

The Archaeology of Measurement: Comprehending Heaven, Earth and Time in Ancient Societies

The construction of formal measurement systems underlies the development of science and technology, economy and new ways of understanding and explaining the world. Human societies have developed such systems in different ways in different places and at different times, and recent archaeological investigations highlight the importance of these activities for fundamental aspects of human life. The construction of measurement systems constituted new means of recognising and engaging with the material world, and their implications, and the motivations behind them, also extend beyond the material world. Measurement systems have provided the structure for addressing key concerns of cosmological belief systems, as well as the means for articulating relationships between the human form, human action and the world – and new understanding of relationships between events in the terrestrial world and beyond.

The Archaeology of Measurement explores the archaeological evidence for the development of measuring activities in numerous ancient societies, as well as the implications of these discoveries for an understanding of their worlds and beliefs. Featuring contributions from a cast of internationally renowned scholars, it analyzes the relationships between measurement, economy, architecture, symbolism, time, cosmology, ritual and religion among prehistoric and early historic societies throughout the world.

Iain Morley is a Fellow and Tutor in Archaeology and Anthropology at Keble College, Oxford, and until 2009 was a Fellow of the McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research and Research Fellow of Darwin College, Cambridge. A scholar of Palaeolithic archaeology and the evolution of human cognition, he is also coeditor, with Colin Renfrew, of *Becoming Human: Innovation in Prehistoric Material and Spiritual Culture* and *Image and Imagination: A Global Prehistory of Figurative Representation*.

Colin Renfrew (Lord Renfrew of Kaimsthorn) is Emeritus Disney Professor of Archaeology at Cambridge University, where he is a Senior Fellow of the McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research. He is author of many influential books on archaeology and prehistory, including, with Paul Bahn, *Archaeology: Theories, Methods and Practice*, which is one of the standard textbooks on the subject.

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Edited by Iain Morley and Colin Renfrew

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in Ancient Societies

Edited by

Iain Morley

Keble College, Oxford

Colin Renfrew

The McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research



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Contents

<i>List of figures and tables</i>	<i>page</i> vii
<i>List of contributors</i>	xiii
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	xv
Introduction: Measure: Towards the construction of our world	1
<i>Colin Renfrew and Iain Morley</i>	
SECTION I. NUMBER: COUNTING, MATHEMATICS AND MEASURE	5
1 Conceptualising quantification before settlement: Activities and issues underlying the conception and use of measurement.	7
<i>Iain Morley</i>	
2 Measurement in navigation: Conceiving distance and time in the Neolithic.	19
<i>Helen Farr</i>	
3 The token system of the ancient Near East: Its role in counting, writing, the economy and cognition	27
<i>Denise Schmandt-Besserat</i>	
4 Grasping the concept of number: How did the sapient mind move beyond approximation?	35
<i>Lambros Malafouris</i>	
5 Numerical cognition and the development of ‘zero’ in Mesoamerica.	43
<i>John Justeson</i>	
6 Recording measure(ment)s in the Inka khipu	54
<i>Gary Urton</i>	
SECTION II. MATERIALISING THE ECONOMY	69
7 Measuring by weight in the Late Bronze Age Aegean: The people behind the measuring tools.	71
<i>Anna Michailidou</i>	

8	The concept of weighing during the Bronze Age in the Aegean, the Near East and Europe	88
	<i>Lorenz Rahmstorf</i>	
9	Measuring the Harappan world: Insights into the Indus order and cosmology	106
	<i>J. Mark Kenoyer</i>	
SECTION III. DIMENSIONS AND BELIEF		123
10	Architectural measurements in the Indus cities: The case study of Mohenjo-Daro.	125
	<i>Michael Jansen</i>	
11	Teotihuacan city layout as a cosmogram: Preliminary results of the 2007 Measurement Unit Study.	130
	<i>Saburo Sugiyama</i>	
12	Aztec dimensions of holiness.	150
	<i>John E. Clark</i>	
13	Establishing direction in early Egyptian burials and monumental architecture: Measurement and the spatial link with the ‘other’.	170
	<i>Kate Spence</i>	
SECTION IV. CALENDAR AND COSMOLOGY		181
14	The measurement of time and distance in the heavens above Mesopotamia, with brief reference made to other ancient astral sciences	183
	<i>David Brown</i>	
15	Evolution of the calendar in Shang China	195
	<i>Mark Edward Lewis</i>	
16	The measure of time in Mesoamerica: From Teotihuacan to the Maya.	203
	<i>Anthony F. Aveni</i>	
17	Measuring time, sacred space, and social place in the Inca Empire.	216
	<i>Charles Stanish</i>	
18	Measuring time in the European Neolithic? The function and meaning of Central European circular enclosures	229
	<i>Peter F. Biehl</i>	
SECTION V. THE SPIRITUALITY OF MEASURE		245
19	The roots of spirituality and the limits of human mensuration. . .	247
	<i>F. LeRon Shults</i>	
20	Worldview, measurement and ‘the roots of spirituality’.	250
	<i>Jeremy S. Begbie</i>	
	<i>Index</i>	257

List of figures and tables

FIGURES

1.1	Types of measurement	<i>page 7</i>
1.2	Concepts of measurement related to the group	8
1.3	Concepts of measurement associated with resources and commodities	9
1.4	Properties of features of the world that may be variously subject to measurement concepts	10
1.5	Concepts of measurement that may be associated with navigation	12
1.6	Concepts of measurement that give rise to, and arise from, awareness of time and cycles	14
2.1	Adriatic islands	21
2.2	Likely routes taking into account prevailing winds, currents and location of islands	22
2.3	Accounting for lateral drift	23
3.1	Pictographic tablet from Godin Tepe, Iran, ca. 3100 BC	27
3.2	Correspondence between cuneiform signs, pictographs and tokens	28
3.3	Plain tokens from Tepe Gawra, Iraq, ca. 5000 BC	29
3.4	Complex tokens from Uruk, Iraq, ca. 3300 BC	29
3.5	Ovoid tokens standing for jars of oil, from Girsu, Iraq, ca. 3300 BC	29
3.6	Envelope from Habuba Kabira, ca. 3300 BC, with ovoid impressed markings	30
3.7	Impressed tablet showing three wedges = three small measures of grain and two circular signs = two larger measures of grain, from Godin Tepe, Iran, ca. 3100 BC	30
3.8	Mesopotamian grain measure	30
4.1	Line bisection effect	36
4.2	How did the sapient mind move beyond approximation?	38
4.3	Three stages in the developmental trajectory of the Near Eastern concept of number	39
6.1	Khipu structures	55
6.2	Inka decimal administration	58
6.3	Khipu with colour banding	60
6.4	Khipu with colour seriation	61
6.5	Khipu with untied knots	61
6.6	A pair of matching khipus	62

6.7	The Puruchuco accounting hierarchy	65
7.1	Ox-hide ingot of copper carried by Cretan messenger depicted in an Egyptian tomb painting of the Eighteenth Dynasty	71
7.2	The melon-shaped stone weight from Aghia Photia, Crete, with incised Linear A inscription	72
7.3	Lead discoid-shaped balance weights from the settlement of Akrotiri on the island of Thera	72
7.4	Linear B tablet KN Oa 730 and the sign for the balance in Linear A script	73
7.5	A stone balance weight from Akrotiri on Thera	74
7.6	Linear B tablet KN Sc 245+5064 displaying the ideogram for chariot, followed by one digit	74
7.7	Linear B tablet KN F(2) 852+8071 featuring the numeral sign for 10,000 immediately preceded by the ideogram for grain	74
7.8	Linear B tablet KN Og 7504+7844 recording one talent of ivory	75
7.9	Linear B tablets KN Np (2) 860 and Np (2) 861 displaying the ideogram for saffron, followed by metrograms for weight and numerals	75
7.10	Linear B tablet KN F(2) 853+5947+6035 recording quantities of grain and olives measured in units of capacity for dry commodities	76
7.11	Linear B tablet KN K 700 displaying the account for 1,800 stirrup-jars in two entries of 900 each	76
7.12	Linear B tablet KN Lc (1) 527+7143+7331 with entries for textiles, followed by the unit of wool in quantities required for these qualities of cloth	78
7.13	The four houses of Complex Delta at Akrotiri, upper floor level	78
7.14	Lead weight from Mochlos with incised Linear A inscription	80
8.1	Spool-shaped balance weights from Tiryns with markings	89
8.2	Spool-shaped balance weights and a 'macehead' from EBA II Tarsus	92
8.3	Haematite balance weights from EBA I (?) and EB III Tarsus	93
8.4	Applying the Kendall formula on spool-shaped balance weights from the EBA Aegean	94
8.5	Distribution of balance weights of the Aegean (spool-shaped), the Near Eastern (sphenonoid haematite and other types of weights) and the Harappan types (cubic and other shapes) in the third millennium BC	96
8.6	Distribution of quadruple spirals, etched cornelian beads, lapis lazuli and flat beads in the third millennium BC	97
8.7	Balance weights from Steinfurth, Hesse, in Germany (Bz D) with application of the Kendall formula	99
9.1	Major traditions of prehistoric South Asia	106
9.2	Early Food Producing and Regionalization Era sites	108
9.3	Integration Era, Harappa Phase sites	109
9.4	Ravi Phase pottery	110
9.5	Ravi and Kot Diji Phase spindle whorls	111
9.6	Ravi and Kot Diji Phase steatite beads	112
9.7	Steatite microbeads: Ravi and Harappa Phase	113
9.8	Ravi Phase mud bricks	113
9.9	Cubical stone weight and seal impression: Kot Diji Period	114
9.10	Cubical stone weights: Harappa Period	115
9.11	Harappa bricks	117
9.12	Harappa well bricks	118

List of figures and tables**ix**

9.13 Harappa: Reconstruction of city walls and gateway, Mound E and ET	119
10.1 Map of Mohenjo-Daro with different tourist paths and the excavated areas	125
11.1 Aerial view of the Teotihuacan central zone, viewed from the south	131
11.2 The main façade of the Feathered Serpent Pyramid	135
11.3 General plan of the city's central zone with possible measured distances in TMU	136
11.4 3D map of the Sun Pyramid	137
11.5 Plan of the Sun Pyramid complex with the Avenue of the Dead	139
11.6 Plan of the Moon Pyramid with the locations of seven overlapping construction stages and measurements in TMU	140
11.7 Plan of the Moon Plaza complex with measurements in TMU	142
11.8 Plan of the Citadel complex with measurements in TMU	143
11.9 General plan of the Teotihuacan city layout in AD 200–250	144
11.10 Reconstruction plan of the Teotihuacan city layout around AD 350	145
12.1 Aztec units of measure and their body referents	150
12.2 Symbols of Aztec units of measure	151
12.3 The Oztoticpac palace and its dimensions	152
12.4 The Oztoticpac palace adjusted to scale	153
12.5 The general proportions of the Oztoticpac palace	154
12.6 The Oztoticpac palace in <i>yollotli</i> units	155
12.7 Tropical year counts (366) of the Oztoticpac palace in <i>yollotli</i> units	156
12.8 Jupiter counts (399) of the Oztoticpac palace in <i>yollotli</i> units	157
12.9 Possible astronomical divisions of the Oztoticpac palace	158
12.10 Drawing of the Sacred Precinct at Tenochtitlan showing the central position of the main pyramid and its twin temples to Tlaloc and Huitzilopochtli	159
12.11 The Sacred Precinct of Tenochtitlan and various of its dimensions in Aztec units of linear measure	161
12.12 The Sacred Precinct of Tenochtitlan as organized by Venus counts (584)	162
12.13 The Sacred Precinct of Tenochtitlan showing solar counts (365) centered on the Templo Mayor	163
12.14 Distances based on the 260 ritual count at the Templo Mayor	164
12.15 Spacing of buildings at the Templo Mayor based on 360 counts	165
16.1 Footprints in a cosmogram from the Madrid Codex showing time's 260-day journey via feet about the periphery of the sacred space of the gods	203
16.2 Copan (Honduras), Stela D, dating from the Classic Maya Period (eighth century AD), depicting the gods of number carrying their own bundles of time	204
16.3 A part of the user's preface to the Eclipse Table in the Dresden Codex showing a column of 13 13s hastily squeezed in	206
16.4 Maya almanac concerning the burdens of particular periods of time, shown being carried by a goddess who personified the earth	207
16.5 An almanac in the Dresden Codex in which time's pathway zigzags its way down the page	207
16.6 An almanac in the Madrid Codex related to deer hunting	208

16.7	Scene from a Mixtec codex showing a figure situated in a temple doorway looking toward the horizon over one of a number of putative crossed-stick sighting devices	208
16.8	Uxmal, the Governor's House, an oddly oriented Maya temple likely arranged to summon the resurrected ancestor lord Venus/Kukulcan	209
16.9	Pecked cross carved in the floor of Str. A-V, Uaxactun	210
16.10	Histograms showing distribution of a) tallies on segments of pecked cross petroglyphs and b) total tallies for all pecked cross petroglyphs in Mesoamerica	211
17.1	South America	216
17.2	Western South America	216
17.3	The Lake Titicaca Basin	219
17.4	Aerial view of the Island of the Sun	220
17.5	The Island of the Sun	220
17.6	The upper Inca road on the Island of the Sun	221
17.7	View of the sacred area on the Island of the Sun, distance view from the southeast	221
17.8	View of the sacred area on the Island of the Sun, closeup view from the southeast	222
17.9	The sacred area from the Tikani ridge	222
17.10	The Titikala or Sacred Rock, northeast side	223
17.11	The Titikala or Sacred Rock, southeast side	223
17.12	La Raya de los Incas, the wall separating the sacred area from the rest of the island	224
17.13	Sight line in the structure known as the Mama Ojila	224
17.14	The sight line of the winter (June) solstice from the Titikala to the Tikani towers	225
17.15	A view from the Mama Ojila to the road that descends from the La Raya de los Incas and site 019	225
17.16	Schematic view of the sight line and other features in the sanctuary area	226
18.1	Distribution of Neolithic enclosed sites	229
18.2	Distribution of the Middle Neolithic stroke-ornamented pottery culture (<i>Stichbandkeramik</i>) in Central Europe	230
18.3	Distribution of Middle Neolithic enclosed sites in Central Europe	231
18.4	Aerial photograph of the Goseck enclosure after removing the topsoil	232
18.5	Reconstructed enclosure in Goseck at its original location	232
18.6	Goseck excavation plan	233
18.7	Goseck excavation plan with disposition patterns	233
18.8	Diagram of the multi-scalar approach to cult places	234
18.9	The Middle Neolithic enclosure in Meisterthal, Bavaria, Germany: a) geophysics, b) map with other enclosures, c) winter solstice, d) summer solstice, e) midsummer sunrise	236
18.10	The construction of the Goseck circular enclosure using perfect circles for comparison	237
18.11	Diagram of the Goseck enclosure indicating astronomical features	237
18.12	Bearing at the southeast entrance gate during the sunrise on the winter solstice (ca. 4900 BC)	237
18.13	Bearing at the southeast entrance with azimuth angles, showing entries in the palisades directly connected with the entrances in the circular enclosure	238
18.14	Sunrise and sunset during the summer solstice (ca. 4900 BC)	238

List of figures and tables

xi

18.15	Timeline of the winter solstice (40–20 days before) in relation to the profile of the horizon in Goseck	239
18.16	Closeup of the southeast entrance of the reconstructed enclosure in Goseck at its original location (from outside and inside)	239

TABLES

5.1	Container terms as numeral bases in Mesoamerican languages	46
5.2	Epi-Olmec phrase represented by the sequence 7 16 3 2 13	48
5.3	Transcription of long count dates on Takalik Abaj Stela 5	49
5.4	Expressions for multiples of 100,000 in the Tecpatán Soke <i>Vocabulario</i> of 1733	51
6.1	Khipu record of summation, subdivision, and proportional values	57
6.2	Khipu with all decimal values	59
6.3	Khipu with two divisions of 100	59
6.4	Close match of khipus from Puruchuco	63
8.1	The conversion of units (talent, mina and basic units) in LBA Syria according to N. Parise (1984)	90
8.2	The 21 marked or inscribed balance weights of the third millennium from seven sites in the Aegean, Syria and Mesopotamia published to date	91
8.3	Multiples and common denominators of basic units	95
8.4	The convergence of the basic units used between the eastern Mediterranean and the Indus valley	101
8.5	Some multiples and common denominators of basic units: 7.83 (= 10), 9.4 (= 12), 11.75 (= 15) and 13.71 (= 17.5)	102
9.1	Indus tradition chronology: Harappa and early Mehrgarh	107
9.2	Early Harappan spindle whorls	111
9.3	Indus cubical weights from Harappa and Mohenjo-daro	115
11.1	Comparative data on the size of paired platforms in the Moon Plaza	137
11.2	Deviation from two north-south axes of the Avenue of the Dead to the midpoint of central structures or to the midpoint of paired platforms at the Moon Plaza	138
12.1	Aztec linear measures and their metric values	151
12.2	Dimensions of Nezahualcoyotl's Palace in different Aztec measures	152
12.3	Dimensions of the different stages of the Templo Mayor in meters	159
12.4	Dimensions of the Templo Mayor in <i>yollotli</i> (0.8359 m)	160
16.1	Seasonal intervals at Teotihuacan and Uaxactun	212

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List of contributors

ANTHONY F. AVENI is the Russell Colgate Distinguished Professor of Astronomy, Anthropology and Native American Studies at Colgate University. Two of his most recent books are *Empires of Time* and *Stairways to the Stars: Skywatching in Three Great Ancient Cultures*.

JEREMY S. BEGBIE is Associate Principal of Ridley Hall, Cambridge, and Honorary Professor of Theology at the University of Saint Andrews. A lecturer in a variety of departments at Ridley Hall and the University of Cambridge, he is the author of *Theology, Music and Time*.

PETER F. BIEHL is Assistant Professor in the Department of Anthropology and Associate Director of the Institute for European and Mediterranean Archaeology at the State University of New York at Buffalo. He has published widely on the meanings and functions of Neolithic circular enclosures, including (with F. Bertemes and H. Meller) *Neolithic Circular Enclosures in Europe*.

DAVID BROWN is a German Research Foundation Fellow in the Department of Idology at the Free University of Berlin. He has previously been a British Academy Research Fellow in Oxford and Alexander von Humboldt Fellow in Berlin. He is the author of *Mesopotamian Planetary Astronomy-Astrology*.

JOHN E. CLARK is Professor of Anthropology at Brigham Young University and Director of the New World Archaeological Foundation of Brigham Young University based in Chiapas, Mexico. He has published numerous articles on Mesoamerica including “The Birth of Mesoamerican Metaphysics: Sedentism, Engagement, and Moral Superiority” in *Rethinking Materiality: The Engagement of Mind with the Material World*.

HELEN FARR is a Fellow of the McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research. She has contributed articles to a number of books including (with John Robb) “Substances in Motion: Neolithic Mediterranean ‘Trade’” in *The Archaeology of Mediterranean Prehistory*.

MICHAEL JANSEN is Professor at RWTH Aachen University of Technology and a senior member of the UNESCO International Technical Committee for Mohenjo-Daro.

JOHN JUSTESON is Professor in Anthropology at the State University of New York at Albany. Most recently, with Terrence Kaufman, he has produced a decipherment of a major portion of the Late Preclassic epi-Olmec hieroglyphs.

J. MARK KENOYER is Professor of Anthropology at the University of Wisconsin, Madison. His publications focus on South Asia and include *The Ancient South Asian World*.

MARK EDWARD LEWIS is Kwoh-Ting Li Professor of Chinese Culture at Stanford University. He is the author of *The Construction of Space in Early China*.

LAMBROS MALAFOURIS is the Balzan Fellow in Cognitive Archaeology at the McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research at Cambridge University. His recent publications include *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society B 363*, which he coedited.

ANNA MICHAILIDOU is the Research Director for the Center for Greek and Roman Antiquity of the National Hellenic Research Foundation. She is the author of numerous articles and the editor of *Manufacture and Measurement: Counting, Measuring and Recording Craft Items in Early Aegean Societies*.

IAIN MORLEY is a Fellow and Tutor in Archaeology and Anthropology at Keble College, Oxford, and until 2009 was a Fellow of the McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research at Cambridge University. He has written articles for numerous journals and books, including (with Colin Renfrew) *Image and Imagination: A Global Prehistory of Figurative Representation*.

LORENZ RAHMSTORF is Assistant Professor and Research Assistant in the Department of Pre- and Protohistory at the University of Mainz.

COLIN RENFREW is a Senior Fellow of the McDonald Institute for Archaeological Research and Emeritus Professor of Archaeology at Cambridge University. He has authored and edited numerous archaeological publications and books, including (with Iain Morley) *Becoming Human: Innovation in Prehistoric Material and Spiritual Culture*.

DENISE SCHMANDT-BESSERAT is Emeritus Professor of Art and Middle Eastern Studies at the University of Texas at Austin. Her work on the origin of writing and mathematics was published in *How Writing Came About*, which was listed in *American Scientist* as one of the 100 books that shaped science in the 20th century.

F. LERON SHULTS is Professor of Theology and Philosophy at the University of Agder in Kristiansand, Norway. He has published a number of books, including most recently *The Evolution of Rationality* and *Christology and Science*, as well as numerous articles and book chapters on a variety of interdisciplinary themes.

KATE SPENCE is Lecturer in the Archaeology of Ancient Egypt at the University of Cambridge. She was a British Academy Post-Doctoral Fellow and a McDonald Institute Research Fellow in Cognitive Archaeology. She has published numerous articles and book chapters on aspects of Egyptian architecture.

CHARLES STANISH is Director of the Cotsen Institute of Archaeology and Professor of Anthropology at the University of California, Los Angeles. A Fellow of the American Academy, he has published several books including *Ancient Titicaca: The Evolution of Southern Peru and Northern Bolivia*.

SABURO SUGIYAMA is Professor at the Graduate School of International Cultural Studies, Aichi Prefectural University. His involvement with excavations at Teotihuacan in Mexico led him to publish *Human Sacrifice, Militarism, and Rulership: Materialization of State Ideology at the Feathered Serpent Pyramid, Teotihuacan*.

GARY URTON is Dumbarton Oaks Professor of Pre-Columbian Studies in the Department of Anthropology at Harvard University. He is the author of numerous articles and books on Inka civilization and Andean and Quechua cultures and societies, including *Signs of the Inka Khipu*.

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