



Writing skills workshop



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

Referencing and Writing Guidelines



University Referencing Guide



MA Level Writing Guide Oct 2023



Guide to Writing Critical Reviews Oct 2021



Guide to Writing Compare and Contrast Essays Secondary Sources



Writing Skills Workshop Handout 2025 PDF

Handouts from the Writing Skills Workshop held at the Summer School in 2025.



Reading and Using Visual Sources Oct 2021



Student Assessment Handbook Oct 2021



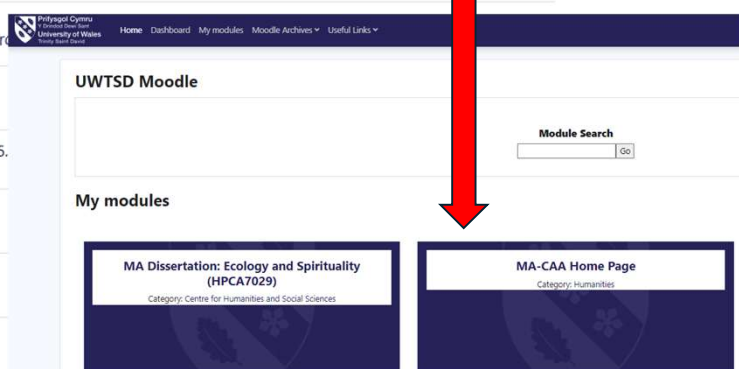
Instructions for Submitting Essays



Referencing Guidelines for citing classical translations

The university Referencing Guide does not cover how to cite classical translations, so this document demonstrates how to do this, with examples.

Primary sources for this workshop



Module:	Astrology: History, Spirit and Soul	Contribution to Overall Assessment (%)	60%
Module code:	HPCA7031	Internal Verifier:	
Lecturer:	Nick Campion, Frances Clynes, Chris Mitchell	Word count equivalent:	(or) 4500 words
Assignment Title:	A 4500 word essay written on a topic within the subject area		
Submission deadline:	4 January 2024	Return date of provisional marks & written feedback:	25 January 2024
Submission method:	All written assessments, where practical and possible, must be submitted via Turnitin unless otherwise instructed by the Lecturer. (Please DO NOT put this assessment specification into Turnitin or it will match many similarities with other students' submissions.) Alternative submission method (if applicable): N/A Late submission of the assessment will result in a late penalty mark. Penalties for late submission: Up to one week late, maximum mark of 50% (0% for late submission over one week late). Only the Extenuating Circumstances Panel can approve a change to submission dates. Academic honesty is required. In the main body of your submission you give credit to authors on whose research and ideas your work is based. Append to your submission a reference list that indicates the books, etc. that you have used, cited or quoted in order to complete this assessment.		
Academic honesty / referencing:			

TASK DESCRIPTION

**4500 word essay written on a topic within the subject area (60% of total marks).
YOU MUST WRITE THE ESSAY TITLE EXACTLY AS GIVEN AT THE HEAD OF YOUR ESSAY**

For this assignment you should write a 4500-word essay on one of the following titles:
ESSAY QUESTIONS - Choose ONE question

1. Are attempts to reform astrology an important part of its history?
2. Did Babylonian astrology survive in the modern world?
3. Taking one period of astrology, consider whether it assumed that the future was negotiable or fixed?
4. Discuss the contribution of classical Greek to astrology in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries.
5. Consider the impact of non-western astrology (for example, Persian, Islamic, Indian, Chinese) on western astrology in the post-classical world (after 500 CE).
6. Did belief in astrology decline in the 17th century?
7. Do astrologers have a theory of history?
9. Do the roots of modern psychological astrology lie (a) in the Renaissance or (b) in the classical world?
9. Assess the impact on the development of psychological astrology of one modern (post 1800) psychologist or psychological astrologer.

Page 2 of 15

10. Taking one period, or culture critically examine views of the soul on the theory and practice of astrology. Choose ONE of the following: the classical world, Medieval Europe, Renaissance Europe, modern Europe (post 1800), India or China.
11. Critically explore the impact of theosophical cosmology on 20th and 21st century astrology.

HOW THE CHURCH CAME TO LOVE ASTROLOGY!

Fred Bloggs, AHSS Essay 2.
Topic: Taking one period of astrology, consider whether it assumed that the future was negotiable or fixed?
Word count: 3,200.

Introduction

We all know that mainstream Christianity is opposed to astrology and condemns it as witchcraft or consorting with demons and this was true of the early Church too. But there was a brief period in the middle ages when the church supported and promoted astrology. How did this miraculous change of heart happen?? This paper will examine how the church came to accept what we astrologers have always known: astrology is amazing because it lets you see into the future and that gives you power over other people! In the power struggles of the middle ages, the church played a prominent role and so its hardly surprising that they wanted to get in on the action.

In this tour of early and medieval attitudes, we'll start by looking at attitudes of the church "fathers" towards astrology and then see how attitudes changed in the later period.

The early church certainly condemned astrology – the catechism says astrology "is a form of divination to be rejected", Augustine condemned it calling astrologers cheats and spreading blasphemous nonsense. But it was OK to use astrology for weather forecasting according to Nick Campion and thats a form of prediction itself. The Venerable Bede also condemned it but still explained how to find signs of the zodiac.

Funnily enough, though, it was a Pope who changed these attitudes – none other than Pope Sylvester in the year 999 who studied astrology in Spain and introduced astrology texts into Catholic Europe! Once he'd green-lighted astrology, kings and bishops were free to promote it. And promote it, they did – by the 12th century, astrology was being taught in cathedral schools and universities.

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- **WRITING STYLE**
- **ADDRESSING THE TOPIC**
- **SPELLING**
- **FACTS OR OPINIONS**
- **QUOTES**
- **PRIMARY/SECONDARY SOURCES**
- **REFERENCES**
- **CITATION FORMAT**
- **LENGTH**



*Popular vs
Academic writing*

Haumea and Pluto

Fanning Evolutionary Flames at a Molecular Level

— Lianne McCafferty

"It is Haumea's creative genius and prominence in the upcoming Pluto Aquarius ingress that has led me to the world of genetic engineering, cloning and other scientific manipulations of DNA, the *stuff of life*", writes Lianne McCafferty. "I hope that in looking at not only Haumea herself but also Haumea in relation to Pluto, an avenue has perhaps opened leading to further research and understanding of our future evolution"

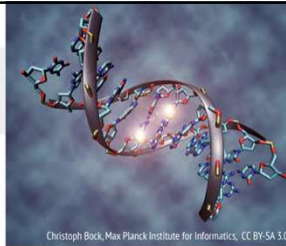
Charts supplied by the author

Many of us are looking toward Pluto's ingress into Aquarius as the next *big shift*. It signals a further step into air which began with the Great Mutation of 2020 when Jupiter and Saturn conjoined at 0° Aquarius: an era of air might be most welcome with its less materialistic ethos looking beyond the physical. I'm sure we're all imagining a myriad of life-changing inventions and technological developments ranging from continued exploration of space, growth of artificial intelligence, virtual reality, gene therapy, human cloning, cryogenics and artificial wombs. The list is only limited by the confines of the mind. Yet for any innovation to be born, a spark of life is needed, a creative energy to fan the flames. So, might there be another dimension to this, a deeper evolutionary force at work?

In my ongoing research on dwarf planets MakeMake and Haumea, their archetypes have become my new normal. It is Haumea's creative genius and prominence in the upcoming

stellium conjunct chart ruler Venus, Mars, also present in the stellium, aptly describes *sex in a test tube*! The chart itself is full of fire, including both lights.

LOUISE BROWN
Female Chart
25 Jul 1979, Tue
23:47 BST+1:00
OLDFHAM, UK
STYLISH BROWN
Astrologer
Pisces
Adrian/John
Rating A
ASTRO.COM



Christoph Bock, Max Planck Institute for Informatics, CC BY-SA 3.0

Writing for a magazine

This is an example of an engaging and well-written article in the *Astrological Journal*.

It reads well, the grammar and spelling are perfect, and it grabs the reader's attention.

BUT...

This is not academic writing (and as it's an article in a non-academic magazine, it's not meant to be).

If you're used to writing like this – don't lose that skill, but you'll need to learn a different skill for academic writing.



Many of us are looking toward Pluto's ingress into Aquarius as the next big shift.

It signals a further step into air which began with the Great Mutation of 2020 when Jupiter and Saturn conjoined at 0° Aquarius.

An era of air might be most welcome with its less materialistic ethos looking beyond the physical. I'm sure we're all imagining a myriad of life-changing inventions and technological developments ranging from continued exploration of space, growth of artificial intelligence, virtual reality, gene therapy, human cloning, cryogenics and artificial wombs.



Academic writing vs Popular writing



Who's "us"?

Many of us are looking toward Pluto's ingress into Aquarius as the next big shift.

What's an "ingress into Aquarius"?

What's does "a big shift" mean"?



Academic writing vs Popular writing



Who's "us"?

Many of us are looking toward Pluto's ingress into Aquarius as the next big shift.

What's an "ingress into Aquarius"?

What's does "a big shift" mean"?

- Don't use the first person: "I", "we"
- Define your terminology
- Don't state your opinions
- Back up your statements



Academic writing vs Popular writing



Who's "us"?

Many of us are looking toward Pluto's ingress into Aquarius as the next big shift.

What's an "ingress into Aquarius"?

What's does "a big shift" mean?

The position of a planet can be given by expressing its position when projected onto the ecliptic, a value known as ecliptic longitude. Astrologers divide the ecliptic into twelve equal segments of thirty degrees, naming each segment according to a long-established tradition known as 'signs of the zodiac'.¹ Using this nomenclature, the dwarf planet Pluto recently moved into the tropical sign of Aquarius.² Astrology correlates movements of planets with events on Earth, and according to Lianne McCafferty this ingress into the sign of Aquarius signifies 'the next big shift'.³

¹ See for example 'The Zodiac' in Nicholas Campion, *The Ultimate Astrologer* (London: Rider, 2002), p.12.
² Due to the nature of the apparent movement of planets, Pluto has moved in and out of Aquarius, initially moving into the sign on 23 March 2023, and will make its final ingress into Aquarius on 19 November 2024, where it will stay for the next 20 years. Data from Solar Fire v9 software from Astrolabe Inc.
³ Lianne McCafferty, 'Haumea and Pluto', *Astrological Journal*, 16.4 (Jul/Aug 2024), 19-26 (p.19).



Academic writing vs Popular writing



What does "air" mean?

It signals a further step into air which began with the Great Mutation of 2020 when Jupiter and Saturn conjoined at 0° Aquarius.

What's "a Great Mutation"?



Academic writing vs Popular writing



What does
“air” mean?

It signals a further step into air which began with the Great Mutation of 2020 when Jupiter and Saturn conjoined at 0° Aquarius.

What’s “a Great
Mutation”?

McCafferty notes that this movement into an air sign⁴ ‘began with a Great Mutation of 2020 when Jupiter and Saturn conjoined at 0° Aquarius.’⁵ Here, McCafferty is referring to a Persian concept from the Sassanid period prior to the Muslim conquest of Persia in the seventh century. This concept links conjunctions of Saturn and Jupiter, which occur roughly every 20 years, usually in the same astrological element, with much longer cycles based on when these conjunctions change element. The ninth-century astrologer Abū Ma’sār stated that ‘when the conjunctions shift from one triplicity [element] to another... that is an indicator of the births of prophets.’⁶ Saturn and Jupiter conjoined at the start of Aquarius in 2020, and this is the ‘Great Mutation’ to which McCafferty is referring.

⁴ For definition of elements and air signs, see Campion, *The Ultimate Astrologer*, p.16.

⁵ McCafferty, ‘Haumea and Pluto’, p.19.

⁶ Abū Ma’sār, *The Book of Religions and Dynasties in Abū Ma’sār on Historical Astrology*, Keiji Yamamoto and Charles Burnett (eds, trans) (Leiden: Brill, 2000), I.3.3, p.37.



Academic writing vs Popular writing



Are you sure?

An era of air might be more welcome with its less materialistic ethos looking beyond the physical. I’m sure we’re all imagining a myriad of life-changing inventions and technological developments ranging from continued exploration of space, growth of artificial intelligence, virtual reality, gene therapy, human cloning, cryogenics and artificial wombs.



Academic writing vs Popular writing



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Unlike Abū Ma' šar, McCafferty does not mention the birth of prophets, but for her the shift of element could relate to 'a myriad of life-changing inventions and technological developments ranging from continued exploration of space, growth of artificial intelligence, virtual reality, gene therapy, human cloning, cryogenics and artificial wombs.'⁷

McCafferty is not alone among astrologers in attributing paradigm shifts to a change of element of Jupiter/Saturn conjunctions, and the 2020 event made it into mainstream magazines, such as the article about it in *Cosmopolitan*.⁸

⁷ McCafferty, 'Haumea and Pluto', p.19.

⁸ Aliza Kelly, 'The Great Conjunction Is Coming, and It's Major', *Cosmopolitan* 17 December 2020. <<https://www.cosmopolitan.com/lifestyle/a34978664/great-conjunction-2020-meaning-astrology/>> [accessed 29 June 2024].

HOW THE CHURCH CAME TO LOVE ASTROLOGY!

Fred Bloggs, AHSS Essay 2.
Topic: Taking one period of astrology, consider whether it assumed that the future was negotiable or fixed?

Word count: 3,200.

Introduction

We all know that mainstream Christianity is opposed to astrology and condemns it as consorting with demons and this was true of the early Church too. But there was a bit of a change of heart in the middle ages when the church supported and promoted astrology. How did this change of heart happen?? This paper will examine how the church came to accept astrology and how it has always been known: astrology is amazing because it lets you see into the future that gives you power over other people! In the power struggles of the middle ages, astrology played a prominent role and so it's hardly surprising that they wanted to get in on it.

In this tour of early and medieval attitudes, we'll start by looking at attitudes of the "fathers" towards astrology and then see how attitudes changed in the later middle ages. The early church certainly condemned astrology – the catechism says astrology is "blasphemous nonsense. But it was OK to use astrology for weather forecasting. Campion and that's a form of prediction itself. The Venerable Bede also explained how to find signs of the zodiac.

Funnily enough, though, it was a Pope who changed these attitudes – Pope Sylvester in the year 999 who studied astrology in Spain and introduced it to Catholic Europe! Once he'd green-lighted astrology, kings and bishops explained how to find signs of the zodiac. And promote it, they did – by the 12th century, astrology was being taught in universities.

Fred Bloggs, AHSS Essay 2 - RESUBMISSION

Topic: Taking one period of astrology, consider whether it assumed that the future was negotiable or fixed?
Word count: 6,300.

Introduction

This paper will examine the period of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries in Christian Europe when the church assumed the future was negotiable or fixed. This period is particularly interesting since the church had previously condemned astrology. Since the times of the early Church Fathers, who had condemned astrology. Saint Augustine called astrology "nonsense".¹ However, the scholar Gerbert d'Aurillac who became Pope in the year 999 had a change of heart. This introduction of Arabic science into Europe blossomed further in the thirteenth century with numerous astrological texts translated from Arabic into Latin, making them available to Christians in Cathedral Schools, one such school being the Cathedral School at Hereford, where astrology was taught.

The view of whether the astrology of that time saw the future as fixed or negotiable is particularly interesting because astrology is worth studying because "it rewards you by showing you future events, and things that will happen over other people!"⁴ Stating that it is possible to see future events clearly demonstrates that astrology was seen as a powerful tool.

However, since the book he wrote for his students is a textbook of horary astrology, he uses a lot of specific methods, and some of these methods contradict each other. He ends up by stating that all astrology is "ideally" and "more accurate" than other methods, but that it is not infallible. The use of the word "ideally" and "more accurate" suggests that the future may not be fixed, but can only be forecast provisionally, in the same way as the weather, but isn't infallible.⁵

This paper will examine the examples given in Roger's book and conclude that the future was negotiable.

¹ Augustine's Confessions Vol 1, C. Hammond Loeb Classical Library 26 p.309.

² Nicholas Campion, *History of Western Astrology* p. 22.

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This paper will examine the period of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries in Christian Europe and examine whether the astrology of that time and place assumed the future was negotiable or fixed. This period is particularly interesting since the attitudes of the Church at the time had changed significantly since the times of the early Church Fathers, who had condemned astrology. Saint Augustine condemned astrology, for example, calling it “blasphemous nonsense”.¹ However, the scholar Gerbert d’Aurillac who became Pope in the year 999 had an interest in astrology and introduced the astrolabe into Christian Europe.² This introduction of Arabic science into Europe blossomed further in the twelfth century, when a major translation movement saw numerous astrological texts translated from Arabic into Latin, making them available to Christian scholars in Europe. These texts were subsequently taught in Cathedral Schools, one such school being the Cathedral School at Hereford, where astrology was taught by a teacher called Roger of Hereford.³

The view of whether the astrology of that time saw the future as fixed or negotiable is particularly striking in Roger’s introduction, where he states that astrology is worth studying because “it rewards you by showing you future events, and things that are hidden from most people – and that gives you power over other people!”⁴ Stating that it is possible to see future events clearly demonstrates that Roger thought the future must be fixed, as it was predictable.

However, since the book he wrote for his students is a textbook of horary astrology, he uses a number of methods for determining the outcome of a question, and some of these methods contradict each other. He ends up by stating that all areas need to be examined and that “Ideally, you will find three to be able to give a more accurate answer”. The use of the word “ideally” and “more accurate” implies that the outcome is not absolutely certain, and that therefore the future may not be fixed, but can only be forecast provisionally, in the same way that a weather forecast today can give an indication of upcoming weather but isn’t infallible.⁵

This paper will examine the examples given in Roger’s book and conclude that the future was not considered absolutely fixed, but was subject to some negotiation.

¹ Augustine’s Confessions Vol 1, C. Hammond Loeb Classical Library 26 p.309.

² Nicholas Campion, History of Western Astrology p.32.

³ Chris Mitchell, England’s First Astrology Book, Leicester 2021.

⁴ Mitchell, England’s First, p.31.

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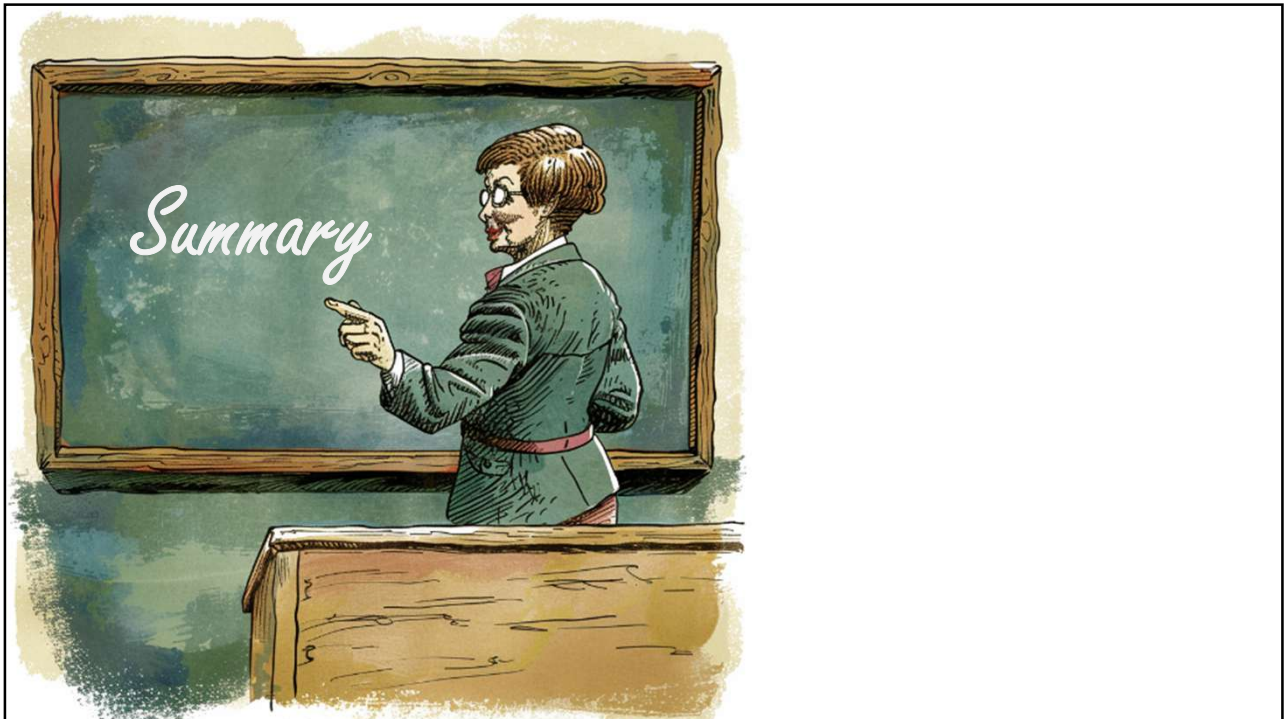
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The academic voice: the do's and don'ts

Don't use personal opinions or flowery language

It is obvious that the world would be a better place if kids were taught astrology.

One cannot help but be struck by the elegance of Smith's writing

It is interesting to note that...

X

The academic voice: the do's and don'ts

Don't quote someone without crediting them

The increase in light pollution in the last 30 years means that communities have lost touch with the night sky.



Susan Freyman has conducted a long-term study of residents' engagement with the night sky in various communities,¹² and concluded that in the last 30 years that engagement has significantly reduced.



¹² Susan Freyman, 'Night Sky Engagement in Rural Communities', *Landscape* 14.8 (2014), 55-80, p.73

The academic voice: the do's and don'ts

Don't use the first person, or put words in someone's mouth

We can see at once that Horace of Peckham believed that the Moon was made of cheese.



Horace of Peckham claimed that all planetary spheres were 'created of solidified dairy matter',⁵ implying that he believed the Moon to be made of cheese.



⁵ Horace of Peckham, *De Lunae* (tr. R. Baker) (Edinburgh: Medieval Imprints, 2017), p.138.

The academic voice: the dos and don'ts

Use primary sources where possible

Kepler invented the quintile aspect.



According to Smith, 'Kepler invented new aspects including the quintile'.⁸

Meh

Regarding new aspects, Kepler stated 'reason soon led me to add three more: quintile, biquintile, and sesquiquadrature'.⁹



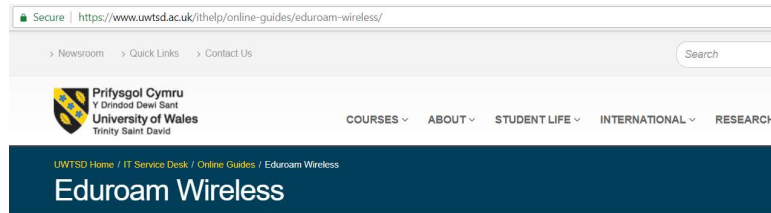
⁸ A. Smith, *Kepler's Contribution to Astrology* (London: Acme Press, 2019), p.38.

⁹ Johannes Kepler, 'On the More Certain Fundamentals of Astrology' cited in Brackenridge...

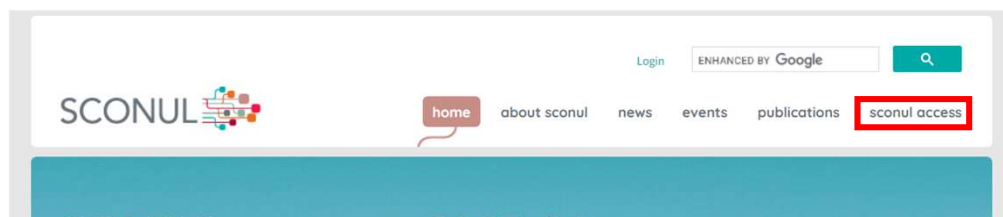


*Finding your
sources*

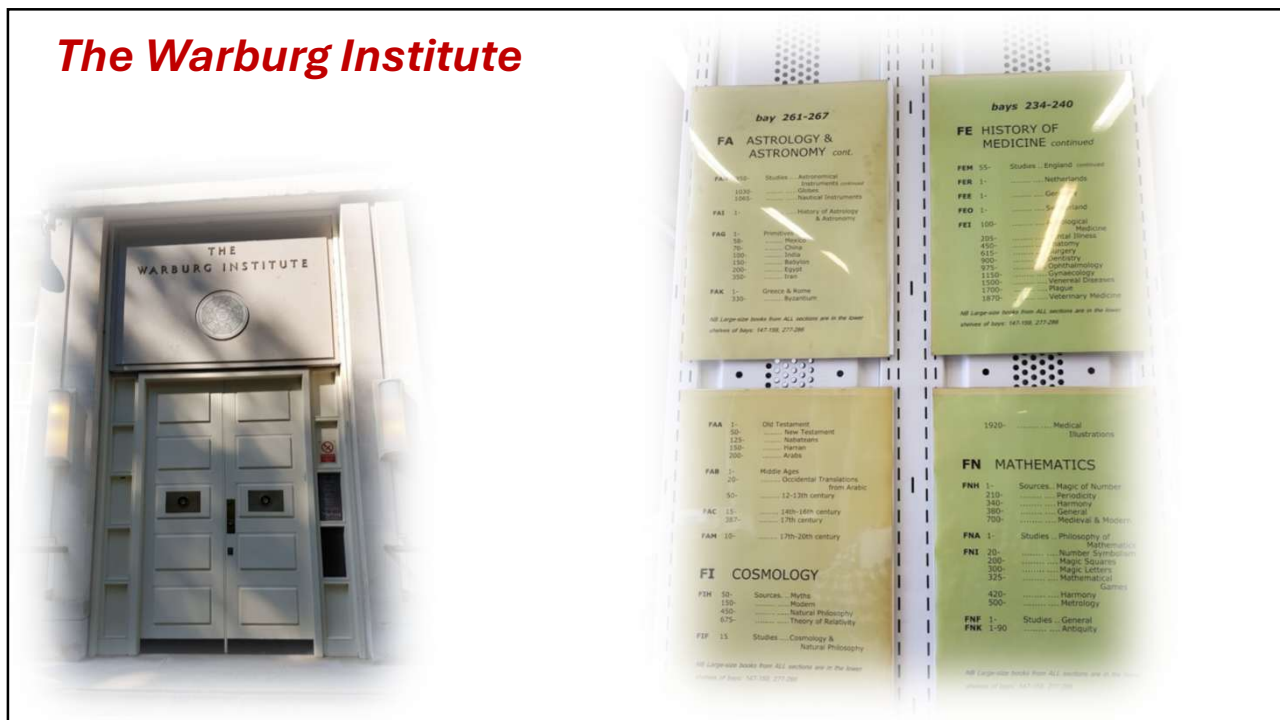
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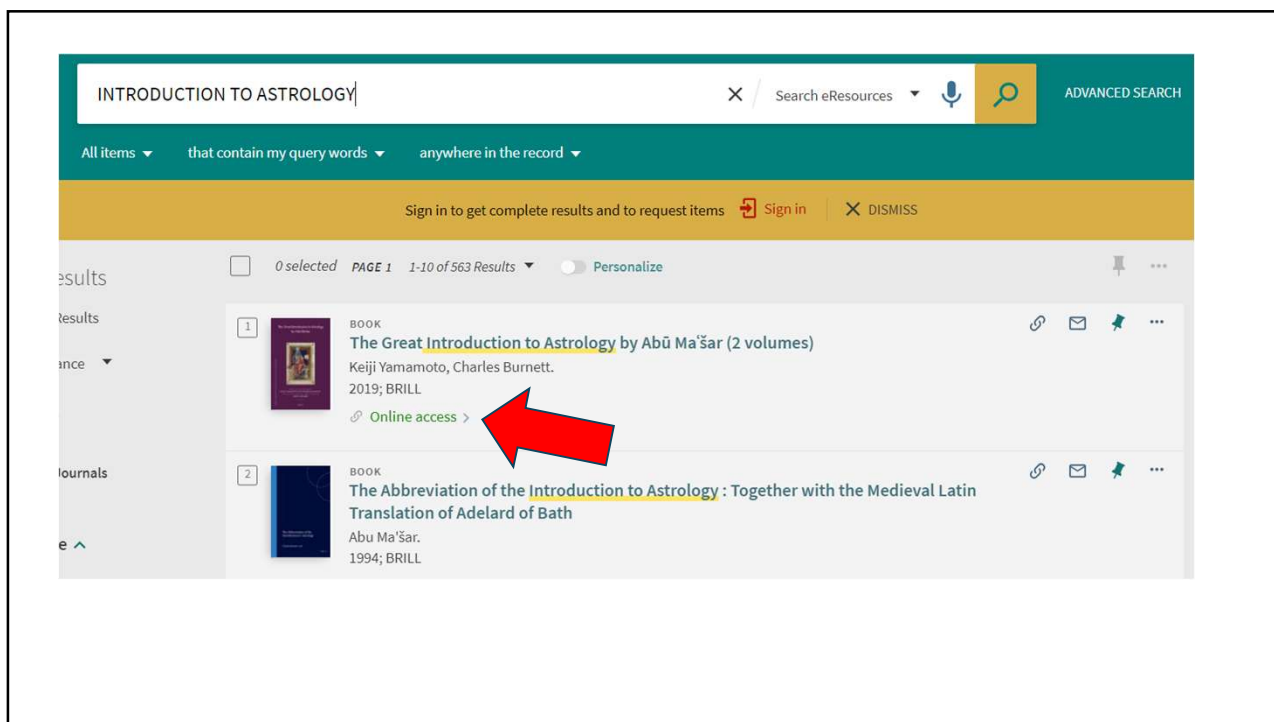
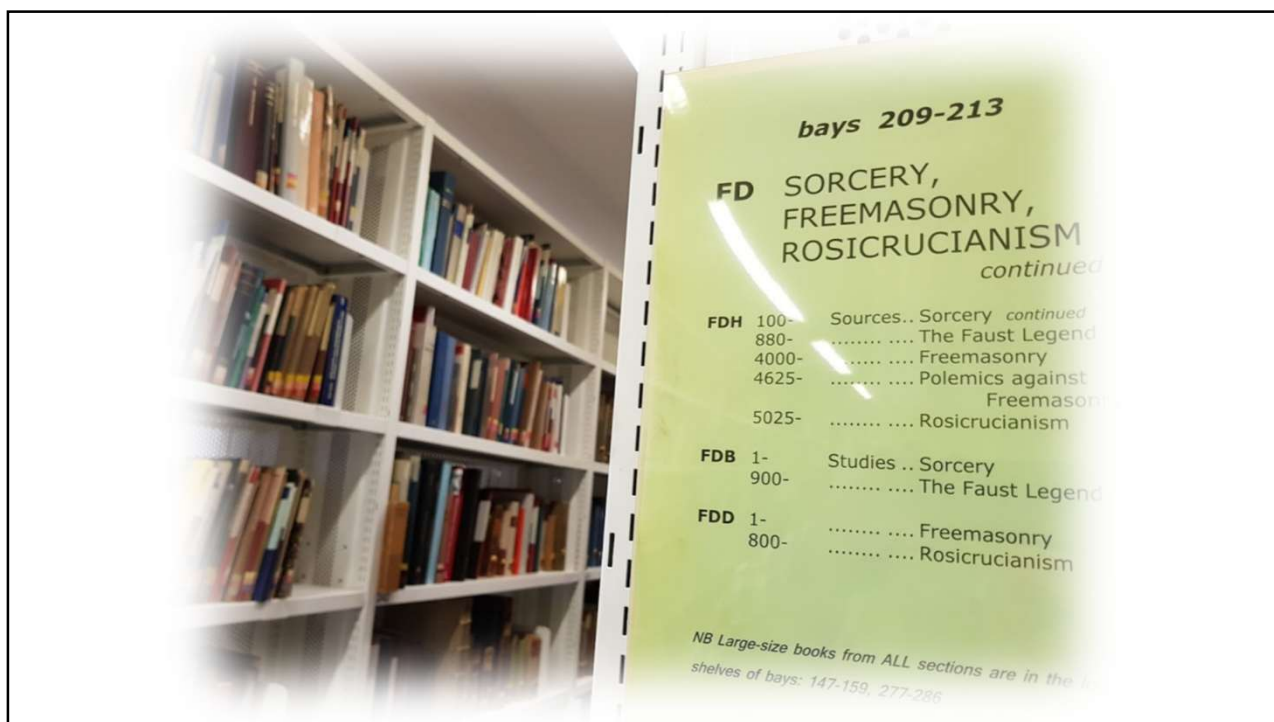


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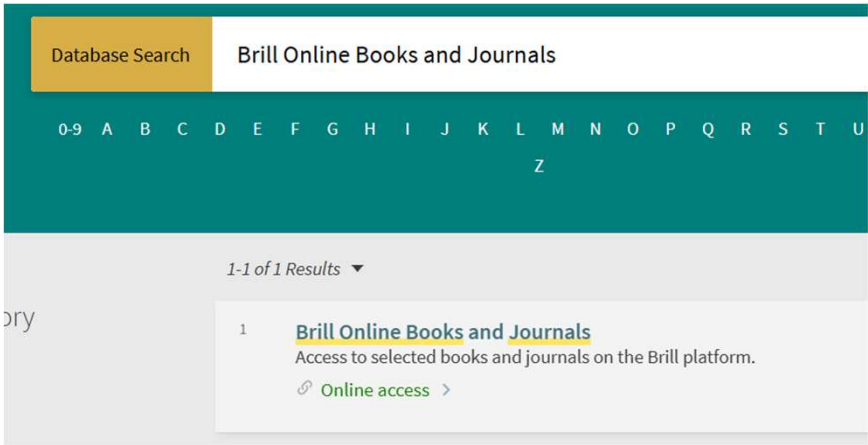
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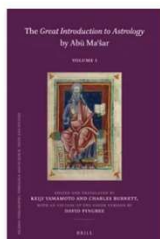
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Primary or secondary source?

Wikipedia: Curse tablet

Curse tablet

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

A **curse tablet** (Latin: *tabula defixionis*, *defixio*; Greek: *κατάδεσμος*, *katadesmos*) is a small tablet with a curse written on it from the Greco-Roman world. The tablets were used to ask the gods, place spirits, or the deceased to perform an action on a person or object, or otherwise compel the subject of the curse.

Contents [hide]

- 1 Description
- 2 Voice mysticism
- 3 Historiography
- 4 Exotic magic
- 5 See also
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Description [edit]

Curse tablets are typically very thin sheets of lead with the text scratched on in tiny letters. They were then often rolled, folded, or pierced with nails, and the tablets were then usually placed beneath the ground: either buried in graves or tombs, thrown into wells or pools, sequestered in underground sanctuaries, or nailed to the walls of temples. Tablets were also used for love spells and, when used in this manner they were placed inside the home of the desired target.^[1] They are sometimes discovered along with small dolls or figurines (sometimes inaccurately referred to as "voodoo dolls"^[2]), which may also be pierced with nails. The figurines resembled the target and often had both their feet and hands bound.^[3] Curse tablets also included hair or pieces of clothing. This is especially the case in love spells, which calls for "hair from the head of the love target". Some love spells have even been discovered "folded around some hair," probably to bind the spell itself.^[4] Not all tablets included a personal name, but it is clear especially in the Roman period, that tablets were sometimes prepared in advance, with space left for inserting the names provided by paying customers.^[5] The cursing rituals may also have incorporated physical binding gestures and spoken elements.^[6]

The texts on curse tablets are typically addressed to infernal or liminal gods such as Pluto, Charon, Hecate, and Persephone, sometimes via the mediation of a dead person (probably the corpse in whose grave the tablet was deposited). Some texts do not invoke the gods, however, but merely list the targets of the curses, the crimes or conditions upon which the curse is valid, and/or the intended ill to befall them. Some tablets are inscribed with nothing more than the names of the targets, leading to the supposition that an oral spell may have accompanied the manufacture of the curse.^[7] The texts on the tablets were not always curses; tablets

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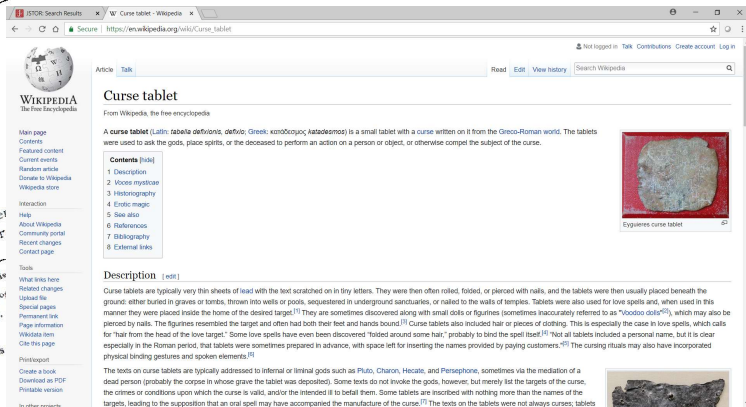
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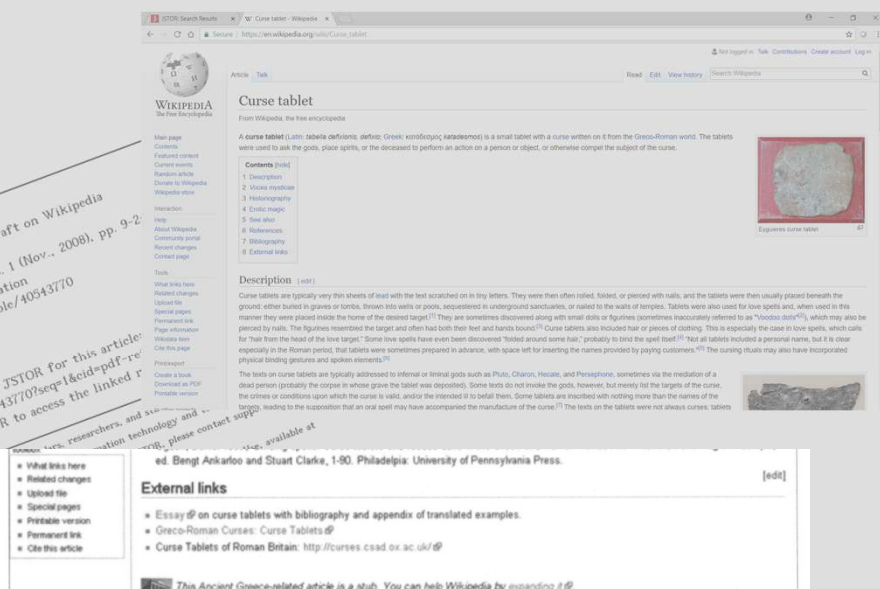


Figure 1: August 2006 screenshot of the Wikipedia entry on “curse tablet.” Because of the dynamic nature of Wikipedia, this entry has changed dramatically since this screenshot was originally taken.

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 ΠΤΟΛΕΜΥ

 συνεργείν, ὁ δὲ τοῦ διδῶντος πρὸς τὸ εὐχρημονέστερον καὶ

 φυλακτικώτερον καὶ αἰδημονέστερον, ὁ δὲ τοῦ Ἑρμοῦ πρὸς

 τὸ περιβοηδέστερον καὶ τὸ πᾶν παθῶν εὐκνητότερον καὶ

 πολυτροπώτερον καὶ εὐπροσποπώτερον.

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 α. Προοίμιον

 Τὰ μὲν οὖν πρὸ τῆς γενέσεως καὶ τὰ κατ' αὐτὴν τὴν

 γένεσιν δυνάμενα θεωρεῖσθαι, καὶ ἐπὶ τὴν μετὰ τὴν γένεσιν

 ὅσα τῆς συντάξεως ἐστὶν ἴδια τὸ καθ' ὅλον ποιοῦν τῶν

 συγκυρμάτων ἐμφαίνοντα, σχεδὸν ταῦτ' ἂν εἴη, τὸν δὲ

 τὸ ἐκτὸς συμβεβηκότων καὶ ἐφεξῆς ἡ δὲ εἰς τὸν δὲ

 διαλαμβάνεσθαι τὸν

 notoriety, instability of the emotions, versatility, and fore-

BOOK IV.

[1. INTRODUCTION.]

THE foregoing may be taken as what can be learned by investigation of matters antecedent to the nativity and contemporary with it, together with such of those posterior to the nativity as properly apply to the constitution of the subject by disclosing the general quality of his temperament. Among external accidentals, which should be treated next in order, the discussion of

Ptolemy. *Tetrabiblos*, IV.1, trans. F. E. Robbins, Loeb Classical Library 435 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1940), p.373.

BOOK THE FOURTH.

Chapter I.

Proem.

ALL those circumstances have now been set forth, which occur previously to the birth, as well as at the actual birth, and after it, and which it seemed necessary to mention, as conducing to a knowledge of the general quality of the con-temperament produced. And of the other points, now remaining, by which extrinsic events * are contemplated, those regarding the several fortunes of wealth and of rank claim

Ptolemy. *Tetrabiblos*, IV.1, trans. J. M. Ashmand (London: Davis and Dickson, 1822), p.172.

Ancient or modern?



Green argues that the Tanakh locates God in a physical location:

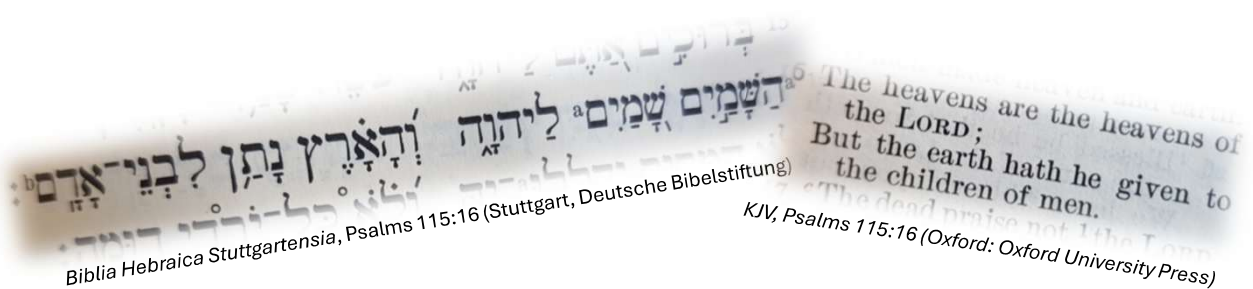
‘In the biblical period God was seen to dwell in a palace located on the far side of the upper waters that lay beyond the sky. “The heavens are the heavens of Y-H-W-H; the earth has He given to the children of Adam” (Ps. 115:16), wrote the Psalmist.’¹

¹ Arthur Green, *Radical Judaism* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2010), p.34.

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Green argues that the Tanakh can be interpreted on many levels, and not necessarily literally:

‘In my religious life, however, I continue to embrace the text as a whole, as sacred artefact rather than as historical document. I enter into the text as a participant in an unending conversation among generations of Jews, enriched but essentially unfazed by critical perspectives. I recognise this as a postmodern perspective’.¹

¹ Arthur Green, *Radical Judaism* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2010), p.85.

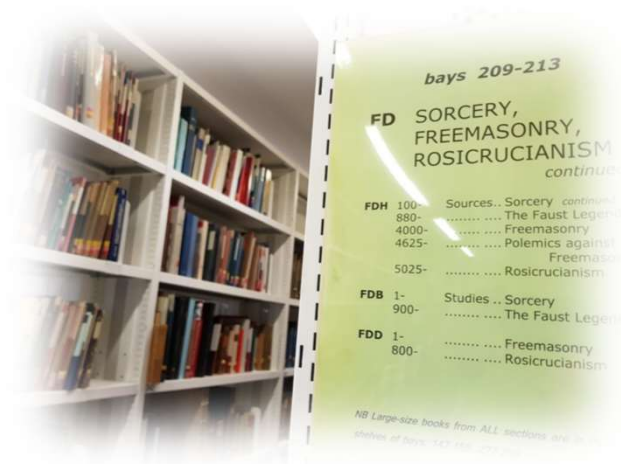
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¹ Arthur Green, *Radical Judaism* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2010), p.85.



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Rhetoric and logic, however, were not then university subjects, but school subjects, and were begun at a much earlier age than now. With grammar, rhetoric and logic formed the *trivium*, which was the domain of the grammar school, while the *quadrivium* and theology became the domain of the university. A London university might, however, well have been developed from these three schools, as one had just been developed at Paris from the two schools of the Cathedral of Notre Dame and collegiate Church of Ste. Geneviève. If London had been the political capital only, as Paris was, and the courts of law had settled there and not outside it at Westminster, and if it had not been the chief port and commercial emporium of the country, its schools might have run the same course as those of Paris, and Oxford would never have been the seat of a university. As it was, commerce proved a more powerful influence than learning.

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"A london university might, however, well have been developed"



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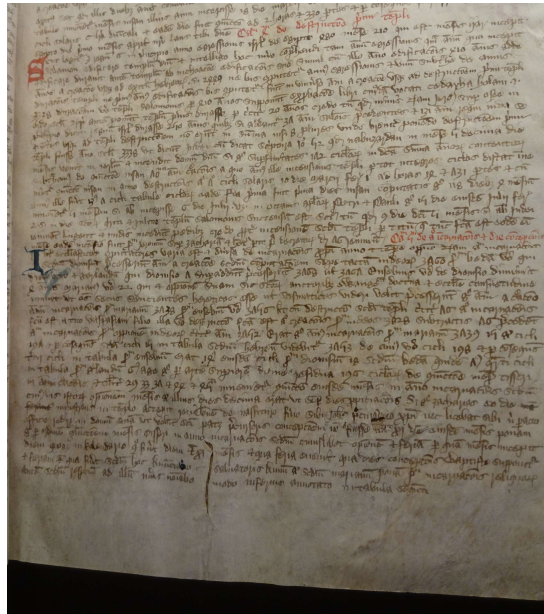
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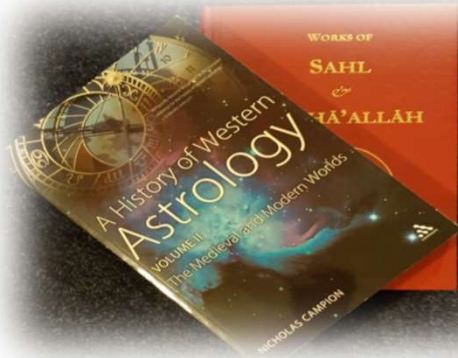
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of an inquisitor for natural evidence is indicative of an uneasy marriage of convenience between theology and empirical observation. Magical practices were dangerous and alchemy suspect, but no astrologer, though, was ever executed just for casting horoscopes.

The safest form of astrology, which could offend nobody, was **weather** prediction. Again, as in the Pope's investigation of alchemy, we see what we would now call a scientific mentality in the work of some practitioners. One was William Merle, or Merlee, a fellow of Merton College, Oxford, who flourished in the first part of the fourteenth century (he died in 1347). Merle was the first medieval astrologer to attempt anything like the empirical collection of data that the Babylonian astrologers had long ago compiled in the *Diaries*, from the eighth century BCE onwards.³³ Although he focused mainly on meteorological data, Merle did mention economic matters (such as the effect of Saturn's transit of Taurus on grain prices in Franconia in 1355) as well as other occurrences such as the small English earthquake of 28 March 1343.³⁴ Merle published a sample of his **weather** data in a manuscript titled 'The State of the **Weather** at Oxford for Seven Years' (from 1337 to 1344), and provided a supporting theoretical manual on astrological **weather** prognostication, probably composed in 1340, which adhered to the tradition evident in Hesiod's *Works and Days* in the eighth century BCE, and emphasized the observation of rising and setting stars (which can be used to indicate changing seasons) at the expense of horoscopes. Merle's principal sources were Aristotle and Ptolemy and, as a Ptolemaic astrologer, he paid attention to the inferior levels of the celestial hierarchy, focusing on signs in

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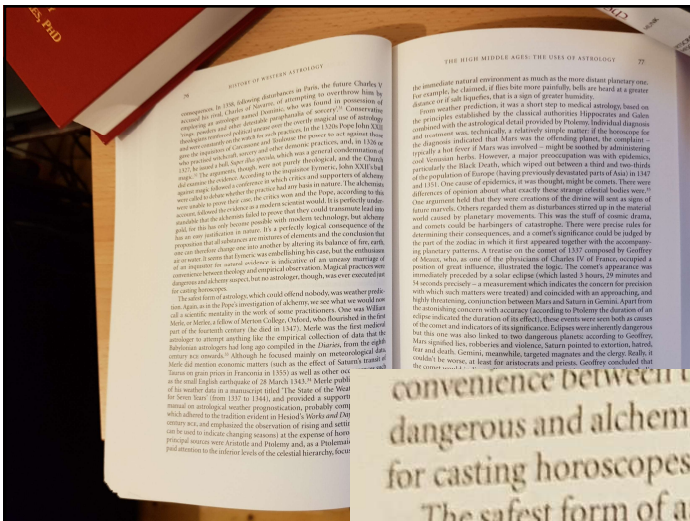
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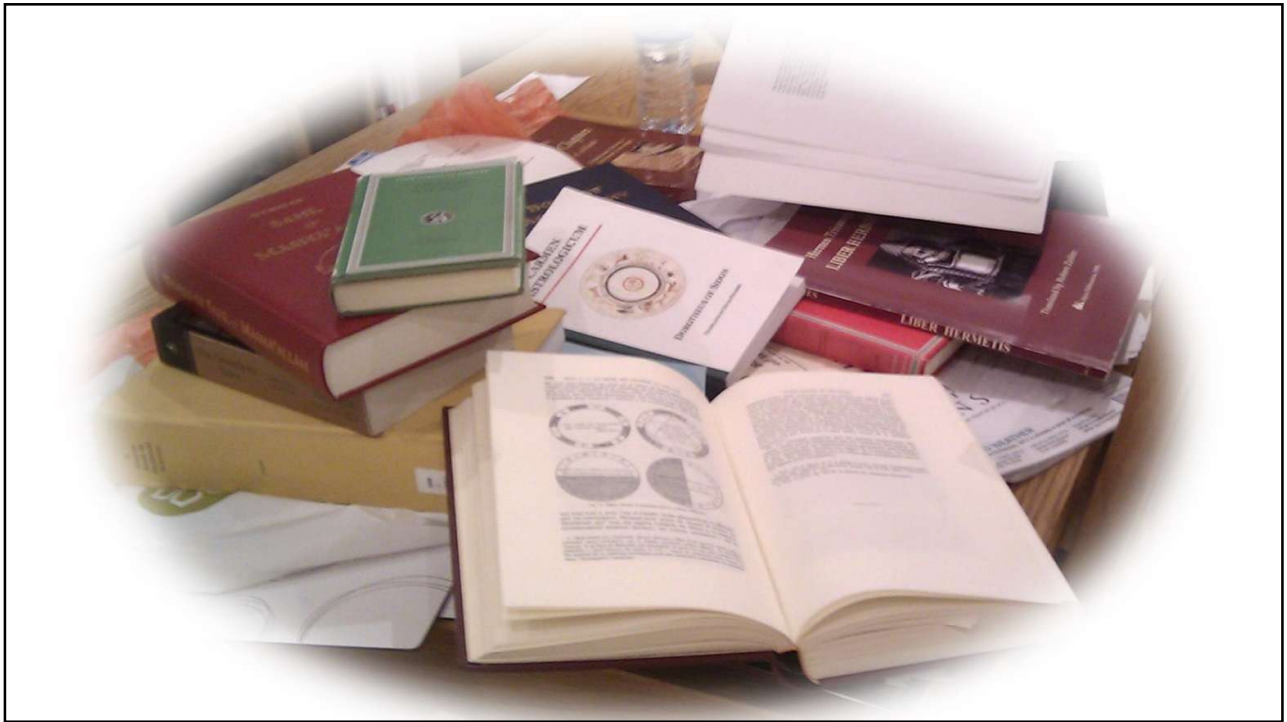
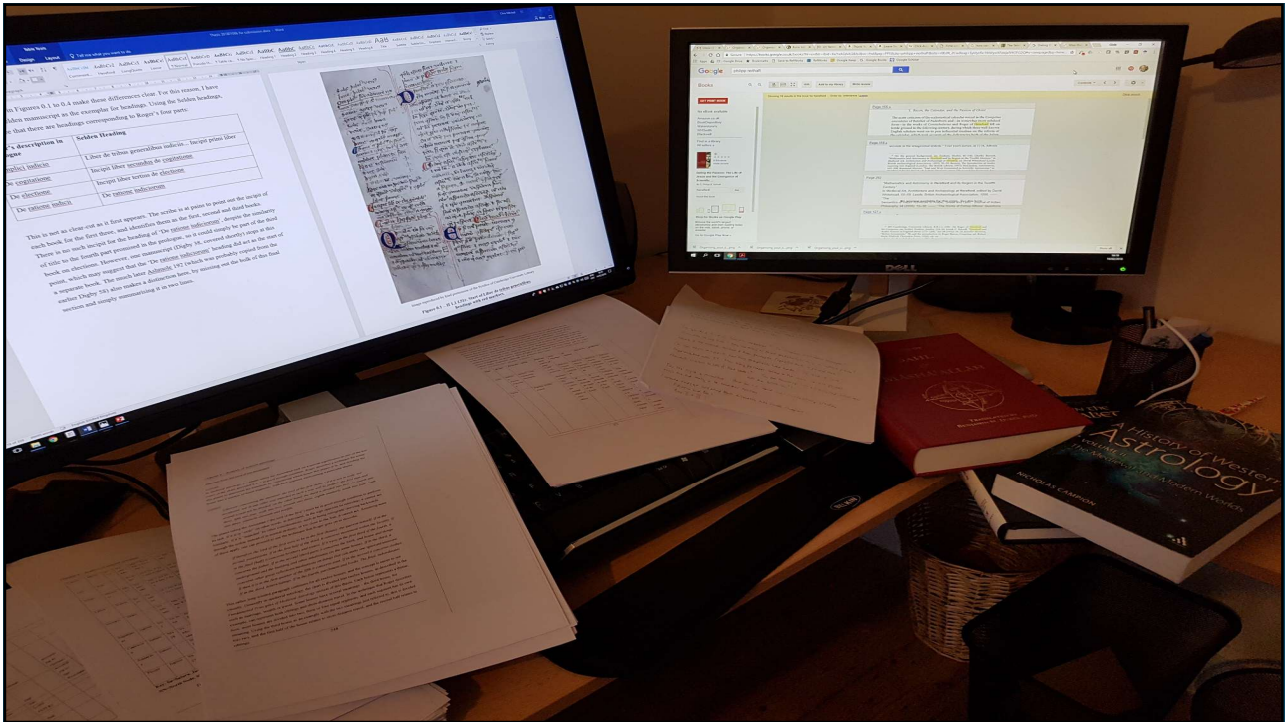
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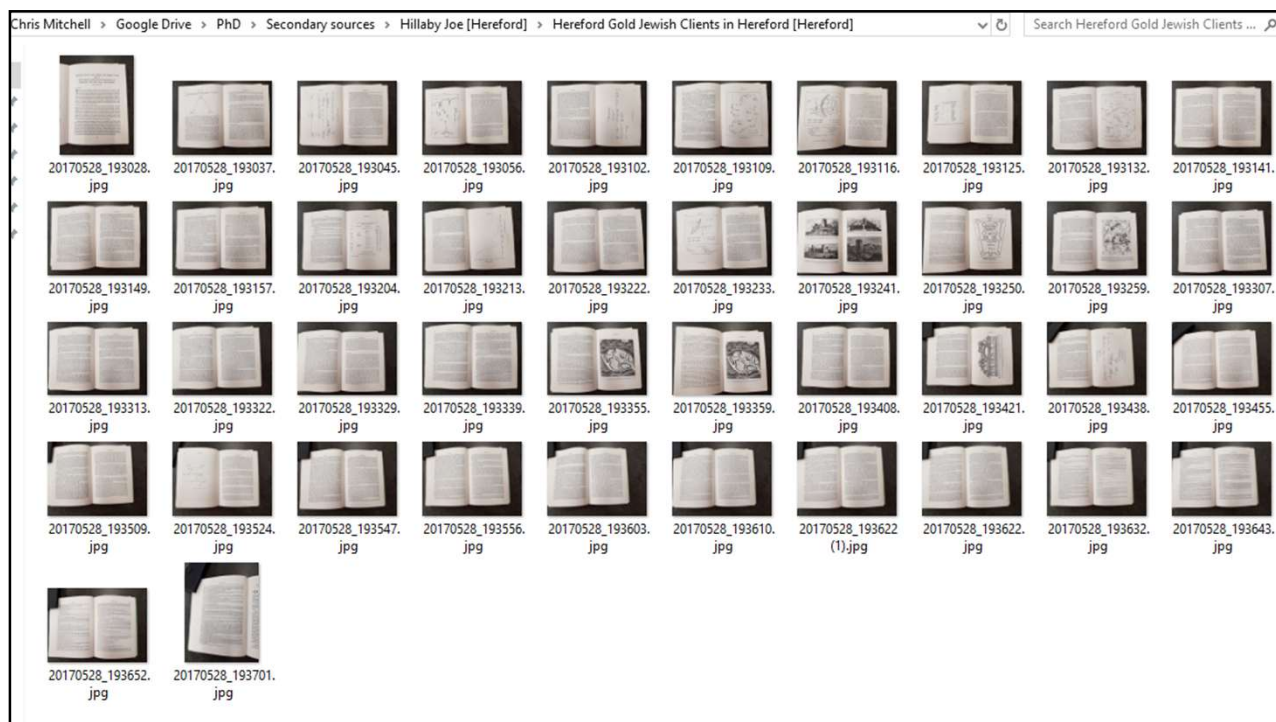


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Burnett Charles [trans12, early Latin]	22/01/2018 11:42	File folder
Cambridge History of Libraries [libraries]	03/08/2016 08:57	File folder
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2018mitchellcjp.pdf	07/01/2018 19:18	12,400 KB	C:\Users\User\Google Drive\PhD\Thesis	
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Thesis Chap 7.docx	29/12/2017 21:47	4,310 KB	C:\Users\User\Google Drive\PhD\Thesis	
Thesis 20171212 with comments.docx	12/12/2017 12:15	37,714 KB	C:\Users\User\Google Drive\PhD\Thesis	
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