

Week 3 Reading List 2026

Ancient Divination in Egypt and the Near East

Required Reading

Dunand, Françoise, and Christiane Zivie-Coche. *Gods and Men in Egypt: 3000 BCE to 395 CE*. Translated by David Lorton. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2004.
Chapter 4, 'Of Men and Gods' **Much of this chapter available on Google Books: search 'piety'. See also the downloadable excerpt in the Reading Section under the tile for Week 3 on Moodle**

Lehoux, Daryn. 'Tomorrow's News Today: Astrology, Fate and the Way Out'. *Representations* 95 (2006): 105-22. **Available on JSTOR**, or here: <http://www.skyscript.co.uk/TNT.html> and here: <https://qshare.queensu.ca/Users01/lehoux/www/Tomorrow%27s%20News%20Today.pdf> This article, although concentrating on astrology and its parameters in the ancient world (especially Greece/Rome and Mesopotamia), provides a backdrop for why divinatory practices existed in the Mediterranean world. It is both useful and thought-provoking (as well as highly readable).

Prada, Luigi, 'Dreams, Rising Stars and Falling Geckos: Divination in Ancient Egypt'. *Egyptian Archaeology* 51 (2017): 4-9.

Redford, Donald B., ed. *The Ancient Gods Speak: A Guide to Egyptian Religion*. Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press, 2002. Jean-Marie Kruchten, 'Oracles', pp. 298-302. **Excerpt available in the Reading Section under Week 3 Tile on Moodle; book can be purchased on Amazon for about \$23 USD or about £43 in the UK.**

Reiner, E., 'Fortune-Telling in Mesopotamia', *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 19.1 (1960), 23-35: **Available on JSTOR.**

Rochberg, F., 'Introduction: The Cultures of Ancient Science: Some Historical Reflections', *Isis* 83.4 (1992), 547-53: **Available on JSTOR.**

Ulanowski, Krzysztof. 'Mesopotamian Divination. Some Historical, Religious and Anthropological Remarks'. *Miscellanea Anthropologica et Sociologica* 15, no. 4 (2014): 13-28. <http://31.186.81.235:8080/api/files/view/6840.pdf>

Additional Reading (available online)

Campion, Nicholas, *The Dawn of Astrology: A Cultural History of Western Astrology*, Vol. 1, The Ancient and Classical Worlds, London: Continuum, 2008: Chapters 3 and 4: Mesopotamian cosmology and astrology; Chapter 5: The Assyrians and Persians; Chapters 6 and 7: Egyptian astrology.

Faraone, C., 'Molten Wax, Spilt Wine and Mutilated Animals: Sympathetic Magic in near Eastern and Early Greek Oath Ceremonies', *The Journal of Hellenic Studies (JHS)* 113 (1993), 60-80: **Available on JSTOR.**

Frankfurter, David, 'The Magic of Writing in Mediterranean Antiquity', in *Guide to the Study of Ancient Magic*, ed. David Frankfurter, 626-658, Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2019.

AVAILABLE on the author's academia.edu page

Greenfield, J.C. and Sokoloff, M., 'Astrological and Related Omen Texts in Jewish Palestinian Aramaic', *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 48.3 (1989), 201-214: **Available on JSTOR.**

Rochberg-Halton, F., 'New Evidence for the History of Astrology', *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 43.2 (1984), 115-140: **Available on JSTOR.**

Rochberg-Halton, F., 'Elements of the Babylonian Contribution to Hellenistic Astrology', *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 108.1 (1988), 51-62: **Available on JSTOR.**

Rochberg-Halton, F., 'Between Observation and Theory in Babylonian Astronomical Texts', *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 50.2 (1991), 107-120: **Available on JSTOR.**

Rochberg, F., 'Empiricism in Babylonian Omen Texts and the Classification of Mesopotamian Divination as Science', *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 119.4 (1999), 559-569: **Available on JSTOR.**

Additional Reading (other)

Escolano-Poveda, Marina (2022), 'Astrologica athribitana: Four demotic-hieratic horoscopes from Athribis (O. Athribis 17-36-5/1741 and ANAsh.Mus.D.O.633 reedited)', *Journal for the History of Astronomy* 53.1 (2022): 49-87.

Escolano-Poveda, Marina (2024), "The astral sciences at Athribis", in M. Müller and C. Teotino (eds), *Athribis (Atripe) im Kontext. Die Stadt und der Tempel als religiöses und kulturelles Zentrum von der ptolemäischen Zeit bis zum Hochmittelalter, Akten der internationalen Tagung, Tübingen 7.-9. Juni 2022*, Studien zur spätägyptischen Religion 43, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2024, pp. 337–366.

von Lieven, Alexandra. 'Divination in Ägypten'. *Altorientalische Forschungen* 26, no. 1 (1999): 77-126 (note: in German: ask for a copy if you are interested)

Rochberg, Francesca, *The Heavenly Writing: Divination, Horoscopy and Astronomy in Mesopotamian Culture*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.