

Astrology essay

Religion



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Introduction

Astrology is a name that comes from Greek words logos (study or science) and astron (stars). As such, astrology is a science or study of stars. The word differs from astronomy in that astrology studies the correlations between celestial events and humanly meaningful events (Lewis, 2003). The American Federation of Astrologers, as well as numerous other bodies, have credited the Babylonians with the birth of astrology, dating as far back as 1645BC (astrology. com). Scientific and technological advances have revolutionized human life and provided answers and solutions to many mysteries. Astrology has ceased to have a strong hold on religious and social interactions among people and the universe, and it now serves lesser casual roles such as fortune telling.

The 12 signs of the Zodiac (circle of animals) with which most people are familiar forms a small part of astrology. These 12 signs relate to the personality of individuals and are commonly used for divinatory or religious purposes (Lewis, 2003). In ancient times, upon varying interpretations of astrological signs, people used to seek divine intervention and get deeply religious. Religious beliefs and practices such as sacrifices and worship resulted from astrological signs and interpretations (Lewis, 2003). For instance, the prominence of a certain planet such as Mars could be interpreted as imminent war or aggression and as such, people sought divine intervention. In addition, astrology and astronomy were the same science in that people used astrological charts, timekeeping systems, and calendars to tell the recurrence of certain celestial and seasons (astrologers. com). However, in recent times, astrology is mostly centered on horoscopes and

the signs of the Zodiac.

Early societies used astrology to create a sense of order out of the chaos and the mysteries of the time (Lewis, 2003). The American Federation of Astrologers notes that the people later used astrology to predict weather patterns especially for agricultural purposes (astrologers. com). Later astrologers started to use astrology to forecast a war, natural disasters among other events. In ancient times astrologists insisted on astrology being, a natural science that has forces comparable to those of gravity and magnetism, which are “ radiated” by the planets.

The commonest use of astrology in the modern world is the Zodiac-a Greek word meaning “ circle of animals”. In ancient times, the Zodiac originated from Egypt. The Babylonians adopted the Zodiac from the Egyptians. The Egyptians had calculated that it took 12 lunar cycles or months for the sun to return to the original position. The observations of 12 constellations matched the 12 seasons and lunar months (Orion, 2007). The ancient Egyptians assigned the seasons various names of animals and people. For instance, the Babylonians named the position of the sun Aquarius because when the sun was at that position it was at one particular position. The Egyptians and the Babylonians subdivided the Zodiac into four groups to serve as signs for different issues. The fire signs were the Leo, Sagittarius, and the Aries. The Water signs were the Cancer, Scorpio, and Pisces. The Air signs were Libra, Aquarius, and Gemini. The Earth signs were Capricorn. Taurus and Virgo. Astrology served as an influential philosophy for many years. People believed the horoscope charts where the relative positions of the sun, moon, stars, and the planets at specific times communicated to their lives. The date, time, and location of one’s birth was tied to the terrestrial bodies.

<https://assignbuster.com/astrology-essay/>

Astrologers did not use the ordinary clock time. They measured time as a “sidereal” that the sun’s position at equinox determined (astrologers. com). The calculations of the date and time enabled astrologers to construct charts to foretell about life events. Modern astrologers use computer program software to create charts. Whereas the creation of charts is only the first step, competent astrologists apply artistic and scientific aspects to tell about a person’s personality traits, current life situations and foretell both the short and the long distant future.

The four groups are found in their quadrants as groups of “houses” in a circle. Each sign was a house representing some significance in real life. The first house represents appearance and surface personality, the second house-money, values and possessions. The third house represents communication, siblings, and short journeys. The fourth represents home, one parent, circumstances at the end of life (Orion, 2007). The fifth-Creativity, children and romance; sixth- work and health; seventh-marriage and other partnerships. The eight houses represent death, sex, regeneration, and other people’s money; ninth-higher education, religion, long journey and philosophy (Orion, 2007). The tenth house represents career, the other parent, reputation, and status. Eleventh house represents friends and aspirations while the last house represents enemies, secrets, and seclusion (Orion, 2007).

In ancient times, astrology had a lot to do with deep symbolism. About 2000 BC, the Babylonian astrologers believed that heavenly bodies such as the moon, the sun, and the five planets that had been discovered (Mars, Saturn, Jupiter, Mercury, and Venus) possessed distinct powers (astrologers. com). For instance, Mars was associated with war and

<https://assignbuster.com/astrology-essay/>

aggression because it appeared red. Venus, which appeared calm, was associated with affection while Mercury represented speech and writing (astrologers. com). The ancient Babylonians associated each planet with two signs while the sun and the moon were each associated with one sign.

Astrology used and still works in collaboration with other belief systems and doctrines. Numerology and Hermeticism are two such doctrines. Numerology interprets character and predicts future conditions. Numerology entails assigning letters of the alphabet some numerical values through a system of Qabballah-Jewish mysticism, which is popular in occult circles (Lewis, 2003). When the numerical values of the letters making up a person's name are added, the resultant number gives that person's character in a similar manner to the astrological signs. The numerological value is equivalent to an astrological sun sign. The numbers making up someone's birthday are also added up and interpreted using astrological signs.

Hermeticism refers to the religious and philosophical tradition that is based primarily on the pseudepigraphical writings attributable to Greek god named Hermes Trismegistus meaning twice great (Lewis, 2003). 20th-century astrologers adopted Hermetic beliefs by casting conception charts attributed to the legendary Greek god (Lewis, 2003). The Hermetic principles relate to the place of the moon at conception and hence its relation to conventional astrology.

Scientific evolution faded the zeal with which people sought after astrology. Instead, astronomy or the study of heavenly bodies gained respect while many people ceased to seek answers to mysteries and religious issues to astrology. Lewis (2003) notes that in modern time, many people have come to associate the astrology with medieval superstition. Religious organizations

<https://assignbuster.com/astrology-essay/>

such as Christians especially in the western world have rallied people against astrology. Modern Christian denominations and conservatives view astrology as an irrational superstition alongside anything else that does not follow within a narrow definition of science.

Hellenistic civilizations, which influenced early religion and Christianity, bore issues of astrology. However, some Christian thinkers worried about the tension that started to exist between determinations of astrology and freewill. Some people state that occurrences in the Bible also show that the biblical prophets believed in astrology. They give the example of the wise men as astrologers since they believed a star to communicate the birth of the Messiah. The ancient people believe that God could use heavenly signs to instruct his people (Lewis, 2003). However, in the 20th century the association of astrology with metaphysical religion through fundamentalists and later on through conservatives rejected astrology terming it a delusion while other considered it satanic.

Although many people still believe in astrological influences, the popularity of the science has waned. Scientific findings, social, economic, cultural, and societal formations have more influence on peoples' lives as compared to the past years. In addition, scientific evidence has solved issues previously seen as mysteries such as diseases, death, drought, floods, hurricanes, and the appearance of certain heavenly bodies among many others. For instance, scientists can prove how rain is formed, or tell what causes certain diseases using science. The more science continues to offer solutions and answers to life's issues, the lesser the influence of astrology on human life. While many people may cease to see astrology as an answer to life's issues, many others casually believe in astrological influences such as the Zodiac or <https://assignbuster.com/astrology-essay/>

birth signs to foretell luck, misfortune, good health among other things.

Today astrologers exist in almost all countries, and the philosophy has ardent followers. Although the vast majority of people shuns its findings or engages in them for fun, others take the philosophy seriously and centre their lives around astrology.

In the modern world, astrology has continued to influence people's lives. Zodiacal symbolism has an influence on modern English. For instance, “bull-headed” alludes to Taurus while “Crabby” alludes to the Cancer sign (Lewis, 2003). The Zodiac is common in daily newspapers where it predicts people's fortunes and foretells events they shall encounter. People have birth signs based on the Zodiac with the sun being the most influential aspect in an astrological chart. When people say that they belong to a certain sign, they refer to the Sun sign. The zodiac signs have also influenced other industries such as the automobile industry. For instance, there are car brands named Taurus and Scorpio (Lewis, 2003).

The fact that people lacked knowledge to explain strange phenomena such as death, diseases, and natural calamities made astrology an attractive doctrine. Astrology helped people to come to terms with mysteries that shocked them such as floods, death, diseases, drought among others. There was nothing important that people have lost by trying to modern science and technology as drivers of human life.

References

- History of Astrology. (n. d.). American Federation of Astrologers. Retrieved October 12, 2014, from <https://www.astrologers.com/about/history>
- History of Astrology - Astrology. com. (n. d.). History of Astrology - Astrology. <https://assignbuster.com/astrology-essay/>

com. Retrieved October 14, 2014, from <http://www.astrology.com/history-astrology/2-d-d-279653>

Lewis, J. R. (2003). *The astrology book the encyclopedia of heavenly influences* (2nd Ed.). Detroit: Visible Ink Press.

Orion, R. (2007). *Astrology for dummies* (2nd Ed.). Hoboken, NJ: Wiley Pub.