Training week: Global history of astronomy week on primary sources

A focus on cosmology, physics and astrology

org.: Eleonora Andriani, David Aubin, Victor Gysembergh, Matthieu Husson,Chen Ji, Stephen Johnston, Agathe Keller, Guillaume Loizelet, Divna Manolova, Anuj Misra, Somkeo Norindr, Jérome Petit, Christophe Schmitt, Florence Somer, Alexandre Tur (Alphabetical order).

Dates: June 8- June 12, 2026

Places: Bibliothèque nationale de France, Observatoire de Paris

Bibliothèque nationale de France and Observatoire de Paris are organizing with the support of Université Paris Sciences et Lettres and Sorbonne Universté an intensive, hands-on workshop bringing together philologists, historians of science, art historians, and digital humanists to collaboratively study, classify, and interpret astral sciences manuscripts in Latin, Greek, Persian, Arabic, Sanskrit, and Chinese.

Aims

This intensive week-long workshop immerses participants in the exceptional collections of the Bibliothèque nationale de France and the Observatoire de Paris. The program offers a unique triad of learning experiences centered on physical manuscripts, cutting-edge digital tools and the history of collections in both institutions. This second edition of the training week will be focusing on the physical/cosmological and astrological aspects of different theories and practices of astral sciences.

1. Primary Sources: Context and Collections

Our journey begins with the manuscripts, printed books and instruments themselves. In a series of sessions led by historians of science and library curators, participants will engage directly with primary sources physically present in the Parisian archives to introduce the related historical context with a focus on the physical/cosmological and astrological aspects of the sources' content. Collectively, these sessions will offer a comprehensive perspective on the global history of astral sciences. These astral sciences sessions will be intertwined with sessions dedicated to the history of the collections themselves, therefore equipping participants

with the tools to critically examine the processes that shaped these archives and their consequences on the pasts and futures historiographies of astral sciences.

2. Digital Tools: Texts, Tables, and Diagrams in the Digital Age

In the second pillar of the workshop digital tools experts and engineers introduce the transformative power of digital humanities and artificial intelligence. Participants will learn to apply cutting-edge tools specifically designed for the analysis of astronomical sources, including textual analysis, the digitization of tables and complex diagrams. These sessions provide a state-of-the-art understanding of recent advancements, fostering critical reflection on the process of turning sources into data and how these methods can productively disrupt traditional archival structures to enable new innovative layers of investigation.

3. Student Projects: Hands-On Research and Comparative Analysis

The workshop culminates in hands-on project sessions, where participants will conduct group research. Depending on the interests of each group, these projects will focus either on the digital tools or deepen more directly questions in the history of - astral sciences . Students can work with a pre-selected set of sources or propose their own, receiving guidance from both historians and digital tools specialists. A key opportunity lies in comparing Parisian archives with documents from other global repositories, enriching the discussion on how archival structures influence the construction of history in the astral sciences.

Requirements and registration

Designed for advanced doctoral students, postdoctoral researchers, and early career faculty specialising in astral sciences.

Registration is done via this form:
https://framaforms.org/registration-training-week-a-global-history-of-astronomy-on-primary-sources-1738244383

Send your **CV** (1 p. max) and a **letter of motivation** (2 pp. max) to support your application at the latest on **January 30, 2026**. Selection results will be communicated on **February 18, 2026** and participation will need to **be confirmed by February 27, 2026**.

A limited number of grants will be proposed to support participants from low income countries and/or with little institutional support. Results for the grants selection will be communicated also on **February 18, 2026**.

Participants must as much as possible bring a laptop with pre-installed digital tools. The links for the software will be provided in a portfolio in advance, together with assignments to prepare for the week.

Since the number of slots is limited, preference will be given to those candidates who can ensure that they will be present for the entire intensive week and who can commit to presenting a contribution.

Provisional Schedule

Day 1 BnF

8.30-9.00 General presentation

9.00-10.30 Primary sources: Greek sources

10.45-12.15 Primary sources: Greek sources

13.30-15.00 Instruments/ EIDA

15.00-16.30 EIDA/Instruments

17.45-19.00 Social event?

Day 2 BnF

9.00-10.30 Primary sources: Arabic/Persian sources

10.45-12.15 Primary sources: Arabic/Persian sources

13.30-15.00: DISHAS

15.00-16.30 Primary sources: Chinese sources

16.45-18.15 Primary sources: Chinese sources

19.30 Dîner?

Day 3 BnF

9.00-10.30 Primary sources: Sanskrit sources

10.45-12.15 Primary sources: Sanskrit sources

13.45-15.30 Primary sources : Latin sources

15.45-17.15 Primary sources : Latin sources

17.30- 18.30: Social event?

Day 4 Paris Observatory

9.00-10.30 Primary sources: modern sources from Europe

10.45-12.15 Primary sources: modern sources from Europe

13.30-17.15 Students' projects

Day 5 Paris Observatory

9.00-12.15 Students' projects

13.30-17.15 Students' projects presentations

18.30: Closing cocktail/ drinks with participants