

Ancient Computers, Part I - Rediscovery, Edition 2 (Paperback)



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Reviews

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ANCIENT COMPUTERS, PART I - REDISCOVERY, EDITION 2 (PAPERBACK)

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Createspace, United States, 2013. Paperback. Book Condition: New. 203 x 127 mm. Language: English . Brand New Book ***** Print on Demand *****.Ancient Computers is an excellent introduction to the calculating methods of diverse cultures across time. A mixture of history and practical techniques for understanding and using these ancient devices brings the tools of these long-forgotten civilizations to a wide audience. Stephenson writes in an easy-to-understand and accessible manner and the use of diagrams is extensive. Want know how to use an abacus or where it came from? This is the book for you! The book is appropriate for high school audiences and above. Dag Spicer Senior Curator Computer History Museum Mountain View, CA ===== The author . makes two points that deserve wider dissemination. The first is that he sees the central dividing line of the Salamis Tablet as allowing an additive side and a subtractive side . and notes that this approach, reduces the number of pebbles needed tremendously . It also makes many calculations easier. One cannot argue with his claims of increased efficiency and this point deserves further investigation. The author s second substantive point is that in attempting to understand ancient mathematics, historians need to pay more attention to the available tools, technology, notation, and terminology to see how particular algorithms may have been performed. The author has a video of himself computing the square root of 2 using a set of Salamis Tablets following Heron s method. It takes him 25 minutes [to achieve the four sexagesimal digit precision of Yale tablet YBC 7289]. His argument is that [making and] using only [mathematical reference] tables and writing intermediate [cuneiform] results on clay would take a lot longer. From review by Prof. Duncan Melville, // in Aestimatio, // ===== People, especially historians, have long...



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