ancient Mesopotamian scribes and scholars to teach and document the complex cuneiform writing system and Sumerian vocabulary. These texts play an important role in the study of the history of education and scholarship, but are also of crucial and foundational importance for the decipherment of cuneiform and for Sumerian lexicography.

DCCLT was started in 2003 and became one of the founding members of the Open Richly Annotated Cuneiform Corpus (ORACC), an umbrella project that strives to provide electronic publications of all cuneiform texts, utilizing a single set of conventions and software tools. ORACC data are freely accessible over the internet and may also be downloaded in JavaScript Object Notation (JSON) format for computational text analysis or other purposes.

In its initial stages DCCLT focused on third millennium and (early) second millennium sources, because those were the areas where traditional (paper) publication of lexical texts in the series *Materials for a Sumerian Lexicon* (1937-2005) had paid relatively less attention. This is not to say that first millennium sources were entirely neglected (in fact hundreds of first millennium lexical tablets have been edited in DCCLT), but rather that no effort had been made so far to present this material systematically.

Now that the great majority of third and second millennium material has been covered it is time to turn attention to later periods of cuneiform lexicography. This is timely, because our partners at the Ludwig-Maximilians Universität, Munich, are interested in creating a full corpus of all Assyrian (Middle Assyrian and Neo-Assyrian) texts in a project to be proposed to the ERC; the Munich project and Berkeley-based DCCLT will mutually benefit, working together through the well-established contacts created with the help of the LMU/UCB partnership.

Creating a full and systematic edition of all first millennium lexical texts is both daunting and very important. It is daunting because there are, by estimate, some 10,000 lexical tablets (including library texts and school exercises) from this period. It is very important because first millennium lexical texts are usually bilingual (Sumerian – Akkadian or, in some cases, Akkadian – Akkadian, with rare Akkadian words explained by more current ones). Since our knowledge of Sumerian vocabulary still has many important gaps, the Akkadian translations are of immense importance for lexicography – even though the ancient translations cannot be blindly trusted.

First millennium lexical texts usually exist in multiple duplicates. These duplicates may be brief (4 or 5 line) extracts on school exercises, or (fragments of) large tablets that once contained an entire chapter of a lexical series. The editorial process, therefore, involves pulling together all known sources in order to create a single composite text. DCCLT editions allow a user to consult the composite text *and* the individual exemplars on which the composite is based (they are linked to each other). In most cases the editorial work of creating a composite was already done for the *Materials for a Sumerian Lexicon* series,

but many of these editions are more than half a century old. In the meantime, new duplicates have been published, and our knowledge of Sumerian and Akkadian vocabulary has increased. Moreover, having electronic editions has the great advantage of allowing scholars to use this material computationally, for instance by asking: how is the vocabulary of the lexical corpus related to the vocabulary of royal inscriptions (presumably written by the same scholars)?

John Carnahan was paid from the Stahl funds (as well as additional funds) to create new reconstructions of two chapters of the encyclopedic series *Ura*. In the first millennium, this series, which goes back to early second millennium origins, had 24 chapters. The first two chapters were devoted to business expressions (contractual clauses, etc). The rest of the series lists Sumerian words with Akkadian translations in a thematic organization (trees, wooden objects, reed, reed objects, clay and pottery, hides, leather objects, metals and metal objects, domestic animals, wild animals, etc.). The newly created editions represent the chapters 11 (hides, leather objects, earths, copper and copper objects) and 12 (bronze, silver, and gold objects). These two chapters were chosen, in particular, because their current editions date to 1959 (*Materials for a Sumerian Lexicon 7*; with updates in Vol. 9, 1967), and a good number of important new exemplars had been published since (in particular for Chapter 11).

The new edition of Chapter 11 (hides and leather objects) is now based on 53 exemplars, all of them linked to the composite edition. About half of these had already been edited provisionally for [DCCLT](#), but working on the entire group allowed for many crucial improvements. The composite text is entirely new and has 421 lines. The edition only has two small gaps, a big improvement over the 1959 edition that still had many lacunae. The composite text links to the exemplars of first millennium *Ura* 11, but also to parallels from earlier stages in the history of this text.

The new edition of Chapter 12 (metal objects) is based on 27 exemplars and is also linked to exemplars from earlier in the history of this composition. The composite text has 280 lines, with some (mostly minor) lacunae. Much of the text can be reconstructed even if no exemplars are available, because of the repetitive nature of this chapter. Many of the precious objects and jewelry such as bracelet, earring, or toggle-pin are repeated in each of the three main sections (bronze, silver, and gold) in the same order.

Compared to their (paper) predecessors, the [DCCLT](#) editions offer three important innovations. First, the paper editions offered the composite only, noting variants from the exemplars in footnotes. The current editions offer access to both the composite and the exemplars. This is important because there is more variation in lexical texts than a composite edition will make us believe. The availability of the exemplars is an important corrective to that appearance. Second, [DCCLT](#) editions are lemmatized, that is, each word is linked to an entry in a glossary. These glossaries contribute in important ways to the development of the electronic Pennsylvania Sumerian Dictionary ([ePSD2](#)), another member of the [ORACC](#) consortium. Third, unlike earlier editions, the [DCCLT](#) editions are translated. The obstacles in understanding Sumerian vocabulary had prevented earlier generations from venturing translations of lexical texts. However, without translations these editions are only accessible to the most specialized cuneiformists. We thus add translations, even though many of the words and expressions are imperfectly understood.

Oracc Search: Q000087 (j=ŋ sz=š s,=š t,=t 0-9=0-9; '=alef)

1 Texts [1 matches] English only

093067 CT 14, pl. 13 BM 091010	Seg.1, 46 [ŋiri ₂] kun ^{zabar}	<i>pat-ri zib-ba-tum</i>	= type of mace bronze dagger with a tail
CT 14, pl. 47, BM 042339	Seg.1, 47 ŋiri ₂ šum-ma ^{zabar}	MIN<(pat-ri)> mu-ša ₂ -ki-lu	type of bronze butchering knife
CT 14, pl. 49, BM 093085	Seg.1, 48 ŋiri ₂ -ur ₃ -ra ^{zabar}	MIN<(pat-ri)> šib-bi	bronze dagger worn in the belt
K 00152 + K 04204 + K 14726	Seg.1, 49 ŋiri ₂ šu ur ₃ -ra ^{zabar}	MIN<(pat-ri)> bi-ib-bi	bronze dagger that rubs away = dagger for the wild-sheep
K 05976 + K 11187	Seg.1, 50 ŋiri ₂ ašgab ^{zabar}	MIN<(pat-ri)> aš ₂ -ka-	bronze knife of
LTBA 1, 35			
LTBA 1, 69			
MC 16 (2013) 047 BM 054569			
MSL SS 1, 024			
N 3711			
RA 016, 171 b			
SpTU 3, 111			
VAT 10866			
W 3			
Parallels			
ASJ 09, 289-291			knife
BM 085983	Seg.1, 55 ŋiri ₂ muḥaldim ^{zabar}	MIN<(pat-ri)> mu-uh-	bronze cook's

DCCLT : Digital Corpus of Cuneiform Lexical Texts

Figure 1: DCCLT edition of the list of metal objects (Ura 12). Left pane: list of exemplars. Right pane: Sumerian, Akkadian, and English translation, respectively. The small window in front shows the text of all exemplars that have some version of line 46. Note that no exemplar has the full line and that there are variants in the rendering of the Akkadian.

Everything that is blue is clickable and will reveal more information. The text numbers (museum numbers and text publication numbers) can be clicked to bring up the full edition of each exemplar (from there one can continue to find images and meta data of the exemplar: where it was found, where it is stored, where it is published, its date, etc.). Clicking on a (Sumerian or Akkadian) word in the right pane will get you to the glossaries. Clicking on a line number opens a window with the so-called "score-edition" of that line (like the one shown here for line 46).