

THE HISTORY OF ASTROLOGY

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Astrology consists of a number of belief systems which hold that there is a relationship between visible astronomical phenomena and events in the human world. In the West, astrology most often consists of a system of horoscopes that claim to predict aspects of an individual's personality or life history based on the positions of the sun, moon, and planetary objects at the time of their birth. Many other cultures have attached importance to astronomical events, and the Indian, Chinese, and Mayan cultures developed elaborate systems for predicting terrestrial events from celestial observations.

Source : Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

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Astrology's origins in Indo-European cultures trace to the third millennium BCE, with roots in calendrical systems used to predict seasonal shifts and to interpret celestial cycles as signs of divine communications. Through most of its history it was considered a scholarly tradition. It was *accepted* in political and academic contexts, and its concepts were built into other studies, such as astronomy, alchemy, meteorology, and medicine. At the end of the 17th century, new scientific concepts in astronomy (such as heliocentrism) began to damage the credibility of astrology, which subsequently lost its academic and theoretical standing. Astrology saw a popular revival in the 19th and 20th centuries as part of a general revival of spiritualism and later New Age philosophy, and through the influence of mass media such as newspaper horoscopes.

ETYMOLOGY

The word astrology comes from the Latin *astrologia*, deriving from the Greek noun *αστρολογία*, which combines *ἄστρο* *astro*, 'star, celestial body' with *λογία* *logia*, 'study of, theory, discourse (about)'. Historically, the word star has had a loose definition, by which it can refer to planets or any luminous celestial object. The notion of it signifying all heavenly bodies is evident in early Babylonian astrology where cuneiform depictions for the determinative MUL (star) present a symbol of stars alongside planetary and other stellar references to indicate deified objects which reside in the heavens. The word planet (based on the Greek verb *πλανάω* *planaō* 'to wander/stray'), was introduced by the Greeks as a reference to how seven notable 'stars' were seen to 'wander' through others which remained static in their relationship to each other, with the distinction noted by the terms *ἀστέρες ἀπλανεῖς* *asteres aplaneis* 'fixed stars', and *ἀστέρες πλανῆται* *asteres planetai*, 'wandering stars'. Initially, texts such as Ptolemy's *Tetrabiblos* referred to the planets as 'the star of Saturn', 'the star of Jupiter', etc., rather than simply 'Saturn' or 'Jupiter', [10] but the names became simplified as the word planet assumed astronomical formality over time.

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The seven Classical planets therefore comprise the Sun and Moon along with the solar-system planets that are visible to the naked eye: Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn. This remained the standard definition of the word 'planet' until the discovery of Uranus in 1781 created a need for revision. Although the modern IAU definition of planet does not include the Sun and the Moon, astrology retains historical convention in its description of those astronomical bodies, and also generally maintains reference to Pluto as being an astrological planet.

BABYLONIAN ASTROLOGY

The history of astrology in Europe and the Middle East are inextricably linked, with each region contributing to astrological theories and continually influencing each other. Bouché-Leclercq, Cumont and Boll hold that the middle of the 4th century BC is when Babylonian astrology began to firmly enter western culture. This spread of astrology was coincident with the rise of a scientific phase of astronomy in Babylonia.

The history of astrology can be traced back to the earliest phases of Babylonian history, in the third millennium BC. In Babylonia as well as in Assyria as a direct offshoot of Sumerian culture (or in general the "Mesopotamian" culture), astrology takes its place in the official cult as one of the two chief means at the disposal of the priests (who were called bare or "inspectors") for ascertaining the will and intention of the gods, the other being through the inspection of the liver of the sacrificial animal (see omen). The earliest extant collection of Babylonian astrology texts are known collectively as Enuma Anu Enlil (literally meaning "When the gods Anu and Enlil..."). These date back at least to the middle of the second millennium BCE. The collection groups together omens and 'signs' drawn from celestial, meteorological and calendrical significations, which are interpreted for their relevancy to national and political affairs. In this the Moon's cycle held special significance. For example, a segment of the text reads: "These are the oracles when Sin (i.e., the moon) makes a decision, the great gods of heaven and earth decide the doings of mankind ... eclipse, flood, illness, death, the great gallu-demons, Sebettu always

Source : Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

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block the way of the Sun"

n Mesopotamian astrology planet-names reflected association with dominant deities. For example, the basic association of the planet Mars was with the ill-boding war-god Nergal, by which it was referred to as the 'star of Nergal'. Likewise the basic association of Saturn was with the destructive god Ninurta, Jupiter the creative god Marduk, Venus the fertility goddess Ishtar, Mercury the scribe god Nabu, the Sun the revealing god Shamash, and the Moon the measuring god Sin.

The movements of the sun, moon and five planets were regarded as representing the activity of the five gods in question, together with the moon-god Sin and the sun-god Shamash, in preparing the occurrences on earth. If, therefore, one could correctly read and interpret the activity of these powers, one knew what the gods were aiming to bring about. [citation needed]

The influence of Babylonian planetary lore appears also in the assignment of the days of the week to the planets, for example Sunday, assigned to the sun, and Saturday, the day of Saturn.

The Babylonian priests applied themselves to perfecting an interpretation of the phenomena to be observed in the heavens, and it was natural that the system was extended from the moon, sun and five planets to the stars.

The interpretations themselves were based (as in the case of divination through the liver) chiefly on two factors:

- On the recollection or on written records of what in the past had taken place when the phenomenon or phenomena in question had been observed, and**
- Association of ideas – involving sometimes merely a play upon words – in connection with the phenomenon or phenomena observed.**

Source : Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

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Thus, if on a certain occasion, the rise of the new moon in a cloudy sky was followed by victory over an enemy or by abundant rain, the sign in question was thus proved to be a favorable one and its recurrence would thenceforth be regarded as an omen for good fortune of some kind to follow. On the other hand, the appearance of the new moon earlier than was expected was regarded as unfavorable, as it was believed that anything appearing prematurely suggested an unfavorable occurrence.

Limitations of early knowledge

Astrology in its earliest stage was marked by three characteristics:

In the first place, In Babylonia and Assyria the interpretation of the movements and position of the heavenly bodies were centered largely and indeed almost exclusively in the public welfare and the person of the king, because upon his well-being and favor with the gods the fortunes of the country were dependent. The ordinary individual's interests were not in any way involved, and many centuries had to pass beyond the confines of Babylonia and Assyria before that phase is reached, which in medieval and modern astrology is almost exclusively dwelt upon – the individual horoscope.

In the second place, the astronomical knowledge presupposed and accompanying early Babylonian astrology was, being of an empirical character, limited and flawed. The theory of the ecliptic as representing the course of the sun through the year, divided among twelve constellations with a measurement of 30° to each division, is of Babylonian origin, as has now been definitely proved; but it does not appear to have been perfected until after the fall of the Babylonian empire in 539 BC. The defectiveness of early Babylonian astronomy may be gathered from the fact that as late as the 6th century BC an error of almost an entire month was made by the Babylonian astronomers in the attempt to determine through calculation the beginning of a certain year. For a long time the rise of any serious study of astronomy did not go beyond what was needed for the purely practical purposes that the priests as "inspectors" of the heavens (as they were also the "inspectors" of the sacrificial livers) had in mind.[citation needed]

Source : Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

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In the third place, we have, probably as early as the days of Khammurabi, i.e. c. 2000 BC, the combination of prominent groups of stars with outlines of pictures fantastically put together, but there is no evidence that prior to 700 BC more than a number of the constellations of our zodiac had become part of the current astronomy.

Astrology in the Hellenistic world

Hellenistic astrology is a tradition of horoscopic astrology that was developed and practiced in Hellenistic Egypt and the Mediterranean, whose texts were written in Greek (or sometimes Latin), mainly around the late 2nd or early 1st century B.C.E. Although the Hellenistic period properly ended in the early part of the Common Era, the type of astrology that developed during the early Hellenistic period was practiced in essentially its original form until the 6th or 7th century C.E. and so is commonly referred to as 'Hellenistic astrology'.

The origins of much of the astrology that would later develop in Asia, Europe and the Middle East are found among the ancient Babylonians and their system of celestial omens that began to be compiled around the middle of the 2nd millennium BCE. This system later spread either directly or indirectly through the Babylonians to other areas such as, China and Greece where it merged with preexisting indigenous forms of astrology. It came to Greece initially as early as the middle of the 4th century BCE, and then around the late 2nd or early 1st century BCE after the Alexandrian conquests this Babylonian astrology was mixed with the Egyptian tradition of Decanic astrology to create horoscopic astrology. This system is labeled as "horoscopic astrology" because, unlike the previous traditions, it employed the use of the ascendant, otherwise known as the horoskopos ("hour marker") in Greek, and the twelve celestial houses which are derived from it. The focus on the natal chart of the individual, as derived from the position of the planets and stars at the time of birth, represents the most significant contribution and shift of emphasis that was made during the Hellenistic tradition of astrology.

Source : Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

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This new form of astrology quickly spread across the ancient world into Europe, and the Middle East. This complex system of astrology was developed to such an extent that later traditions made few fundamental changes to the core of the system, and many of the same components of horoscopic astrology that were developed during the Hellenistic period are still in use by astrologers in modern times.

Several Hellenistic astrologers ascribe its creation to a mythical sage named Hermes Trismegistus. Hermes is said to have written several major texts which formed the basis of the art or its evolution from the system of astrology that was inherited from the Babylonians and the Egyptians. Several authors cite Hermes as being the first to outline the houses and their meaning, and thus the houses are usually thought to date back to the very beginning of the Hellenistic tradition and indeed they are one of the major defining factors which separate Hellenistic astrology and other forms of horoscopic astrology from Babylonian astrology and other traditions in different parts of the world. This system of horoscopic astrology was then passed to another mythical figure named Asclepius to who some of the Hermetic writings are addressed.

According to Firmicus Maternus, the system was subsequently handed down to an Egyptian pharaoh named Nechepso and his priest Petosiris. They are said to have written several major textbooks which explicated the system and it is from this text that many of the later Hellenistic astrologers draw from and cite directly. This system formed the basis of all later forms of horoscopic astrology

After the occupation by Alexander the Great in 332BC, Egypt came under Greek rule and influence, and it was in Alexandrian Egypt where horoscopic astrology first appeared. The endeavor to trace the horoscope of the individual from the position of the planets and stars at the time of birth represents the most significant contribution of the Greeks to astrology. This system can be labeled as "horoscopic astrology" because it employed the use of the ascendant, otherwise known as the horoskopos in Greek.

The system was carried to such a degree of perfection that later ages

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made but few additions of an essential character to the genethliology or drawing up of the individual horoscope by the Greek astrologers. Particularly important in the development of horoscopic astrology was the astrologer and astronomer Ptolemy , whose work, the Tetrabiblos laid the basis of the Western astrological tradition. Under the Greeks and Ptolemy in particular, the planets, Houses, and Signs of the zodiac were rationalized and their function set down in a way that has changed little to the present day. Ptolemy's work on astronomy was the basis of Western teachings on the subject for the next 1,300 years.

To the Greek astronomer Hipparchus belongs the credit of the discovery (c. 130 BC) of the theory of the precession of the equinoxes, for a knowledge of which among the Babylonians we find no definite proof. Babylonia or Chaldea was so identified with astrology that "Chaldaean wisdom" became among Greeks and Romans the synonym of divination through the planets and stars, and it is perhaps not surprising that in the course of time to be known as a "Chaldaean" carried with it frequently the suspicion of charlatanry and of more or less willful deception. Astrology in Egypt developed under the Ptolemies after the conquest of Egypt by Alexander the Great.

Astrology and the sciences

Astrology played an important part in Medieval medicine; most educated physicians were trained in at least the basics of astrology to use in their practice.

Partly in further development of views unfolded in Babylonia, but chiefly under Greek influences, the scope of astrology was enlarged until it was brought into connection with practically all of the known sciences: botany, chemistry, zoology, mineralogy, anatomy and medicine. Colours, metals, stones, plants, drugs and animal life of all kinds were each associated with one or another of the planets and placed under their rulership.

By this process of combination, the entire realm of the natural sciences was translated into the language of astrology with the purpose of seeing in all phenomena signs indicative of what the future had in store.

Source : Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

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The fate of the individual led to the association of the planets with parts of the body and so with Medical astrology. .

From the planets the same association of ideas was applied to the constellations of the zodiac . The zodiac came to be regarded as the prototype of the human body, the different parts of which all had their corresponding section in the zodiac itself. The head was placed in the first sign of the zodiac, Aries, the Ram; and the feet in the last sign, Pisces, the Fishes. Between these two extremes the other parts and organs of the body were distributed among the remaining signs of the zodiac. In later phases of astrology the signs of the zodiac are sometimes placed on a par with the planets themselves, so far as their importance for the individual horoscope is concerned.



Astrology played an important part in Medieval medicine; most educated physicians were trained in at least the basics of astrology to use in their practice.

With human anatomy thus connected with the planets, with constellations, and with single stars, medicine became an integral part of astrology. Diseases and disturbances of the ordinary functions of the organs were attributed to the influences of planets, constellations and stars.

Source : Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

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Astrology in the Islamic world

The medieval Arabs took a keen interest in the study of heavens; partly because they considered the celestial bodies to be divine, partly because the dwellers of desert-regions often travelled at night, and relied upon knowledge of the constellations for guidance in their journeys.[1] After the advent of Islam, the Muslims needed to determine the time of the prayers, the direction of the Ka'bah, and the correct orientation of the mosque, all of which helped give a religious impetus to the study of astronomy and contributed towards the belief that the heavenly bodies were influential upon terrestrial affairs as well as the human condition.

The science dealing with such influences was termed astrology (Arabic: علم النجوم *Ilm an-Nujūm*), a discipline contained within the field of astronomy (more broadly known as علم الفلك *Ilm al-Hay'ah* 'the science of formation [of the heavens]'). The principles of these studies were rooted in Arabian, Persian, Babylonian, Hellenistic and Indian traditions and both were developed by the Arabs following their establishment of a magnificent observatory and library of astronomical and astrological texts at Baghdad in the 8th century.

Throughout the medieval period the practical application of astrology was subject to deep philosophical debate by Muslim religious scholars and scientists. Astrological prognostications nevertheless required a fair amount of exact scientific expertise and the quest for such knowledge within this era helped to provide the incentive for the study and development of astronomy.

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*Study of the moon and stars. Ottoman miniature from 17th century.
Istanbul University Library*

Medieval Islamic astronomy and astrology continued Hellenistic and Roman era traditions based on Ptolemy's *Almagest*. Centres of learning in medicine and astronomy/astrology were set up in Baghdad and Damascus, and the Caliph Al-Mansur of Baghdad established a major observatory and library in the city, making it the world's astronomical centre. During this time knowledge of astronomy was greatly increased, and the astrolabe was invented by Al Fazari. Many modern star names are derived from their Arabic names.

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Albumasur or Abu Ma'shar (805 - 885) was the greatest of the Persian astrologers. His treatise 'Introductoriam in Astronomium' spoke of how 'only by observing the great diversity of planetary motions can we comprehend the unnumbered varieties of change in this world'. The 'Introductoriam' was one of the first books to find its way in translation through Spain and into Europe in the Middle Ages, and was highly influential in the revival of astrology and astronomy there.

Muslims also combined the disciplines of medicine and astrology by being linking the curative properties of herbs with specific zodiac signs and planets.[2] Mars, for instance, was considered hot and dry and so ruled plants with a hot or pungent taste - like hellebore, tobacco or mustard. These beliefs were adopted by European herbalists like Culpeper right up until the development of modern medicine.

The Muslims also developed a system called Arabic parts by which the difference between the ascendant and each planet of the zodiac was calculated. This new position then became a 'part' of some kind.[3] For example the 'part of fortune' is found by taking the difference between the sun and the ascendant and adding it to the moon. If the 'part' thus calculated was in the 10th House in Libra, for instance, it suggested that money could be made from some kind of partnership.

The calendar introduced by Omar Khayyám Neyshabouri, based on the classical zodiac, remains in effect in Afghanistan and Iran as the official Persian calendar.

The Almagest together with the original contributions of 9th to 10th century Islamic astronomy such as the astrolabe was introduced to Christian Europe beginning in the 11th century, by contact with Islamic Spain.

Source : Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

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Another notable astrologer and astronomer was Qutb al-Din al Shirazi (1236–1311). He wrote critiques of Ptolemy's *Almagest* and produced two prominent works on astronomy: 'The Limit of Accomplishment Concerning Knowledge of the Heavens' in 1281 and 'The Royal Present' in 1284, both of which commented upon and improved on Ptolemy's work, particularly in the field of planetary motion. Al-Shirazi was also the first person to give the correct scientific explanation for the formation of a rainbow.

Ulugh Beyg was a fifteenth-century Persian Sultan and also a mathematician and astronomer. He built an observatory in 1428 and produced the first original star map since Ptolemy, which corrected the position of many stars, and included many new ones.

Astrology in Medieval and Renaissance Europe

Astrology became embodied in the Kabbalistic lore of Jews and Christians[dubious – discuss], and came to be the substance of the astrology of the Middle Ages. In time this would lead to Church prelates and Protestant princes using the services of astrologers. This system was referred to as "judicial astrology", and its practitioners believed that the position of heavenly bodies influenced the affairs of mankind. It was placed on a similar footing of equality and esteem with "natural astrology", the latter name for the study of the motions and phenomena of the heavenly bodies and their effect on the weather.

During the Middle Ages astrologers were called mathematici. Historically the term mathematicus was used to denote a person proficient in astrology, astronomy, and mathematics. Inasmuch as some practice of medicine was based to some extent on astrology, physicians learned some mathematics and astrology.

Source : Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

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In the 13th century, Johannes de Sacrobosco (c. 1195–1256) and Guido Bonatti from Forlì (Italy) were the most famous astronomers and astrologers in Great Britain (the first) and in Europe (the second): the book *Liber Astronomicus* by Bonatti was reputed "the most important astrological work produced in Latin in the 13th century" (Lynn Thorndike). Jerome Cardan (1501–76) hated Martin Luther, and so changed his birthday in order to give him an unfavourable horoscope.[dubious – discuss] In Cardan's times, as in those of Augustus, it was a common practice for men to conceal the day and hour of their birth, till, like Augustus, they found a complaisant astrologer.

During the Renaissance, a form of "scientific astrology" evolved in which court astrologers would compliment their use of horoscopes with genuine discoveries about the nature of the universe. Many individuals now credited with having overturned the old astrological order, such as Galileo Galilei, Tycho Brahe and Johannes Kepler, were themselves practising astrologers.

But, as a general rule, medieval and Renaissance astrologers did not give themselves the trouble of reading the stars, but contented themselves with telling fortunes by faces. They practised chiromancy (also known as palmistry), and relied on afterwards drawing a horoscope to suit.

As physiognomists (see physiognomy) their talent was undoubted, and according to Lucilio Vanini there was no need to mount to the house-top to cast a nativity. "Yes," he says, "I can read his face; by his hair and his forehead it is easy to guess that the sun at his birth was in the sign of Libra and near Venus. Nay, his complexion shows that Venus touches Libra. By the rules of astrology he could not lie."

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The present distinction between astronomy and astrology is only relatively recent. In fact, most of those considered to be the founders of modern scientific astronomy, including Nicolaus Copernicus (1473 - 1543), Johannes Kepler (1571 - 1630) and Isaac Newton (1642 - 1727) were competent astrologers. The origins of astrology lie long before these intellectual giants however, and although the starry heavens have been used by man as a guide since time immemorial, the art now designated as astrology is considered to have originated with the Chaldeans, in Babylon, Mesopotamia, (now Iraq) around the fourth millennium BC. It was practiced in the temples, where it was blended with religious elements and was an important resource for farmers as well as physicians. It is thought to have spread to Egypt around the third millennium BC, as the first records of its use by Egyptian rulers as a predictive tool for agricultural events such as the likelihood of good or bad harvests, and the fate of the nation in relation to its fortunes in war and peace, are dated at this time. It may well be however, that comprehensive knowledge of the heavenly bodies in Ancient Egypt is much older, as recent study of the pyramids has brought new evidence to light that indicates that the principal Giza monuments form an accurate terrestrial "map" of the three stars of the "belt" of the constellation of Orion, as these appeared in the sky in 10,500 BC.

Inevitably the knowledge of the Egyptians and Chaldeans spread throughout the ancient and later the classical world. It was easy for the ancient Greeks, who were great traders and seafarers, to see the potential benefits of astrology, and they adopted this at an early stage. By the 8th. century BC, astrology had already become so important in Greek life, that the Greek poet Hesiod could write in his long poem "Works and Days", that the positions of the planets and stars should be used to determine propitious times for the commencement of all kinds of endeavors. By the 5th. century BC astrology had become an inextricable part of Greek medicine and it is recorded in the writings of Hippocrates (460 - 375 BC), who is considered to be the father of modern medicine, that he taught astrology to his students so that they could determine the critical days of an illness.

Source : Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

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As the Roman Empire expanded its frontiers, it incorporated Greece at an early stage of its conquests, with the result that Greek culture with its highly advanced sciences became a source of considerable influence on Roman culture. With that influence came astrology, which rapidly grew in popularity and quickly became an increasingly important part of everyday life, reaching its zenith in imperial times, when it was used by people at every level of Roman society and was interwoven into almost every part of Roman culture and life.

Perhaps the most important work on astrology was written in the first half of the 2nd century AD by the Greek philosopher Ptolemy. It is a colossal compilation of works from previous centuries that consists of two parts: The Almagest and The Tetrabiblos. The Almagest deals with the astronomical movement of the Sun, Moon, and planets, while the Tetrabiblos deals with astrological interpretations of these movements. As many ancient works on astrology were destroyed in the disastrous fires at the Great Library of Alexandria, these books now represent the most complete extant record of ancient astronomy and astrology.

As the power of Roman Empire waned and Europe entered the Middle Ages, much of the influence of Roman culture remained. To this was now added a new cultural force, that of the Arabic Empire that had conquered the Eastern Roman Empire, including its main centre of learning, Alexandria, and by virtue of this had inherited the Greek wisdom traditions, which they soon expanded and enhanced. These advances were readily absorbed by Middle Age Europe and became incorporated into its cultural philosophy, bringing about considerable progress in science, medicine and alchemy - the forerunner of modern chemistry. The philosophy that bound all these disciplines together however, was astrology, as may be seen from the medical terms that were in use in the 13th. to 17th. centuries, that defined different human characteristics according to astrological influences from the Sun, Moon and planets, such as mercurial, saturnine, lunatic, venereal, jovial and martial. These terms are still in common use today and remain a tribute to the work of those times.

Source : Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

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After the 17th. century, astrology's influence on the sciences began to decline. The reasons for this were varied. A new scientific materialism was dawning that rejected everything that did not appear to have an obvious physical explanation. The realization that the earth was not the centre of the universe, but like the other planets revolved around a simple and ordinary star in a universe of a myriad stars, somehow seemed to undermine the belief in astrology, even though a number of eminent minds of the time, including Sir Isaac Newton (1642 - 1727), pointed out that astrology is about the relationship between planets, and could therefore be valid no matter which heavenly body was at the center of the solar system. As a result it was used for little more than the publication of farmer's Almanacs for predicting the weather, and for entertainment in the form of regular "starsign" columns in newspapers and periodicals. Some - albeit very few - genuine consultant astrologers do remain as do those Traditional Healers that use their knowledge of astrology for medical purposes.

India



Statue of Aryabhata on the grounds of Inter-University Centre for Astronomy and Astrophysics, Pune. As there is no known information regarding his appearance, any image of Aryabhata originates from an artist's conception.

Source : Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

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Historical Indian astronomy (Jyotiṣa) develops as a discipline of Vedāṅga or one of the "auxiliary disciplines" associated with the study of the Vedas. The oldest extant text of astronomy is the treatise by Lagadha, dated to the Mauryan era (final centuries BCE).

As with other traditions, the original application of astronomy was thus religious, and would be considered astrology in modern terminology. Hindu astrology was heavily influenced by Hellenistic astrology during the early centuries of the Common Era, notably by the Yavanajataka, a Sanskrit translation of a Greek text disseminated from the 2nd century.

Indian astronomy flowered in the 6th century, with Aryabhata, whose Aryabhatiya represented the pinnacle of astronomical knowledge at the time, and significantly influenced medieval Muslim astronomy. Other astronomers of the classical era who further elaborated on Aryabhata's work include Brahmagupta, Varahamihira and Lalla. But an identifiable native Indian astronomical tradition remains active throughout the medieval period and into the 16th or 17th century, especially within the Kerala school of astronomy and mathematics.

Some cosmological concepts are present in the Vedas, as are notions of the movement of heavenly bodies and the course of the year. As in other traditions, there is a close association of astronomy and religion during the early history of the science, astronomical observation being necessitated by spacial and temporal requirements of correct performance of religious ritual. Thus, the Shulba Sutras, texts dedicated to altar construction, discusses basic astronomical concepts such as the cardinal directions. Jyotiṣa Vedāṅga as the science of observing the heavens in

Source : Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

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order to correctly perform Vedic sacrifice arises after the end of the Vedic period, during ca. the 6th to 4th centuries BCE, and the work of Lagadha is informed by these earlier traditions.

By the early centuries of the Common Era, Indo-Greek influence on the Vedanga tradition becomes evident with texts such as Romaka Siddhānta and Yavanajataka. Later astronomers mention the existence of various siddhantas during this period, among them a text known as the Surya Siddhanta. But these weren't fixed texts but rather an oral tradition of knowledge, and their content is not extant. The text today known as Surya Siddhanta dates to the Gupta period and was received by Aryabhata.

The classical era of Indian astronomy begins in the late Gupta era, in the 5th to 6th centuries. The Pañcasiddhāntikā (Varahimira, 505 CE) approximates the method for determination of the meridian direction from any three positions of the shadow using Gnomon. By the time of Aryabhata I the motion of planets was treated to be elliptical rather than circular.

Other topics included definitions of different units of time, eccentric models of planetary motion, epicyclic models of planetary motion, and planetary longitude corrections for various terrestrial locations.

Calendars

The hindu calendar used in ancient times has undergone many changes in the process of regionalization, and today there are several regional Indian calendars, as well as an Indian national calendar. Nepali calendar, Bengali calendar, Malayalam calendar, Tamil calendar, Telugu calendar, Kannada calendar etc. are some prominent regional Hindu calendars.

Most of these calendars are inherited from a system first enunciated in Vedanga Jyotisha of Lagadha, a late BCE adjunct to the Vedas, standardized in the Surya Siddhanta (3rd century CE) and subsequently reformed by astronomers such as Aryabhata (499 CE), Varahamihira (6th c. CE), and Bhaskara (12th c. CE). Differences and regional variations

Source : Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

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abound in these computations, but the following is a general overview of Hindu lunisolar calendar

Day

In the Hindu calendar, the day starts with local sunrise. It is allotted five "properties", called angas. They are:

- the tithi (one of 30 divisions of a synodic month) active at sunrise
- the vaasara, vaar (ravi-vaar, som-vaar, etc.) or weekday
- the nakshatra (one of 27 divisions of the celestial ecliptic) in which the moon resides at sunrise
- the yoga (one of 27 divisions based on the ecliptic longitude of the sun and moon) active at sunrise
- the karana (divisions based on tithis) active at sunrise.

Together these are called the panchāngas (Sanskrit: pancha = five). An explanation of the terms follows.

Vaasara

Vaasara refers to the days of the week and bear striking similarities with the names of the week in many western cultures:

No.	Sanskrit name of the weekday	English & Latin names of the weekday	Celestial objec
1	Ravi vāsara रविवार	Sunday/dies Solis	Ravi = Sun
2	Soma vāsara सोमवार	Monday/dies Lunae	Soma = Moon

Source : *Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia*

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3	Mangala vāsara मंगलवासर	Tuesday/dies Martis	Mangala = Mar
4	Budha vāsara बुधवासर	Wednesday/dies Mercurii	Budha = Mercury
5	Guru vāsara गुरुवासर or Bruhaspati vāsara बृहस्पतिवासरः	Thursday/dies Iovis	Guru (Brihaspati) = Jupiter
6	Shukra vāsara शुक्रवासर	Friday/dies Veneris	Shukra = Venus
7	Shani vāsara शनिवासर	Saturday/dies Saturnis	Shani = Saturn

The term -vaasara is often realized as vaara or vaar in Sanskrit-derived languages. There are many variations of the names in the regional languages, mostly using alternate names of the celestial bodies involved.

Nakshatra

The ecliptic is divided into 27 nakshatras, which are variously called lunar houses or asterisms. These reflect the moon's cycle against the fixed stars, 27 days and 7³/₄ hours, the fractional part being compensated by an intercalary 28th nakshatra. Nakshatra computation appears to have been well known at the time of the Rig Veda (2nd–1st millennium BCE).

The ecliptic is divided into the nakshatras eastwards starting from a reference point which is traditionally a point on the ecliptic directly opposite the star Spica called Chitrā in Sanskrit. (Other slightly different definitions exist.) It is called Meshādi or the "start of Aries"; this is when

Source : Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

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the equinox — where the ecliptic meets the equator — was in Aries (today it is in Pisces, 28 degrees before Aries starts). The difference between Meshādi and the present equinox is known as ayanāngsha or fraction of ecliptic. Given the 25,800 year cycle for the precession of the equinoxes, the equinox was directly opposite Spica in 285 CE, around the date of the Surya Siddhanta.

The nakshatras with their corresponding regions of sky are given below, following Basham.[4] As always, there are many versions with minor differences. The names on the right-hand column give roughly the correspondence of the nakshatras to modern names of stars. Note that nakshatras are (in this context) not just single stars but are segments on the ecliptic characterised by one or more stars. Hence there are more than one star mentioned for each nakshatra.

#	Sanskrut, Hindi,Marathi name संस्कृतम् ,हिन्दी,मराठी	Malayalam name □□□□□□	Tamil name தமிழ்	Telugu name తెలుగు	Kannada name ಕನ್ನಡ	Western star name
1	Ashvinī अश्विनी	Ashvati □□□□□□	Aswini அஸ்வினி	Aswini అశ్వినీ	Ashwini ಅಶ್ವಿನಿ	β and γ Arietis
2	Bharanī भरणी	Bharaṇi □□□□	Baraṇi பரணி	Bharani భరణి	Bharaṇi ಭರಣಿ	35, 39, and 41 Arietis
3	Krittikā कृत्तिका	Kārttika □□□□□□□□	Kārthikai கார்த்திகை	Krithika కృత్తిక	Krithika ಕೃತ್ತಿಕೆ	Pleiades
4	Rohini रोहिणी	Rōhiṇi □□□□□□	Rōhiṇi ரோகிணி	Rohini రోహిణి	Rohini ರೋಹಿಣಿ	Aldebaran
5	Mrigashīrsha	Makayiram □□□□□□	Mirugasīrida m	Mrigashīr a	Mrigashīra ಮೃಗಶಿರ	λ, φ Orionis

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	मृगशीर्षा		மிருகசீரிடம்	మృగశిర		
		Ātira or Tiruvātira				
6	Ārdrā आर्द्रा	□□□□ (□□□□□□□□ □□)	Thiruvādhirai திருவாதிரை	Arudra அருட్ర	Aridra ఆరిద్ర	Betelgeuse
7	Punarvasu पुनर्वसु	Puṇartam □□□□□□	Punarpoosa புனர்பூசம்	Punarvasu పునర్వసు	Punarvasu పునర్వసు	Castor and Pollux
8	Pushya पुष्य	Pūyam □□□□	Poosam பூசம்	Pushyami పుష్యమి	Pushya పుష్య	γ, δ and θ Cancri
9	Āshleshā आश्लेषा / आश्लेषा	Āyilyam □□□□□□□□	Ayilyam ஆயிலியம்	Āshleshā ఆశ్లేష	Aslesha ఆశ్లేష	δ, ε, η, ρ, and σ Hydrae
10	Maghā मघा	Makam □□□□	Magam மகம்	Makha మఖ	Maghe మఘే	Regulus
11	Pūrva or Pūrva Phalgunī पूर्व फाल्गुनी	Pūram □□□□	Pooram பூரம்	Pūrva Phalgunī/P ubba పూర్వా ఫల్గుణి / పుబ్బ	Hubba ఘబ్బ	δ and θ Leonis
12	Uttara or Uttara Phalgunī उत्तर फाल्गुनी	Utram □□□□□□	Uthiram உத்திரம்	Uttara Phalgunī/ Uttara ఉత్తర ఫల్గుణి / ఉత్తర	Utthara ఁత్తర	Denebola
13	Hasta हस्त	Attam □□□□□□	Astham அஸ்தம்	Hasta హస్త	Hastha ఘస్త	α, β, γ, δ and ε Corvi
14	Chitrā चित्रा	Chittira (Chitra) □□□□□□□□ (□□□□□□)	Chithirai சித்திரை	Chitta చిత్త	Chittha ఛిత్త	Spica
15	Svāti स्वाती	Chōti □□□□	Swathi சுவாதி	Swathi స్వాతి	Swarhi స్వౌతి	Arcturus
16	Vishākhā	Vishākham	Visakam	Vishākhā	Vishakhe	α, β, γ and ι Librae

Source : Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

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17	विशाखा Anurādhā अनुराधा	□□□□□□ Anizham □□□□□	விசாகம் Anusham அனுஷம்	विशाख Anurādhā అనురాధ	विशाखी Anuradha అనురాధ	β, δ and π Scorpioni s
18	Jyeshtha ज्येष्ठा	□□□□□□ (Trikkēṭṭa) □□□□□□ (□□□□□□□□ □□)	Kettai கேட்டை	Jyeshtha జ్యేష్ఠ	Jesta జేష్ఠ	α, σ, and τ Scorpionis
19	Mūla मूल	Mūlam □□□□□	Mūlam மூலம்	Moola मूल	Moola మూల	ε, ζ, η, θ, ι, κ, λ, μ and <u>vScorpi</u> onis
20	Pūrva Ashādhā पूर्वाषाढा	Pūrāṭam □□□□□□	Pūradam பூராடம்	Pūrva Ashādhā పూర్వాషాడ	Poorvasha da పుర్వాషాడ	δ and ε Sagittarii
21	Uttara Ashādhā उत्तराषाढा	Utrāṭam □□□□□□□	Uthirādam உத்திராடம்	Uttara Ashādhā ఉత్తరాషాడ	Uttharash ada ఁత్తరాషాడ	ζ and σ Sagittarii
22	Shravana श्रवण	Tiruvōnam □□□□ (□□□□□□□□ □)	Tiruvōnam திருவோணம்	Shravana m శ్రవణం	Shravana శ్రావణ	α, β and γ Aquilae
23	Shravisht hā or Dhanis hta श्रविष्ठा or धनिष्ठा	Avittam □□□□□□□	Avittam அவிட்டம்	Dhanishta ధనిష్ఠ	Dhanishta ధనిష్ఠ	α to δ Delphinus
24	Shatabhis hā or Shatatara ka शतभिषक् / शततारका	Chatayam □□□□□	Sadayam சதாயம்	Shatabhis hām శతభిషం	shathatha ra శథతార	γ Aquarii
25	Pūrva Bhādrapa	Pūruruttāti □□□□□□□□	Pūruruttādhī பூரட்டாதி	Pūrva Bhādra	poorvabad hra	α and β Pegasi

Source : Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

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	dā				
	पूर्वभाद्रपदा / □□□□		పూర్వాభాద్ర	ಪೂರ್ವಾ ಭಾದ್ರ	
	पूर्वप्रोष्ठपदा				
	Uttara				
	Bhādrapa Uttara				
26	dā □□□□□□□□	Uttarādhi	Uttara	Uttharaba	γ Pegasi and α Andr
	उत्तरभाद्रपदा / □□	உத்திரட்டாதி	Bhādra	dhra	omedae
	उत्तरप्रोष्ठपदा		ఉత్తరాభాద్ర	ಉತ್ತರಾ ಭಾದ್ರ	
27	Revati □□□□□	Rēvathi	Rēvathi	Revati	ζ Piscium
	रेवती	ರೇವತಿ	ರೇವತಿ	ರೇವತಿ	

An additional 28th intercalary nakshatra, Abhijit (अभिजित्)(α, ε and ζ Lyrae - Vega - between Uttarasharha and Sravana. Last two (third and fourth) Padas of Uttrashada and first two (first and second) Padas of Sravana are considered to be Abhijit. Unless specifically mentioned it is not included in the list of the 27 constellations. The nakshatra in which the moon lies at the time of sunrise of a day is the nakshatra for the day.

Yoga

The Sanskrit word Yoga means "union," but in astronomical calculations it is used in the sense of "alignment." First one computes the angular distance along the ecliptic of each object, taking the ecliptic to start at Mesha or Aries (Meshādi, as defined above): this is called the longitude of that object. The longitude of the sun and the longitude of the moon are added, and normalized to a value ranging between 0° to 360° (if greater than 360, one subtracts 360). This sum is divided into 27 parts. Each part will now equal 800' (where ' is the symbol of the arcminute which means 1/60 of a degree). These parts are called the yogas. They are labeled:

Vishkumbha

Prīti

Āyushmān

Saubhāgya

Shobhana

Atiganda

Sukarman

Dhriti

Shūla

Source : Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

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Ganda
Vridhhi
Dhruva
Vyāghāta
Harshana
Vajra
Siddhi
Vyatipāta
Varigha
Parigha
Shiva
Siddha
Sādhya
Shubha
Shukla
Brāhma
Māhendra
Vaidhriti

Again, minor variations may exist. The yoga that is active during sunrise of a day is the yoga for the day.

Karana

A karaṇa is half of a tithi. To be precise, a karana is the time required for the angular distance between the sun and the moon to increase in steps of 6° starting from 0°. (Compare with the definition of a tithi above.)

Since the tithis are thirty in number, one would expect there to be sixty karanas. But there are only eleven. There are four "fixed" karanas and seven "repeating" karanas. The four "fixed" karanas are:

Kinstughna
Śakuni
Catuspāda
Nāgava

The seven "repeating" karanas are:

Bhava

Source : Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

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Bālava

Kaulava

Taitula

Garaja

Vāñija

Viṣṭi (Bhadra)

Now the first half of the first tithi (of the bright fortnight) is always Kimstughna karana. Hence this karana is "fixed".

Next, the seven repeating karanas repeat eight times to cover the next 56 half-tithis. Thus these are the "repeating" karanas.

The three remaining half-tithis take the remaining "fixed" karanas in order. Thus these are also "fixed".

Thus one gets sixty karanas from eleven.

The karana active during sunrise of a day is the karana for the day.

Months of the lunisolar calendar

When a new moon occurs before sunrise on a day, that day is said to be the first day of the lunar month. So it is evident that the end of the lunar month will coincide with a new moon. A lunar month has 29 or 30 days (according to the movement of the moon).

The tithi at sunrise of a day is the only label of the day. There is no running day number from the first day to the last day of the month. This has some unique results, as explained below:

Sometimes two successive days have the same tithi. In such a case, the latter is called an adhika tithi where adhika means "extra". Sometimes, one tithi may never touch a sunrise, and hence no day will be labeled by that tithi. It is then said to be a tithi kshaya where kshaya means "loss".

Source : Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

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Month names

There are twelve months in Hindu lunar Calendar:

Chaitra (चैत्र, चैत)

Vaishākha (वैशाख, बैसाख)

Jyaishtha (ज्येष्ठ, जेठ)

Āshādha (आषाढ, आषाढ)

Shrāvana (श्रावण, सावन)

Bhaadra or, Bhādrapada (भाद्रपद, भादो)

Āshwin (अश्विन)

Kārtika (कार्तिक, कार्तक)

Agrahayana or, Mārgashīrsha (मार्गशीर्ष, अग्रहण)

Pausha (पौष)

Māgah (माघ)

Phālguna(फाल्गुन)

Determining which name a lunar month takes is somewhat indirect. It is based on the rāshi (Zodiac sign) into which the sun transits within a lunar month, i.e. before the new moon ending the month.

There are twelve rāshi names, there are twelve lunar month names. When the sun transits into the Mesha rāshi in a lunar month, then the name of the lunar month is Chaitra. When the sun transits into Vrishabha, then the lunar month is Vaishākh. So on.

If the transits of the Sun through various constellations of the zodiac (Rashi) are used, then we get Solar months, which do not shift with reference to the Gregorian calendar. The Solar months along with the corresponding Hindu seasons and Gregorian months are:

(Rashi)				
Saur Maas	Ritu	Gregorian	Zodiac	
(solar months)	(season)	months		

Source : Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

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Mesha	Vasant	March/April	Aries
Vrishabha	(spring)	April/May	Taurus
Mithuna	Grishma	May/June	Gemini
Karkata	(summer)	June/July	Cancer
Simha	Varsha	July/Aug	Leo
Kanya	(monsoon)	Aug/Sept	Virgo
Tula	Sharad	Sept/Oct	Libra
Vrishchika	(autumn)	Oct/Nov	Scorpius
Dhanur	Hemanta	Nov/Dec.	Sagittarius
	(autumn-		
Makara	winter)	Dec/Jan	Capricornus
Kumbha	Shishir	Jan/Feb	Aquarius
Meena	(Winter-Spring)	Feb/Mar	Pisces

The Sanskrit grammatical derivation of the lunar month names Chaitra etc., is: the (lunar) month which has its central full moon occurring at or near the nakshatra Chitrā is called Chaitra. Similarly, for the nakshatras Vishākhā, Jyeshthā, (Pūrva) Ashādhā, Shravan, Bhādrapad, Ashvinī (old name Ashvayuj), Krittikā, Mrigashīrsha, Pushya, Meghā and (Pūrva/Uttara) Phalgunī the names Vaishākh etc. are derived.

The lunar months are split into two pakshas of 15 days. The waxing paksha is called shukla paksha, light half, and the waning paksha the krishna paksha, dark half. There are two different systems for making the lunar calendar:

amavasyanta or mukhya mana system - a month begins with a new moon, mostly followed in the southern states

purnimanta or gauna mana system - a month begins with a full moon, followed more in the North.

Extra months

When the sun does not at all transit into any rāshi but simply keeps moving

Source : Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

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within a rāshi in a lunar month (i.e. before a new moon), then that lunar month will be named according to the first upcoming transit. It will also take the epithet of adhik or "extra". For example, if a lunar month elapsed without a solar transit and the next transit is into Mesha, then this month without transit is labeled adhik Chaitra. The next month will be labeled according to its transit as usual and will get the epithet nija ("original") or shuddha ("clean"). [Note that an adhik māsa (month) is the first of two whereas an adhika tithi is the second of two.]

Extra Month, or adhik mas māsa (mas = lunar month) falls every 32.5 months. It is also known as purushottam mas, so as to give it a devotional name. Thus 12 Hindu mas (māsa) is equal to approximate 356 days, while solar year have 365 or 366 (in leap year) which create difference of 9 to 10 days, which is offset every 3rd year. No adhik mas falls during Kartik to Magh.

A month long fair is celebrated in Machhegaun during adhik māsa. It is general belief that one can wash away all one's sins by taking a bath in the Machhenarayan's pond.

Lost months

If the sun transits into two rāshis within a lunar month, then the month will have to be labeled by both transits and will take the epithet kshay or "loss". There is considered to be a "loss" because in this case, there is only one month labeled by both transits. If the sun had transited into only one raashi in a lunar month as is usual, there would have been two separate months labeled by the two transits in question.

For example, if the sun transits into Mesh and Vrishabh in a lunar month, then it will be called Chaitra-Vaishaakh kshaya. There will be no separate months labeled Chaitra and Vaishākh.

A kshay māsa occurs very rarely. Known gaps between occurrence of

Source : Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

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kshaya māsas are 19 and 141 years. The last was in 1983. January 15 through February 12 were Pausha-Māgha kshay. February 13 onwards was (adhik) Phālguna.

Special Case:

If there is no solar transit in one lunar month but there are two transits in the next lunar month, the first month will be labeled by the first transit of the second month and take the epithet adhik and the next month will be labeled by both its transits as is usual for a kshay māsa

This is a very very rare occurrence. The last was in 1315. October 8 to November 5 were adhik Kārtik. November 6 to December 5 were Kārtik-Mārgashirsh kshaya. December 6 onwards was Paush.

Religious observances in case of extra and lost months

Among normal months, adhika months, and kshaya months, the earlier are considered "better" for religious purposes. That means, if a festival should fall on the 10th tithi of the Āshvayuja month (this is called Vijayadashamī) and there are two Āshvayuja months caused by the existence of an adhika Āshvayuja, the first adhika month will not see the festival, and the festival will be observed only in the second nija month. However, if the second month is āshvayuja kshaya then the festival will be observed in the first adhika month itself.

When two months are rolled into one in the case of a kshaya māsa, the festivals of both months will also be rolled into this kshaya māsa. For example, the festival of Mahāshivarātri which is to be observed on the fourteenth tithi of the Māgha krishna paksha was, in 1983, observed on the corresponding tithi of Pausha-Māgha kshaya krishna paksha, since in that year, Pausha and Māgha were rolled into one, as mentioned above. When two months are rolled into one in the case of a kshaya māsa, the festivals

Source : Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

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of both months will also be rolled into this kshaya māsa.

China and East Asia

Chinese astrology is based on the traditional astronomy and calendars. The development of Chinese astrology is tied to that of astronomy, which came to flourish during the Han Dynasty (2nd century BC to 2nd century AD).

Chinese astrology has a close relation with Chinese philosophy (theory of the three harmony, heaven, earth and water) and different "principles" to Western: the wu xing teachings, yin and yang, astronomy: five planet, the 10 Celestial stems, the 12 Earthly Branches, the lunisolar calendar (moon calendar and sun calendar), the time calculation after year, month, day and shichen (時辰).

The 5 classical planets are associated with the Wu Xing:

Venus—Metal (White Tiger)

Jupiter—Wood (Azure Dragon)

Mercury—Water (Black Tortoise)

Mars—Fire (Vermilion Bird) (may or may not be associated with the phoenix which was also an imperial symbol along with the dragon)

Saturn—Earth (Yellow Dragon)

According to Chinese astrology, a person's destiny can be determined by the position of the major planets at the person's birth along with the positions of the Sun, Moon and comets and

Source : Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

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the person's time of birth and Zodiac Sign. The system of the twelve-year cycle of animal signs was built from observations of the orbit of Jupiter (the Year Star; simplified Chinese: 岁星; traditional Chinese: 歲星; pinyin: Suìxīng). Following the orbit of Jupiter around the sun, Chinese astronomers divided the celestial circle into 12 sections, and rounded it to 12 years (from 11.86). Jupiter is associated with the constellation Sheti (simplified Chinese: 摄提; traditional Chinese: 攝提- Boötes) and is sometimes called Sheti.

A laborious system of computing one's fate and destiny based on one's birthday, birth season, and birth hours, known as Zi Wei Dou Shu (simplified Chinese: 紫微斗数; traditional Chinese: 紫微斗數; pinyin: zǐwēidǒushù) is still used regularly in modern day Chinese astrology to divine one's fortune. The 28 Chinese constellations, Xiu (Chinese: 宿; pinyin: xiù), are quite different from the 88 Western constellations. For example, the Big Bear (Ursa Major) is known as Dou (Chinese: 斗; pinyin: dǒu); the belt of Orion is known as Shen (simplified Chinese: 参; traditional Chinese: 參; pinyin: shēn), or the "Happiness, Fortune, Longevity" trio of demigods. The seven northern constellations are referred to as Xuan Wu (Chinese: 玄武; pinyin: xúanwǔ). Xuan Wu is also known as the spirit of the northern sky or the spirit of Water in Taoism belief.

Source : Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

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In addition to astrological readings of the heavenly bodies, the stars in the sky form the basis of many fairy tales. For example, the Summer Triangle is the trio of the cowherd (Altair), the weaving maiden fairy (Vega), and the "tai bai" fairy (Deneb). The two forbidden lovers were separated by the silvery river (the Milky Way). Each year on the seventh day of the seventh month in the Chinese calendar, the birds form a bridge across the Milky Way. The cowherd carries their two sons (the two stars on each side of Altair) across the bridge to reunite with their fairy mother. The tai bai fairy acts as the chaperone of these two immortal lovers.

Luni-solar calendar

The 60-year cycle consists of two separate cycles interacting with each other. The first is the cycle of ten heavenly stems, namely the Five Elements (in order Wood, Fire, Earth, Metal, and Water) in their Yin and Yang forms.

The second is the cycle of the twelve Zodiac animal signs (生肖 shēngxiào) or Earthly Branches . They are in order as follows: the Rat, Ox, Tiger, Rabbit, Dragon, Snake, Horse, Goat, Monkey, Rooster, Dog, and Pig. In Vietnam the rabbit is replaced by the cat.

This combination creates the 60-year cycle due to the least amount of years (least common multiple) it would take to get from Yang Wood Rat to its next iteration, which always starts with Yang Wood Rat and ends with Yin Water Boar. Since the

Source : Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

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zodiac animal cycle of 12 is divisible by two, every zodiac sign can also only occur in either Yin or Yang: the dragon is always yang, the snake is always yin, etc. The current cycle began in 1984 (as shown in "Table of the sixty year calendar" below).

When trying to traverse the lunisolar calendar, an easy rule to follow is that years that end in an even number are yang, those that end with an odd number are yin. The cycle proceeds as follows:

If the year ends in 0 it is Yang Metal.

If the year ends in 1 it is Yin Metal.

If the year ends in 2 it is Yang Water.

If the year ends in 3 it is Yin Water.

If the year ends in 4 it is Yang Wood.

If the year ends in 5 it is Yin Wood.

If the year ends in 6 it is Yang Fire.

If the year ends in 7 it is Yin Fire.

If the year ends in 8 it is Yang Earth.

If the year ends in 9 it is Yin Earth.

However, since the (traditional) Chinese zodiac follows the (lunisolar) Chinese calendar, the switch-over date is the Chinese New Year, not January 1 as in the Gregorian calendar. Therefore, a person who was born in January or early February may have the sign of the previous year. For example, if a person was born in January 1970, his or her element would still be Yin Earth, not Yang Metal. Similarly, although 1990 was called the year of the horse, anyone born from January 1 to January 26, 1990, was in fact born in the Year of the Snake (the sign of the previous year), because the 1990 Year of the Horse did not begin until January 27, 1990. For this reason, many online sign calculators (and Chinese restaurant place mats) may give a person the wrong sign if he/she was born in January or early February.

The start of a new Zodiac is also celebrated on Chinese New Year along

Source : Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

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with many other customs.

Table of the sixty year calendar

The following table shows the 60-year cycle matched up to the Western calendar for the years 1924–2043 (see Sexagenary cycle article for years 1804–1923). This is only applied to Chinese Lunar calendar. The sexagenary cycle begins at lichun 'about February 4' according to some astrological sources

	Year 1924–1983	Associated Element	Heavenly Stem	Earthly Branch	Associated Animal	Year 1984–2043
1	Feb 05 1924–Jan 23 1925	Yang Wood	甲	子	Rat	Feb 02 1984–Feb 19 1985
2	Jan 24 1925–Feb 12 1926	Yin Wood	乙	丑	Ox	Feb 20 1985–Feb 08 1986
3	Feb 13 1926–Feb 01 1927	Yang Fire	丙	寅	Tiger	Feb 09 1986–Jan 28 1987
4	Feb 02 1927–Jan 22 1928	Yin Fire	丁	卯	Rabbit	Jan 29 1987–Feb 16 1988
5	Jan 23 1928–Feb 09 1929	Yang Earth	戊	辰	Dragon	Feb 17 1988–Feb 05 1989
6	Feb 10 1929–Jan 29 1930	Yin Earth	己	巳	Snake	Feb 06 1989–Jan 26 1990
7	Jan 30 1930–Feb 16 1931	Yang Metal	庚	午	Horse	Jan 27 1990–Feb 14 1991
8	Feb 17 1931–Feb	Yin	辛	未	Goat	Feb 15 1991–Feb 03

Source : Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

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	05 1932	Metal				1992
9	Feb 06 1932–Jan 25 1933	Yang Water	壬	申	Monkey	Feb 04 1992–Jan 22 1993
10	Jan 26 1933–Feb 13 1934	Yin Water	癸	酉	Rooster	Jan 23 1993– Feb 09 1994
11	Feb 14 1934–Feb 03 1935	Yang Wood	甲	戌	Dog	Feb 10 1994–Jan 30 1995
12	Feb 04 1935–Jan 23 1936	Yin Wood	乙	亥	Pig	Jan 31 1995–Feb 18 1996
13	Jan 24 1936–Feb 10 1937	Yang Fire	丙	子	Rat	Feb 19 1996–Feb 06 1997
14	Feb 11 1937–Jan 30 1938	Yin Fire	丁	丑	Ox	Feb 07 1997–Jan 27 1998
15	Jan 31 1938–Feb 18 1939	Yang Earth	戊	寅	Tiger	Jan 28 1998–Feb 15 1999
16	Feb 19 1939–Feb 07 1940	Yin Earth	己	卯	Rabbit	Feb 16 1999–Feb 04 2000
17	Feb 08 1940–Jan 26 1941	Yang Metal	庚	辰	Dragon	Feb 05 2000–Jan 23 2001
18	Jan 27 1941–Feb 14 1942	Yin Metal	辛	巳	Snake	Jan 24 2001–Feb 11 2002
19	Feb 15 1942–Feb 04 1943	Yang Water	壬	午	Horse	Feb 12 2002–Jan 31 2003
20	Feb 05 1943–Jan 24 1944	Yin Water	癸	未	Goat	Feb 01 2003–Jan 21 2004
21	Jan 25 1944–Feb 12 1945	Yang Wood	甲	申	Monkey	Jan 22 2004–Feb 08 2005
22	Feb 13 1945–Feb 01 1946	Yin Wood	乙	酉	Rooster	Feb 09 2005–Jan 28 2006
23	Feb 02 1946–Jan 21 1947	Yang Fire	丙	戌	Dog	Jan 29 2006–Feb 17 2007
24	Jan 22 1947–Feb 09 1948	Yin Fire	丁	亥	Pig	Feb 18 2007–Feb 06 2008

Source : Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

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25	Feb 10 1948–Jan 28 1949	Yang Earth	戊	子	Rat	Feb 07 2008–Jan 25 2009
26	Jan 29 1949–Feb 16 1950	Yin Earth	己	丑	Ox	Jan 26 2009–Feb 13 2010
27	Feb 17 1950–Feb 05 1951	Yang Metal	庚	寅	Tiger	Feb 14 2010–Feb 02 2011
28	Feb 06 1951–Jan 26 1952	Yin Metal	辛	卯	Rabbit	Feb 03 2011–Jan 22 2012
29	Jan 27 1952–Feb 13 1953	Yang Water	壬	辰	Dragon	Jan 23 2012–Feb 09 2013
30	Feb 14 1953–Feb 02 1954	Yin Water	癸	巳	Snake	Feb 10 2013–Jan 30 2014
31	Feb 03 1954–Jan 23 1955	Yang Wood	甲	午	Horse	Jan 31 2014–Feb 18 2015
32	Jan 24 1955–Feb 11 1956	Yin Wood	乙	未	Goat	Feb 19 2015–Feb 07 2016
33	Feb 12 1956–Jan 30 1957	Yang Fire	丙	申	Monkey	Feb 08 2016–Jan 27 2017
34	Jan 31 1957–Feb 17 1958	Yin Fire	丁	酉	Rooster	Jan 28 2017–Feb 18 2018
35	Feb 18 1958–Feb 07 1959	Yang Earth	戊	戌	Dog	Feb 19 2018–Feb 04 2019
36	Feb 08 1959–Jan 27 1960	Yin Earth	己	亥	Pig	Feb 05 2019–Jan 24 2020
37	Jan 28 1960–Feb 14 1961	Yang Metal	庚	子	Rat	Jan 25 2020–Feb. 11 2021
38	Feb 15 1961–Feb 04 1962	Yin Metal	辛	丑	Ox	Feb 12 2021–Jan 31 2022
39	Feb 05 1962–Jan 24 1963	Yang Water	壬	寅	Tiger	Feb 01 2022–Jan 21 2023
40	Jan 25 1963–Feb 12 1964	Yin Water	癸	卯	Rabbit	Jan 22 2023–Feb 09 2024
41	Feb 13 1964–Feb	Yang	甲	辰	Dragon	Feb 10 2024–Jan 28

Source : *Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia*

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	01 1965	Wood				2025
42	Feb 02 1965–Jan 20 1966	Yin Wood	乙	巳	Snake	Jan 29 2025–Feb 16 2026
43	Jan 21 1966–Feb 08 1967	Yang Fire	丙	午	Horse	Feb 17 2026–Feb 05 2027
44	Feb 09 1967–Jan 29 1968	Yin Fire	丁	未	Goat	Feb 06 2027–Jan 25 2028
45	Jan 30 1968–Feb 16 1969	Yang Earth	戊	申	Monkey	Jan 26 2028–Feb 12 2029
46	Feb 17 1969–Feb 05 1970	Yin Earth	己	酉	Rooster	Feb 13 2029–Feb 02 2030
47	Feb 06 1970–Jan 26 1971	Yang Metal	庚	戌	Dog	Feb 03 2030–Jan 22 2031
48	Jan 27 1971–Feb 14 1972	Yin Metal	辛	亥	Pig	Jan 23 2031–Feb 10 2032
49	Feb 15 1972–Feb 02 1973	Yang Water	壬	子	Rat	Feb 11 2032–Jan 30 2033
50	Feb 03 1973–Jan 22 1974	Yin Water	癸	丑	Ox	Jan 31 2033–Feb 18 2034
51	Jan 23 1974–Feb 10 1975	Yang Wood	甲	寅	Tiger	Feb 19 2034–Feb 07 2035
52	Feb 11 1975–Jan 30 1976	Yin Wood	乙	卯	Rabbit	Feb 08 2035–Jan 27 2036
53	Jan 31 1976–Feb 17 1977	Yang Fire	丙	辰	Dragon	Jan 28 2036–Feb 14 2037
54	Feb 18 1977–Feb 06 1978	Yin Fire	丁	巳	Snake	Feb 15 2037–Feb 03 2038
55	Feb 07 1978–Jan 27 1979	Yang Earth	戊	午	Horse	Feb 04 2038–Jan 23 2039
56	Jan 28 1979–Feb 15 1980	Yin Earth	己	未	Goat	Jan 24 2039–Feb 11 2040
57	Feb 16 1980–Feb 04 1981	Yang Metal	庚	申	Monkey	Feb 12 2040–Jan 31 2041

Source : Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

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58	Feb 05 1981–Jan 24 1982	Yin Metal	辛	酉	Rooster	Feb 01 2041–Jan 21 2042
59	Jan 25 1982–Feb 12 1983	Yang Water	壬	戌	Dog	Jan 22 2042–Feb 09 2043
60	Feb 13 1983–Feb 01 1984	Yin Water	癸	亥	Pig	Feb 10 2043–Jan 29 2044

Maya calendar



Maya civilization

The Maya is a Mesoamerican civilization, noted for the only known fully developed written language of the pre-Columbian Americas, as well as for its art, architecture,

Source : Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

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and mathematical and astronomical systems. Initially established during the Pre-Classic period (c. 2000 BC to 250 AD), according to the Mesoamerican chronology, many Maya cities reached their highest state of development during the Classic period (c. 250 to 900 AD), and continued throughout the Post-Classic period until the arrival of the Spanish.

The Maya civilization shares many features with other Mesoamerican civilizations due to the high degree of interaction and cultural diffusion that characterized the region. Advances such as writing, epigraphy, and the calendar did not originate with the Maya; however, their civilization fully developed them. Maya influence can be detected from Honduras, Guatemala, Northern El Salvador and to as far as central Mexico, more than 1,000 km (620 mi) from the Maya area. Many outside influences are found in Maya art and architecture, which are thought to result from trade and cultural exchange rather than direct external conquest.

The Maya peoples never disappeared, neither at the time of the Classic period decline nor with the arrival of the Spanish conquistadores and the subsequent Spanish colonization of the Americas. Today, the Maya and their descendants form sizable populations throughout the Maya area and maintain a distinctive set of traditions and beliefs that are the result of the merger of pre-

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Columbian and post-Conquest ideas and cultures. Many Mayan languages continue to be spoken as primary languages today; the Rabinal Achí, a play written in the Achi language, was declared a Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO in 2005.

Geographical extent



The Maya civilization extended throughout the present-day southern Mexican states of Chiapas, Tabasco, and the Yucatán Peninsula states of Quintana Roo, Campeche and Yucatán. The Maya area also extended throughout the northern Central American region, including the present-day nations of Guatemala, Belize, Northern El Salvador and western Honduras.

Source : Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

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The Maya area is generally divided into three loosely defined zones: the southern Maya highlands, the central lowlands, and the northern lowlands. The southern Maya highlands include all of elevated terrain in Guatemala and the Chiapas highlands. The southern lowlands lie just north of the highlands, and incorporate the Mexican states of Campeche and Quintana Roo and northern Guatemala, Belize and El Salvador. The northern lowlands cover the remainder of the Yucatán Peninsula, including the Puuc hills



The ruins of Palenque

THE MAYAN CALANDAR

The 260 day count of days is commonly known to scholars as the Tzolkin, or Tzolk'in in the revised orthography of the Academia de las Lenguas Mayas de Guatemala.[3] The Tzolk'in was combined with a 365-day vague solar year known as the Haab, or Haab year' ,

Source : Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

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to form a synchronized cycle lasting for 52 Haab's, called the Calendar Round. Smaller cycles of 13 days (the trecena) and 20 days (the veintena) were important components of the Tzolk'in and Haab' cycles, respectively. The Calendar Round is still in use by many groups in the Guatemalan highlands.

A different calendar was used to track longer periods of time, and for the inscription of calendar dates (i.e., identifying when one event occurred in relation to others). This is the Long Count. It is a count of days since a mythological starting-point. According to the correlation between the Long Count and Western calendars accepted by the great majority of Maya researchers (known as the GMT correlation), this starting-point is equivalent to August 11, 3114 BCE in the proleptic Gregorian calendar or 6 September in the Julian calendar (-3113 astronomical). The Goodman-Martinez-Thompson correlation was chosen by John Eric Sydney Thompson in 1935 on the basis of earlier correlations by Joseph Goodman in 1905 (August 11), Juan Martínez Hernández in 1926 (August 12), and Thompson himself in 1927 (August 13).By its linear nature, the Long Count was capable of being extended to refer to any date far into the past or future. This calendar involved the use of a positional notation system, in which each position signified an increasing

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multiple of the number of days. The Maya numeral system was essentially vigesimal (i.e., base-20), and each unit of a given position represented 20 times the unit of the position which preceded it. An important exception was made for the second-order place value, which instead represented 18×20 , or 360 days, more closely approximating the solar year than would $20 \times 20 = 400$ days. It should be noted however that the cycles of the Long Count are independent of the solar year.

Many Maya Long Count inscriptions contain a supplementary series, which provides information on the lunar phase, number of the current lunation in a series of six and which of the nine Lords of the Night rules.

A 584-day Venus cycle was also maintained, which tracked the heliacal risings of Venus as the morning and evening stars. Many events in this cycle were seen as being astrologically inauspicious and baleful, and occasionally warfare was astrologically timed to coincide with stages in this cycle.

Less-prevalent or poorly understood cycles, combinations and calendar progressions were also tracked. An 819-day Count is attested in a few inscriptions. Repeating sets of 9-day (see below "Nine lords of the night") and 13-day intervals associated with different groups of deities, animals, and other

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significant concepts are also known.

Maya concepts of time

With the development of the place-notational Long Count calendar (believed to have been inherited from other Mesoamerican cultures), the Maya had an elegant system with which events could be recorded in a linear relationship to one another, and also with respect to the calendar ("linear time") itself. In theory, this system could readily be extended to delineate any length of time desired, by simply adding to the number of higher-order place markers used (and thereby generating an ever-increasing sequence of day-multiples, each day in the sequence uniquely identified by its Long Count number). In practice, most Maya Long Count inscriptions confine themselves to noting only the first five coefficients in this system (a b'ak'tun-count), since this was more than adequate to express any historical or current date (20 b'ak'tuns cover 7,885 solar years). Even so, example inscriptions exist which noted or implied lengthier sequences, indicating that the Maya well understood a linear (past-present-future) conception of time.

However, and in common with other Mesoamerican societies, the repetition of the various calendric cycles, the natural cycles of observable phenomena, and the recurrence and renewal of death-rebirth imagery in their mythological traditions were important influences upon Maya societies. This conceptual view, in which the "cyclical nature" of time is highlighted, was a pre-eminent one, and many rituals were concerned with the completion and re-occurrences of various cycles. As the

Source : Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

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particular calendric configurations were once again repeated, so too were the "supernatural" influences with which they were associated. Thus it was held that particular calendar configurations had a specific "character" to them, which would influence events on days exhibiting that configuration. Divinations could then be made from the auguries associated with a certain configuration, since events taking place on some future date would be subject to the same influences as its corresponding previous cycle dates. Events and ceremonies would be timed to coincide with auspicious dates, and avoid inauspicious ones.

The completion of significant calendar cycles ("period endings"), such as a k'atun-cycle, were often marked by the erection and dedication of specific monuments (mostly stela inscriptions, but sometimes twin-pyramid complexes such as those in Tikal and Yaxha), commemorating the completion, accompanied by dedicatory ceremonies.

A cyclical interpretation is also noted in Maya creation accounts, in which the present world and the humans in it were preceded by other worlds (one to five others, depending on the tradition) which were fashioned in various forms by the gods, but subsequently destroyed. The present world also had a tenuous existence, requiring the supplication and offerings of periodic sacrifice to maintain the balance of continuing existence. Similar themes are found in the creation accounts of other Mesoamerican societies.

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United States

In the United States, a surge of interest in astrology took place between 1900 through 1949. A popular astrologer based in New York City named Evangeline Adams helped feed the public's thirst for astrology readings. A court case involving Adams, who was arrested and charged with illegal fortune-telling in 1914 – was later dismissed when Adams correctly read the horoscope of the judge's son with only a birthdate. Her acquittal set an American precedent that if astrologers practiced in a professional manner they were not guilty of any wrong-doing.

The hunger for astrology in the earliest years of the 20th century by such astrologers as Alan Leo, Sepharial (also known as Walter Gorn Old), "Paul Cheisnard" and Charles Carter, among others, further led the surge of interest in astrology by wide distribution of astrological journals, text, papers, and textbooks of astrology throughout the United States.

In the period between 1920 and 1940 the popular media fed the public interest in astrology. Publishers realized that millions of readers were interested in astrological forecasts and the interest grew ever more intense with the advent of America's entry into the First World War. The war heightened interest in astrology. Journalists began to write articles based on character descriptions and astrological "forecasts" were published in newspapers based on the one and only factor known to the public: the month and day of birth, as taken from the position of the Sun when a person is born. The result of this practice led to modern-day publishing of Sun-Sign astrology columns and expanded to some astrological books and magazines in later decades of the 20th century.