

Workshop Cultures of Computation and Quantification

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Before and after the Sexagesimal Place Value Notation

Abstract :

In this presentation, I examine the small *corpus* of Early Dynastic tables of surfaces in order to understand the methods of calculation of surfaces used in Mesopotamia around the mid-third millennium, that is, before the invention of sexagesimal place value notation. From the observation of the notations of measuring values and the structure of the list, I argue that these methods were not the same for large field and for small surfaces.