



„Astrology and Divination in India: On the Philosophical, Social and Religious Foundations“

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Abstract:

In India, from their inception, astronomy and astrology have operated concurrently and in complementary fashion providing a grammar and syntax for a single semantic universe. This cosmos was above all relevant to the terrestrial world, especially to the proper functioning of Indian society. The structures and movements of celestial phenomena provide an arena in which philosophical insights and religious traditions, mythological vision, and social reality are expressed, mediated, and objectified. Yet, many questions arise: how can astrology's persistent continuation and large-scale survival in India be explained? What was its role in traditional society and within ancient bodies of knowledge? How it is related to traditional cosmology and on which philosophical foundations is it grounded? Why did astrology appealed to the educated Indians? Opposing the common assumption that astrology is merely an expression of archaic and degrading superstition, the conclusion can be made that the Indian divinational system – as cultural system – is based on a particular cosmic vision and lends human experience value and meaning. And astrological practices in India cannot be differentiated from other social practices on the basis of their symbolic exchange or their rhetorical powers.

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Time: 2.00 p.m. / 14.00 Uhr