

Comparison and Connection in the Astral Sciences across Eurasia

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As stated by David Pingree, the astral sciences 'have been transmitted for millennia from culture to culture, and transformed by each recipient culture into something new' (*Isis* 83, 554-563). The night sky was an object of study throughout the ancient and medieval world. Cultures across Eurasia all look at more or less the same sky and so it is unsurprising that the people of many different Eurasian cultures interacted with the sky in similar ways: observing astronomical phenomena, trying to understand the structure of the universe, developing computational methods of predicting future astronomical events, and interpreting astronomical phenomena through systems of astrology. Very often, astronomical and astrological knowledge circulated between these different cultures, where it was adapted to fit in with pre-existing knowledge and world-views. The papers in this session will explore the circulation of the astral sciences between cultures including Mesopotamia, Greece, the Arab world, India and China, and compare astronomical and astrological practices in these cultures in order to identify commonalities and differences in how the astral sciences were practiced. The session will contain 15 papers presented by scholars from a diverse range of countries and by a mixture of senior and junior scholars and advanced graduate students. The diversity of topics and contributors demonstrates the level of activity in this research field, and we look forward to moving the relevant research forward through this symposium.