

Chapter 10

Conclusion

This chapter draws the arguments of the thesis together and presents final considerations. The focus of this research project, as described in chapter 1, was to examine the nature of fate as accepted by present-day astrologers. Its prime question was: 'What is the nature of the fate and/or determinism within the beliefs of present-day astrologers?' From the investigation of this question came three other questions: is this concept of fate the same or different to that defined by physics as determinism?; is a belief in fate within astrology an acceptance of 'fatalism'?; and, finally, does understanding the nature of fate within present-day astrology provide an insight into the role astrology plays in present-day society? The community I queried was that of practitioners and theorists of astrology, defined as those people who worked with horoscopes for friends, family or clients and who also belonged to astrological organisation, or attended classes and conferences. The breadth of the investigation engaged astrologers from forty different countries.

Chapter 1 gave an overview of determinism highlighting the free will dilemma in the face of the accepted universality of determinism. The contemporary term of incompatibilism is used within philosophy to distinguish arguments that see free will and determinism as mutually exclusive. The acceptance of determinism and thus denial of free will is known as hard incompatibilism.⁹²⁵ This was shown to be equivalent to Cicero's assumption that a horoscope can only indicate one inevitable life. The opposite argument, libertarianism, denies the existence or influence of determinism.⁹²⁶ In contrast to these two incompatibilist positions are those arguments which support compatibilism, where free will is seen to exist alongside determinism. Additionally, the notions of dualism and monism were presented in the light of the astrologer's view of the horoscope. A dualist argument, associated with libertarianism, was one where the astrologer considered that the horoscope was only a

⁹²⁵ Fischer et al., *Four Views on Free Will*: p.3.

⁹²⁶ Fischer et al., *Four Views on Free Will*: p.3.

partial or incomplete view of the self. Chapter 3 discussed how this argument was supported by Aquinas in the thirteenth century and, due to his influence, became widely accepted. These dualist arguments acknowledged the will, spirit or soul and located it outside the horoscope insulating it from the horoscopes' implications of fate. In contrast the monist astrologers were defined as those who considered that the horoscope was a representation of the complete or whole self, defined as just the body and the personality or as a complete psyche – mind, body, soul and/or spirit. These astrologers could therefore hold either hard incompatibilist or compatibilist beliefs.

With the definitions and outline of the research project established, chapter 2 presented a literature review of the classical thinking on fate focusing primarily on Plato, Aristotle, the Stoics as well as the Neo-Platonist Plotinus and the Middle Platonist Calcidius; it then considered the transmission of these ideas through the work of Augustine and Aquinas. This classical literature review showed that fate was not a single concept but was instead contained in a theory of fate, a set of interlocking beliefs which were embedded into their own 'physics', a sympathetic cosmos.

In chapter 3, the literature review considered some modern views on determinism and its consequences for free will through the work of René Descartes, Baruch de Spinoza, David Hume and Arthur Schopenhauer. These four philosophers presented four different solutions to the free will dilemma, the problem of human free will existing in a world governed by the universality of determinism. Descartes drew on Platonism and presented a style of dualism, thereby supporting a libertarian solution. Spinoza, drawing on Stoicism, accepted hard incompatibilism but offered a therapeutic approach to determinism. Hume drew on the naturalism of Aristotle and supported a form of compatibilism. Schopenhauer presented a dualism within hard incompatibilism by replacing the notion of Plato's benefic cosmos with an irrational and unconscious force which dominated not only the external world but also the inner depths of the human mind, where consciousness struggled for any level of control.⁹²⁷

⁹²⁷ Meštrović, "Rethinking the Will and Idea of Sociology in the Light of Schopenhauer's Philosophy," p.274.

With the establishment of these diverse opinions on fate and determinism, the research then explored the beliefs of astrologers within this context. Chapters 4, 5, and 6 presented a review of the diverse range of twentieth- and twenty-first century astrological literature. A survey, reported on in chapter 7, was also conducted with over a thousand practicing astrologers. This survey explored beliefs about fate and determinism, as well as information about the attitude and actions that astrologers took in their daily lives with regard to their beliefs about fate. Additionally these surveyed astrologers provided a large volume of personal comments on matters to do with fate and astrology and these were presented in chapter 8. Finally I conducted interviews with twenty-two astrological authors and teachers who are accepted by the community as leaders in their own areas within astrology. These interviews were discussed in chapter 9.

An overview of the research findings

Each of the chapters in this thesis has been focused on one particular facet of this project. However, the following offers an overview of the entire findings of the research project. The research found common elements amongst the astrologers. However, within these common elements, there exists great diversity of beliefs.

Fate and Determinism

Central to all astrological beliefs is the notion of fate. Determinism, defined in chapter 1, is the assumption that life conforms to the laws of physics devoid of moral content or purpose.⁹²⁸ Fate, however, as has been argued, is something else. Through examining the various theories of fate from the classical and Late Antiquity periods fate is revealed to be a force that has intent and purpose. Solomon sees this intent and purpose of fate as being held in its 'hands' and thus the notion of fate tends to apply to living things rather than inorganic objects.⁹²⁹ It was in the classical period and still is, a non-measurable but highly influential causal agent based on an ensouled, sympathetic cosmos. Fate may be a figment of the human imagination, as suggested by Robert Hand in chapter 9, or it may be

⁹²⁸ Cartwright, *The dappled world: a study of the boundaries of science*: p.3 and pp.43-46.

⁹²⁹ Solomon, "On Fate and Fatalism," p.442; Also see Botros, "Freedom, Causality, Fatalism and Early Stoic Philosophy," p.279.

considered the perception of determinism in one's life, or it may be the non-compelling force of a not-yet-understood emergentism, as suggested by Whitehead in chapter 3. However, real or not, it is perceived and in this perception fate's nature is that it is personal, rather than objective, focused more on the organic rather than inorganic, and thus with its intent and purpose, it is story or narrative in which the individual finds themselves, rather than a description of the inevitability of determinism.

Fate for astrologers was reflected both within their horoscope as well as in their predictions.

Astrology's fatalism – *kairos* time

Prediction consists of two components, both Time and Event. By acknowledging the dual nature of prediction in my research and investigating these components of Time and Event separately, the research revealed the strong presence of *kairos* time. This is time which possesses quality, rather than *chronos* time which is clock-driven and carries quantity. This *kairos* view of time, discussed in chapter 5, is based in the astrologers' belief that from the moment of their birth the timing of when they will 'meet' the symbolism of a certain planet is fixed. No action they take can alter the fact that their horoscope indicates that 'encounters' will occur at set times in their life. This is the nature of prediction within astrology and it appears to be an almost universal feature of present-day astrology.

Dane Rudhyar, in chapter 4, referred to this *kairos* view of time when he talked of how the timing of life events can be judged from the horoscope. In chapter 8, many statements offered by my respondents also talked of cycles and how the astrologers understood that the rhythm of the future was written in their horoscope. In chapter 9 Rob Hand commented, 'you never miss a transit' while Clare Martin in her interview also talked of how the timing of these encounters were revealed in the horoscope from birth to death. This is the fatalism of astrology where fatalism, different to fate, is inevitable teleology, unchangeable and fixed, generally not known until reached.⁹³⁰ So central was this notion of *kairos* time to astrologers that the survey showed that the actual numbers of astrologers

⁹³⁰ Massie, *Contingency, Time and Possibility, an essay on Aristotle and Duns Scotus*: p.52.

who accepted the fatalism of *kairos* time increased the longer they studied astrology — suggesting that this was acquired and accepted as astrology was learned and practiced. However, equally, as the astrologers supported the notion of *kairos* time, they, the modern astrologers, also supported the belief that the predicted encounter was with an ambiguous symbol rather than with an exact event.

Other forms of prediction that involved both Time and the exact Event received minimal support and was indeed actually considered a taboo, with many astrological organisations barring it in their code of ethics. For this reason any researcher who fails to understand, firstly, the different nature of prediction within astrology (*kairos* time) and, secondly, is not aware of the taboo within the community, will potentially collect data which is reflective of the politically-correct rhetoric within the community, rather than what the astrologers actually practice. Furthermore it was shown that support for *kairos* time, the astrologer's form of prediction, was independent of any spiritual or lack of spiritual beliefs of the part of the astrologer. Indeed support for *kairos* time increased over time and was independent of all other variables apart from the length of time a person was involved with astrology.

Another approach to time was found to exist within the practice of horary astrology, the astrology of asking questions, and discussed in chapter 5. These astrologers adopted Calcidius' libertarian argument that humanity had agency, the ability to instigate a new chain of fate. In this way they did not need to address Cicero's assumption, nor adopt Aquinas' solution, for their freedom existed in their choice to instigate a new chain of fate by casting a horoscope. However, once cast, they agreed with Cicero and considered the horoscope to be inevitable.

Kairos time was one expression of fate within astrology; the other was that of the fate of the personal horoscope and its role of potentially denying moral responsibility, as argued by the sceptical literature.

Astrologers and moral responsibility

My research suggested that the presence of fate, like determinism, is required for an individual's sense of moral responsibility. In reproducing the research of Nichols and

Knobe via an astrological framework, as cited in chapter 7, my research showed that the astrologers mirrored the results of the philosophy students in that the influence of 'fate', however defined, was sensitive to moral issues. The survey results indicated that the astrologers accepted fate and allowed it unchecked expression in their life as long as it did not compromise their emotional or moral world. When it threatened to produce events which had emotional consequences, the majority of astrologers displayed a natural compatibilists attitude and sought to use their will to change the course of events being indicated by fate. This replication of Nichols' and Knobe's findings suggests that such sensitivity is not an isolated case peculiar to the astrologer's world view but may instead be a common feature of many people's beliefs.

Furthermore, the evidence of people displaying natural compatibilism as the moral or emotional consequences of a situation increased supports the Stoic argument that free will and fate are in fact independent concepts, rather than a mutually exclusive pair.⁹³¹ This is the argument of Cockburn, as well as Wolf, who claims that moral responsibility and not determinism is the central issue in the free will debates. Cockburn argues that determinism has to fit into 'gaps left by responsibility' and thus is secondary to responsibility.⁹³² My research, as with that of Nichols and Knobe, revealed a compatibilism which was activated by issues containing emotional content and hence supports Cockburn's comments, at least in terms of the 'natural beliefs' held by astrologers.

Additionally, Wolf argues in a similar way to Hume, that determinism was necessary for personal identity and moral responsibility. She comments, as cited in chapter 3, that 'nonrational determinants are, after all, what give us our individuality and distinctiveness. they provide the basis for a substantive identity and an attachment to the world without which no interest in freedom and responsibility could arise.'⁹³³ For the astrologer, one of Wolf's 'nonrational determinants' is their horoscope which provides a unique personal identity and includes a personal fate. My research has shown that such acceptance by the

⁹³¹ Botros, "Freedom, Causality, Fatalism and Early Stoic Philosophy," p.276.

⁹³² Cockburn, "Responsibility and Necessity," p.427.

⁹³³ Wolf, *Freedom within Reason*: p.146.

astrologers of this fated identity promotes compatibilism rather than fatalism and using Cockburn's and Wolf's arguments upholds responsibility rather than futilism.

Astrologers and modern theories of fate

Astrologers hold theories of fate. Their view of fate requires a physics of sympathy which in turn leads to a set of beliefs concerning the nature, source and purpose of fate which constitutes their personal theory of fate. At all stages of my research a wide diversity was revealed in these theories of fate: in the literature reviews; in the survey, where all forty-eight different theories of fate which the questions allowed for gained some level of support; in the personal stories of living with fate and its implications, as revealed in the 902 'notes in a bottle' collected from the questionnaire; and in the interviews with professional astrologers. In combining all of these findings, literature reviews, survey, and interviews the elements of these astrological theories of fate are revealed as follows.

The features of a theory of fate

The survey, the interviews, and literature review all found that fate, like determinism requires its own 'physics'. This 'physics' is made up of different elements which combined together to form the astrologer's theory of fate. The central requirement for any of these theories of fate is the notion of a sympathetic cosmos, where all is linked or enchained by some form of correspondence, the notion of a *sumpatheia*.⁹³⁴

A sympathetic cosmos

Sympathy is the 'physics' which gives agency to the astrologer's concept of fate. This sympathetic cosmos, as discussed in chapter 2, can take different forms. There is a Stoic sympathetic cosmos driven by the 'one divine and continuously connected *pneuma*' and which is contained in the world of matter.⁹³⁵ There also appears to be a modern version of the Stoic cosmos which is a secular emergentism of patterns promoted by Whitehead and later Berry which also leads to a version of astrology where the individual is seen as part of

⁹³⁴ Inwood, *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy* p.277.

⁹³⁵ Quoted from: Inwood and Gerson, *The Stoics Reader*: p.62. Cicero text 2.19.

the natural world. The second form is an Aristotelian sympathetic cosmology linked by material qualities which lends itself to an exploration of the material world and which seeks perfection of the self. The third form is a Platonist sympathetic cosmology based on a union of oneness found through harmony with the heavens. The horoscope, for modern astrologers, is about the soul, and this can support esoteric astrology. The fourth form is Plotinian based on a sympathetic cosmology linked by symbols, leading to an astrology which relies on symbols and focuses on the psyche, as defined by Hone in chapter 6.

For many astrologers the way they lived with their view of a sympathetic cosmos was through the notion of participation. This was seen in the survey results (chapter 7, *figure 9*) and found within the interviews reported in chapter 9 — for example, see Clark's comments in 'Living with fate'. The only astrologer I found who had abandoned the concept of a sympathetic cosmos was Edward Johndro, discussed in chapter 5, whose attempt to look for a measurable causal agent within astrology ended in failure, and possibly some of the 8% of the surveyed astrologers who accepted the argument of an inevitable horoscope.

This theme of individual participation with a sympathetic cosmos contradicts the theories of Adorno and the findings of Bauer and Durant, who concluded that people were drawn to astrology because they lacked control over their lives. For Bauer and Durant this confirmed that astrology was fatalistic, assuming that the astrologers submitted to external loci of control and thus an inevitable life.⁹³⁶ My research found instead that people who adopt astrology may indeed be actually seeking greater control of their lives but, this was to allow for participation in a sympathetic cosmos. Thus the astrologers in my research were actively engaging with a 'loci of control' but doing so not to surrender to a high power but instead to become more fully engaged with their life.

⁹³⁶ Bauer and Durant, " British Public Perceptions of Astrology: An Approach from the Sociology of Knowledge," p.66.

Causality — the cause of fate

There were different causal models of fate that the astrologers could adopt to support their theory of fate. The causal model of the majority of the dualist astrologers was Platonist teleology, as discussed in chapter 2, where fate was the result of the soul's need to journey towards perfection — survey results, *figure 12*. The causal model of many monist astrologers was Aristotelian teleology in which fate is the result of the individual living within patterns within the natural world and drawn to seek the perfection of their 'character' as defined within the horoscope. There was also the causal model of antecedent causes, which could also be associated to the law of karma, as adopted by Alan Leo but was usually adopted along with a teleological model. For example Leo adopted the law of karma, linked with Platonist teleology, as the causal model in his theory of fate.

Additionally an astrologer could, if they adopt the emergent sympathetic cosmos, also adopt emergent telos as a causal agent for their theory of fate. Fate became the teleological 'desire' for patterns to be maintained and/or created and this produced a pressure which required future events to conform to the parameters of the emergent pattern. Whitehead and later Berry, discussed in chapter 3, argued for this world view, seeing this order as immanent and emergent, a non-inevitable *telos*, moving forward in time while maintaining a loyalty but not exactness to a pattern.⁹³⁷ The acceptance of emergentism and the non-inevitable *telos* of pattern had strong support in the survey results (chapter 7, *figure 10*) showing 91% of astrologers giving support to this concept, 30% of which gave strong support.

The location of the mind or will

The expectations that astrologers hold for their astrology largely depends on the attributes they assign to the horoscope. There is general agreement that the horoscope will reflect the physical body but there are varying opinions as to whether the mind, soul or will are also a reflected in the horoscope. In answering these questions astrologers adopted either a dualist or monist position, as defined in chapter 1, depending on whether they accepted Aquinas' dualist solution and located the mind and/or the will outside astrology or rejected his

⁹³⁷ Berry, *The Great Work, our way into the future*: p.31.

solution and saw them within its domain. The dualist astrologers, comprising 46% of the surveyed astrologers, defaulted to a natural libertarian solution to the free will dilemma, locating the will, and thus its ability to be free, outside the horoscope. Most of the dualist astrologers accepted Platonist dualism, where the soul, as argued by Broadie, had 'a sort of limited omnipotence' and required the use of a body to aid its return to the divine.⁹³⁸ These astrologers considered that the soul, the holder of the will, therefore engaged in a mortal body for the soul's 'evolution' (see chapter 7, *figure 13*). The other form of dualism found in the literature review was Cartesian dualism, where the Cartesian mind/body split is defined by Broadie as the 'mind and body are ontologically separable' with the mind able to exist independently.⁹³⁹ This form of dualism attracted smaller support amongst the astrologers. The early twentieth century astrologer Sepharial and the financial astrologer Louise McWhirter showed evidence of Cartesian dualism in their astrology. Within the interviews in chapter 9, Martin's description of soul had the independent nature of Cartesian dualism, though this was only a suggestion rather than a clear statement. However, in the esoteric astrology of Alan Oken, also in chapter 9, the soul appeared empowered, with Oken implying that it had little if any need for the body. Esoteric astrology may be a vehicle of Cartesian dualism within contemporary astrology.

In contrast to the dualist astrologers were those 52% of the surveyed astrologers and many of those interviewed who adopted a monist position. These astrologers either accepted Cicero's assumption, a natural hard incompatibilism, about 8%, or a natural compatibilism, 44%, which considered that the will was reflected in the horoscope but it had a level of freedom. The natural compatibilists were thus the larger group within the monist astrologers. Compatibilism in astrology is achieved by adopting a sympathetic cosmos linked by ambiguous symbols, such as supported by Plotinus, as argued by Hone and Greene and/or by accepting that fate was the result of the emergence of patterns, discussed earlier in this chapter, which produced a non-inevitable teleology.

⁹³⁸ Broadie, "Soul and Body in Plato and Descartes," p.305.

⁹³⁹ Broadie, "Soul and Body in Plato and Descartes," p.299.

What was evident, however, within the monist astrologers who saw the horoscope as reflective of the individual's psychological complexes was that they accepted Schopenhauer's reversal of Plato dualism, and saw the individual as both *conatus*, or conscious mind, as well as complexes or unconscious. In this way they considered that the individual was born into an on-going narrative of either Jungian archetypes or emerging patterns, and the narrative of these patterns at the time of birth was the individual's fate. However, having accepted Schopenhauer's form of mental dualism they did not accept his World and Will argument with its irrational and thus pessimistic implications. Instead they considered that the narrative into which one was born, one's fate, did have purpose.

The order of the world as viewed in the horoscope

The astrologers' world view also contributed to their theory of fate. If they saw the world, the world of life and matter, in an Aristotelian manner, it was rational and ordered and held the potential for perfection in the material realm. With this view the astrologer saw the horoscope as one's personal image of perfection, that which should be aimed for in a material rational order. This view of the nature of the world is a feature of humanistic astrology, developed by Dane Rudhyar and promoted by Michael Meyer, discussed in the literature reviews.

On the other hand, the astrologer could consider that the world was emergent, as already discussed. For the astrologer, if the order of the world was a dynamic blend of Jungian archetypes or the dynamic emergence of a pattern, then one's fate was to be born into this emergent shifting order. Thus the horoscope reflected the mode of the cosmos at the time of birth and one's life was to live with this mode; this was one's fate. This is reflected in versions of psychological astrology and reflects both Spinoza's and Schopenhauer's world views, where the horoscope reflected the complexes of the mind as a result of it being formed or populated by Jungian archetypes. If the astrologer linked a divine purpose to their astrology, then this view also reflected Stoicism. If, however, the astrologer linked their emergentism to the patterns produced by nature, then these astrologers can be considered emergent astrologers and the horoscope reflected the state of the world at the time of birth and its use was for finding harmony in life.

A third world view was that of the world described by Platonist view of the material world a scrambled world of matter which was detrimental to the soul and the horoscope, if this was the astrologer's view then the horoscope was not a reflection of self but rather a reflection of the external issues with which one would be presented in life.

Thus the four features which make up the astrologer's personal theory of fate are: the nature of the sympathetic cosmos; the causal model of the adopted version of fate; the astrologer's opinions as to the location of character/will within or outside of the horoscope; and the considered nature of the order of the material world. An astrologer will learn a combination of these elements from teachers or authors, or will construct their own theory of fate by their own choices. Once a theory of fate has been constructed or adopted, then the astrologer will weave it into the concept of *kairos* time to create a life-style which, for the majority of astrologers, was found to be one of participation, as already discussed.

Cicero's assumption and Aquinas' solution

Chapter 1 considered Cicero's belief that fate was the inescapable unwinding of a cable.⁹⁴⁰ With fate so defined, he then argued that astrology had to produce an inevitable horoscope. Throughout my research there were only 7%-8% of the surveyed astrologers and Edward Johndro, discussed in chapter 5, with his scientific expectations of astrology who could have potentially accepted Cicero's assumption. Johndro represented a small number of astrologers who, in the last quarter of the twentieth century, sought a scientific proof of astrology.⁹⁴¹ The survey tested extensively for the acceptance of the inevitability of the horoscope (chapter 7, see *figure 5*, 6 and 7 also the matrix of *figure 13*). However, varying but only small support was found for Cicero's assumption, and this support actually diminished the longer an individual was involved with astrology. This indicates that contrary to the sceptical literature on astrology the practice of astrology does not cause the acquiring of a fatalistic attitude to life.

⁹⁴⁰ Cicero, *De Divinatione*; I lvi 127.

⁹⁴¹ See Dean for an overview of the astrologers work in seeking a scientific proof, from a science perspective: Geoffrey Dean, *Recent Advances in Natal Astrology* ([S.l.]: Fowlers, 1977); See Phillipson for an overview of astrology's quest for a proof from a non-scientific perspective: Garry Phillipson, *Astrology in the Year Zero* (London: Flare Publications, 2000).

In the thirteen century Aquinas, in his attempt to give God supreme power over the soul provided a solution to Cicero's assumption. This solution, discussed in chapter 2, separated the soul from fate as represented by the horoscope. Aquinas' dualist solution was dominant in astrology for the first half of the twentieth century. However, by the mid-twentieth century, probably through the work of Margaret Hone, a natural compatibilism was established which no longer required dualism. This compatibilism has now become widely accepted within the astrological community, either through the adoption of Jungian symbolism within astrology or through the adoption of emergentism and non-inevitable teleology. At the time of the research, the balance between the Platonic, Leonian, Rudhyarian style of dualist astrology which tends to be person-centred and places the astrologer on an individual journey of self-perfection only represents around half the community of astrologers. While the idea of an astrology where the individual was simply part of the natural world, part of an emergent system — Jungian or patterns — represents the other half of the community.

The horoscope and detachment

My research also found that the horoscope provided the astrologer with an image of their personal relationship to the cosmos and, as revealed in the interviews, it also offered a form of detachment, a self-referencing, consistent inner authority. This detachment allowed the astrologer to use their astrological knowledge to reflect on external events and/or their internal emotions. This supported Costello's research which also found that astrologers used their horoscope to gain perspective on emerging events, as well as to allow for reflection.⁹⁴² Additionally for the astrologer, the horoscope lies both in time as well as outside time, as all time, past, present, and future, can be seen and examined in any one instance. This attitude to time and the detachment offered by the horoscope and its use as an inner authority is reflective of Spinoza's therapeutic approach to life.⁹⁴³ This in itself does not suggest that the astrologers are intentionally following Spinoza but are instead

⁹⁴² Costello, "Astrology in action: Culture and status in unsettled lives," p.77.

⁹⁴³ Spinoza, *The Ethics*: Part 2, Prop. 44, corollary 42 and Part 45, Prop 42 and 44; Scruton, "Spinoza," p.164.

intuitively finding therapeutic benefits in their astrology which allow them to reflect on times past as well as times present in order to gain understanding of themselves.

Astrology as neither secular nor non-secular

Many researchers assume that astrology has required spiritual bases, or that practitioners support a set of spiritual beliefs.⁹⁴⁴ However my research found that around 50% of astrologers implied that they do not agree with these assumptions. This finding was also in agreement with the independent studies of Campion and Feher, both cited in chapter 7. If the astrologer did link their spiritual beliefs to their astrology then the survey revealed that they were equally divided between monotheism or either polytheism or pantheism (see chapter 7, *figure 12*). This finding raises questions about any definition of astrology that assumes spiritual bases as around half of the astrologers would be described by such an opinion, but also half would not.

Astrology and the notion of a diverse community

Astrologers with their common astrological interest constitute a community for as argued by P.Hoggartt a community can be one bounded by geography or by interest.⁹⁴⁵ As my research progressed it became increasingly obvious that the community contained a great diversity of beliefs. Indeed, from my own perspective, the most powerful impression gained from the entire research project has been the diversity of beliefs around the notion of fate within the astrological community. The range of these beliefs are reflected in the 'notes in a bottle', reported in chapter 8. In chapter 7, all forty-eight different theories of fate presented in the questionnaire were present in the results. The great diversity of beliefs was also reflected in the differing opinions found within the literature review, ranging from the Platonic dualism of Alan Leo in chapter 4, the quest for science of Johndro in chapter 5, the Stoic, Spinozian, Schopenhauerian astrology of Hone and Greene in chapter 6, and the range of thought revealed in the interviews in chapter 9.

⁹⁴⁴ For two such examples see: Bruce, *Religion in Modern Britain*: p.105; Melton, "The Emergence of New Religions in Eastern Europe since 1989," p.53.

⁹⁴⁵ P Hoggartt, "Contested communities," in *Contested Communities: experiences, struggles, policies*, ed. P Hoggartt (Bristol: Policy Press, 1997), p.7.

With this diversity in mind, therefore, it is possible to find some astrologers who may adopt astrology for authoritarian matters, as argued by Adorno, or some astrologers who would agree with Nederman and Goulding, cited in chapter 1, that 'fate is interpreted as a cosmic throw of the dice. It is always the element of risk that determines one's fate.'⁹⁴⁶ As well, with such a diverse community, some astrologers would fit Tyson's claims that astrologers have maladjusted personalities.⁹⁴⁷ Others could adequately be described by Dawkins' assumptions that astrologers are 'quacks' who seek to delude their victims.⁹⁴⁸ However, all such comments are characterisations of different sections of what this research has found to be a diverse community. Such criticisms reduce this diverse community to a single stereotype and therefore say more about their author's beliefs rather than the community which they are depicting.

This very diversity illuminates the difficulties that past scholars have had in defining astrology and supports Curry's definition, given in chapter 1, that astrology is '... the practice of relating the heavenly bodies to lives and events on earth, and the tradition that has thus been generated.'⁹⁴⁹ Any other definition involving spirituality or the single idea regarding the nature of fate, matters of magic or science, would in fact not be applicable to all astrologers. Furthermore it is the diversity of beliefs contained within astrology that reveals its ability to absorb new beliefs, while seemingly able to hold on to old ones, as long of those beliefs involve a sympathetic cosmos. The astrology of Ptolemy's period, for example, did not contain the notions of free will expressed in Dane Rudhyar's astrology, but present-day astrology still retains themes of Ptolemaic astrology.

It is this chameleon-like nature of astrology, which absorbs but never loses a theme, which is its appeal. For whatever the personal preferences of the new potential astrologer, there is a form of astrology which fits their inherent ideas on how the world works. There is not a

⁹⁴⁶ Nederman and Goulding, "Popular Occultism and Critical Social Theory: Exploring Some Themes in Adorno's Critique of Astrology and the Occult," p.327.

⁹⁴⁷ Tyson, "People Who Consult Astrologers: A profile," pp.119-120.

⁹⁴⁸ Dawkins, "The Real Romance in the Stars."

⁹⁴⁹ Curry, "Astrology," Vol 1 p.55.

single astrology. There is not a single philosophical astrological position. There is not a single version of fate.

Final thoughts

This research has revealed a diverse collection of philosophies contained in present-day astrology. The classical notions of fate, carried forward through different authors, are now rivers of thought within astrology. The philosophy of any one theory of fate can be described as Platonic, Aristotelian, or Stoic, while also being contained within a spiritual or non-spiritual framework. Descartes' dualist arguments are active within esoteric astrology. Spinoza's therapeutic approach is also found as a naturally occurring practice in the manner that many astrologers choose to live their astrologically informed lives. Hume's argument around moral responsibility and compatibilism is reflected within the style of natural compatibility found within astrology and the influence of Schopenhauer's dark World of Will is seen in a moderated form within psychological astrology. Curry's definition of astrology referred to 'tradition generated'. My research suggests that these traditions contained within astrology are a cultural vessel regarding humanity's worth in a sympathetic cosmos. By reflecting both classical and contemporary society, astrology's robustness can be attributed to its sensitivity; it may even contribute to the contemporary culture within which it is contained.

However, in the face of this diversity there was a deeper theme that appeared to run through nearly all of the astrologers, and this was the notion of living a life in participation with a sympathetic cosmos. So strong was this theme that, regardless of the stated style of astrology practiced by the astrologers, whether of the nature of the esoteric practice of Alan Oken, or the Dutch business astrologer Faye Cossar, or the Hellenistic astrologer Dorian Greenbaum, all of them took the same practical approach to living with fate. This approach took the form of understanding the forthcoming symbolism and attempting to give it a more productive outlet. In this way it appears that the complexity of beliefs around notions of fate complement but do not dominate this deeper relationship to fate – the ability to participate and to negotiate with it.

Thus one can also argue that there is only *one* astrology and that is the human endeavour to reach for control of one's life through a union with heavens. For what became apparent as the research progressed is that by adopting a theory of fate, no matter how diverse, the individual astrologer places their life into what, for them, is a meaningful context, supporting either a natural libertarian or compatibilist approach to fate. Thus rather than submitting to what an outsider may consider to be a fated life dictated by the planets, my research shows that the astrologers are instead largely seeking knowledge of their fate in order to provide greater participation with, and meaning to, their own lives.

The astrologer's theory of fate can be understood within the framework and lineage of classical philosophy and having adopted such a theory at the beginning of their astrological studies, the longer they practiced astrology, the greater was their acceptance of natural compatibilism.
