Six Neo-Sumerian Texts in the Boston Public Library

Changyu Liu
Zhejiang Normal University

§1. Introduction

§1.1. The six Neo-Sumerian cuneiform tablets published here are housed in the collection of the Boston Public Library, Boston, Massachusetts. They were brought to the Boston Public Library in 1928 when Edgar J. Banks had transcribed them in a letter (April 14). I would like to thank Sean Casey from the Rare Books & Manuscripts Department, Boston Public Library, and Susan L. Glover, the Keeper of Special Collections in Boston Public Library, for kindly granting the publication rights of these texts. Any remaining mistakes or errors, however, are my sole responsibility.

§2. Transliterations, translations and commentary

§2.1. Withdrawal of animals

Museum Number: CAB.G.3.137-1 (Plate 1)
Provenience: Puzriš-Dagan
Date: Šulgi 43 iii 20

Obverse
1. 1(diš) sila₄ d-en-lil₂₁ lamb for Enlil,
2. 1(diš) sila₄ d-nin-lil₂1 lamb for Ninlil,
3. mu-ku₃ (DU) šeš-kal-la / u₂-du-lu delivery (from) Šeš-kala, the chief herdsman,
4. er₃-ra-na-da maškim Erra-nada was maškim;
5. 1(diš) udu niga 2(diš) sila₄ d-en-lil₂1 barley-fed sheep, two lambs for Enlil,
6. 1(diš) udu niga 2(diš) sila₄ d-nin-lil₂1 barley-fed sheep, two lambs for Ninlil,
7. 1(diš) udu niga_dinanna 1 barley-fed sheep for Inanna,
8. 1(diš) udu niga 1(diš) sila₄ d-ašgi 1 barley-fed sheep for Ašgi,
9. 1(diš) udu niga dalla₅(PAP.NAGAR) 1 barley-fed sheep for Alla,
10. 1(diš) udu niga d-nin-hur-sağ 1 barley-fed sheep for Ninhursağ,

Reverse
1. 1(diš) udu niga 1(diš) sila₄ 1 barley-fed sheep, 1 lamb
2. Ṗ̃ul-pa-[e]₃ for Šulpae,
3. 1(diš) sila₄ niga d-ne₃-eri₁₁-gal 1 barley-fed lamb for Nergal,
4. [1(diš)] sila₄ d-si-im-ti-ša 1 lamb for Ilsimtiša,
5. ṭmu₅-ku₃ (DU) zabar-dab₅ delivery (from) the zabardab-official,
6. ṧanše-ul₄-gal maškim Nanše-ulgal was maškim;
7. 1(diš) u₄ d₁₅ (diš) maš₄ šu-gid₂ 1 female goat, 1 male goat, designated as šugid,
8. e₂-muhaldim-še₃ to the kitchen;
9. u₄ 2(u)-kam credited on the 20th day;
10. zi-ga iti u₅-bi₂-gu₇ month: “Ubi feast,”
§2.1.1 This text documents the livestock credited for various deities and to the kitchen.

obv. 3: For the term u₂-du-lu, see Waetzoldt 1982.

obv. 8: In the Ur III texts, this divine name dAšgi is found as part of personal names, such as Lu₂-dAšgi (BPOA 7 2650) and Ur-dAšgi (TCL 2 5483), as well as a part of geographical name like dAšgi-p₃-da₃ in TCTI 2 3543. For dAšgi, see Such-Gutiérrez 2003: 321.

obv. 9: Except for this case, the divine name dAlla₉ (PAP.NAGAR) is exclusively attested in the texts from Iri-Sa₉rig, such as Nisaba 15 488 and Nisaba 15 1070. For the signs PAP.NAGAR read as Alla, see Owen 2013: 555.

rev. 3: The divine name was restored on the basis of Nisaba 15 652.

rev. 4: Except for this case, the divine name Di₅GIR-si-im-ti₃-sa or I₃-si-im-ti₃-sa is exclusively attested in the texts from Iri-Sa₉rig, such as Nisaba 15 178 and Nisaba 15 944. For the reading of this deity, see Owen 2013: 556.

§2.2. Receipt of Slaughtered Animal

Museum Number: CAB.G.3.138-3 (Plate 2)
Provenience: Puzriš-Dagan
Date: Šulgi 46 xi 25

Obverse
1. 1(diš) maš-da₃
2. ba-uš₂
3. u₄ 2(u) 5(diš)-kam
4. ki lu₂-di₅gir-ra-ta

Reverse
1. ur-nigar₂
2. šu ba-ti
3. iti ezem me-ki-gal₂
4. mu ki-mašₖi u₃ / hu-ur₅-ti₃ₘₖi> ba-hul

§2.2.1 This text records that one slaughtered gazelle was accepted by Ur-ni₅gär from Lu-di₅gira (son of Arad-hu₉lla). Note that the transaction of slaughtered animals between Ur-ni₅gär and Lu-di₅gira was also recorded on the same day in the text BPOA 7 2984.

§2.3. Transfer of Animals

Museum Number: CAB.G.3.138-5 (Plate 2)
Provenience: Puzriš-Dagan
Date: Amar-Suen 2 i 21

Obverse
1. 1(diš) gu₄ niga 1 barley-fed ox,
2. u₄ 2(u) 1(diš)-kam on the 21st day,
3. ki ab-ba-sa₆-ga-ta from Abba-saga,
4. dšul-gi-a-a-gu₁₀ Šulgi-aya₉gu

Reverse

page 2 of 11 Cuneiform Digital Library Bulletin 2021:1
1. i₃-dab₅  
   blank space  
   seized;  
2. iti maš-da₃-gu₇  
   month: “Gazelle feast,”  
3. mu ur-bi₂-lumᵏⁱ ba-ḥul  
   year: “Urbilum was destroyed.”  

§2.3.1 This text records that Šulgī-aʿagu, an official of the nakabtu₅m organization, seized one ox from Abba-saga. For Šulgī-aʿagu and Abba-saga, see recently Liu 2017: 236-254, 30-177.

rev. 3: For the abbreviated year name mu ur-bi₂-lumᵏⁱ ba-ḥul “the year when Urbilum was destroyed” referring to the second regnal year of Amar-Suen, see Hilgert 2003: 19-20.

§2.4. Transfer of Animals

Museum Number: CAB.G.3.140 (Plate 3)  
Provenience: Puzriš-Dagan  
Date: Amar-Suen 7 x

Obverse
1. 3(ban₂) dabin  
   30 liters of semolina,  
2. 1(ban₂) 5(diš) sila₃ eša  
   15 liters of eša-flour,  
3. er₂ e₂-nigin₂-na  
   designated as er₂ e₂-nigin₂-na,  
4. ₃inanna  
   for Inanna;  
5. 4(diš) sila₃ dabin 2(diš) sila₃ eša  
   4 liters of dabin-flour, 2 liters of eša-flour,  
6. “na-na-a a-ra₂ 1(diš)-kam  
   for Nanaya for the first time;  
7. 1(ban₂) zi₃ sig₁₅ ninda gur₁-ra-še₃  
   10 liters of refine zi-flour for (making) fat-breads,  
8. 4(diš) sila₃ dabin 2(diš) sila₃ eša  
   4 liters of dabin-flour, 2 liters of eša-flour,  

Reverse
1. dub-dub-de₃  
   designated as dub-dub,  
2. ₃na-na-a ša₂ e₂-gal  
   for Nanaya at the palace (for the second time);  
   blank space  
3. zi-ga ša₃ unuᵏⁱ-ga  
   credited at Uruk;  
4. iti ezem an-na  
   month: “Festival of Heaven,”  
   blank space  
5. mu ḥu-uh₂-nu-riᵏⁱ / ba-ḥul  
   year: “Ḫuḫnuri was destroyed.”

§2.4.1 This text documents flour credited for various deities.

obv. 3: The phrase er₂ e₂-nigin₂-na possibly means “the mourning of/for the house-of-returning.” It also possibly refers either to a type of rite attested in the text AUCT 2 322 (er₂ siskur₂-ra “mourning rite”) or to a designation following livestock, such as maš₂ er₂-nigin₂-na ka ge₅-par₁-ra in AnOr 7 58, udu niga er₂-nigin₂-na in JEOL 26 51 13, and maš₂ er₂ iri nigin₂-na in CTNMC 9.

rev. 7: For the term zi₃ sig₁₅, see Englund 1990: 86-88.

rev. 1: For the term dub-dub, see Sallaberger 1993: 218.

§2.5. On Female Workers

Museum Number: CAB.G.3.137-7 (Plate 4)  
Provenience: Umma  
Date: Amar-Suen 3
Obverse
1. 1(geš₂'u) 5(geš₂) 1(u) 4(diš) geme₂ 914 female workers
2. u₄ 1(diš)-šē₃ for one day,
3. geme₂ niğ₂-ar₃-ra e₂-amar-ka (were) female workers of groats in Eamar,
4. 5(geš₂) 1(u) 2(diš) geme₂ u₄ 1(diš)-šē₃ 312 female workers for one day, (were) female workers of miller-(house)
5. 3(geš₂) geme₂ u₄ 1(diš)-šē₃ geme₂ / e₂-bappir 180 female workers for one day, (were) female workers of beer-house,
6. e₂-kas₄ a-pi₄-sal₄ ki (in) the Ekas of Apisal,

Reverse
1. ki šeš-saga₁₀-ta from Šeš-saga,
2. kišib lu₂-kal-la under seal of Lu-kala,
3. a₂ u₄-du₅-ḫa-bi its wage of nonworking day
4. i₃-ib₂-ğar was placed;
5. mu 8₉-gu-za d'en-/lil₂-la₂ ba-dim₂⁽¹⁾(HUL) year: “The throne of Enlil was made.”

Seal
1. lu₂-kal-la Lu-kala,
2. dub-sar the scribe,
3. dumu ur-e₁₁-e kuš₇ son of Ur-e’e, chief livestock administrator.

§2.5.1 obv. 3: For the term niğ₂-ar₃-ra “groats”, see Powell 1984: 52.

§2.6. Receipt of Beer
Museum Number: CAB.G.3.137-8 (Plate 5)
Provenience: Umma
Date: Šu-Suen 4 xii 25

Obverse
1. 1(ban₂) 5(diš) sila₃ kaš saga₁₀ 15 liters of good beer,
2. 3(ban₂) 5(diš) sila₃ kaš du 35 liters of common beer,
3. u₄ 2(u) 3(diš)-kam on the 23rd day;
4. 1(ban₂) 2(diš) ½(diš) sila₃ kaš saga₁₀ 12.5 liters of good beer,
5. 3(ban₂) 8 sila₃ kaš du 38 liters of common beer,
6. u₄ 2(u) 4(diš)-kam on the 24th day;

Reverse
1. 1(ban₂) 5(diš) sila₃ kaš saga₁₀ 15 liters of good beer,
2. 3(ban₂) 7(diš) sila₃ kaš du 37 liters of common beer,
3. u₄ 2(u) 5(diš)-kam on the 25th day;
4. ki a-al-li₂-ta from Ayalli,
5. kišib ensi₂-ka under seal of the governor (of Umma);
6. iti d₄-dumu-zi month: “Dumuzi,”
7. mu ba₃₃ mar-tu / ba-du₃ year: “The Amorite wall was built.”

Seal
i₁. d₄šu-d₄-suen Šu-Suen,
2. lugal kal₃-a strong king,
3. lugal ur₃s-ki-ma king of Ur,
4. lugal an ub-/da limmu₂-ba king of the four quarters:
ii 5. a-a-kal-la  
6. ensi₂ 
7. umma₃ 
8. arady-zu 

Aya-kala, 
governor 
of Umma, 
(is) your servant.

§2.6.1 This text documents that beer was received from Ayalli. For further discussion on Aya-kala, the governor of Umma province, see Dahl 2007: 63-69.


Plate 1

(1) CAB.G.3.137-1
Plate 2

(2) CAB.G.3.138-3

(3) CAB.G.3.138-5
Plate 3

(4) CAB.G.3.140
Plate 4

(5) CAB.G.3.137-7