

SAW Three-Month Workshop: Mathematical Practices in relation to the Astral Sciences

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Numbers and Units in Babylonian astronomy: The Case of the Rising Time Schemes and the Ziqpu-Star Texts

Abstract: This presentation considers the use of numbers and units within the various Babylonian texts which feature the so-called *ziqpu* stars: stars which culminate in order. The *ziqpu*-star lists present a list of the *ziqpu* stars with intervals between the stars in DANNA and UŠ. The interpretation of these intervals is somewhat ambiguous: do they refer to distances between the stars (in modern terms, differences in RA) or time intervals between the culminations of the stars? After introducing the *ziqpu*-star lists I turn to a group of texts which present a scheme equating the rising of each sign of the zodiac across the eastern horizon with an interval stated using the *ziqpu* stars.