

Seminar History and Philosophy of Mathematics – 2011-2016

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The transfer of mathematical knowledge between Europe and East Asia: case studies from the end of the Ming dynasty (China), to the Taisho era (Japan)

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Confucian scholars' attitudes towards the Western astral-mathematical knowledge in the early 19th century — a study of on the civil examination and correspondence resources

Abstract – For the acceptance of the newly-imported astral-mathematical knowledge from the West by the scholars in the early-middle Qing dynasty, there are many previous studies on their treatises. In this presentation, I mainly focus on the civil examination and correspondence resources. On one hand, I will study on the correspondences on discussing precession among scholars during Qianlong (1736-1795) and Jiaqing (1796-1820) eras (also abbreviated as Qian-Jia), such as Jiang Sheng (1721-1799), Qian Daxin (1728-1804), Sun Xingyan (1753-1818) and Ling Tingkan (1757-1809). On the other hand, I will take the provincial examination of Jiangnan Province in 1804 as an example, in order to examine why and how the examiner Dai Junyuan (1746-1840) set some questions on the astral-mathematical knowledge in a rigid examination system which was previously thought it should be confined in the neo-Confucianism theories, and to analyse examinees' answers and the selection criteria. Instead of basing on the treatises materials, these cases can show Qian-Jia scholars' attitudes towards the Western astral-mathematical knowledge in a different perspective.