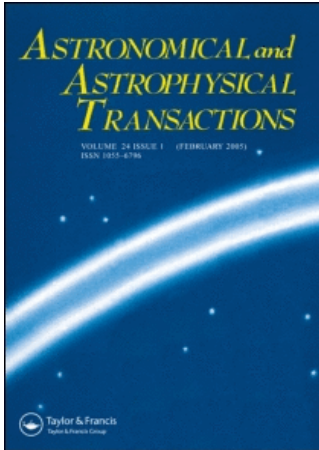


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The draco constellation as a key element of the ancient chinese astronomical picture of the sky

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THE DRACO CONSTELLATION AS A KEY ELEMENT OF THE ANCIENT CHINESE ASTRONOMICAL PICTURE OF THE SKY

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It determined entire class of constellations as the type of “Ribbon constellations”.
Ribbon constellations are Draco, Serpens, Hydra and Eridanus.
It supposed there is a relationship between those constellations.

KEY WORDS Draco constellation, Ribbon constellations

According to “The Book of Changes” (“Yi Jing”) and other Chinese literary monuments, the Dragon’s symbol was one of the most important one in ancient china well before the development of writing.

Philosophical aspects of this question was considered in monographs [1, 2, 3], as a question of the ancient Chinese culture of Tao. We have analyzed these monographs and consider astronomy aspects of the problem. As a result, a reconstruction of the connection between the *S*-pattern of the Taoist traditional symbol of the Great Limit Chart (GLC) and the *S*-figure of the Draco constellation emerged.

An ancient origin of some long and narrow constellations, which consist of un-remarkable and pale stars, has been revealed recently.

We consider the common character of that constellations. We determine this class of constellations as “Ribbon constellations”.

Besides the Draco, the Ribbon constellations include Serpens, Hydra and Eridanus. We suppose there is a relationship between the Ribbon constellations. We determine this relationship as a “kinematic relationship”.

Figures of the Ribbon constellations were known from ancient times, as evidenced by the star catalogue of Ptolemy and the more ancient star-map of Aratus. Because of the ancient Chinese origin of the Draco constellations, it may be

suggested that the tradition of the Ribbon constellations was an ancient Chinese tradition too.

Preliminary analyses shows that the tradition of the Ribbon constellations began forming about 15–20 thousand years ago. Its shaping took probably some thousand years. Probably these constellations are the most ancient ones in astronomy.

Our next conclusion is that the traditions of the constellations of Hercules and Orion are synchronous temporal markers and their age is probably the same as that for one of the Ribbon constellations. It should be noted that the symbolism of the Ribbon constellations is the most archaic form of Zoomorphic symbols of the nature powers – snakes and dragons. This indicates a great antiquity of the Ribbon constellations origin. A key element of this ancient system of constellations is the Draco constellation. This ancient constellation system is connected with chronology, calendar and the cardinal points.

A traditional significance of the circumpolar region and the Draco constellation was noted by J. Needhem, a famous specialist on the ancient Chinese astronomy. The assumed picture of the ancient Chinese observational practice is based also on the fundamental role of the precession affecting the observing practice of ancient civilisations. One of the most important consequences is the displacement of the solstice and equinox along the ecliptic. This leads to changing of four constellations of Zodiac according of Gurstein's idea.

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