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A procedure text on volume calculations: BM 85196

Abstract - The text of the tablet BM 85196, dated from the Old-Babylonian period, contains 18 mathematical procedures, most of them being related to the calculation of volume. This text was edited successively by François Thureau-Dangin and Otto Neugebauer during the second half of the 1930's. Apart from 2 problems, the text has not been studied again since then. However, much remains to be said about the related mathematical practices, especially when one takes into account the current knowledge of the relationship between this kind of text and the metrological tables. What is at stake in the different kind of signs used to express numbers and quantities? How this text testifies for the relationship between its procedures and mental representation of volumes? What about the diagrams found in two procedures?