

## ScriPTS: Scribal Performance and Textual Standardization in First Millennium Cuneiform Lists

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Throughout the 1<sup>st</sup> millennium BC, the unchanging stream of cuneiform tradition seems to have offered a solid node of cultural stability against the rise and fall of the great Assyrian, Babylonian, and Achaemenid empires and in the face of a long decline and death of Akkadian against a global Aramaic. Most modern histories seem, however, to agree on one thing: the cosmopolitan cuneiform tradition always contended with numerous local and temporal variations. There is less agreement on how these variations affect our understanding of standardization or canonization as a social process.

The project “Scribal Performance and Textual Standardization” (ScriPTS) takes this problem of diversity and standardization in scholarly texts as a starting point for exploring the role of the mechanics of writing within models of cuneiform canonization. At the heart of the project is the series known as Syllabary B (S<sup>b</sup>), attested in more than 450 tablets across numerous libraries in Assyria and Babylonia. The last witnesses include the so-called Graeco-Babyloniaca, in which the text was transcribed into the Greek alphabet. Through its wide currency as one of the rudiments to cuneiform education, the series provides a robust view of how concrete writing practices map onto the multiple, intersecting, and overlapping scribal communities of first millennium Mesopotamia.

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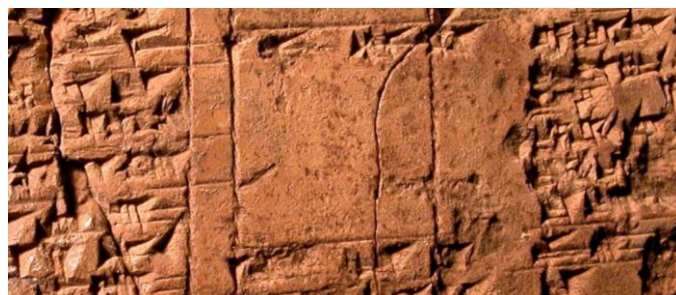


Fig.: VAT 10222 (MSL 3, 49 A1), modified from Cuneiform Digital Library Initiative.

