

Culture - Astrology Interface in Jaffna

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Abstract

This explorative study is primarily concerned with the ethnography of Jaffna Tamil society with special reference to astrological beliefs and practices existing among them. Jaffna with its cultural antiquity has cherished rich religious traditions as well as the cultural behaviours of Jaffna people are shaped by their religious beliefs and rituals. It is noteworthy that astrology plays an important role in their socio-cultural life from ancient time. In this context, the present inquiry attempts to bring out the significant features of culture - astrology interface in Jaffna through ethnographical perspective. Astrology is the study of the sun, moon, planets and stars in an attempt to regulate the religious' rituals and social behaviour of the humankind. Various astrological customs and practices have globally and regionally popularized among the different cultural groups from ancient to present day. In another words, astrological customs and practices are universal phenomenon as well as cultural adaptation of humankind. Further, number of cultural practices regarding the normal life derives from the myths of astrology as well as astrological traditions vary from culture to culture. Indeed it is necessary to explore the interface between culture and astrology. Data used in this study were collected through the participatory observations, interviews with key informants particularly astrologers, temple priests and discussion with peoples in terms of astrological customs that effects on their normal life. This study concludes through the different ethnographical aspect that the beliefs and customs of astrology does influence on the cultural patterns of Jaffna. In conclusion, it could be summarized that most of the people in Jaffna go hand in hand with astrological beliefs and practices in span of their life.

Key words: Ethnography, Astrology, Culture

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