

A note on cuneiform ligatures

To: SAH
 From: Robin Leroy 𐎶
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We propose that the following section be added to PDUTR #56.

2.6 Discretionary Ligatures

On occasion, some sequences of signs may be combined in a ligature, as illustrated in Figure 5. Such ligatures are not usually distinguished in transliteration from the corresponding sequences, and do not carry distinct semantics. They are not separately encoded; it is left to the font to display these if desired, possibly based on the presence of a zero-width joiner; see *Cursive Connection and Ligatures* in Section 23.2, *Layout Controls*, of [Unicode], and item 2 in [Principles]. When one needs to convey the ligature in transliteration, a plus sign is used, thus ^dEN.ZU for the ligated example in Figure 5.

Figure 5. The name of the god Sin, 𐎶𐎵𐎶, transliterated ^dsuen or ^dEN.ZU. Left: 𐎶𐎵 ^dEN is ligated; right: no ligature is used.



In the references:

- [P226934] “RIME 3/2.01.04.22, Ex. 01 Artifact Entry.” (2003) 2023. Cuneiform Digital Library Initiative (CDLI). June 14, 2023.
<https://cdli.ucla.edu/P226934>
- [P232275] “RIME 3/1.01.07, St B Witness Artifact Entry.” (2003) 2023. Cuneiform Digital Library Initiative (CDLI). June 14, 2023.
<https://cdli.ucla.edu/P232275>

Background

The relevant text from [Principles] is:

Since the identity of signs as characters within the system is frequently possible only by means of diachronic study of script development in the matter of those signs, it will be necessary, on a sign-by-

sign basis, to examine the diachronic development of the sign. Thus, when a sign appears as an (inscribed) complex sign in one place, but as a sequential 2 compound in another, the sign ought to be encoded as a character sequence; its complex representation could be realized as a ligature via a ZERO-WIDTH JOINER mechanism. The rendering engine will have to resolve such sequences into the appropriate glyph where necessary.

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