

SAW Seminar: Mathematical practices in the context of the astral sciences

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Calendars, hemerological calculations, manuals of calendar annotations in China

Abstract: The hemerological dimension of the Chinese calendar is undoubtedly the one that prevails over his astronomical and liturgical aspects. There are indeed hundreds of activities, which can be roughly grouped into ten categories, which tell daily what is auspicious to do and what is not. Methods to determine "the quality of days" are most often based on "spirits" (*shensha*), which are annual, monthly or daily, and specific to the calendar. Numbering in the dozens, the placement of these spirits and determination of the resulting activities is a real headache, some overlapping with others, some obviously in contradiction with each other, etc. However, it seems that very early manuals were developed to make the task of the calendarist easier, but at the same time it is his choice that was restricted.