

# ETH1. Introduction

## 1 What's ethnoastronomy in the general context of "cultural astronomy"?

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Société Européenne pour l'Astronomie dans la Culture

# SEAC

European Society for Astronomy in Culture

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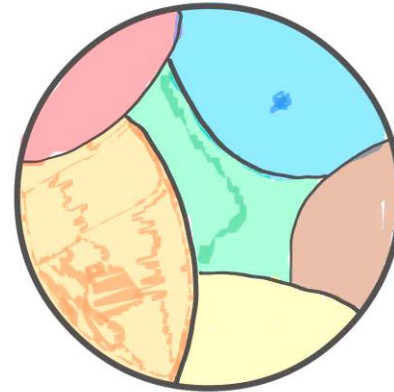
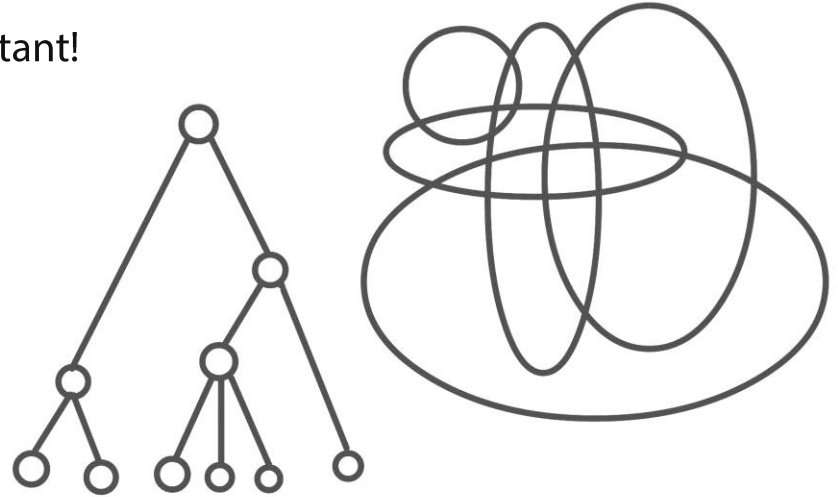


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## Divisions and classifications: Names are very important!

- Names are not the simple result of epistemological debates
- Classifications are the result of historical processes:
  - Disputes for the legitimacy, visibility and autonomy
  - Involves reconstructions of the past
  - Contingent is not the same than arbitrary
- “Cultural astronomy” or “astronomy in culture” as a great achieve of the field



Cultural astronomy as an interdisciplinary, but...

dedicated to the study of social facts

Cultural astronomy see astronomies as socio-cultural products

Cultural astronomy includes:

- Ethnoastronomy,
- Archaeoastronomy,
- Social History of Astronomy
- Intercultural Astronomical education, etc.



## Ethnoastronomy:

A perspective dedicated to study the living astronomical knowledge, practices and materialities as integral part of any social/cultural human group (ethnic groups, professional groups, social classes, kinship groups, religious groups, gender groups, etc.), with special emphasis in the ethnographical, ethnological and anthropological tools.



## Ethnoastronomy: main features

- global perspective → holistic intention
- direct involvement → participant observation
- search for the local logics → logics of practice and cosmologies
- Framing the local through historical, regional and global views
- many combined techniques
- estrangement and reflexivity
- Astronomical knowledge and practices (both general and specialized) are understood as articulated ensembles but always unfinished and under construction
- research implies involvement with local circumstances
- is not only ethnography, it is also ethnology -comparison-, and anthropological-sociological theory
- Includes all kind of societies (even present academic astronomy)



## Ethnoastronomy: main contributions to cultural astronomy in general

- Helps to denaturalize categories and conceptions of researchers (identities, observation, group, night, etc.)
- Provides a variety of possible ways of relating to the sky
- Clarifies the complexity, heterogeneity, unfinished and dynamic character of the conceptions about the sky of human groups
- Evidence the relationships of astronomy with different aspects of human life
- Make visible the links between astronomy and power
- It allows current academic astronomy a critical reflection on its place in contemporary societies
- Provides the starting elements for an intercultural astronomical education
- Helps empower subalternized groups



# Credits

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## Concept SEACTeach

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## Design

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