

O.E. Mathematics in other cultures

We have already mentioned that “All cultures have had some form of mathematics or pre – mathematics,” but in a 10 week course it is necessary to emphasize cultures which have had the greatest impact on the development of mathematics. Here are some references which discuss noteworthy mathematical insights from a few other cultures. The first reference is the most general and accessible, while the final reference is a scholarly treatise with extensive bibliographic footnotes.

M. Ascher. Ethnomathematics: A multicultural view of mathematical ideas. *Chapman & Hall, New York, 1991.*

M. Ascher. Mathematics elsewhere: An exploration of ideas across cultures. *Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ, 2002.*

M. Setati and A. K. Bangura. African Mathematics: From Bones to Computers. *University Press of America, Lanham, MD, 2011.*

The term ***ethnomathematics*** refers to study of mathematical ideas in all cultures, with particular attention to those which had not received much attention before the past 40 – 50 years. There is a wide range of opinions about the extent to which material from ethnomathematics should be presented in elementary and secondary school mathematics courses, but such issues are beyond the scope of a course on the history of mathematics.