

What is an astronomical religion?

An astronomical religion is a type of religion or philosophy that isn't fixated on the concept of God, or an afterlife, or humanity, or even The Earth itself for that matter. Instead, an astronomical religion is primarily concerned with space, astronomical progeny like stars and galaxies, astronomical phenomena like supernovas, and the wider universe beyond The Earth and all that exists between.

Essentially, an astronomical religion is focused on contemplating space. For this reason, Cometan developed the word "cosmocentricity" to denote how Astronism is centred on The Cosmos, or space just as Christianity, Islam, and Hinduism are "theocentric", or in other words God-centric, fixated on the concept of the existence of God.

But before we begin to look at how astronomical religions exist today, let's go back to when it all started.

Imagine 40,000 years ago in about 38,000 BC. You are in a time period called the Upper Palaeolithic period. You are standing in the final years

of the Stone Age. This is when astronomical religions began. And this is why astronomical religions are often cited by the Astronist Institution as being one of the oldest forms of religion, if not the oldest form.

Of course, worship and contemplation of the stars may have existed long before this time period, but these dates are what we know from fact, from archaeological evidence found across various continents in not only ancient, but prehistoric civilisations.

So what exactly were our prehistoric ancestors worshipping the stars for?

Well, astrolatry – which combines astro- meaning stars with -latry meaning worship – emerged when prehistoric tribes began to measure the movements of the stars and how their movements corresponded with the seasons.

And as the age of agriculture began, reliance upon the stars to designate when seeds were to be sown increased to the point at which entire societies became dependent upon calculating the movement of stars.

People began to associate their survival with the stars and of course, this led to their worship of the stars to ensure that they would keep shining

so that the society would continue to know when to plant and harvest the crops.

Of course, astrolatry developed as a religious practice and many myths and beliefs began to emerge over thousands of years growing more and more complex and advanced as they went on. From this, astrology emerged that proclaimed that the stars held abilities to intercede with divinity and that their correct interpretation could tell us of upcoming events in our lives.

And now we come to Astronism. The third and final completing part of this trio of types of astronomical religion, the first being astrology and the second being astromancy. Astronism now emerges so as to develop an even more advanced theology and philosophy based on the stars and it is for this reason that Astronism considers its own lineage to go back to those prehistoric tribespeople who first looked up at the stars and contemplated their lives in relation to those twinkling lights above.

Returning to today, as part of The Founding of Astronism, Cometan saw that astronomical religions had long been forgotten, ignored, or in some cases, had been heavily persecuted to the point at which they existed

only in the form of Astrology which had largely been undermined as a practice after The Enlightenment.

Cometan sought to change this, not only with the founding of a new astronomical religion in the form of Astronism, but by organising the history of astronomical religions and related nature religions into a new tradition of religion to sit alongside that of the Abrahamic, Dharmic, and Taoic faiths. This tradition would come to be known as the Astronic tradition.

Cometan began to explore the rich history and intertwinement between astronomy and religion and the role that each had played in the history of one another's development and he was deeply fascinated by this.

Cometan organised and collected together the astronomical religions and saw that the tradition comprised of a vast array of beliefs, practices, and traditions just like the other religious traditions and it was Cometan's vocation to tell the world about this.

Let us continue to follow Cometan on his journey to disseminate not only Astronism itself, but to spread the true facts of history and to show people that there does exist a tradition of religion that is based on what

can be observed and known and that is the religious tradition of the stars.

Fact Checker

As you know, at Astronism.org, we pride ourselves on providing honest, fact-checked content especially on academic subjects so please take a look at some resources we used to create this article:

Resource One: “Astronomy in Primitive Religion”. The Journal of Bible and Religion

Resource Two: “Some Aspects of Primitive Astronomy”. Irish Astronomical Journal.

Resource Three: “Astronomy and religion”. Popular Astronomy.

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