

How and why Cometan recombined astronomy and religion?

The name Cometan is becoming synonymous with astronomical religion. I chose that name for myself because it means “follower of the comet” which perfectly reflects the theme of my philosophical endeavours, namely my religion of the stars called Astronism. But why merge astronomy and religion into one at all? Well, up until the turn of the 17th century, religion and astronomy *were* closely related with the former dictating the movements of the latter.

Religion and astronomy have long been intertwined and I have dedicated much of my scholarly work in 2020 to exploring the prehistoric relationship between these two institutions. In fact, I just recently completed my Master’s Dissertation on the subject, which is set to be published shortly (Dissertation Title: Do the interactions between astronomy and religion, beginning in prehistory, form a distinct religious tradition?).

In my dissertation research, I propose the existence of an Astronic religious tradition; I proposed that this is the oldest religious tradition with origins in the Upper Palaeolithic period of the Stone Age around 40,000 BCE, that it is distinguished by its astronomical theme, and that it shall stand alongside the Abrahamic, Dharmic and Taoic traditions as a major world religious tradition.

Astronomy's origins are steeped in religious activities and, according to Astronist and Cometanic theory, religion's origins are also considered to have been based on the observation and subsequently deification of the stars and other celestial phenomena (like the Sun, the Moon, the planets etc.). Star worship (astrolatry) and divination by the stars (astromancy) emerged in the Upper Palaeolithic as forms of astronomical religion that have persisted into contemporary times.

Following Galileo's trial with the Catholic Church, however, and their forced acceptance of the truth of heliocentrism, the grip the Church held over astronomy was weakened and it would not hold such influence again. The astronomers took their chance to establish secular scientific astronomy as a product of the Age of Enlightenment and so the disintegration of astronomy and religion began.

Since then, religion and astronomy have been presented as being worlds apart from each other. But now comes along Astronism to change this; to re-establish the connection between the astronomical, the religious and the philosophical. Echoing the astronomical faiths of prehistory, Astronism emerges as the re-integration of astronomy into a religious, philosophical and spiritual system for people across the globe to identify with as Astronists.

From the age of fifteen, what I have felt as Cometan is a distinct connection to the astronomical world; a spiritual source that provides me with existential purpose, guidance, and a consistent feeling of wonderment. It is this emotion that I have named in my work as astronality and it is this that forms the foundations of the Astronist religion and philosophy, and astrospirituality.

The astronomical world has become my source of existential guidance, knowledge, compass of self-conception, and drives forward my religious beliefs and practices. For me, astronomical observation or basic stargazing are religious, spiritual, and philosophical practices. Religious astronomy is the hallmark of Astronism for it is considered to be the destiny of humanity to explore the worlds of The Cosmos as the only means to achieve

transcension (that is, the highest, intended form of human ability and knowledge).

Astronism is astronomical religion for the modern world and as Cometan, Astronism's founder, I believe our world is in need of Astronism than ever before. This is why I believe in destiny because I can't honestly say that I think that my comprehension of the astronomical world and my founding of Astronism in this very moment in history are coincidental as that seems utterly implausible. No, instead, I believe that the force driving me forward to recombine astronomy with religion as a testament to the original religion of prehistoric Astrolatry, is the same force that drives all other change in The Cosmos, both minute and monumental.

I believe our youth to be lost. I believe our world to be lost. I believe our people to be concerned with matters not worthy of such attention. Instead, what should be of central attention, of central importance, of central concern is that which our prehistoric ancestors held to be central to their lives; the astronomical world, it's movements, it's wonders, and it's mysteries. The astronomical must drive the religious and the religious fervour must drive our exploration of deep space. I see no other possible way of galvanising

the magnitude of funds, bravery, dedication and intrigue for such cosmic exploration if not done in the name of religion.

And to all those ascribing to anti-religion and listing all that religions have not done or the instances in which religion has caused suffering, why not allow a new religion, a new movement, a new philosophy to ignite and build something life-changing for all humanity? That is, building the ideological, spiritual, philosophical and religious zeal for mass exploration into deep space. This is why I am combining astronomy and religion once more in the form of Astronism for this is the destiny that must be fulfilled.

Will Astronism be perfect? No. Why mistakes be made in the name of Astronism? Such is likely. Is criticism of Astronism and its Institution warranted? When reasonable, of course. But to lead such a movement in galvanising the eyes of the world to look up to the stars and connect the astronomical world to their religious beliefs is a task of such monumental scale that mistakes, misdirections, and misinformation are all inevitably going to occur. It is the task of the Astronist Institution to oversee that such misguidance does not persist for long which is engrained into the responsibilities of the Institution that I have recently conferred.

To end, astronomy and religion, astronomy and philosophy, astronomy and spirituality, and astronomy and ideology are returning to each other once more through Astronism and it is my lifelong vocation to see this reintegration succeed.

Written by **Cometan**, *Founder of Astronism and First Padron of the Astronist Institution*

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