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In the frame of the
TEXNH: Making, creating, and agency networks in the Ancient Mediterranean world
lecture series and discussion forum, we kindly invite you to the lecture

*Implementing metrology : economy, institutions and techniques
in the Mediterranean (1st millennium BCE)*

by

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Discussant:



27 November 2024, 18.00

at the Netherlands Institute at Athens
11, Makri str., 117 42 Athens

The event will also be streamed live. For registration please visit:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZYod-2qqT4tG9C3ANIKQin9I8Zt8GLQzvSW>



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UCR
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Abstract

In the Mediterranean world, the 1st millennium BCE has been a period of densification of trade and human mobility. This process has had, without any doubt, an impact on the institutions of connectivity, well known in some contexts such as Classical Athens, for instance. One of the main consequences is the development of the measurement of capacity according to a theoretical standard -i.e. capacity metrology-, mainly for use in a transactional context. From at least the 9th century BCE onwards, transactions number and volume augmented at all geographical scales, from the very local to the international. They became increasingly anonymous, therefore emphasizing the need for the swift transmission of sincere information that would go beyond a declarative statement from the seller. The range of measurements increased to embrace capacities, spreading from the very large to the very small, in order to provide such reliable information. Tools were made for systematic control by the polities, and containers capacity would quickly adjust to the theoretical standards. This presentation will consider the chronological/geographical dimension of this process. Through specific case studies, it will make proposals about the techniques used for making any measurement as accurate as needed, and will discuss the techniques we can use for investigating and addressing this topic.