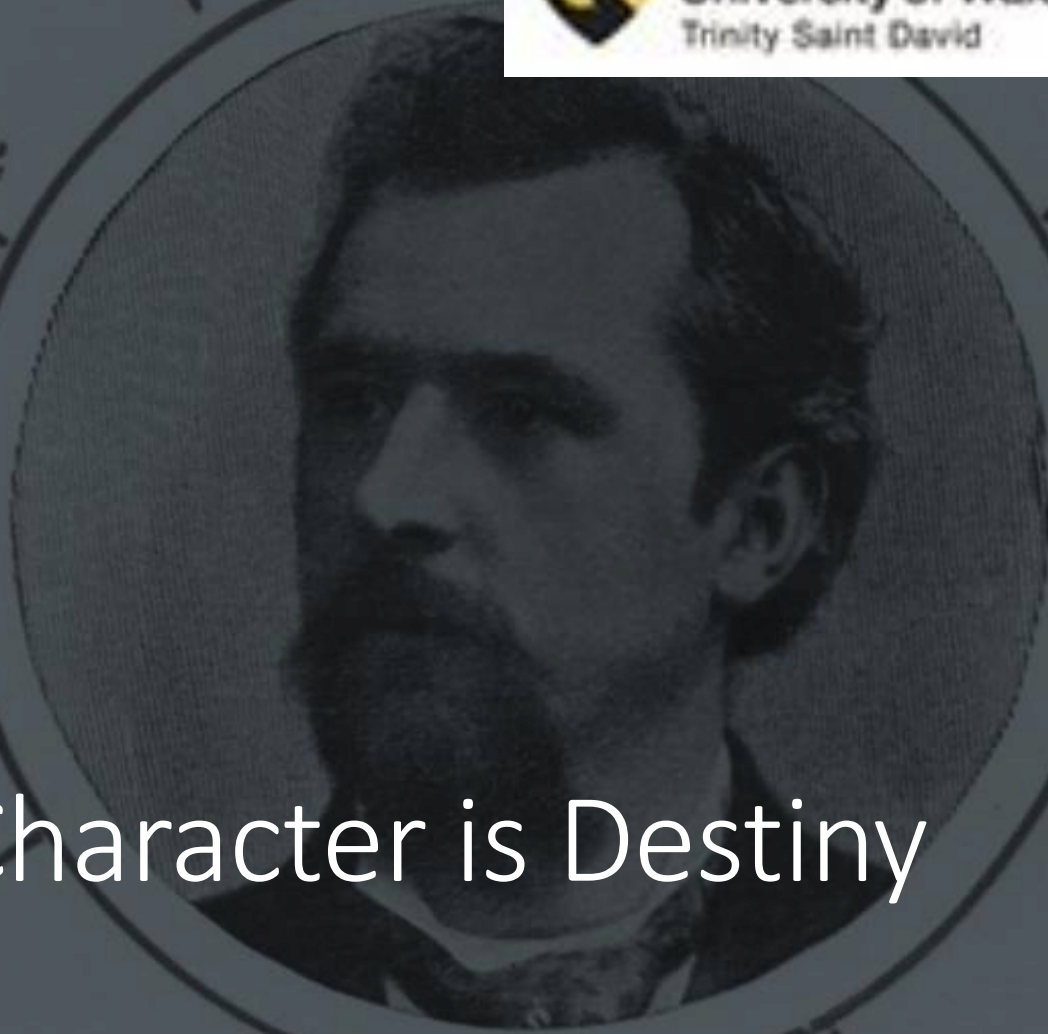




Prifysgol Cymru
Y Drindod Dewi Sant
University of Wales
Trinity Saint David

Canolfan Sophia
The Sophia Centre



Alan Leo: Character is Destiny

Dr. Frances Clynes

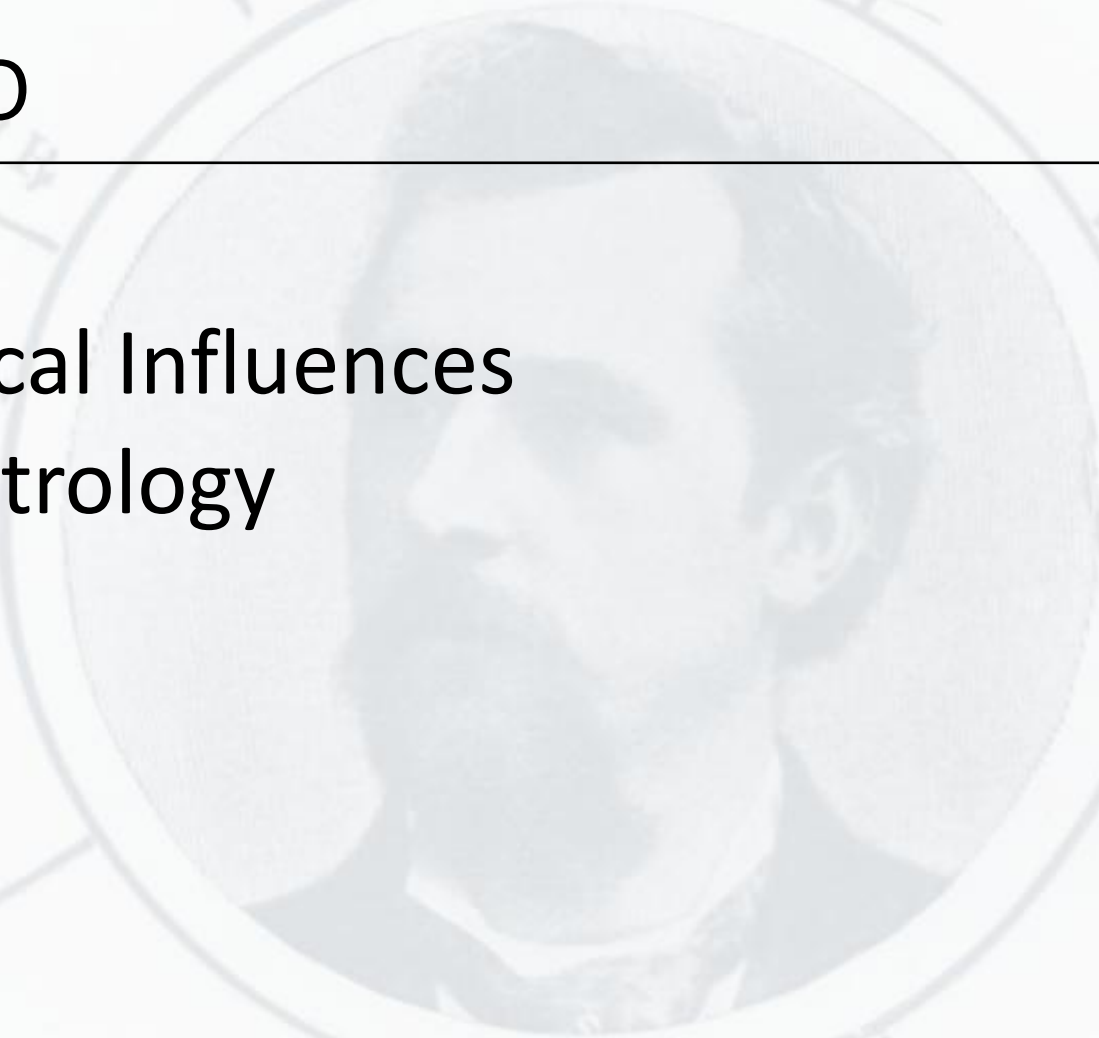
Alan Leo

Biography

Theosophical Influences

Leo and Astrology

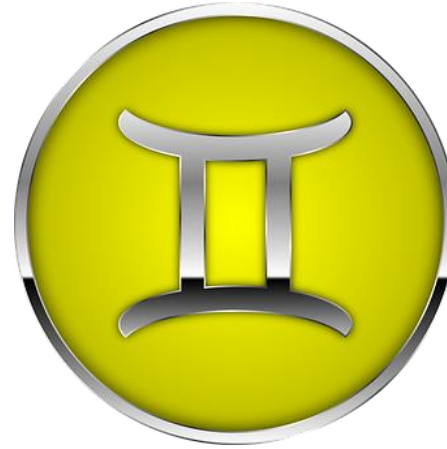
Legacy



What is Psychological Astrology?

‘The philosophical premise upon which psychological astrology is based is that a person’s reality springs outward from his or her inner landscape of thoughts, feelings, expectations and beliefs’

Howard Sasportas, *The Twelve Houses*, p. 20



Herein the Aspects of the Heavens learn;
And of the Times the Mystic Signs discern.

25

THE

PROPHETIC ALMANACK;

Or, Annual Abstract of Celestial Lore:

Calculated, from the Era of Human Redemption, for the Year

1825:

BEING THE FIRST AFTER LEAP-YEAR,

And the Sixth of the Reign of His Majesty George IV:

WHICH, REMAINS UNCHANGING AND EXPLAINING

THE PERIODICAL PHENOMENA OF THE HEAVENS,

AND

THE OMINOUS TENDENCY

OF

Particular Configurations of the Planets,

CONTAINING

Salutary Precepts and Comments on the same:

WITH

Prognostications of the Weather throughout the whole Year:

INCLUDING ALSO

NEW TABLES OF MEMORABLE EVENTS, AND AN IMPROVED TIDE-TABLE:

A BATCH OF RECREATIONS IN ASTRONOMY FOR THE YEAR;

With all the Useful Tables and Contents of the Common Almanacks;

AND

A Poetic Sagarp on the Way of the World:

To all which is prefixed

A COMMENTARY ON EZEKIEL'S LAMENTATION OVER TYRE:

The whole being calculated to prepare Mankind for

The Coming of Christ's Kingdom upon Earth.

FROM THE MSS. OF SIR WILLIAM BRACHM, K.G. & ASTRONOMIST.

"What Sign shall there be?"

CHRIST'S ANSWER.—And there shall be Signs in the Sun, and in the Moon, and in the Stars; and upon the Earth distress of Nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men shall be terrified, and shall leave their cities for fear; and for looking after those things which are coming on this world. (See Luke, xxi. 25.)

London:

ALMANACK

Astrology in Britain in the 1890s

General Public

Almanacs for sale

Newspaper Astrology

Questions were answered for a small fee

Practice of Astrology

Planetary importance based on technical
considerations derived from Hellenistic
Egypt

Little change since medieval times

Campion, *A History of Western Astrology*, Vol II, p. 232

Image: By John Harries (d. 1839) - This image is available from the National Library of Wales

Alan Leo
(1860 – 1917)



Alan Leo (1860 – 1917)

William Frederick Allan

Born in London

Father - a Scottish soldier who served in the Indian Mutiny and was 'of a religious turn of mind'

Left the home when Alan was nine years old and family moved to Edinburgh

Mother - 'a woman who was of the sect called the Plymouth Brethren'

An unhappy childhood

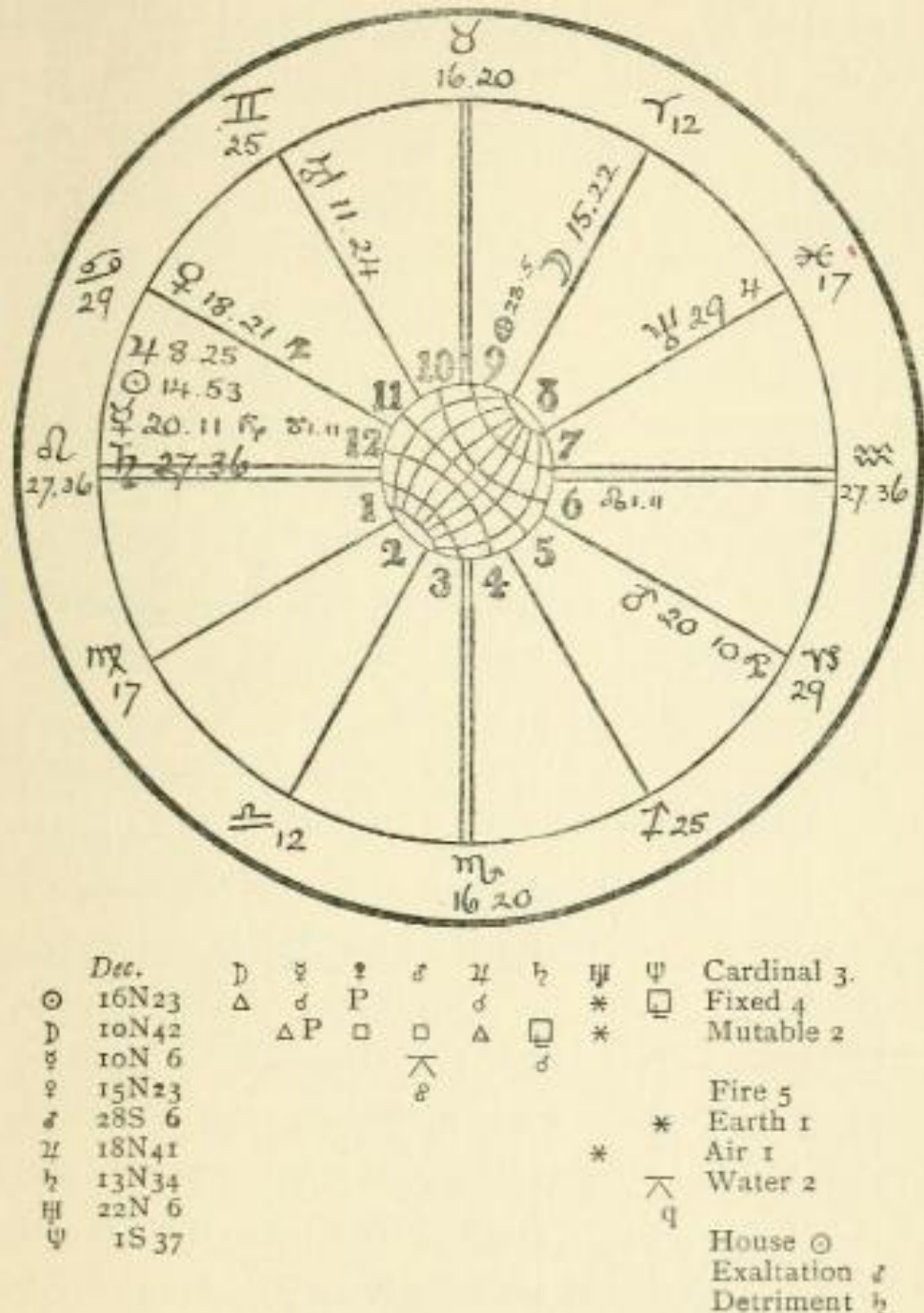
Constant work and strict religious atmosphere

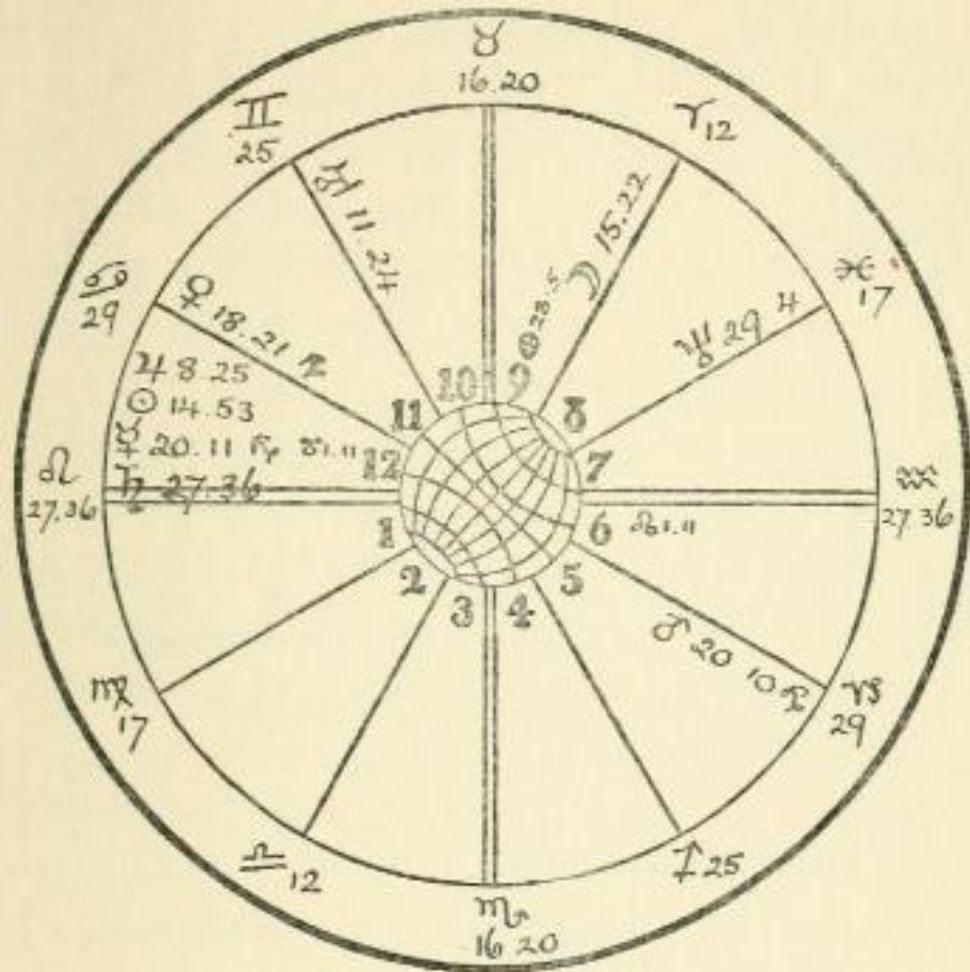
Left to his own devices as a young child

Began working at 15 when family moved back to London

Late teens – began working as a travelling salesman

Bessie Leo, 'Parentage and Early Life,' in *The Life and Work of Alan Leo, Theosophist – Astrologer – Mason*, ed. Bessie Leo, 1919





Alan Leo

Believed in reincarnation from a young age

At nine years old Leo had a vision 'that liberated my soul' from bondage and he readily accepted the idea of reincarnation which he was introduced to, aged seventeen, forming 'the opinion that our souls were connected with the stars.'

Leo, *Esoteric Astrology*, p. vi.

Reincarnation was an explanation for the unfairness of life and inequalities in society

Never doubted the existence of a Great Being

Discovered astrology in his late teens

'Astrology is God's Law'

At 21 moved to Manchester to manage a large grocer's shop

At 28 moved to London

Dec.	♈	♉	♊	♋	♌	♍	♎	♏	♐	♑	♒	♓	Cardinal 3.
☉ 16N23	♈	♉	♊	♋	♌	♍	♎	♏	♐	♑	♒	♓	Fixed 4
☾ 10N42	♈	♉	♊	♋	♌	♍	♎	♏	♐	♑	♒	♓	Mutable 2
☿ 10N 6	♈	♉	♊	♋	♌	♍	♎	♏	♐	♑	♒	♓	
♀ 15N23	♈	♉	♊	♋	♌	♍	♎	♏	♐	♑	♒	♓	
♂ 28S 6	♈	♉	♊	♋	♌	♍	♎	♏	♐	♑	♒	♓	Fire 5
♂ 18N41	♈	♉	♊	♋	♌	♍	♎	♏	♐	♑	♒	♓	Earth 1
♂ 13N34	♈	♉	♊	♋	♌	♍	♎	♏	♐	♑	♒	♓	Air 1
♂ 22N 6	♈	♉	♊	♋	♌	♍	♎	♏	♐	♑	♒	♓	Water 2
♂ 1S 37	♈	♉	♊	♋	♌	♍	♎	♏	♐	♑	♒	♓	
	♈	♉	♊	♋	♌	♍	♎	♏	♐	♑	♒	♓	House ☉
	♈	♉	♊	♋	♌	♍	♎	♏	♐	♑	♒	♓	Exaltation ♄
	♈	♉	♊	♋	♌	♍	♎	♏	♐	♑	♒	♓	Detriment ♅

The Theosophical Society



*To the Aryan Theosophical Society, of New York.
With H. P. B.'s & H. S. O.'s good wishes
London, October, 1888.*



by an Theosophical Society, of
H. P. B.'s & H. S. O.'s good
London, October, 1888

HP Blavatsky and Henry Olcott, Public Domain

The Theosophical Society

Founded in New York 1875 by Helena Petrovna Blavatsky and Henry Olcott

Objectives

Form a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, gender, caste or colour

To encourage the study of comparative religion, philosophy and science

To investigate unexplained laws of nature and the powers latent in mankind.

H. P. Blavatsky, *The Key to Theosophy*, (Theosophy Trust, 2007 [1888]), p. 30.



Theosophy

The Absolute is the One Infinite Eternal Divine Principle

The Logos is the expression of the Absolute which radiates from the Absolute to bring the world into being

At the heart of the spiritual universe is the Central Spiritual Sun

Every atom is a spark of the One, so everything in the universe contains life and consciousness

H. P. Blavatsky, *Isis Unveiled Vol. 1*, (Theosophical University Press Online 1877), available online: <http://www.theosociety.org/pasadena/isis/iu-hp.htm>



Theosophy

Reincarnation

A cycle of death and rebirth concerned with spiritual evolution

Humans are spiritual beings descended into matter, to gain experience and evolve

Karma

A law of nature under which every action produces a corresponding reaction

Balances out over several lives

Purpose is to teach and bring about spiritual development

H.P. Blavatsky, *Isis Unveiled Vol. 2 Appendix, Theories about Reincarnation and Spirits* (Theosophical University Press Online Edition 1877), available online <http://www.theosociety.org/pasadena/isis/iu2-ap1.htm>



Theosophy

‘The history of the world since its formation to its end is written in the stars’

Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine*, Vol 1, p.438

‘Astrology is a science *as infallible* as astronomy itself, with the condition, however, that its interpreters must be equally infallible ... that has always proved a stumbling-block ... In astrology and psychology one has to step beyond the visible world of matter, and enter into the domain of transcendent spirit.’

Blavatsky, *Isis Unveiled* Vol. 1, p.259,
<https://www.theosociety.org/pasadena/isis/iu1-08.htm>



*by an Theosophical Society, of
H P B's & H S O's good
London, October, 1888*

HP Blavatsky and Henry Olcott, Public Domain

Age of Aquarius

The universe begins as pure spirit

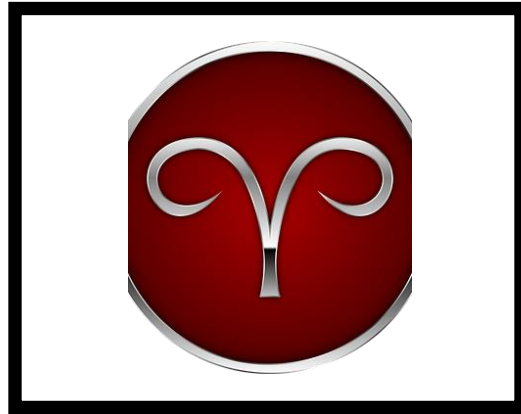
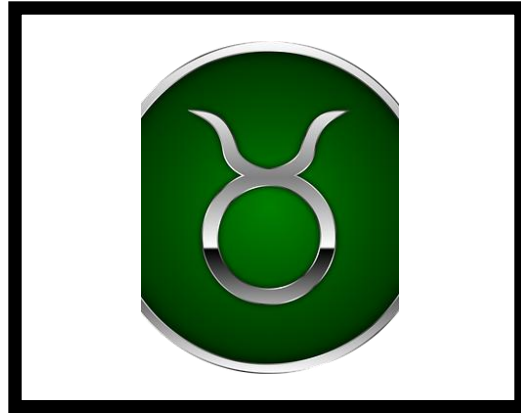
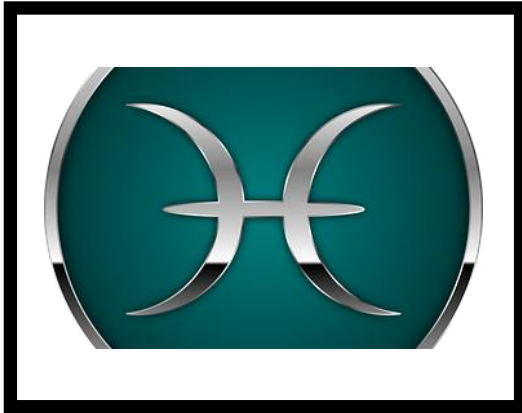
Spirit condenses into matter and the physical world appears

Eventually the process is reversed and all return to spirit

At time of writing, HPB believed that the return to spirit was imminent

- Age of Aquarius
- Increase in consciousness

Precession of the Equinox



Vernal Equinox moving
backwards through zodiac

Each sign or age lasts 2,200
years and ushers in a new
age

Currently believed to be in
Pisces

Move backwards into
Aquarius was immanent

'An Examination of Contemporary Understandings of the Age of Aquarius on TikTok'

Social media platforms such as TikTok have become key sites for astrological discourse and information sharing in the digital age, with TikTok now the fastest-growing social media app in history. Approximately 40% of users aged between 12 and 28 use the platform as a search engine in place of reputable, fact-checked sources (Huang, 2022).

This presentation examines the contemporary understandings of the *Age of Aquarius* on TikTok, drawing from a thematic analysis of user-generated content under the #AgeofAquarius hashtag. I explore how TikTok users interpret the concept of the Aquarian Age and the extent to which these beliefs intersect with its countercultural history, broader astrological debates, and contemporary conspiracy theories.

Drawing on Ward and Voas' (2011) concept of *conspirituality*, the study analyses user-generated video content about the *Age of Aquarius* for the 'clues, traces, and signs' of the conspiritual milieu (Griera et al., 2022), including references to far-right conspiracy theories and Christian fundamentalism.



Alan Leo
(1860 – 1917)

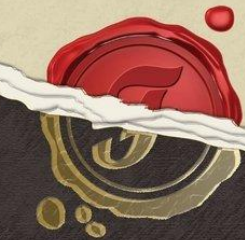


CLASSIC REPRINT SERIES

THE ASTROLOGER'S MAGAZINE, 1894

A Work Dealing Solely With
All Branches of Astral Science

Vol. 4



by
Alan Leo

Forgotten Books

Image: <http://www.amazon.com>

Life in London

Took the name Alan Leo reflecting his chart

1889 – Introduced to Helena Petrovna Blavatsky and the Theosophical Society (TS)

1890 - Joined the TS and was involved for the rest of his life

Committed himself to developing a theosophical astrology

Launched *The Astrologers' Magazine* in 1890

Became a vegetarian, teetotaler, non-smoker and celibate

1895 - Married Bessie

1898 – Became a full time astrologer



Image: Public Domain

Leo and Astrology

Aims

To reform astrology

To integrate theosophical principles into astrology

To make astrology available to everyone

To help people use astrology for their personal evolution

To prepare people for the Age of Aquarius

New World Teacher

21 March 1928

Alan Leo, 'Retrospect,' *Modern Astrologer* 12, no. 1 (1902), p. 2.



Reform of Astrology

Astrology failed when astrologers 'ceased to advance with the times'

Solution – 'purify' astrologers and their practice

A thorough knowledge of theosophy along with a belief in karma and reincarnation

Astrologers needed to be aware of and move with the 'progress of civilisation' because scientific discoveries could render some of the old astrological rules inapplicable



Character is Destiny

‘Sooner or later it must be realised that character is destiny’

◦ Alan Leo (1913), p. 35

‘The knowledge that each man is a law unto himself that within each is the power to create his own destiny and build his character.’

A strong character can overcome the limitations of the chart

The horoscope represents the body but not the spirit or soul

Focusing on the individual (spirit) rather than the personality allows people to rule their stars and achieve self-realisation



Reform of Astrology

The combining of astrology with Theosophy was

‘The true Astrology for the new Era that is now dawning upon the world.’

- Alan Leo, *Esoteric Astrology*, (Rochester, Vermont: Destiny Books, 1983 [1913]), p. v.

ALAN LEO'S
ASTROLOGICAL TEXT BOOKS

ESOTERIC ASTROLOGY

Free Will

‘The Stars incline, they do not compel’ ‘

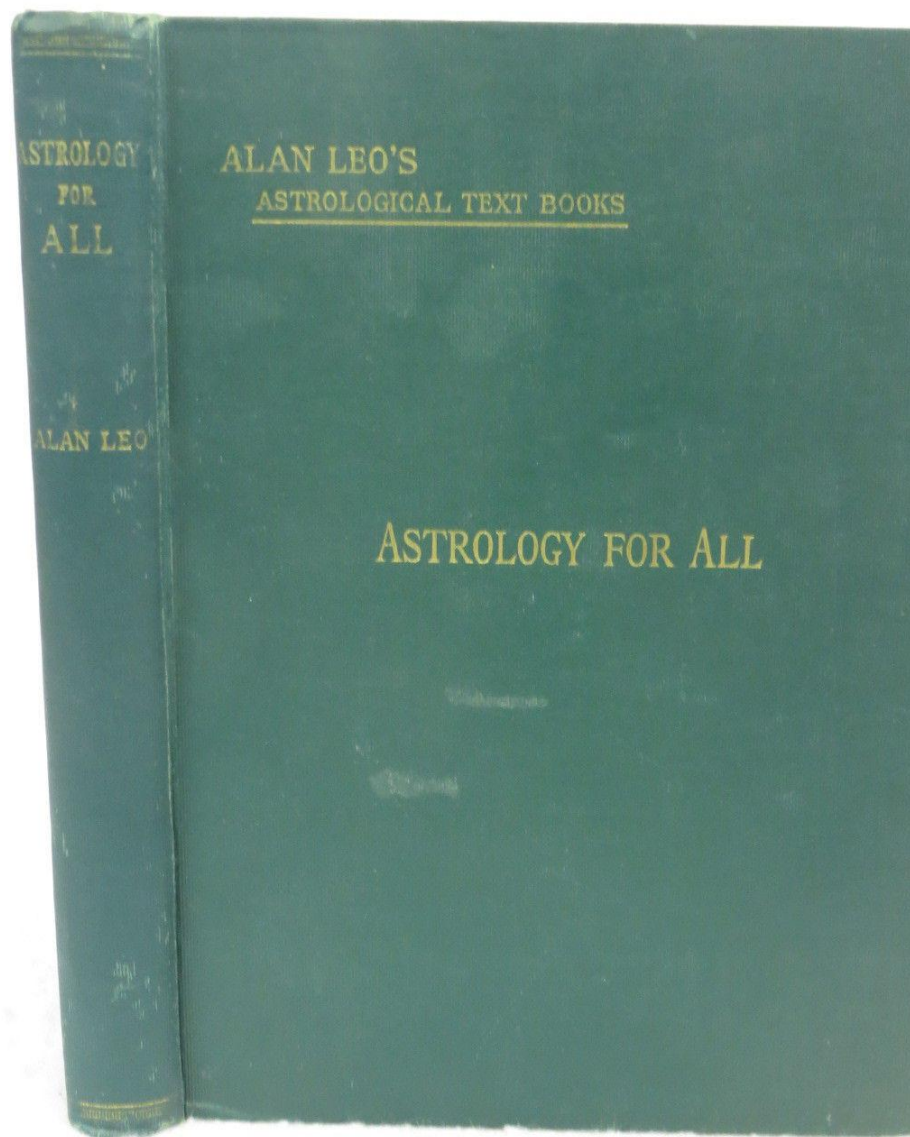
‘The Wise Man rules his Stars, the Fool obeys them’

‘We are fated in our birth’ because we cannot change the conditions of it and our early life.

However, in later life, fate is the result of gratifying ‘our *lower* nature,’ following the dictates of the body

Once this is conquered we develop free will and follow the ‘aspirations of the spirit’

‘Mind is the creative power and man becomes what he thinks.’



Astrology and Science

‘The Rational Basis for Astrology’

‘The *first principle* upon which the science of astrology rests is, that the whole Universe is actually what the terms implies – a unity; and that a law which is formed in manifestation in one portion of Universe must also be equally operative throughout the whole.’

‘The *second principle* is, that by a study of the motions and relative positions of the planets the operations of these laws may be observed, measured, and determined.’

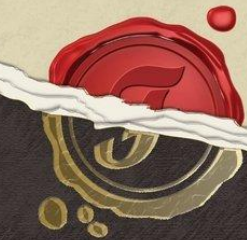
Astrology for All, p. a1

CLASSIC REPRINT SERIES

THE ASTROLOGER'S MAGAZINE, 1894

A Work Dealing Solely With
All Branches of Astral Science

Vol. 4



by
Alan Leo

Forgotten Books

Life in London

1903 – The Shilling Horoscopes

The first mass-produced horoscopes

Used the profit to publish his books and pocket manuals

1910 – Ceased production

1915 – founded the Astrological Lodge of the Theosophical Society ('to teach Astrology to Theosophists and Theosophy to Astrologers').

Bessie Leo - the first President – replaced by Charles Carter in 1922.

1914 – Appeared in court charged with fortune-telling under the Vagrancy Act, but acquitted

CLASSIC REPRINT SERIES

THE ASTROLOGER'S MAGAZINE, 1894

A Work Dealing Solely With
All Branches of Astral Science

Vol. 4

by
Alan Leo

Forgotten Books

1914 Prosecution

‘I have now no intention of retiring until I have done my best to free the science of Astrology from the taint of common fortune-telling.’

‘Let us part company with the fatalistic astrologer who prides himself on his predictions and who is ever seeking to convince the world that in the predictive side of Astrology alone shall we find its value. We need not argue the point as to its reality, but instead make a much-needed change in the word and call Astrology the science of *tendencies*, thus giving a more elastic interpretation of the old but very good astrological word ‘influence’.

CLASSIC REPRINT SERIES

THE ASTROLOGER'S MAGAZINE, 1894

A Work Dealing Solely With
All Branches of Astral Science

Vol. 4



by
Alan Leo

Forgotten Books

1917 Prosecution

Convicted of fortune-telling and fined £5 +
£25 costs

‘At this time a death in your family is likely to
cause you sorrow’

The Times, 7th May 1917

Died on 30th August 1917.

Alan Leo: Influence on 21st Century Astrology





Influence on Astrology

Theosophical Beliefs

Evolutionary Astrology

The Sun

Dualism

ALAN LEO'S
ASTROLOGICAL TEXT BOOKS

ESOTERIC ASTROLOGY

Astrology and Karma

‘Today my whole belief in the science of the stars stands or falls with Karma and Reincarnation, and I have no hesitation in saying that without these ancient teachings, Natal Astrology has no permanent value. The law which gives to one soul a nativity of good environment in which refinement, opportunity, and sound moral training are uppermost; and to another poverty, disease, and immoral training, is manifestly unjust to say the least, apart from its being without any apparent purpose’.

Alan Leo, *Esoteric Astrology*, p. vii.

ALAN LEO'S
ASTROLOGICAL TEXT BOOKS

ESOTERIC ASTROLOGY

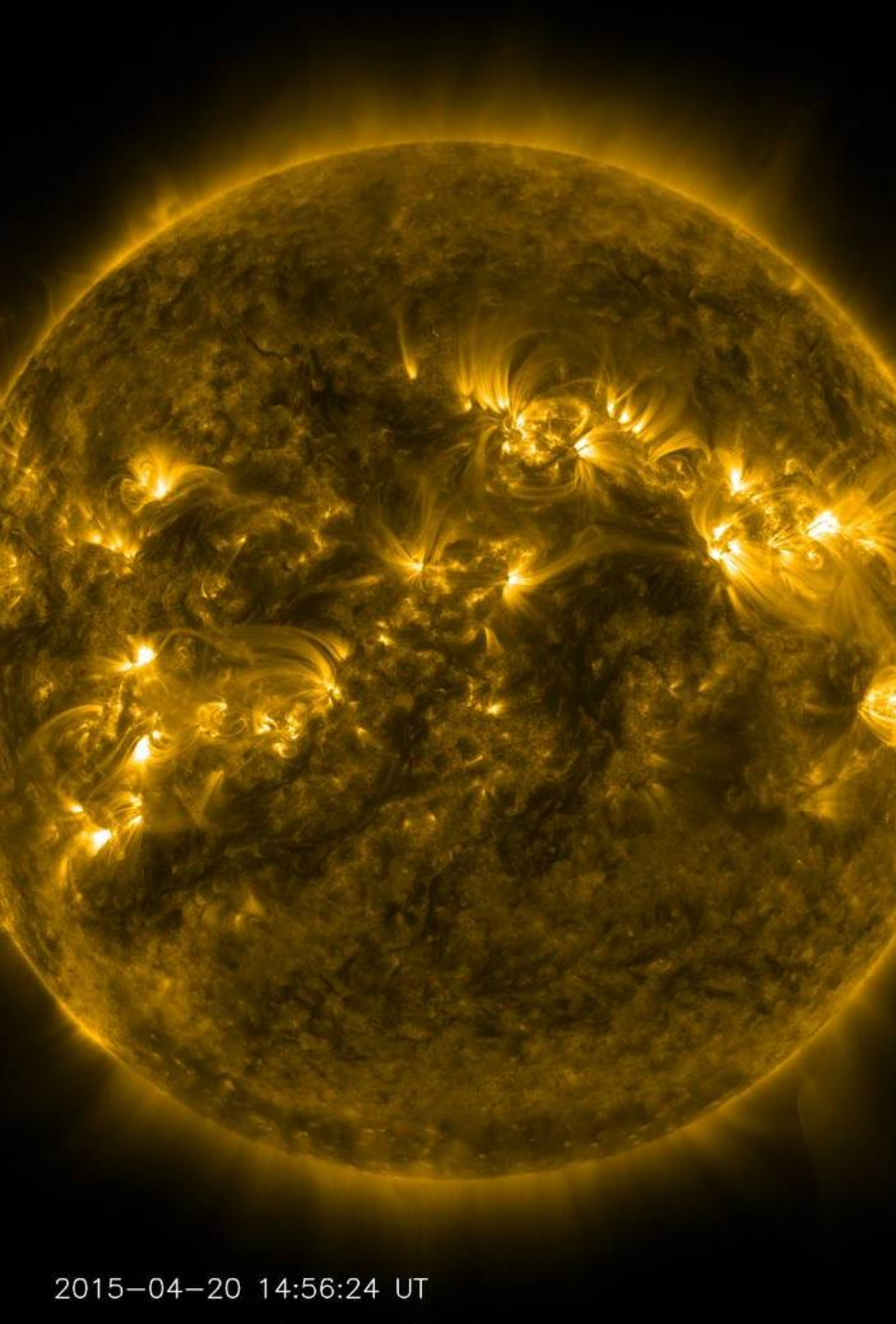
Esoteric Astrology

Rejected 'Exoteric Astrology' – prediction

An astrology of spiritual evolution

Revolutionary change from the Ptolemaic
emphasis on outer manifestation of
zodiacal signs in the chart

Rejected these interpretations in favour of inward
looking descriptions of the signs



Central Spiritual Sun

The Sun in the chart represents the Central Spiritual Sun of theosophy

The Sun's position in the chart was paramount

It is the Solar Logos or divine reason

‘There is but One Life within the Universe – the Supreme Life of God, streaming through the Sun’

Alan Leo (1904), p. xix

The more developed the individual, the more the Sun dominated the chart



Theosophical Beliefs

Age of Aquarius

Karma and Reincarnation

2004 – A high level of belief in karma and reincarnation among astrologers

Self-Awareness and Spiritual Growth

2004 – Majority of astrologers view astrology as a tool for self-development and growth

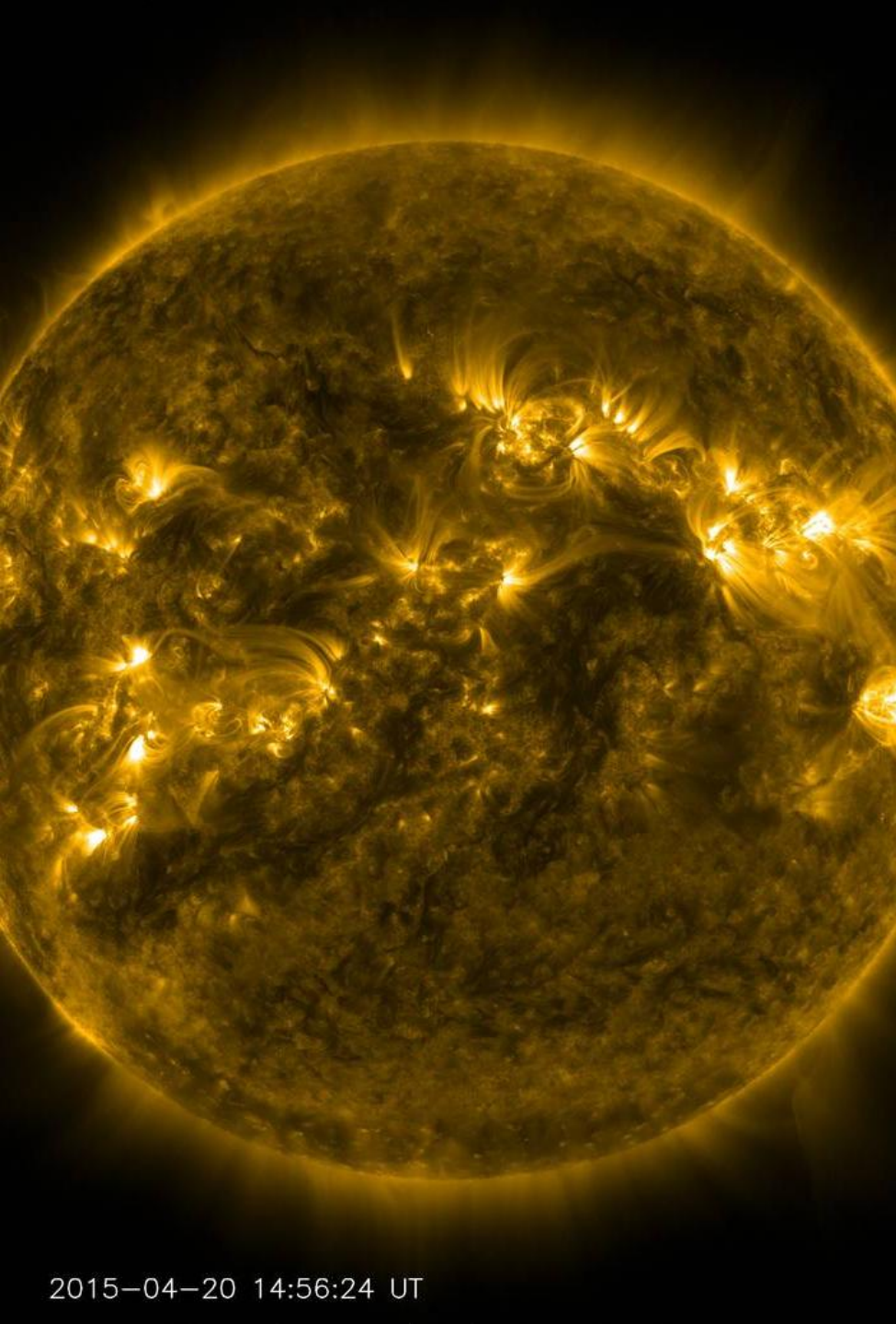
Nicholas Campion (2004)



Evolutionary Astrology

‘From an analysis of this nature the very core desires of the individual can be approached immediately within a chart reading, allowing for an intense understanding of the premises of an individual life. With the understanding of the prior life circumstances and causes of the present life, a new perspective can be brought to traditional Astrological understanding that vastly increases its scope and efficacy. In this way, an individual examining their chart can gain a unique understanding of the unfolding self, in a way that bypasses 'cookbook' understanding of Astrology, in which a planet in a given sign always means the same thing. ***Within this approach the aspect and position of every planet can be interpreted within the context of the ongoing evolution of the Soul from life to life.***’

Mark Jones, Website <https://www.plutoschool.com/about/evolutionary-astrology>



The Sun

‘The Sun, which is at the heart of the solar system and the single most important symbol within the birth chart...reflects the individual’s urge to become himself.’

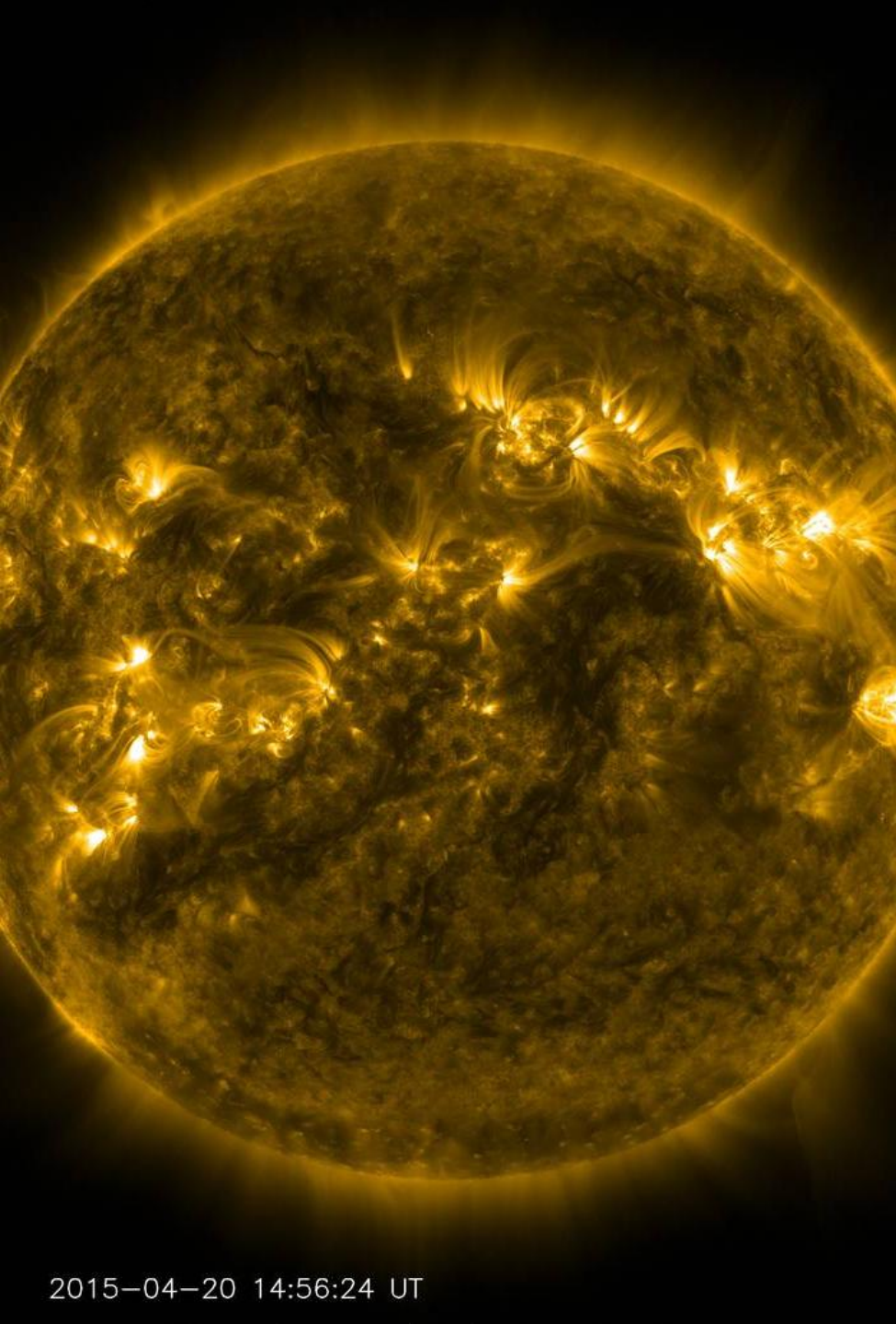
Liz Greene (1977), p. 30

‘Solar goals are inner and are concerned with self-realisation and experiencing one’s life as special and meaningful.’

Liz Greene (1992), p. 85

‘The Sun is the foundation stone of the human being. In a natal chart, it represents the life journey and story which will be undertaken by the individual seeking awareness.’

Bernadette Brady (1992), p. 3



The Sun

Sun-Signs as Description of Character

‘All astrologers refer to their friends and colleagues by the zodiac shorthand of ‘Arien’, ‘Taurean’, and so on, even though when criticised, they respond that there is far more to astrology than just the Sun: rhetoric and practice do not always coincide’

Nicholas Campion (2012) p. 70

‘Thus the Sun sign is important, for it reveals the myth or story that the individual follows through life.’

Bernadette Brady (1992), p. 3



Dualism in Astrology

Bernadette Brady

A dualist argument in astrology is one where the astrologer considered that the horoscope was only a partial or incomplete view of the self

‘He accepted a dualist argument by insulating the soul, character, and will from the full influence of fate, allowing it to only influence the body’

Still found in the books of twentieth century astrologers

46% of astrologers held a dualistic view of the chart

Bernadette Brady (2011), p. 284



The Astrological Lodge

Home

Classes and Programme ▾

How to Join ▾

Books and Publications

About ▾

Contact ▾

1915 Founded the Astrological
Lodge of London

- Alan Leo as President
- Bessie Leo as Vice-President

Faculty of Astrological Studies 1948
Astrological Association 1958

<https://astrolodge.co.uk/history/>

London's foremost learning
institution for the study of
astrology

Find out more

References

Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, *The Key to Theosophy*: Theosophy Trust, 2007 [1888]).

Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, *Isis Unveiled*. Theosophical University Press Online 1877.
<http://www.theosociety.org/pasadena/isis/iu-hp.htm>.

Bernadette Brady, *Predictive Astrology: The Eagle and the Lark* (York Beach: Samuel Weiser, 1992)

Bernadette Brady, 'Theories of Fate among Present-Day Astrologers', (University of Wales Trinity Saint David, 2011)

Nicholas Champion, 'Prophecy, Cosmology and the New Age Movement: The Extent and Nature of Contemporary Belief in Astrology', (PhD, University of the West of England, 2004)

Nicholas Champion, *A History of Western Astrology, Vol II: The Medieval and Modern Worlds* (London: Continuum, 2009)

References

Alan Leo, *How to Judge a Nativity* (London: L. N. Fowler & Ltd, 1969 [1903])

Alan Leo, 'Retrospect,' *Modern Astrologer* 12, no. 1 (1902)

Alan Leo, 'The Observatory,' *Modern Astrologer* 1 New Series, no. 6 (1904)

Alan Leo, *The Art of Synthesis* (London: Modern Astrology, 1936 [1904])

Alan Leo, 'The Age of Aquarius', *Modern Astrology* 8(7) (1911) New Series: 272

Alan Leo, 'The Editor's Observatory,' *Modern Astrologer* 10 New Series, no. 12 (1913)

Alan Leo, *Esoteric Astrology: A Study in Human Nature* (London: Modern Astrology, 1913)

Alan Leo, 'The Astrological Mind,' *Modern Astrology* 11 New Series, no. 6 (1914), p. 247.

Bessie Leo, 'Parentage and Early Life,' in *The Life and Work of Alan Leo, Theosophist – Astrologer – Mason*, ed. Bessie Leo, 1919, available online: <https://archive.org/details/lifeworkofalanle00leob>

Howard Sasportas, *The Twelve Houses* (London: Thorsons, 1998) p. 20