



## ABSTRACT SUBMISSION

# Inline or in the line - Quantitative analyses of layout in Old Babylonian economical texts using coordinates from image annotations

SMIDT G.<sup>1\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ghent University, Ghent, Belgium

\*Corresponding author

## Abstract

Old Babylonian cuneiform texts use layout to convey parts of their messages. Writers of lexical lists used indentation to indicate topical change and certain layout choices in sale documents can indicate family relations. However, the connection between specific layout choices and text has not yet been quantitatively investigated as the data required has not been available prior to our work. Within the Cune-iif-orm project, we have annotated signs on 2D+ visualizations of Old Babylonian cuneiform tablets concerning economic matters. The coordinates of cuneiform signs can be extracted together with the text. Comparing this data across tablets can help us understand the relations between layout and meaning. The results inform the reader on sentence lengths and intra-textual structures. Furthermore, a deeper knowledge of layout can assist the reconstruction of partially broken texts. All this Information is relevant for both human and computer reading of texts.

We hope that our methodology can easily be reproduced across genres of Old Babylonian cuneiform texts to help the reading of individual texts, and the further enrichment of data used to train computer models for reading cuneiform.

## Keywords

Cuneiform, Tablets, Text layout, Old Babylonian period, Image annotations

## Session

4. The materiality of inscribed and figurative objects

## Type of paper

Poster session