

Mysterious Chinese Astrology

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In modern times, many people still ask fortune-tellers for their fates. This phenomenon also prevails in China, for Chinese astrology has existed for 3000 years. In order to reveal the mysterious science, Chinese astrology, one must understand its origin, components, and effects.

Chinese astrology is based on the lunar calendar, which is different from Gregorian calendar. It is determined by the cyclical period of the moon phase that takes twelve years as a circle and five circles as a complete turn. A lunar calendar has twelve months, each of which has 29 and a half days. A lunar calendar is divided into 24 solar terms that indicate the various positions of the sun to the earth. The ancient Chinese developed the lunar calendar by observing the regularity of the orbit of stars and planets. In fact, by the 5th century, they had cataloged 1,464 stars. Thus, Chinese astrology is “a type of divination that consists in interpreting the influence of planets and stars on earth affair in order to predict or affect the destinies of individuals, groups or nation” (“Astrology”).

Chinese astrology is divided into many categories. Among all categories, the horoscope and five elements are two essentials. The Chinese horoscope is represented by twelve different animals over a twelve-year span. The first year of the cycle is the year of the rat. After that, the years turn to the ox, the tiger, the rabbit, the dragon, the snake, the horse, the sheep, the monkey, the rooster, the dog, and the pig. All the animals are regarded as being intelligent and kind; no one is considered evil or dumb. The symbol of the twelve animals is called “*sheng xiao*” in Chinese, meaning “birth” and “resemblance”. So, it is said that one has the characteristics of a certain animal that represents the year in which he or she was born.

In addition, the five elements perform a virtual function. The five elements are metal, fire, wood, water, and soil, which symbolize wealth, luck, happiness, health, and longevity. Chinese astrologers use the five elements to explain the various changes of nature. Wood becomes ashes after being burned; ashes turn to soil; soil makes metals in the earth; and metals bring water. To complete the circle, water irrigates all plants (wood). Chinese astrologers insist that the universe consists of the five elements. They believe that everyone has a unique fate due to the different percentages of the five elements in one’s body. Though there are many components in the Chinese astrology, the horoscope and the five elements are among the most fundamental.

Since the belief of Chinese astrology has existed for more than 3000 years, it deeply affects Chinese people’s daily lives. For example, besides analyzing market information, some business people are glad to consult astrologers about their fortune. If one plans to open a store, he or she will ask an astrologer to visit the place. An astrologer usually predicts by looking at the direction of the environment of that place. After observing the surroundings and surveying the orientation of the place, he or she offers comments. Further, farmers who live in remote villages still use astrology for farming such as the proper time to plant. It indicates that Chinese astrology is rooted in the Chinese people’s daily life.

Chinese astrology is based on the lunar calendar, and has two main components, the horoscope and the five elements. Though Chinese developed this mysterious science, which most scientists also call pseudo-science thousand years ago, many people today still strongly believe in this faith. It suggests that regardless of Chinese astrology true value has undeniable charm.

Work Cited

“Astrology.” May 22, 2002 <<http://abyss.uoregon.edu/~js/glossary/astrology.html>>