
Abstract

This workshop series brings together scholars from different disciplines who study the textual, numerical, and visual representations of the heavens, their bodies, phenomena, and imaginary inhabitants across Eurasia and North Africa from the fourth millennium BCE to early modern times. They will discuss three major sets of research topics and their respective methodologies:

1. materiality of the visualizations of the heavens with regard to structure, phenomena, functions, or purposes;
2. pictorial choices, their spread, and their changes across space and/or time;
3. the relationship between pictorial programs, time management, and knowledge about the heavens and their appearances in texts, instruments, rituals, and representations of power, order, or fate.

The first workshop focuses on the ancient world until 700 CE discussing iconographies and their contexts from Mesopotamia, ancient Egypt, the Roman Empire, the Christian Middle East and eastern Europe, Central Asia, and East Asia. The second workshop carries the conversation to medieval western and eastern Europe, South Asia, Tibet, and China. Both workshops include sessions the image database in construction and the IT resources available and to be developed in future. Two round tables will explore directions of research to develop Visualization of the Heavens and Their Material Cultures in its next phase and strengthen and extend the international research network enabling it.

Organizers

Sonja Brentjes
Dagmar Schäfer
Jürgen Renn

Venue

Department III Conference Room 265
Max Planck Institute for the History of Science,
Boltzmannstraße 22, 14195 Berlin

More About Us

The image database invites research on multiple forms and formats of visualizing the heavens, from deities to demons and from stars to weather phenomena. It is designed to facilitate comparative research on processes of knowledge formation and exchange on the heavens in Eurasia and North Africa. The collection includes calendars, star constellations, planets, and other heavenly inhabitants or phenomena in anthropomorphic, zoomorphic, diagrammatic, or semiotic formats, as well as theoretical models and a broad range of tables: <https://www.mpiwg-berlin.mpg.de/research/projects/visualization-and-material-cultures-heavens-image-database-eurasia-and-north>

Cover Image: ‚Horoscope of Prince Iskandar.‘
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Visualisation of the Heavens

Workshop II
April 19-20, 2018



Visualisation of the Heavens and their
Material Cultures in Eurasia and North
Africa (4000 BCE - 1700 CE)

Department III: Artefacts, Action
and Knowledge. Histories of Plan-
ning Research Theme.



April 19

9:45-10:00 **Registration**

10:00-10:05 Welcome, SONJA BRENTJES

10:05-10:35 Introduction, DAGMAR SCHÄFER

Session 1: Europe, Chair: SARA NUR YILDIZ

10:35-11:15
TAMAR ABULADZE, Astrological and Astronomical Manuscripts in Georgia

11:15-11:45 Coffee break

11:45-12:30
NICOLAS WEILL-PAROT, Producing Stars and Heavens? Astral Magic, Scientific Utopia and the Process of Imitation of the Supralunary World (12th-15th century).

12:30-13:00 Discussion

13:00-14:00 Lunch

Session 2: China, Chair: BABU SENTHIL

14:00-14:45
GÁBOR KÓSA, The Representation of Firmaments in the Chinese Manichaean 'Cosmology Painting'

14:45-15:30
SHI YUNLI, Charting the Chinese Sky with European Observations: Jesuit Star Maps from the Late Ming Dynasty Revisited

15:30-16:15
MICKI MCCOY, The Hellenistic Zodiac on the Eastern Silk Road: Sources and Semiotics

16:15-16:45 Discussion

16:45-17:00 Coffee break

17:00-17:20
FLORIAN KRÄUTLI, resourcespace and where to go

17:20-17:50
Open Floor Discussion: Image Database and Research on the Visualization of the Heavens and Their Material Cultures: Perspectives and Recommendations

19:00 Dinner

April 20

Session 3: South Asia 1, GÁBOR KÓSA

10:00-10:45
GERD J. R. MEVISSEN, Can the Tropic of Cancer be Regarded as Indicative of the Occurrence of Representations of Astral Deities or Symbols on Certain Images in Indian Art?

10:45-11:30
VENKATESVARAN T.V., Calendar Aspects of Vijayanagara Epigraphy in Tamil—a Preliminary Survey

11:30-12:00 Discussion

12:00-12:15 Coffee break

Session 4: South Asia 2, Chair: SHI YUNLI

12:15-13:00
SENTHIL BABU D., Sculpting the Heavens: Measuring as Work

13:00-14:00 Lunch

14:00-14:30
RONIT YOELI-TLALIM, Notes on the Tibetan Seven-Day Planet Week and its Possible Sources

14:30-15:00 Discussion

15:00-15:30 Coffee break

Session 5: Near East, Chair: DROR WEIL

15:30-16:00
MARK GELLER, Eclipse Myth: The Long Road from Sumerian to Aramaic

16:00-16:45
MAREK VINKLÁT, Triple Function of Mandaic Illustrations

16:45-17:15 Discussion

17:15-17:30 Summing up & publication options: DAGMAR SCHÄFER