

## **SAW Workshop Cultures of Computation and Quantification**

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### **Legal Texts and Royal Inscriptions with Matters Related to Prices and Regulation. Old Babylonian and Old Assyrian Periods**

#### **Abstract**

The aim of this study is to analyze the prices given in the royal inscriptions and legal texts from the Old Babylonian and Old Assyrian periods, then to see if a comparison with mathematical texts and texts of practice is possible. A price is an equivalency value between two products. The price is the result of a sale, the value of the product, the product itself, or even the market. To express prices, various commodities were used: barley and silver are the most common; copper is used for small amounts.

The royal inscriptions were written for the king and they commemorated the actions of the king in military victories and his cultic activities. These inscriptions could contain some rules dealing with measuring standards, price regulations, wages, rate interest regulations or taxes to be paid to the state.

Mathematical texts distinguish between the purchase and the sale price. The price of lard is the same in royal inscriptions and mathematical texts while barley and oil are usually more expensive in the equivalencies given by mathematical texts. As for salaries, the data given by texts of practice correspond to those given by mathematical documents but not really to the important amounts given by the royal inscriptions. In general, we observe that the different categories of texts do not give the same type of information, this makes comparisons often difficult and witness that these documents were elaborated in different milieus.