

Guest star (astronomy)

In Chinese astronomy, a **guest star** (Chinese: 客星; pinyin: *kèxīng*; literally: "guest star") is a star which has suddenly appeared in a place where no star had previously been observed and becomes invisible again after some time. The term is a literal translation from ancient Chinese astronomical records.

Modern astronomy recognizes that guest stars are manifestations of cataclysmic variable stars: novae and supernovae. The term "guest star" is used in the context of ancient records, since the exact classification of an astronomical event in question is based on interpretations of old records, including inference, rather than on direct observations.

In ancient Chinese astronomy, guest stars were one of the three types of highly transient objects (bright heavenly bodies); the other two (彗星, *huixing*, "broom star", a comet with a tail; and *xing bo*, "fuzzy star", a comet without a tail) being comets in modern understanding.^[1] The earliest Chinese record of guest stars is contained in *Han Shu* (漢書), the history of Han Dynasty (206 BCE – 220 CE), and all subsequent dynastic histories had such records.^[1] These contain one of the clearest early descriptions consistent with a supernova, posited to be left over by object SN 185, thus identified as a supernova remnant of the exact year 185 CE.^[2] Chronicles of the contemporary Ancient Europeans are more vague when consulted for supernovae candidates.^[3] Whether due to weather or other reasons for lack of observation, astronomers have questioned why the notable remnant attributed to Chinese observations of a guest star in 1054 AD (see SN 1054), is missing from the European records.^[3]

See also

- Historical comet observations in China

References

- Zhentaο Xu, David W Pankenier (2000) "East-Asian Archaeoastronomy Historical Records of Astronomical Observations of China, Japan, and Korea" ISBN 90-5699-302-X, Chapter 6, "Guest Stars"
- Zhao FY; Strom RG; Jiang SY (2006). "The Guest Star of AD185 Must Have Been a Supernova"*Chinese J Astron Astrophys.* 6 (5): 635&ndash, 40. Bibcode:2006ChJAA...6..635Z (<http://adsabs.harvard.edu/abs/2006ChJAA...6..635Z>). doi:10.1088/1009-9271/6/5/17(<https://doi.org/10.1088%2F1009-9271%2F6%2F5%2F17>)
- Murdin, Paul; Murdin, Lesley (1985).*Supernovae*. ISBN 0-521-30038-X

Retrieved from '[https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Guest_star_\(astronomy\)&oldid=866169601](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Guest_star_(astronomy)&oldid=866169601)

This page was last edited on 28 October 2018, at 18:48(UTC).

Text is available under the Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike Licenseadditional terms may apply By using this site, you agree to the Terms of Use and Privacy Policy. Wikipedia® is a registered trademark of the Wikimedia Foundation, Inc., a non-profit organization.