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Heavenly Discourses
AHAN7024
MA CAA

Welcome!



1 2 May	Week 1 - Introduction	Lectures: Introducing the module and topics
2 9 May	Week 2 – Calendars	Lectures: Calendars
3 16 May	Week 3 - Mapping	Lecture Mapping the sky and Globes
Work Week 1		Selecting your two items for the first assignment.
4 30 May	Week 4 - Sky Myths	Lecture: Sky Myths
5 6 June	Week 5 - Sky and Buildings	Lecture: Architecture and Ceilings
Work Week 2		Working on 1 st assignment
Work Week 3		Submit 1 st assignment 25 June
6 27 June	Week 6 - Sky and Art	Lecture: Sky and Art
Work Week 4		Work on sky journal
7 18 July	Week 7 – Sky and literature	Lecture Literature and Film.
8 25 July	Week 8 - Space	Lecture Space Travel.

Assignment timetable

2000 Word Essay: draft completion 20 June 2018 and final submission BST 11.59 pm **Monday 25 June 2018**.

3000 Word Sky Journal: completion 20 August 2018 and submission BST 11.59 pm **Monday 27 August 2018**.

Moodle:



Welcome to this module on Heavenly Discourses.

Heavenly Discourses (AHAN7024)

The Heavenly Discourse Tutors are:

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VIDEO - Introduction to the Heavenly Discourse Module



The official module descriptor for Heavenly Discourses- Please Ignore the assignment information in this 2012 PDF



2018 Module Timetable



Seminar list with discussions and readings - 2018



Required Text for this Module

Forum for general chat and images



The Chat Room



This is a general forum for conversations, comments, images, Youtubes that relate to the sky. This is a general conversation area for everyone to share images and thoughts.

Assignments

1. ASSIGNMENT 1**2000 word essay (40% of total marks).**

Compare and contrast the expression or representation of the sky in two works of film, music, art, architecture, celestial cartography or literature in their expression or representation of the sky.

Guidance on essay 1.

The purpose of this exercise is to engage you with the use of the primary sources, that is, original documents. These texts may be, for example, written texts, paintings, buildings, maps or musical compositions.

You must post details of the texts you are using on the Forum, provided for this purpose. Explain briefly why you have chosen the texts you have. You may not have made your final choice before the end of week 8, but you can post ideas earlier.

2000 Word Essay: submission Monday 25 June 2018

Assignments

2. ASSIGNMENT 2 3000 word Sky Journal (60% of total marks).

This is a piece of qualitative research. A Sky Journal is a piece of research using the sky as the primary document. You are in effect interviewing the sky. You may 'interview' the sky in different ways some of which are suggested in 'Ideas for creating your sky journal' as a separate document in this Moodle topic.

You will need to post your ideas on the forum as well as submit a Sky Journal proposal form for approval.

You will need to be aware of the sky for at least a month and focuses on one or several particular features recorded either by drawing or photography the changes in these sky features or sky and landscape features.

Your journal may contain a mixture of images, text, and personal reflections but you **must cite academic literature both for your methodology as well as for your journal's aim.**

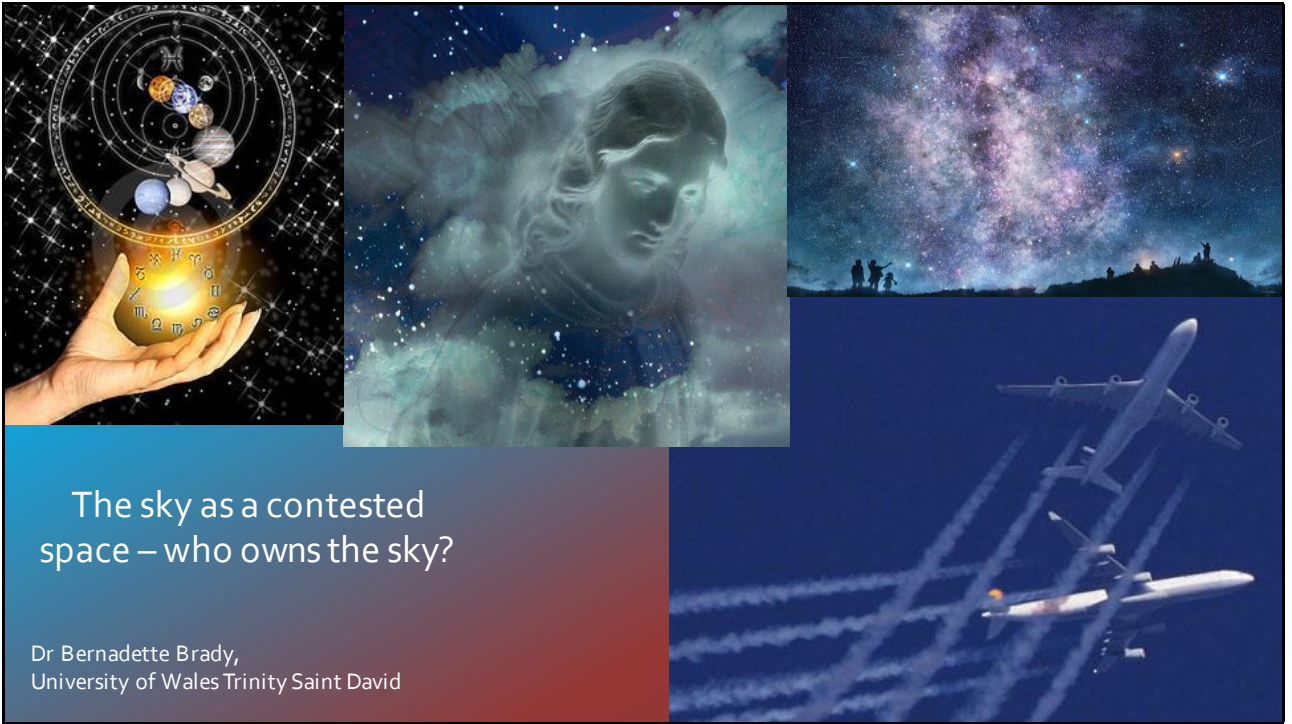
Your 3000 word Sky Journal paper will include an account of your methods, your findings (images, and notes) and a discussion which places your field work into the context of the sky as a cultural resource.

Sky Journal: submission BST 11.59 pm Monday 27 August

Getting Started with the Sky

Sky Resources Section on Moodle page.

- Make sure you watch Bernadette's 30 minutes lecture on YouTube on Sky Watching. - This will give you a good introduction to watching the sky.
- Also look at the 3 minute presentation from the Kurdistan Planetarium on the Celestial Sphere.
- Read – 'Ideas for sky journals'
- Check out the free software and consider some apps.



The sky as a contested space – who owns the sky?

Dr Bernadette Brady,
University of Wales Trinity Saint David

Weekly Description: Cultural uses and views of the sky

The purpose of this week is to establish an overview of the entire module and to introduce different cultural uses of the sky.

Cultural uses discussed will be:

- The phenomenological use of the sky.
Indigenous cultures including astrologers, the sky as a cultural resource of narrative, history, notions of place and time, and/or mythology.
- The sky as a neutral resource or a place to be colonised, notions of space travel and large scale astronomy.
- The sky is that of it being utilised as a commercial and/or political platform.

We consider the question, who speaks for the sky?

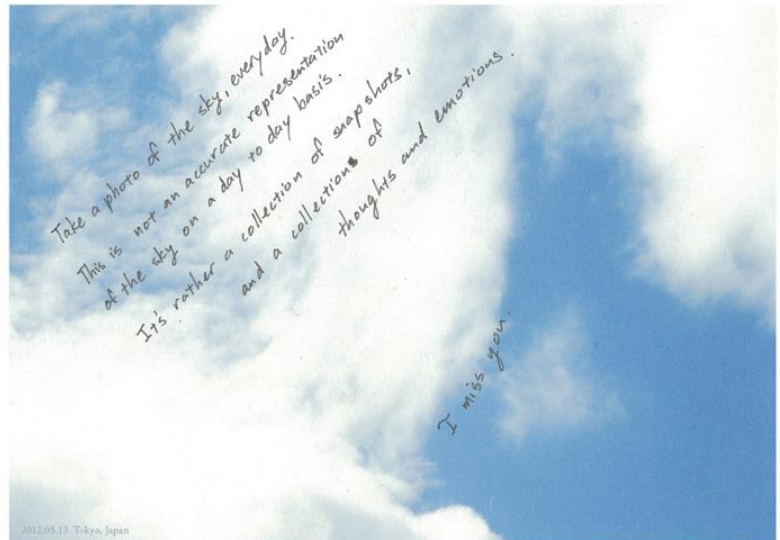
- Religious leaders
- Astrologers
- Astronomers

The phenomenological use of the sky

The Sky as Inspiration

The feelings and thoughts that are derived by watching the sky - this is a vast subject and includes art, literature, poetry, mythology and spiritual discourses. Many which we introduce in the module.

The cultural right to have access to a night sky is the focus of the International Dark-Sky Association.
<http://www.darksky.org/>



The phenomenological use of the sky - Cultural astronomy and/or Ethnoastronomy

Exploring the links between sky and culture can be daunting. The phenomenological approach to the sky can be defined as either ethnoastronomy or more broadly **cultural astronomy**. Such links between a culture and the sky can find their home in sky myths.

Sky Myths - which we consider later in the module

In considering past cultures Tyler Nordgren, writing about native American sky mythology stated:

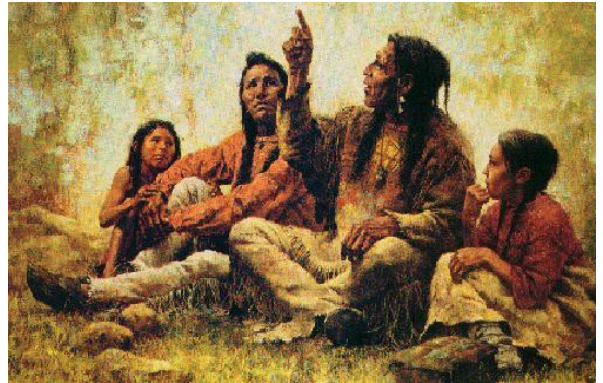
'One is left like a detective, to piece together hints and inferences, disparate pieces of information and, yes, guess and conjecture, to understand what is now lost. Putting these pieces together to understand the relationship between culture and the heavens is the goal of the interdisciplinary field of ethno-astronomy.'

Nordgren, T. E. (2010). *Stars above, earth below: a guide to astronomy in the national parks*. New York, Springer. p.15

The Sky as Myth-Holder

The Sun was a young woman who lived in the east, while her brother, the Moon live in the west. The girl had a lover who used to come every month in the dark of the moon to court her. He would come at night and leave before daylight.

[In the story she wondered who he was so she marked his face with ash]

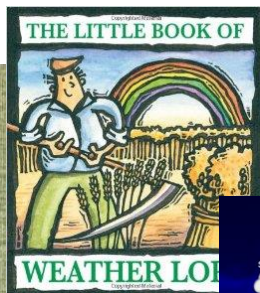
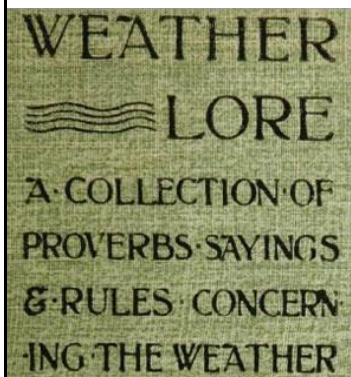
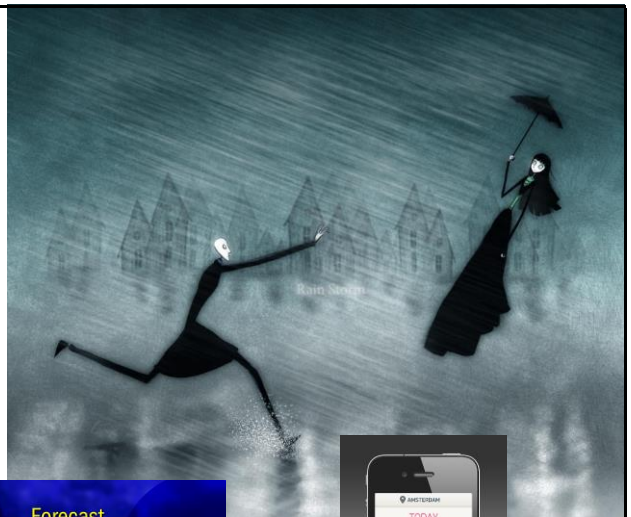


The next night when the Moon came up in the sky his face was covered with spots, and then his sister knew he was the one who had been coming to her. He was so much ashamed to have her know it that he kept as far away as he could at the other end of the sky all the night. Ever since he tries to keep a long way behind the Sun, and when he does sometimes have to come near her in the west he makes himself as thin as a ribbon so that he can hardly be seen.

James Mooney (1898) Myths of the Cherokee,
<http://archive.org/stream/cu31924104080076#page/n3/mode/zup>

The sky as a never-ending story – it is always becoming never begin

- Seasonal and weather folk-lore.
- Meteorology – measuring the dynamic sky to predict weather patterns.
- Astrology – observing the sky narrative and its relationship to human life.



The Sky as Never-Ending Story

The astrological use of the sky

Assyrian text from c.650 B.C.E.

[If the O]ld Man star comes close to the top of the moon and stands there, {and} enters the moon: the king will be pleasing to his land; there will be truth and justice in his land. (Hunger: p.231)



Mars, which stan[ds] inside Scorpius, is about to move out: until the 25th of [Tammuz(IV)] it will move out of Scorpius; and is radiance is fallen. Let the king my lord be happy; the king should be very glad, (but) until (Mars) goes out, let the king guard himself. (Hunger p.387)



Hunger, H. (1992). *Astrological Reports to Assyrian Kings*, Helsinki Helsinki University Press.

The Sky as Never-Ending Story

Astrologers use the sky as a resource

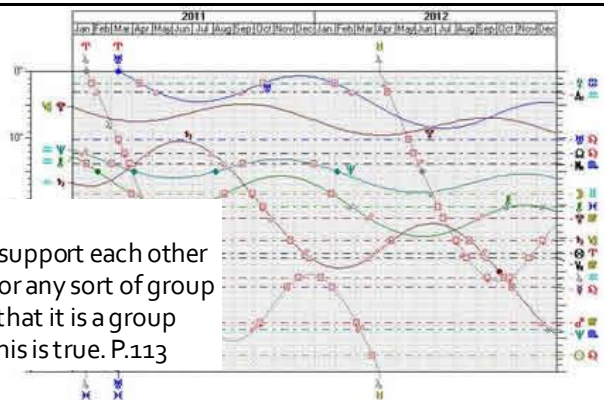
Robert Hand 1976

Moon and Jupiter

This transit denotes a time when you and your fiends support each other and feel that you being together. This is a good time for any sort of group activity, because by working together you all will feel that it is a group effort form which everyone will benefit equally. And this is true. P.113

Mars Trine Neptune

This is one of the few Mars transits that does not create high physical energy. In fact you may feel like doing very little, and certainly you will not be very self-assertive. But you will be able to work with a spirit of true self-sacrifice and a desire to help others. P.251



Hand, R. (1976). *Planets in transit : life cycles for living*, Gloucester, Mass., Para Research.

The Sky as Inspiration



'What would it be like to walk among the spectral landscape of the Milky Way, to hike through Sagittarius and see these dark rivers and bright mountains of the imagination made manifest about me? Above the familiar teapot of Sagittarius there's a small bright concentrated cloud, a veritable Matterhorn in the mountain range of the night.'

Nordgren, T. E. (2010). *Stars above, earth below : a guide to astronomy in the national parks*, New York, Springer. P.8

The Sky as Divine

Stonehenge and the Sun



22 Dec 2011 – The Telegraph, UK

Calanais and the Moon



Image Curtis, Ron, and Margaret Curtis. *Callanish Stones, Moon & Sacred Landscape*. Isle of Lewis: Olcote, [1994] 2008. p. 24.

The Sky as Divine

Calanais and goddess worship

Margaret Curtis promotes and runs goddess worship at Calanais I



Curtis, Ron, and Margaret Curtis. *Callanish Stones, Moon & Sacred Landscape*. Isle of Lewis: Olcote, [1994] 2008. p.24-27
Images from : <http://forums.canadiancontent.net/hot-topics/47884-druids-moon-worship-sacre-d-la-ndscape.html> accessed 20 Nov 2012.

The Sky as Terra Nullius

The attitude the dark sky organisations struggle against is the idea that the sky is a terra nullius, belonging to no one and containing nothing of value.

The Sky as a blank canvas.

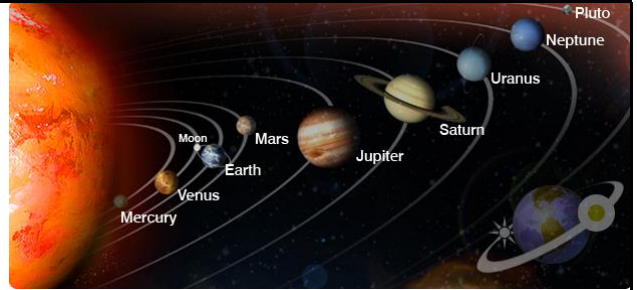
It is this terra nullius attitude that has led to the problems of light pollution.

Such pollution brings about the loss of darkness. This removes our starry skies and presents an environmental issues.



The Sky as Objects

Large scale astronomy sees the sky as objects to be explored. This has reshaped our cosmology from an **ensouled sky to a mathematical sky, only reachable by those who can operate the immense technology.** The astronomers have become the modern-day priest and they seek to speak for the sky.



David Schramm commented in 1993, that 'Cosmology has entered a "golden age" in which there is a close interplay between theory and observation-experimentation. ... The probes of cosmology are multidisciplinary, with particle accelerators and particle detectors now joining telescopes ...'

Satellites – according to the SSN there are currently about 3000 satellites currently orbiting the earth.

David N. Schramm, "Physical Cosmology" in *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America*, Vol. 90, No. 11 (Jun. 1, 1993), p. 4765

The Sky as a Commercial Resource

Selling the Stars

The Universal Star Registry sells the naming rights to the stars. You can name a star for the cost of £19.99.

<http://www.universal-star-registry.com/>

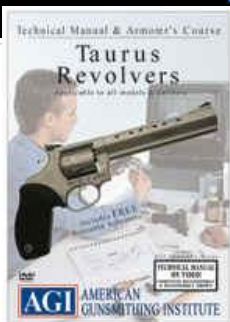


But this is only one expression of how the sky is used in commerce.
It is use is almost all walks of life

The Sky and Food



The Sky and objects and places



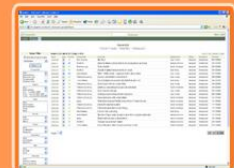
Newspapers and motors



Software, ships, insurance



GEMINI



MERCURY
INSURANCE GROUP

Other Stars...



Who Speaks for the Sky?

When there are unusual events in the sky who is asked to speak?

- Religious leaders
- Astrologers
- Astronomers

All are chosen by different groups to speak for the sky.

Is the sky contested space?
Does it simply have multiply usage?
Who has the 'right' to tell the 'truth' of its events?

Who Speaks for the Sky?

The Miracle of the Sun

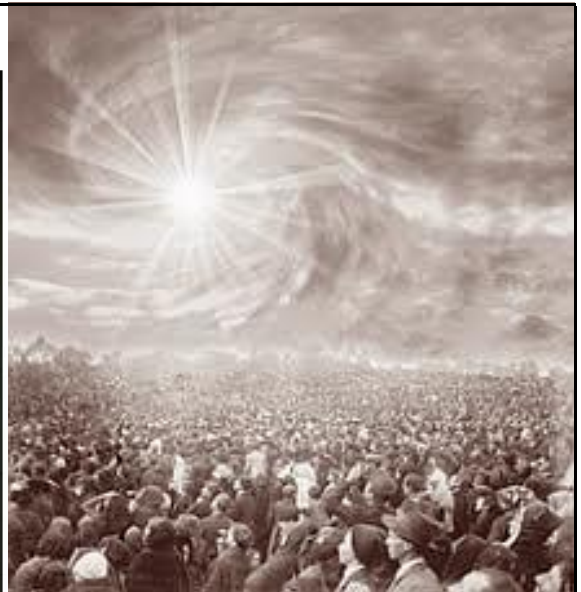
13 October 1917 - Cova da Iria, Portugal location of the Fatima shrine.

The rain had ceased, the clouds parted, and the sun shone forth, but not in its usual brilliance. Instead, it appeared like a silver disc, pale as the moon, at which all could gaze without straining their eyes. Suddenly, impelled by some mysterious force, the disc began to whirl in the sky, casting off great shafts of multi-coloured light. Red, green, blue, yellow, violet the enormous rays shot across the sky at all angles, lighting up the entire countryside for many miles around, but particularly the upturned faces of those 70,000 spellbound people. seemed that the whole world was on fire, ...Then a gasp of terror rose from the crowd, for the sun seemed to tear itself from the heavens and come crashing down upon the horrified multitude... Just when it seemed that the ball of fire would fall upon and destroy them, the miracle ceased, and the sun resumed its normal place in the sky, shining forth as peacefully as ever. When the people arose from the ground, their clothes, which had been soaking wet and muddy, now were clean and dry. Many of the sick and crippled had been cured of their afflictions.



Who Speaks for the Sky?

Dalle De Verre stained glass windows (Monks Of Buckfast Abbey) in Our Lady of Fatima, Harlow. This panel shows the Miracle Of The Sun the occurred when the BVM appeared at Fatima in 1917. The shapes in the 3rd and 6th rows down are lights.



Who Speaks for the Sky?

The Miracle of the Sun



A parhelion in rainbow colours.

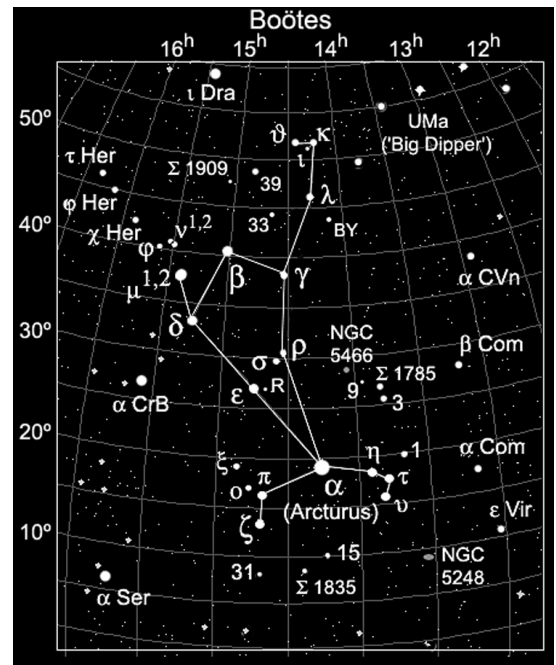
Sundogs – Fargo 18 Feb, 2009
photos Wikicommons.

A **sun dog** or **sundog**, scientific name **parhelion** (plural **parhelia**) also called a **mock sun** or a **phantom sun**, is an atmospheric phenomenon that creates bright spots of light in the sky, often on a luminous ring or halo on either side of the sun.



Who Speaks for the Sky?

The Sky and Mythology



Readings for this week.

Frazier, Kendrick. "Stars, Sky and Culture." Science News 116, no. 5 (1979): 90-93, quote from p.90.

Kendrick's paper, written in 1979, looks at a Pawnee Indian 'Sky Map'. The interruption of this map is contested however the paper will introduce you to debates on cultural views of the sky, and the debate about who 'speaks' for the sky.

'The idea is not just to record the often-surprising astronomical knowledge of native Americans (although that is a fascinating part of it), but to better understand the workings of their minds and cultures. It's not an exercise in sterile history, but an effort to come to terms with the way **early people's** lives and thoughts were integrated with the sky and heavens. As such it can tell us a lot not only about **our predecessors** in the Americas but also something about ourselves.'

Readings for this week.

Clive Ruggles paper written in 2009, is on other views in astronomy. He is commenting on how astronomers should deal with indigenous astronomy:

'The answer, certainly, comes from **mutual respect**. This may be achieved more easily on the 'Western' side by bearing in mind that other world-views cannot be summarily dismissed as 'non-science', because they *do make sense of the evidence available to them in a logical way*. We shall say more about this in the following section. 'Their' rationality may not be ours, but it is a valid rationality nonetheless.'

Ruggles, C. 'Indigenous Astronomies and Progress in Modern Astronomy'. Proceedings of Science, August 11-14 2009 2009 Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. P.5

Readings for this week.

Martin Heidegger's paper is a classic paper which will introduce you to a phenomenological way of viewing the sky and its relationship to earth, the spiritual desires of humanity and our own mortal concerns.

Heidegger looks at the four corners of humanity:
Earth and Sky, Divinities and Mortals
 and he argues that they belong together as one...

'The sky is the vaulting path of the sun, the course of the changing moon, the wandering glitter of the stars, the year's seasons and their changes, the light and the dusk of day, the gloom and glow of night, the clemency and inclemency of the weather, the drifting clouds and blue depths of the ether. When we say sky, we are already thinking of the other three [Earth, Divinities, and Mortals] along with it, but we give no thought to the simple oneness of the four.'

Heidegger, Martin. "Building, Dwelling, Thinking." In *Poetry, Language, Thought*. New York: Harper & Row, 1975 p.149.

Readings for this week.

Google Books Reading

The Secret of Seeing

Chapter 1 - Schaaf, Fred. *The Starry Room : Naked Eye Astronomy in the Intimate Universe*. Mineola, N.Y.: Dover Publications ; Newton Abbot : David & Charles, 2002.

Schaaf shares his inspirations for sky watching.

'Once you do look, adventure is unending. You can either not see or you cannot stop seeing (and enjoying and adventuring). Astronomy may not quite begin with the eye, but that is where you meet or front the starry task and reward it with your champion that vision is. The eye is where you enter the starry room of the universe. All the eye can see is not all there is, but it is a myriad of times and things more than you had dreamed. It is an everlasting, ever-growing enough.' p.18