Possible GeoPhysical and Hypnotic Influences on Observed Correlations in Astrology

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Abstract

It is no far stretch of the imagination to think that seasonal changes and variations in sunlight may have significant effects on personality and behavior. In fact, there is a diagnosis that can be made of certain individuals called *Seasonal Affective Disorder* (SAD). SAD is more commonly experienced by women than men, and in areas that have longer winters and less yearly sunlight. In addition to this, behavioral, physical and mental changes have been studied in response to changes in environmental light and darkness, biological clocks, and circadian rhythms, in the science of *chronobiology*.

Keywords: sunlight, chronobiology

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# GeoPhysics

Mother Nature, Mother Earth

There are several different natural cycles that influence the weather on Earth. Here, I will do my best to understand, and then summarize my comprehension, to get an idea of a few mechanisms involved in determining the changes we experience through our planet’s diverse climates.

The word *Geo* comes from the word ***Gaia***, which is a Greek word for Earth, and the word *physic*s is also Greek from the word ***physikos***, which means *pertaining to nature*. These words certainly have earlier origins than Greek, I am just limiting the etymological or source research of the words, to avoid a discussion that will lead us too far off the main point. Geophysics is a broad ranging subject. However, I will be narrowing the focus of geophysics to Earth’s natural environment in space, and its relationship with the Sun specifically.

For purposes of organization and study, Astronomers use a Pole Star, the North Star, or Polaris, which our North Pole is conveniently pointing to in modern times. The South Pole is exactly opposite the North Pole. This is used as a guide in charting the position of Earth in its space environment, and for celestial navigation. Because of this polar orientation, the Earth is tilted 23.5 degrees towards the Sun at the North Pole. As if there was actually a pole running through it at this point, the Earth spins like a top fixed on this axis of rotation as it orbits the Sun.

Next, imagine an enormous sphere surrounding an area using Earth’s orbit as its diameter made of movie screen material, this is known as the *celestial sphere*. The shadow that the Earth would eclipse out along its path of orbit around the Sun is known as the *ecliptic*. Since the Earth is tilted 23.5 degrees from the ecliptic, its equator is also, and if a beam were shining out from this onto the giant movie screen sphere it would trace out a path called the *celestial equator*. The equinoxes would be when the Sun is at the point where these two paths meet at 23.5 degrees from the North and South Poles on the celestial sphere opposite each other, while the solstices would be when the Sun is along the celestial equator on East and West opposites of Earth’s equator, relative to the poles.

**Summer and Winter Solstice**

In late June on the day of the summer solstice, Earth’s northern hemisphere is angled or inclined towards the Sun which is at its farthest point in north during the year. Because of this, the sunlight shines almost straight down at northern latitudes. This can be thought of like the ground being hit by the sunlight at a 95 to 100 degree angle. In the southern hemisphere, the sunlight is more dispersed because it strikes the ground at a much wider angle. This could be imagined as an angle of 145 to 150 degrees.

In late December on the day of the winter solstice, Earth’s northern hemisphere is angled or inclined away from the Sun which is at its farthest point south during the year. Because of this, the sunlight is dispersed because it strikes the ground at a wide angle, just like it was for the southern hemisphere during summer solstice. In the southern hemisphere, the sunlight shines almost straight down, just like it was for the northern hemisphere during summer solstice. The major causes of weather changes are due to the Sun moving through the solstices and their mid-points, the equinoxes.

**Equinox**

When spring begins, approximately March 20th, the length of day and night is approximately equal and it is known as the *Vernal Equinox*. In the northern hemisphere, this marks a mid-point between the dispersed sunlight of the winter solstice around December 22nd, and the approaching period of more direct, straight down sunlight of the summer solstice around June 22nd.

When autumn begins around September 22nd marking the mid-point between the June 22nd summer solstice and the upcoming winter solstice on December 22nd, it is known as the *Autumnal Equinox*. It is at this point once again, that the length of night and day are approximately the same.

**Perihelion and Aphelion**

The orbit of the Earth is not perfectly circular. It is slightly elliptical so that two sides are a bit closer together than the other two sides perpendicular to it. This moves the perfect circle you could imagine it being to something slightly more oval, though not very noticeably. When the Earth is about 1.7 times closer to the Sun than usual around January 3rd, it is said to be at perihelion. Around July 5th when the Earth is about 1.7 times further from the Sun than usual, it is said to be at aphelion. Even though the distance measurably changes, it is said that this does not significantly affect the seasons. Even so, the intensity of sunlight does vary, which might become important in this analysis.

**Circadian Rhythms, SAD and Epigenetics**

In the geophysics summary above, I have outlined the mechanisms that cause the changes in seasons and for the variations in intensity of sunlight striking the Earth and all who live here. Understanding a little bit about circadian rhythms and perhaps epigenetics may offer some insight into how a person’s personality might be effected by the time of year they were born. In chronobiology, it has been observed that the sleep-awake cycles, body temperature, genetic expression, release of hormones and other biochemicals, are significantly affected by changes in the intensity of light. Circadian rhythms roughly follow a twenty-four hour cycle.

Being born under conditions having low sunlight, a person may not have a very upbeat or energetic personality. This is because their biology would have adapted to the low energy coming from the Sun and promoted a condition favorable to conservation. Since this is the case, they would not experience highs and lows as severely or noticeably as someone born under conditions having high amounts of the Sun’s energy. This could be compared to the hibernation cycles of some organisms who conserve energy by dramatically slowing down their metabolism and energy consumption during the winter. The depression or lethargy is somewhat like our bodies hibernating for the winter and is not perceived as beneficial, but instead as a handicap, since we can not go to sleep for months at a time. If we did this, perhaps it would be a coma. Instead we just have to stay awake more often than our bodies would like and deal with it.

In addition, heritable changes affecting genetic markers passed on to someone from their parents but that have not changed the actual genes, known as epigenetics may also be responsible. This could vary depending upon the conditions under which the parents were born and if they were unconsciously or genetically driven to seek an environment favorable to their own genetic predisposition for their own optimal sunlight needs. It is also worth noting that people with darker skin will be more affected by less sunlight because of the melanin content of their skin cells. Higher amounts of sunlight are needed for darker skinned people in order to optimize their health through sunlight stimulated biological mechanisms. One example is the process by which your body synthesizes Vitamin-D with cholesterol sulfate.

Over time, the light cycles causing changes in genetic and hormonal expression through circadian rhythm would become somewhat more programmed over the long term as an epigenetic adaptation. In the short term, Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) would be experienced but not necessarily have time to lay down an epigenetic pattern because the spring and summer months would be recurring again soon. The depressive moods and feelings of SAD are most probably experienced by those whose biological processes are adapted to being driven by high sunlight levels. In this case during the winter months, their bodies would not readily increase their metabolic rate in time to deal with the decreased amount of energy from the Sun.

 **Signs and Seasons**

By analyzing this summarized list of characteristics below often attributed to the Zodiac Signs, it is obvious to me at least, that the characteristics are based on the cycles of the seasons. With Spring having attributes of birth and beginnings, through Summer being growth, development and maturity. Then comes Autumn with characteristics of transformation and change, through Winter being death, completion and seed formation for the new cycle. But do these traits as far as a human being’s personality is concerned, have anything to do with varying intensities of the Sun’s light?

On Vernal Equinox around March 20th, the sign for Aries makes its turn on the Zodiac.

**Aries**=Start of new cycles, vitality, enthusiasm, birth;

**Taurus**=Taking form, embodiment, down to earth, steadiness;

**Gemini**=Curiosity, learning, cleverness, 1st communication.

On Summer Solstice around June 22nd, the sign for Cancer makes its turn on the Zodiac.

**Cancer**=Nurturing, bonding, roots, emotions;

**Leo**=becoming, development, entering ego,

**Virgo**=Individual, adaptable, perfecting, functional, practical.

On Autumnal Equinox around September 22nd, the sign for Libra makes its turn on the Zodiac.

**Libra**=Partnership, interdependence, harmony, social;

**Scorpio**=Change, ego-death, breaking free, transformation;

**Sagittarius**=Expansion, enlightenment, abstract, theoretical

On Winter Solstice around December 22nd, the sign for Capricorn makes its turn on the Zodiac.

**Capricorn**=Certainty, authority, reality, disciplined;

**Aquarius**=idealistic, unorthodox, utopian, dogmatic

**Pisces**=Surrender, sacrifice, dissolving, seed formation

**Climate Driven Subconscious Conditioning as Hypnotic Programming**

An interesting idea to me is that perhaps due to the changes in the environment, a person born during a certain season would somehow develop personality traits that fit the weather patterns. Are the seasons inherently built into our psychology? More specifically, is it because the weather has these traits, that a Spring baby really develops a vital and enthusiastic personality? Do Summer babies really have a focus on bonding, putting down roots and maturity? Do the Autumn born tend to be more harmonious and social? And do Winter births make for surrendering, authoritative and utopian types?

I have spoken to a lot of people who are convinced that Astrology accurately describes who they are. I also know of some others who do not think this way, while many others are uncertain. There are also those who have explored the descriptions of their particular birth times through Chinese Astrology and Numerology and discovered quite conflicting personality descriptions.

The fact that different geographic locations have varying sunlight, weather and climate conditions could be one way of explaining the conflicting Astrological interpretations of corresponding dates from different cultures. Because of different climates, the local religions, customs and philosophies would ultimately have been influenced by the wildlife and vegetation present. Different animals with characteristics assigned to them would make up the varying zoos or *Zodiacs* that were pictured in patterns of stars in the sky. Through careful observation, Astrologers would have accurately perceived patterns of behavior that corresponded with children being born during certain times of the year. Of course a culture located north of the equator would have made different observations than another culture south of the equator, even though the time of year is the same.

Over time, these observations would become part of the folklore and a more permanent part of the culture. As cultures expanded and became more global due to better transportation, Astrological interpretations would be shared and integrated. Some ideas would be accepted while others would conflict and be rejected. As it usually happens, many areas would tend to have a genetic majority. This group would then tend to have similar needs and responses regarding sun exposure. These ideas would not necessarily fit someone who migrated from another area with different genetic requirements.

Overall, the established traditions would not just give way to new interpretations easily. This is because humans are easily programmed or hypnotically influenced for good or for ill. If this were understood by more people, perhaps negative habits, conditioning and other unfavorable hypnotic influences could be corrected when necessary. Unfortunately, this is not the case and many old ideas and traditions remain simply because they are ancient and traditional. What was once a science based on careful observation may have soon become an outdated dogma, unsuitable for continued, successful application and accurate prediction of characteristics.

But that would be just pure, reductionist science speaking if I let it go at that. The problem with all I have just written is that it is inaccurate according to my experience. I have checked various sources for my Western Astrology sign as Virgo and found it to be accurate. The same goes for my Chinese Astrology sign as a Fire-Snake as well as for my number-5 life-path in Numerology. The very interesting thing, is if you check out all three of these for yourself as far as my Virgo, Fire-Snake and number-5 go, they are all remarkably similar.

I would have thought it was because I was just being optimistic and overly accepting to find some answers for direction in my life at one time. However, the personal experiences and predictions I have made using those three systems, as well as the downfalls I have experienced when not following the advice of these Divination Tools, have convinced me that there is more to them. I have found that this is not merely due to expectation or hypnotic suggestion because I have usually checked the signs and numbers *after* many incidents and events I have considered significant.

I am not one to just blindly accept anything at face value for long. When I have done so it was as an experiment to see how useful something is, as I have with many different philosophies in the past. As soon as I find something is not quite right or I am being misled, I withdraw and move on. Astrology and many other divination Tools may not be perfect, but they are indeed not just pseudo-sciences that anyone should easily dismiss because it does not fit the prevailing dogma of so-called scientific rationale.

Indeed, we should find a way to take anything useful and fill our lives with that, instead of being at the mercy of anything and feeling powerless. Personality traits and characteristics might have to do with a combination of these things. But what is the point to just accept the effects of the stars, moons, planets, astronomy or astrology or anything outside of ourselves as the final answer? It is probably more effective that we do our best to change our own stars and be the masters of our own fate.