

# **WORKING WITH POSITIONS: A VIEW FROM ANCIENT CHINESE MATHEMATICAL SOURCES**

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The earliest extant Chinese mathematical works handed down through the written tradition attest to specific practices with positions. However, it is not easy for historians to describe this practice, which, until the 10th century, has remained purely material. This talk will show how we can recover key features of the practice and key moments in its history, and it will shed light on the mathematical work that actors carried out in this way. We will see that the use of a decimal place-value notation was merely one facet in this broader practice.