The Significance and Methodology of the Measurement of Materials

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With the increase in the number of archaeological materials, their metrical analysis has gained more significance. Though metrical measurement of a large amount of materials may seem to be a demanding task, it is easier than the actual measurement or photographing of many similar materials. Introduction of this method of measurement will be laborsaving in the preparation of reports.

The present paper, begins with the research history of measurement, and states that this is one of the basic methods that have existed since the beginning of modern archaeology, and that, after an interruption, it has been cultivated by scholars in the past. This paper then says that systematic classification is required for measurement; that the results can be aggregated not only on levels of attributes, but also on different levels of grouped remains, vestiges, areas, and periods, and that various quantities or components obtained from the aggregation of results may be used for many purposes.

"Many purposes" as used here includes the clarification of chronology, the significance of model change, distribution, stratum, and characteristics of area or period. This method is not limited to remains, but may be used for all elements of vestiges including remaining structure.

As for detailed measuring methods, the author compares some examples of calculation, and suggests that the individual identification method is advisable for grouped remains of up to a certain quantity, and that a combination of the rim part measuring method and the fraction number calculation method is to be recommended for the measurement of large amounts of materials, or materials which individual identification is difficult due to lack of individuality. Furthermore, based on examples of traditional calculation, the author presents a coefficient by which data in the form of fractions can be converted into whole numbers.

If the custom of describing measurement results in various reports by a uniform method is here to stay, thanks to the recent development of computers, we will no longer need to complain about the flood of reports. For the next study based on this paper, the author is planning to restore the stratum of vessels of the Middle Ages.