

# ARABIC TABLES IN SANSKRIT, CHINESE AND LATIN A FIRST INTERNATIONALIZATION OF SCIENCES ?

**24-25 octobre 2012**

Journées d'étude dans le cadre du projet [Histoire des tables numériques](#)

Organisers : Matthieu Husson (Sphère-Paris Diderot ; Saprat-EPHE), Clemency Montelle (University of Canterbury, Nouvelle Zelande) et Li Liang (Sphère-Paris Diderot)

University Paris Diderot, site Paris Rive Gauche, Bat. Condorcet, **Salle Klein, 612B**  
[4 rue Elsa Morante](#), 75013 Paris

It is well known that in Baghdad during the eighth and ninth centuries, Arabic astronomers relied on Greek and Persian sources as well as ideas and models coming from the Indian subcontinent to design their first astronomical tables, or zijes. The circulation of these works in various parts of the Islamic world and the specific astronomical schools it produced, for instance in al-Andalus (Toledo) or ancient Iran (Ulugh Begh), is also documented. The subsequent transmission and reception of these Arabic astronomical zijes in Latin, Sanskrit and Chinese in the following centuries has also been a major theme of research in the history of astronomy, yet scholars studying these different transmission and reception processes have had so far little opportunity to gather and contrast their questions, methodology, and findings. We seek to address this, by convening a two-day workshop which will function as a forum for scholars who focus on these different aspects to share and synthesise their researches in mutually beneficial ways.

We envisage that the following provisional list of questions will be relevant. Material transmitted from astronomical zijes to Latin, Sanskrit and Chinese works was not always from the same ; how precise can we be about the sources and which texts proved to be popular in which contexts ? Under what circumstances did the tables and their related texts circulate and what sorts of peoples were involved ? Questions relating to the integration of foreign astronomical materials and tabular data into the traditions of the inheritor cultures of inquiry are significant too. For instance, there were long-standing astronomical traditions in Chinese, Sanskrit : how well was data from the zij literature accommodated into these contexts ? What proved attractive and influential to these cultures of inquiry and how was it assimilated into its new setting ? In contrast, in Latin, the transmission of Arabic astronomical tables in fact initiated new direction and vigour into the astral sciences. What can we surmise from such contrasts ? More broadly, to what extent did the large-scale transmission of Arabic astronomical tables produce a standardisation of astronomical science, or rather did it result in ongoing diversification ?

# PROGRAMME

---

## WEDNESDAY 24 OCTOBER

10:00 Accueil et introduction (Liang Li, Clemency Montelle, Matthieu Husson)

**10 :30 Glen van Brummellen** (Quest university, Canada)  
*Circulation of Arabic astronomical tables in Arabic*

12 :00 Lunch break

**13 :30 José Chabas** (University of Barcelona, Espagne)  
*Arabic Influence on Astronomical Tables in Medieval Europe*

15 :00 Coffee break

**15 :15 Matthieu Husson** (Sphère-Paris Diderot ; Sapat-EPHE)  
*Is the Chinese « European Layout » of the Mingshi (1738) really european ? A case study in layout transmission : first part from Arabic to Latin sources.*

16 :45 End of the day

## THURSDAY 25 OCTOBER

10:00 Accueil

**10 :30 Clemency Montelle** (University of Canterbury, Nouvelle Zelande)  
*The emergence of “cyclic tables in the seventeenth century : Haridatta’s Jagadbhūṣaṇa and its Islamic inspiration.*

12 :00 Lunch break

**13 :30 Yunli Shi** (University of Science and technology of China, Chine)  
*The Chinese and Korean Appropriation of Islamic astronomy*

15 :00 Coffee break

**15 :15 Liang Li** (Sphère-Paris Diderot)  
*Double entry arrays and tables of Huihui Calendar (Arabic Calendric System) in China, A case study in layout transmission : second part from Arabic and Latin to Chinese sources”*

**16 :45** Discussion, General Conclusion

17 :15 End of the day