ASTROLOGY (Greek ’αστρον [astron]—heavenly body, start; λογος [logos]—word, discourse]—one of the oldest and most constroversial systems of knowledge that holds that the celestial bodies (lunar, solar, planetary, and astral cycles) influence the fates of individual people (natal astrology), relations between individual people (synastral/comparative astrology), health and healing process (iatroastrology), the history of nations and social-religious systems (mundal astrology), the fates of human undertakings (elective astrology), relations between the time and place in which a problem is posed and its resolution (horal astrology), changes in weather (astrometeorology). Astrology is practiced today under the names of cosmobiology, cosmopsychology, solar biology, astrobiometrics, and astropsychometrics.

Astrology dates back to the most ancient times. It was practiced in the civilizations of ancient Egypt, Mesopotamia, India, China, and the Americas. What exactly were the principles of astrology and how it was applied remain unknown since no written accounts have been preserved. The most ancient remains of writing containing astrological prognoses are from Babylon. They were daily reports to the king of Assyria, Assurbanipol (around 668–626 BC). The zodiac, which is a basic astrological element, arose first in Egypt and later came to Mesopotamia. Initially, the horoscopes drawn up by Babylonian priests were not for individuals, but for the whole country or a city and were intended to predict the development of political and social events (wars, crop failures). Later (beginning in the late fifth century BC), individual horoscopes appeared. More or less at the same time, Babylonian astrology came to Greece (around 390 BC Berosus founded the first astrological school on the Greek island of Cos). The seeds of this knowledge probably already existed in Greece in the mystical and philosophical principles of Pythagoreanism. In a short time the Greeks transformed Chaldean astrology into an axiomatic and deductive system of knowledge modeled after geometry. They also supplemented Chaldean astrology with the addition of many important elements. Their most important contribution was that they provided a physical model of how the stars (or planets) influenced Earth. At the same time they showed how the heavenly bodies indirectly influenced man’s fate (via factors such as the air). They introduced an element of holism into the principles of astrology, stating the this influence does not come from particular heavenly bodies but from the whole present configuration of those bodies, a configuration that was often very complex. They also linked astrology with medicine and alchemy. This modified astrology had many opponents, primarily from the Middle Academy (Carneades), the school of Skeptics (Sextus Empiricus), and the Epicureans. The Stoic Poseidonius of Apamea (around 135–50 BC) answered the arguments of the opponents of astrology. He restored the old Stoic doctrine of mantic knowledge (soothsaying) and the harmony of the universe and so effectively answered the critics of astrology. Through the Greeks, mainly through philosophers of the Stoic school, the Romans became familiar with astrology.

One of the first Romans to practice astrology actively and to try to reconcile the religious conceptions of the Romans and Etruscans with astrological and cosmological systems and with the wisdom of Iran and Babylon was the Pythagorean Publius Nigidius Figulus (around 98–45 BC). In his work *De terris* and *Sphaera* he included such things as early description (from Egypt and Babylon) of the constellations of the Zodiac. The oldest complex manual of astrology surviving to this day was written in the second century by Claudius Ptolemy (around 100 to around 147) and was called Τετραβιβλος [Tetrabiblos (four books)]. In the introduction to his work (which was concerned with method), Ptolemy tried to provide a rational justification for the formulation of astrological predictions. To this end he made a

 

distinction between theoretical astronomy, which was intended to explain the configuration and motion of heavenly bodies as related to one another and to the earth, and applied astronomy or astrology (for Eudoxos of Knidos and for Aristotle, this term meant the mathematical science concerned with the motions of the stars). According to Ptolemy, astrology used its own specific "philosophical method" and studied the changes that heavenly bodies cause on earth on the basis of the particular configurations of the heavenly bodies. Ptolemy stated that the judgments formulated in astrology do not have the same value as the judgments formulated in theoretical astronomy, but at the same time he thought that they have some value because they can provide accurate information about future events (and so they can be beneficial). He wanted to avoid the undesirable consequences of astral determinism and made a distinction between divine predestination (which was irrevocable and necessary) and natural predestination (which was mutable and not necessary). The study of astrology continued in ancient times in neo- Platonism, although it had vocal critics such as Plotinus, and in patristic thought (St. Augustine). Through neo-Platonic philosophers (Plotinus), and more precisely in the reception of Greek science in Arab philosophy (beginning in the eighth century they collected and worked upon Greek, Persian, Syrian, and Hindu astrological manuscripts), the study of astrology came to the century of Arab science, that is, to the universities in Seville and Grenada. There as well astrology had vocal critics. Many Muslim philosophers and theologians (al-Farabi, Avicenna, Averroes, and Ibn Chaldun) were opposed to astrology and developed the same arguments that had previously been addressed to astrology (concerning matters such as predestination, determinism, and responsibility for one's actions). Nevertheless the study of astrology continued to develop, especially at the universities. The Jews at that time had the greatest accomplishments in this field, but also Arabs such as al-Kindi, Abu Ma'sar, and al-Kabisi. The most influential author was Abraham bin Ezra, the author of a new method (later known as the Regiomontana method) for indicated so-called astrological houses. The Jews also spread astrology in the countries of Christian Europe by the practice of astrology and with their writings.

In a period when the reception of Greek and Arab science was intensified (the twelfth and thirteenth century), many Latin translations of Greek and Arab astrological treatises appeared (John of Seville and Gerard of Cremona). At that time R. Grosseteste, R. Bacon, and Albert the Great studied astrology. Thomas Aquinas did not condemn astrology, but thought that the influence of the heavenly bodies is restricted to physical desires, but the rational man is able to resist them. Aquinas explained the accuracy of the astrologers' predication by saying that most people cannot master their desires. In the fourteenth century, astrology developed in close connection with meteorology (Richard of Wallingford, William Merle), and with medicine (Geoffrey de Meaux, Jacobus Angelus, Peter Limoges). Poetry written in that period speaks of astrology. The best known example was a poem by Geoffrey Chaucer titled *Troilus et Criseida*. Nicholas Oresme was the chief opponent of astrology in the fourteenth century and expressed the opinion of most of the scholars of that time. Oresme rejected natal, elective, and horal astrology, but he allowed with some reservations a place for medical astrology (iatroastrology) and astrometeorology. Astrology reached its height in the Renaissance. In that period secular rules (such as Matthew Corwin, Henry IV, Sigmund Augustus) and representatives of the Church (such as Richelieu, Mazarini, and Paul III) were influenced by astrology. Art reflected the influence of astrology (A. Dürer, H. Bosch). Astrology also enjoyed a blossoming at the Jagiellonian University. By the end of the fifteenth century, the work of two of the most eminent astronomrs, Wojciech of Brudzewo and John of Głogów, made the Kraków astronomical school the second school of this type in Europe after Vienna.

 

At the end of the sixteenth century, astrological questions took precedence over astronomical questions, a situation which persisted to the end of that century. Astrology was then treated as the crowning point of astronomy. Astrologers made a distinction between natural astrology (*astrologia naturalis*), also called theoretical astrology, mathematical astrology or *quadrivialis*, and predicative astrology (*iudiciaria*), which was the same as practical astrology. Blaise of Parma even said that astrology does not differ from the philosophy of nature *secundum distinctionem obiectorum*, that is, astrology and the philosophy of nature share the same material object. The most important controversies in Renaissance astrology did not focus on the conception of astrology, but on the questions arising from polemics between its leading critic, Giovanni Pico della Mirandola (*Disputationes adversus astrologiam divinatricem*, 1495), and its leading defender, Peter Pomponazzi (*De naturalium effectuum admirandorum causis, sive de incantationibus*, 1520).

In a later period authors of modern science such as Tycho de Brahe, John Kepler, Galileo, and Newton were practitioners of astrology. Kepler even tried to reform astrology by introducing a new model of how the planets influence men and by criticizing the traditional interpretations of astrology as a science concerning science. Kepler placed greater emphasis on the significance of aspects. He also emphasized the importance of astrometeorology. As a consequence of the tendency to see the world more and more in terms of nature, which occurred in the period when the rudiments of modern science were taking shape, astrology declined in importance. It shared the fate of scholasticism and was almost completely banished (first from the universities) in the eighteenth centuries and the early nineteenth century. The declining appreciation of astrology was affected by the fall of the Aristotelian philosophy of nature, the reception of heliocentrism, and (an effect of this process) the discovery of new planets, but the main source of antipathy to astrology was the success of science and the scientism associated with it. Around 1850 there was a certain increase in interest in astrology with the wave of interest in spiritualism and the culture of the east. In the Theosophical society founded by Helen Blavatsky (1831–1891) and Henry S. Olcott (1832–1907), and particularly in the Astrological Lodge of the Theosophical society founded by William Frederick Allen (1860–1920, pseudonym Alan Leo), astrology acquired an institutional base. W. F. Allen's textbooks presented the whole of astrology in an accessible form and in a short time caused an increase of interest in astrology in European countries and the United States. The interest in astrology increased further after the First World War, especially in Germany. New astrological schools arose, include a system developed by Alfred Witte, the so-called Hamburg School (which introduced new hypothetical planets).

From 1930 there was an avalanche of interest in astrology in the form of horoscopes in newspapers. This fashion developed in Europe (England) but quickly spread over the whole world. Also in this period in the United States there was a strong intellectual current that had sources in the works of the artist and theoretician of art Dane Rudhyara (1895–1985, with such works as *Astrology of Personality*, 1936; *Thy Pulse of Life*, 1943). His works linked astrology with psychology (including Jung's depth psychology). Within this movement developed so-called humanistic (homocentric) astrology, an attempt to update traditional astrology. It is a very complex astrological system that by its symbolism looks to occult numerology (which has such sources as the neo-Pythagorean philosophy of nature and Hinduism).

As opposed to the traditional predictive astrology that aimed at predicting future events, humanistic astrology tries to present man's personal (psychic) growth by prognosis and retrognosis of mental states. At present this movement is developed by Stephen Arroyo,

Tracy Marks, Leszek Weres, and others. Another attempt to make astrology current is the attempt to make it "scientific" by the introduction of statistical methods (correlations of the positions of the planets in the signs of the Zodiac in natal horoscopes with choice of profession). The French psychologist M. Gauquelin (1928–1991) was a pioneer of such works. L. Michelson, O. Beckier, and H. Fridman are among those who later continued this type of research, and they only modies the kinds of correlation. At present we may observe a rapid increase in local and national (USA) astrological organizations (around 200), the number of specialized periodicals (around 200 with an average edition of 1000–2000 copies), and publishing houses (about 250 new titles appear each year).

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