

COSMOLOGY, MAGIC AND DIVINATION

COURSE HANDBOOK

MODULE LEADER: DR DORIAN GIESELER GREENBAUM

MODULE TUTOR: DR DAWN COLLINS

CREDITS: 30

AIM(S)

To:

- introduce students to the theory and practice of magic and divination as understood within the context of ancient Greek and Roman ritual and religious traditions
- locate such practices within classical and Hellenistic cosmology and the development of astrology
- explore the wider context of ancient Egyptian and Near Eastern divination and magic
- consider the legacy of Hellenistic and Classical divinatory and magical practices in post-Classical culture, especially in Late Antiquity
- introduce students to oracles and divination in ancient Tibet
- consider the anthropological topics and themes that can be applied to ancient divinatory practices

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this module successful students should be able to:

1. Demonstrate a sophisticated understanding of the theory of magic and divination
2. Demonstrate a critical understanding of cosmological frameworks in the Classical and Hellenistic worlds, especially the notion of individual participation in cosmic processes, and their legacy in the Near East.
3. Display an advanced awareness of current academic debates on ancient divination and magic, and critical evaluation of scholarly theories.
4. Critically interpret the emergence of classical astrology, its nature and function, within a religious and divinatory context
5. Demonstrate a working knowledge of ancient Tibetan oracles and divination
6. Be able to apply theories and practices of anthropology to ancient divination and its practices

COURSE CONTENT

Week 1

- Introduction to the Module and Guidance on Writing your Critical Review
- Introduction to Plutarch's *On the Obsolescence of Oracles*; Cicero's *On Divination*

Week 2

Divination, Magic and Religion

- The role of divination within magical and religious practices: theoretical and methodological issues
- What is divination? What is magic? What is religion? What are the connections and boundaries between them and how can we define them?
- Examples of divination in magical and religious contexts
- Controversies, connections and boundaries between religion and magic
- Anthropological and historical perspectives and debates on the nature of magic and religion.
- Case studies: Magical Papyri, curse tablets and "prayers for justice" – between religion and magic?

Week 3

Ancient Divination in Egypt and the Near East

- Codification of different types of divination
- Emergence of astral divination
- Distinction between provoked and unprovoked divination
- The Heavens as a system of communication between divinity and humanity
- The use of magic to engage in a dialogue with destiny

Week 4

Divination and Oracles in Ancient Tibet

- The Nechung Oracle and other Tibetan traditions of oracular divination
- Sho, Dice and other Tibetan use of divination in everyday life
- The Kalachakra (Wheel of Time) tantra – Astrology and Buddhist practice
- The Mentsikhang – exploring the connection between astrology and medicine
- Divination and Diagnosis in Tibetan worldviews

Week 5

Magic, medicine, religion and divination in Ancient Greece

- Magic and medicine: early connections and links
- Incantations and healing amulets
- Hippocratic medicine, magic and religion
- Healing oracles and divination practices: sanctuaries and oracles of Asclepius in Classical and Hellenistic Greece and in the Roman World
- Astrology and medicine
- Oracles of Sarapis and Isis in Hellenistic Greece and Late Antiquity

Week 6

Divination, Theurgy and Tantra

- The emergence of theurgy in Late Neoplatonism: What was theurgy? Can it be classified as a type of magic? Was it spiritual purification and, if so, how did it work?
- Theurgy as spiritual purification and ritual practice
- The Cosmology, worldview and Metaphysics of theurgy: the animated cosmos, cosmic sympathy (*sympatheia*) and divine love (*theia philia*), will and providence, grades of being and reality
- The role of divination within theurgy
- The emergence of tantra in Mahayana Buddhism: What is tantra? Can it be classified as a type of magic? Is it spiritual purification and, if so, how does it work?
- Tantra as spiritual purification and ritual practice
- The Cosmology, worldview and metaphysics of tantra: mount meru, the wheel of karma, spirited agencies, the tantric mandala and deity yoga

Week 7

Hellenistic Astrology and its Place within Divinatory Practice

- The emergence of astrology in the Hellenistic World: the cosmology of astrology
- Mechanics of Hellenistic astrology
- Origins of Hellenistic astrology: Babylon, Egypt, Greece
- Astrology and divination
- Practice of astrological divination

Week 8

Anthropological Perspectives on Divination and Magic

- Methodology: the relevance of anthropology and ethnography for ancient history, ancient philosophy and classics
- Evans-Pritchard's ethnographic field and anthropological study of the Azande, Sudan, North Africa: case study of Evans-Pritchard's Witchcraft, Oracles and Magic among the Azande
- Ideas of causation and oracles, magic and witchcraft
- Religion and Science; ritual and rationality
- Anthropology and the 'mentalities' debate

ONLINE SEMINARS FOR THE MODULE

Week 1: Introductory Seminar

Tuesday 3rd February 2026

Dr Dorian Greenbaum, Dr Dawn Collins

Introduction to the Module and Writing your Critical Review

Introduction to Plutarch, On the Obsolescence of Oracles; Cicero's On Divination

Week 2: Seminar 2

Tuesday 10th February 2026

Dr Dawn Collins

Divination, Magic and Religion in Antiquity

Week 3: Seminar 3

Tuesday 17th February 2026

Dr Dorian Greenbaum

Ancient Divination in Egypt and the Near East

Week 4: Seminar 4

Tuesday 24th February 2026

Dr Dawn Collins

Divination and Oracles in Ancient Tibet

Week 5: Seminar 5

Tuesday 3rd March 2026

Dr Dorian Greenbaum

Magic, Medicine, Religion and Divination in Ancient Greece

NO CLASS ON TUESDAY, 10TH MARCH 2025

Week 6: Seminar 6

Tuesday 17th March 2026

Dr Dawn Collins

Divination, Theurgy and Tantra

Week 7: Seminar 7

Tuesday 24th March 2026

Dr Dorian Greenbaum

Hellenistic Astrology and its Place within Divinatory Practice

Week 8: Seminar 8

Tuesday 31st March 2026

Dr Dawn Collins

Anthropological Perspectives on Divination and Magic

ASSESSMENT FOR THIS MODULE

There are two assignments for this module, which together comprise 5000 words of written work in total:

Assignment 1: One 3000 word assignment (40% of marks)

Critical Review: Analysis of a primary source document

(1) A Critical Review of Cicero's Arguments against divination in *De Divinatione*

Write a critical review of Cicero's arguments against divination in *De Divinatione*

Students are encouraged to use the Loeb edition, in English translation with facing page Latin, found in the UWTSD online database, Loeb Classical Library. This can be useful to see the Latin at a glance.

Bill Thayer has transcribed the English of the Loeb edition here:

http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Cicero/de_Divinatione/home.html

The Perseus site at Tufts has the Falconer translation here:

<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A2007.01.0043%3Ab ook%3D1%3Asection%3D1> This can be toggled to see the Latin original.

OR

(2) A critical review of Plutarch's arguments for divination in *De defectu oraculorum* (*On the Obsolescence of Oracles*).

Write a critical review of Plutarch's arguments for divination in *De defectu oraculorum* (*On the Obsolescence of Oracles*)

For essay title 2, please use the Loeb Classical Library edition of the text:

Plutarch, *The Obsolescence of Oracles* (*De defectu oraculorum*): Frank Cole Babbitt (trans.), Loeb Classical Library, Moralia vol. V, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1936. This text is available in the UWTSD online database, Loeb Classical Library.

Alternatively, you can find the same translation online here:

The Perseus site at Tufts:

<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A2008.01.0251%3Asection%3Dintro>

and Bill Thayer's site:

http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Plutarch/Moralia/De_defectu_oraculorum*.html

You are required to use additional secondary sources. We suggest at least three to five (you are encouraged to use more, but we expect three to five as a minimum). You should use required or recommended books in the MA, as well as digital resources available through the University (such as JSTOR, Oxford Scholarship, Project MUSE).

NB: You should consult the guideline for writing critical reviews.

Assignment 1 Due:

Completion: Thursday 5th March 2026

Final date for Submission: Monday 12th March 2026, 23:59

Assignment 2: One 4500 word essay (60% of marks) on one of the following topics.

1. Analyse the roles of, and relationship between, cosmology and divination in **ONE** of the following:
 1. Ancient Egypt
 2. Ancient Mesopotamia
 3. Hellenistic astrology
 4. Ancient and Contemporary Tibetan Traditions
2. Critically analyse a text from the Greek or Demotic Magical Papyri in **ONE** of the following in terms of:
 1. its cosmology and astrology
 2. its magic and divination
3. Analyse the role of divination within the theory and practice of ancient Greek medicine.
4. Can the theory and practice of divination help distinguish between magic and religion?
5. What relevance do anthropological theories and observations have to the study of divination and magic in antiquity?
6. Explain how the insights regarding science and knowledge gained by Evans-Pritchard in his anthropological fieldwork among the Azande can assist us in our study of divination and religion in the ancient Greco-Roman world.

Assignment 2 Due:

Completion: Thursday 2nd April 2026

Final date for Submission: Thursday 9th April 2026, 23:59.

READING LISTS AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

- I. Essential Reading
- II. Weekly Seminar Readings
- III. Ancient Texts and Sources: Essential and Additional
- IV. Additional General Readings

Some items are repeated if they are relevant to more than one area of the course. These are exploratory rather than prescriptive: in other words, you will not be required to read everything on every list, but it is constructed so as to give you starting places for whatever topics interest you.

I. Essential Reading

Addey, Crystal. *Divination and Theurgy in Neoplatonism: Oracles of the gods*, Farnham: Ashgate, 2014 (**available from UWTSD Library as an e-book**)
Or buy directly from: <https://www.routledge.com/products/isbn/9781409451525>

Betz, Hans Dieter, *The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation, including the Demotic Spells*, Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1992, repr. 1996. (**available on archive.org**)

Campion, Nicholas, *The Dawn of Astrology: A Cultural History of Western Astrology*, Vol. 1, The Ancient and Classical Worlds, London: Continuum, 2008.

Flower, Michael Attyah, *The Seer in Ancient Greece*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 2007. (**available from the UWTSD Library as an e-book; downloadable by section from JSTOR [recommended]**)

Greenbaum, Dorian Gieseler, *The Daimon in Hellenistic Astrology: Origins and Influences*, Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2016 (**available from UWTSD Library as an e-book**)

Greenwood, Susan. *The Anthropology of Magic*, London: Routledge, 2009 [eBook published Taylor & Francis 2020]. Chapters 1, 4 & 6. Available from TSD Library as an e-book from the database Askew and Holts, VleBooks

de Nebesky-Wojkowitz, René, *Oracles and Demons of Tibet: The Cult and Iconography of the Tibetan Protective Deities*. Graz: Akademische Druck-u. Verlagsanstalt, 1956 (repr.1996). <https://www.tsemrinpoche.com/download/Buddhism-General/en/Rene%20de%20Nebesky%20Wojkowitz%20-%20Oracles%20and%20Demons%20of%20Tibet.pdf>

Ogden, D., *Magic, Witchcraft and Ghosts in the Greek and Roman Worlds: A Sourcebook*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002 (**available from UWTSD Library as an e-book**) *If you can afford to buy books for this course, we recommend this one especially*

Not required for 2026, though recommended if you are interested in this topic
Iamblichus, *On the Mysteries (De mysteriis)*: Emma C. Clarke, John M. Dillon and J.P. Hershbell (eds.), Iamblichus: *On the Mysteries*, Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003

II. Weekly Seminar Readings

Each weekly reading list is divided into three sections: Required Reading for that week, Additional Reading in two sections: those available online and other additional reading.

Week 1

Introduction to the Module

Plutarch, *On the Obsolescence of Oracles (De defectu oraculorum)* and Cicero's *On Divination (De Divinatione)*

Required Reading

Plutarch, *The Obsolescence of Oracles (De defectu oraculorum)*: Frank Cole Babbitt (trans.), Loeb Classical Library, Moralia vol. V, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1936. **Available in the UWTSD online database, Loeb Classical Library.** Start reading this work; you may also read any of the Delphic Dialogues (*The E at Delphi (De E apud Delphos)* and *The Oracles at Delphi no longer given in verse (De Pythiae oraculis)*, also in vol. V

Cicero, *On Divination (De divinatione)*: W. A. Falconer (ed. And trs.), Loeb Classical Library, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, vol. XX, 1923. **Available: UWTSD database: Loeb Classical Library**

Also available:

http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Cicero/de_Divinatione/home.html;

<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A2007.01.0043%3Abook%3D1%3Asection%3D1>

Start reading the whole work (Books 1 and 2)

Additional Reading (available online or in e-book format through TSD Library Catalogue)

Addey, Crystal. *Divination and Theurgy in Neoplatonism: Oracles of the gods*, Farnham: Ashgate, 2014 (**available from TSD Library as an e-book**): Read Chapter 6

Beard, M., "Cicero and Divination: The Formation of a Latin Discourse," *Journal of Roman Studies* 76 (1986), 33-47: **Available on JSTOR.**

Burriss, E.E., "Cicero's Religious Unbelief," *Classical Weekly* 17.13 (1924), 101-103: **Available on JSTOR.**

Flower, Michael Attyah, "Divination as a System of Knowledge and Belief", Chapter 4 in Flower, *The Seer in Ancient Greece*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2007, pp. 104-131. **Available on JSTOR**

Goar, R., "The Purpose of *De Divinatione*", *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 99 (1968), 241-248: **Available on JSTOR**

Goldschmidt, Victor, "Les thèmes du 'De defectu oraculorum' de Plutarque", *Revue des Études Grecques* 61 (1948), 298-302. **Available on JSTOR**

Jackson, Peter, "Apparitions and Apparatuses: On the Framing and Staging of Religious Events", *Method and Theory in the Study of Religion* 24 (2012), 291-300. **Available on JSTOR**

Jaillard, Dominique, "Plutarque et la divination: la piété d'un prêtre philosophe", *Revue de l'histoire des religions* 224 no. 2 (Divination et révélation dans les mondes grec et romain) (2007), 149-169. **Available on JSTOR**

Nock, A. D., "Religious Attitudes of the Ancient Greeks", *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 85 (1942), 472-482. **Available on JSTOR**

Schofield, M., "Cicero for and against Divination", *Journal of Roman Studies* 76 (1986), 47-65: **Available on JSTOR**.

Schröder, Stephan, "Plutarch on Oracles and Divine Inspiration", in H-G. Nesselrath, ed., *Plutarch: On the Daimonion of Socrates*, Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010, pp. 145-168. **Available on JSTOR**

Simonetti, Elsa G., *A Perfect Medium? Oracular Divination in the Thought of Plutarch*. Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2017. **Available on EBSCO Ebooks**

Not required for 2026, though recommended if you are interested in this topic
Iamblichus, *On the Mysteries (De mysteriis)*: Books 1 and 3: Emma C. Clarke, John M. Dillon and J.P. Hershbell (eds.), Iamblichus: *On the Mysteries*, Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003. Read Book 3. It would also be useful to read Book 1 for Iamblichus' general approach and philosophical and theological principles. If you have time, Book 9 deals with some issues connected with ancient astrology and the personal *daimon*.

Week 2

Divination, Magic and Religion in Antiquity

Required Reading

Greek Magical Papyri, PGM IV.475-829, "The Mithras Liturgy," in Hans Dieter Betz (ed.), *The Greek magical papyri in translation, including the Demotic spells*, Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1992, 2nd ed. 1996. Available under 'Reading' for Week 2 on the Moodle page.

It is highly recommended that you purchase the book, however. It is not expensive (about £35 on Amazon, cheaper used), and is a resource to be used again and again.

Wax, M. And Wax., R., 'The Notion of Magic', *Current Anthropology* 4.5 (1963), 495-518: **Available on JSTOR.**

Collins, D., 'Nature, Cause and Agency in Greek Magic', *Transactions of the American Philological Association (TAPA)* 133.1 (2003), 17-49: **Available on JSTOR.**

Otto, Bernd-Christian, 'Towards Historicizing "Magic" in Antiquity', *Numen* 60.2-3 (2013), 308-347. **Available on JSTOR**

Additional Reading (available online)

*A companion to Betz's Greek Magical Papyri is the newly published **Greek and Egyptian Magical Formularies: Text and Translation**, Vol. 1, eds Christopher Faraone and Sofia Torallas Tovar, Berkeley, CA: California Classical Studies, 2022. <https://escholarship.org/uc/item/9650x69r> Highly recommended.*

Bremmer, J. 'The birth of the term "magic"', *Zeitschrift fur Papyrologie und Epigraphik (ZPE)* 126 (1999), 1-12.
<http://uni-koeln.de/phil-fak/ifa/zpe/downloads/1999/126pdf/126001.pdf>

Dickie, M., *Magic and Magicians in the Graeco-Roman World*, London: Routledge, 2001: Chapter 1: the formation and nature of the Greek concept of magic; Chapter 5: Magic as a distinctive category in Roman thought. **Available through UWTSD Library catalogue as an e-book**

Eidinow, E., *Oracles, Curses and Risk among the Ancient Greeks*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007. **Available through UWTSD Library catalogue as an e-book**

Gordon, Richard. 'Cosmology, Astrology and Magic: Discourse, Schemes, Power and Literacy'. In *Panthée: Religious Transformations in the Graeco-Roman Empire*, eds Laurent Bricault and Corinne Bonnet, 85-111, Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2013.
Will be available as a handout in this class

Hammond, D., 'Magic: A Problem in Semantics', *American Anthropologist* New Series 72.6 (1970), 1349-1356: **Available on JSTOR.**

Johnston, Sarah Iles, *Greek Divination*, Oxford: Wiley Blackwell, 2008.
Available through UWTSD Library catalogue as an e-book

Stark, R., 'Reconceptualizing Religion, Magic and Science', *Review of Religious Research* 43.2 (2001), 101-120: **Available on JSTOR.**

K.B. Stratton and D.S. Kalleres (eds.), *Daughters of Hecate: Women and Magic in the Ancient World*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014.
Available through UWTSD Library catalogue as an e-book

Additional Reading (other)

Collins, Derek, *Magic in the Ancient Greek World*, Oxford: Blackwell, 2008: especially Chapter 1: Magic, what is it and how does it work?

Franz, Marie-Louise von, *On Divination and Synchronicity: The Psychology of Meaningful Chance*, Toronto: Inner City Books, 1980.

Gordon, Richard, "Imagining Greek and Roman Magic," in Flint, V., R. Gordon, G. Luck, D. Ogden (eds), *The Athlone History of Witchcraft and Magic in Europe Volume 2: Witchcraft and Magic in Europe: Ancient Greece and Rome*, London: Athlone Press, 1999, 159-266.

Graf, F., *Magic in the Ancient World*, Cambridge Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1997.

Johnston, Sarah Iles, "Introduction: Divining Divination," in Johnston, Sarah Iles and Peter Struck, *Mantike: Studies in Ancient Divination*, Leiden: Brill, 2005, 1-28.

Leach, E., *Social Anthropology*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982.

Lloyd, G.E.R., *Magic, Reason and Experience: Studies in the origins and Development of Greek Science*, Cambridge, New York, Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1979.

Luck, Georg, *Arcana Mundi: Magic and the Occult in the Greek and Roman Worlds*, Wellingborough: Crucible, 1987: especially Introduction and Chapter 1: Magic.

Malinowski, Bronislaw, *Magic, Science, Religion and other Essays*, New York: Doubleday, 1954.

Mauss, Marcel, *A General Theory of Magic*, London: Routledge, 1950.

Smith, Jonathan Z, *Map is Not Territory: Studies in the History of Religions*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1978: especially Chapters 10-12.

Tambiah, S., *Magic, Science, Religion and the Scope of Rationality*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990, Chapter 3.

Week 3

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.

Week 4

Divination and Oracles in Ancient Tibet

Required Reading

Dotson, Brandon, 'A Fragment of an Early Tibetan Divination Board from Mīrān', in Volker Caumanns, Marta Sernesi and Nikolai Solmsdorf (eds), *Unearthing Himalayan Treasures: Festschrift for Franz-Karl Ehrhard*, NIndica et Tibetica Verlag, Marburg 2019.

Erlewine, Michael, 'Tibetan Astrology', *The Tibet Journal*, Vol. 37, No. 2 (Summer 2012), pp. 31-72. Library of Tibetan Works and Archives. **Available at EBSCOhost Academic Search Premier.**

Gerke, Barbara. 'The Art of Tibetan Medical Practice', in Theresia Hofer (ed.), *Bodies in Balance*, New York: Rubin Museum of Art/University of Washington Press, pp. 16-31. **Available on JSTOR.**

Hoban, Isabela Basombrio, 'Nechung: A Tibetan Oracle in Exile', *The Tibet Journal*, Vol. 33, No. 2 (Summer 2008), pp. 33-64. Library of Tibetan Works and Archives. **Available at EBSCOhost Academic Search Premier.**

Nebesky-Wojkowitz, René de. 1956, repr. 1996. *Oracles and Demons of Tibet*. Delhi: Book Faith India. **Available here:** <https://www.tsemrinpoche.com/download/Buddhism-General/en/Rene%20de%20Nebesky%20Wojkowitz%20-%20Oracles%20and%20Demons%20of%20Tibet.pdf>

Additional Reading (available online)

Roney-Dougal, S. M. 'Tibetan Psychic Traditions'. *The Tibet Journal*, Vol. 43, No. 1 (Spring/Summer 2018), pp. 3-15. Library of Tibetan Works and Archives. **Available at EBSCOhost Academic Search Premier.**

Samuel, Geoffrey. 'Healing, Efficacy and the Spirits'. *Journal of Ritual Studies* 24, no. 2 (2010): 7–20. (*The Efficacy of Rituals, Part 2*. Second volume of two-volume special issue edited by William S. Sax and Johannes Quack.) **Available at EBSCOhost Atla Religion Database**

Yoeli-Tlalim, Ronit. 'A Tibetan Image of Divination: Some Contextual Remarks'. 2018. In Vivienne Lo, 羅維前, Penelope Barrett, David Dear, Lu Di, 蘆笛, Lois Reynolds, Dolly Yang 楊德秀 (eds), *Imagining Chinese Medicine*. Leiden/Boston: Brill, pp. 429-440. **Available on Brillonline Open Access Books; JSTOR Open Access Books.**

Yoeli-Tlalim, Ronit. 'Bodies in Balance', in Theresia Hofer (ed.), *Bodies in Balance*, New York: Rubin Museum of Art/University of Washington Press, pp. 91-104. **Available on JSTOR.**

Additional Reading (other)

Clark, B. 1995. *The Quintessence Tantras of Tibetan Medicine*. Ithaca: Snow Lion Publications.

Cornu, P. 1990. *Tibetan Astrology*, Massachusetts: Shambala Publications.

Wallace, V. (trans.). 2004. *The Kālacakrat Tantra: The Chapter on the Individual together with the Vimalaprabhā*. Columbia: American Institute of Buddhist Studies.

Week 5

Magic, medicine, religion and divination in Ancient Greece

Required Reading

Betz, Hans Dieter (ed.), *The Greek Magical Papyri in Translation, Including the Demotic Spells*, Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1992: Use the "Table of Spells" (pp.xi-xxviii) at the beginning to look up any spells / rituals connected with healing and illness (for example, PGM VII.199-201: For migraine headache; PGM VII.211-12: For fever with shivering fits). **1986 Edition available at the Internet Archive.**

Ogden, D., *Magic, Witchcraft and Ghosts in the Greek and Roman Worlds*, Oxford: Oxford University Press: 2002: Chapter 13 (Amulets: Healing amulets); Chapter 11 (Erotic Magic: section on Abortion and contraception); Chapter 9 (Further varieties of divination); Chapter 10 (curse tablets and 'prayers for justice'); Chapter 9 (ancient sources on Necromancy, Evocation, Oracles of the Dead and Reanimation): Chapter 8 (ancient sources on ghosts, ghost-laying, exorcism, werewolves). **Available as an e-book through UWTSD**

Additional Reading (available online)

Hippocrates, *On Regimen IV*. In Jones, W. H. S. *Hippocrates Volume IV*. Cambridge, MA/London: Harvard University Press, 1931, repr. 1998. **Available UWTSD Loeb Classical Library**

Dickie, M., *Magic and Magicians in the Graeco-Roman World*, London: Routledge, 2001: Chapter 1: the formation and nature of the Greek concept of magic: **Available through UWTSD Library catalogue as an e-book**

Greenbaum, Dorian Gieseler. 'Divination and decumbiture: Katarchic astrology and Greek medicine'. In *Divination and Knowledge in Greco-Roman Antiquity*, edited by Crystal Addey, 109-37, London/New York: Routledge, 2022. **Available from UWTSD Library as an e-book**

Maecherner, G.A., 'Medicine, Music and Magic: The Healing Grace of Pindar's Fourth Nemean,' *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 95 (1993), 113-141: **Available on JSTOR.**

Renahan, R., 'The Staunching of Odysseus' Blood: The Healing Power of Magic', *The American Journal of Philology* 113.1 (1992), 1-4: **Available on JSTOR.**

Additional Reading (other)

Cox Miller, P., *Dreams in Late Antiquity: Studies in the Imagination of a Culture*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994.

Edelstein, E.J. and Edelstein, L., *Asclepius: A Collection and Interpretation of the Testimonies*, Volumes 1 and 2, Baltimore: John Hopkins Press, 1945.

Hamilton, M., *Incubation*, London: Henderson, 1906.

Hart, G.D., *Asclepius: the God of Medicine*, London: Royal Society of Medicine Press, 2000.

Kee, H.C., "Self-Definition in the Asclepius Cult," in B.F. Meyer and E.P. Sanders (eds.) (1982), *Jewish and Christian Self-Definition Volume 3: Self-Definition in the Graeco-Roman World*, London: SCM Press, 118-36.

King, Helen, *Greek and Roman Medicine*, London: Duckworth, 2001 (revised: 2009).

Kingsley, Peter. *In the Dark Places of Wisdom*. Inverness, CA: The Golden Sufi Center, 1999.

Nutton, Vivian, *Ancient Medicine*, London: Routledge, 2004; 2nd ed. 2013; 3rd ed. 2024.
[Ask for copy of 2nd edition]

Nutton, Vivian. 'Greek Medical Astrology and the Boundaries of Medicine'. In *Astro-Medicine: Astrology and Medicine, East and West*, edited by Anna Akasoy, Charles Burnett and Ronit Yoeli-Tlalim, 17-31, Florence: Sismel, Edizioni del Galluzzo, 2008.

Pakkanen, P., *Interpreting Early Hellenistic Religion: A Study based on the Mystery Cult of Demeter and the Cult of Isis*, Helsinki, Finland: Foundation of the Finnish Institute at Athens (Papers and Monographs of the Finnish Institute at Athens, Vol. III), 1996.

Petsalis-Diomidis, A., "The Body in Space: Visual Dynamics in Graeco-Roman Healing Pilgrimage," in J. Elsner and I. Rutherford, I. (eds.) (2005), *Pilgrimage in Graeco-Roman and Early Christian Antiquity: Seeing the Gods*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 183-218.

Temkin, O. and Temkin, C. Lilian, *Ancient Medicine: Selected Papers of Ludwig Edelstein*, Baltimore: John Hopkins Press, 1967.

Ustinova, Y., "Either a Daimon, or a Hero, or Perhaps a God:" Mythical Residents of Subterranean Chambers," *Kernos* 15 (2002), 267-288.

Week 6

Divination, Theurgy and Tantra

Required Reading

Theurgy

Addey, Crystal, *Divination and Theurgy in Neoplatonism: Oracles of the gods* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2014): Chapters 1 and 7. **available from TSD Library as an e-book or buy directly from: <https://www.routledge.com/products/isbn/9781409451525>**

Johnston, Sarah Iles (ed.), *Religions of the Ancient World: A Guide* (Cambridge, MA 2004) : pp.649-650 on theurgy. **Available from UWTSD Library as an e-book**

Tantra

Samuel, G. 2012. *Introducing Tibetan Buddhism*. Oxford, New York: Routledge: Chapter 3, pp.44-50 & Chapter 4 **Available on Moodle**

Collins, Dawn. 2020. 'Seeing the Gods: Divine Embodiment through Visualisation in Tantric Buddhist Practice' in Child & Rosen (eds), *Religion and Sight* (UK & USA: Equinox). Chapter 11. pp. 200-220 **Available on Moodle**

Additional Reading

Theurgy (Primary Sources)

Chaldean Oracles. Text, translation and Commentary by Ruth Majercik (Leiden 1989 [2015]) **Available from the Prometheus Trust: www.prometheustrust.co.uk**

Iamblichus, *On the Mysteries*. Translated by Emma C. Clarke, John M. Dillon and Jackson P. Hershbell (Atlanta 2003) **Available at**

<http://www.archive.org/stream/iamblichusonmys00taylgoog#page/n9/mode/1up>

Theurgy (Secondary Sources)

Addey, C., "Oracles, Dreams and Astrology in Iamblichus' *De mysteriis*," in P. Curry and A. Voss (eds.) (2007), *Seeing with Different Eyes: Essays in Astrology and Divination*, Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2007, 35-57. **Available from UWTSD Library through eBook collection EBSCO Host**

Athanassiadi, P., 'Dreams, Theurgy and Freelance Divination: The Testimony of Iamblichus', *The Journal of Roman Studies* 83 (1993), 115-130: **Available on JSTOR.**

Lawrence, Marilynn. 'Astral symbolism in theurgic rites'. In *Divination and Knowledge in Greco-Roman Antiquity*, ed. Crystal Addey, 270-94, London/New York: Routledge, 2022. **Available from UWTSD Library as an e-book**

Ogden, D., *Magic, Witchcraft and Ghosts in the Greek and Roman Worlds*, Oxford: Oxford University Press: 2002: Chapter 4: Apollonius of Tyana (ancient sources in translation); Chapter 14: Libanius and Apuleius (ancient sources in translation).

Available from UWTSD Library as an e-book

Shaw, Gregory, *Theurgy and the Soul. The Neoplatonism of Iamblichus* (University Park 1995 [2014]) [186 IAMB.S], **Available from UWTSD Library as an e-book**

Sheppard, A., 'Proclus' Attitude to Theurgy', *The Classical Quarterly* 32.1 (1982), 212-224: **Available on JSTOR**

Struck, Peter T. *Birth of the Symbol: Ancient Readers at the Limits of their Texts*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004. **Available from UWTSD Library as an e-book**

Tanaseanu-Döbler, Ilinca, *Theurgy in Late Antiquity: The Invention of a Ritual Tradition* (Göttingen 2013) [203.8 TANA]. **Available from UWTSD Library as an e-book**

Tantra (Primary Sources)

Clark, B. 1995. *The Quintessence Tantras of Tibetan Medicine*. Ithaca: Snow Lion Publications. **Available at** <https://archive.org/details/quintessencetant00drba>

Tsong Kha pa (trans. Jeffrey Hopkins), 1980. *Tantra in Tibet: The Great Exposition of Secret Mantra – Volume 1*. London: George Allen and Unwin, [1977]. **Available at** <https://www.pdfdrive.com/the-great-exposition-of-secret-mantra-volume-1-tantra-in-tibet-e194677701.html>

Wallace, V. (trans.). 2004. *The Kālacakrat Tantra: The Chapter on the Individual together with the Vimalaprabhā*. Columbia: American Institute of Buddhist Studies. **Available at** <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/j.1748-0922.2006.00101.4.x>

Tantra (Secondary Sources)

Collins, Dawn H. 'Becoming the Gods: Visualisation and Healing in Tibetan Deity Yoga', in *Alternative Spirituality and Religion Review*, vol. 14, Issue 1, 2023.

<https://www.pdcnet.org/collection-anonymous/browse?fp=asrr&fq=asrr/Volume/8986%7C14/8999%7CIssue:%201/>

Esler, D. 2022. 'Yamāntaka's Wrathful Magic: An Instance of the Ritual Legacy of gNubs chen Sangs rgyas ye shes on the Byang gter Tradition via the Figure of rGya Zhang khrom' in *Revue d'Études Tibétaines* no. 62 (Cambridge University Press). **Available at** https://himalaya.socanth.cam.ac.uk/collections/journals/ret/pdf/ret_62_08.pdf

Mayer, R. 2014. 'Indigenous elements in Tibetan tantric religion', in Berounský, D. (ed.), *Mongolo-Tibetica Pragensia '14: Ethnolinguistics, Sociolinguistics, Religion and Culture*, volume 7, no.2: 35-53. Prague: Charles University, **Available on Moodle**

Poupard, D. J. 2018. 'How the Turtle Lost its Shell: Sino-Tibetan Divination Manuals and Cultural Translation' in *HIMALAYA* 38(2). **Available at** <https://digitalcommons.macalester.edu/himalaya/vol38/iss2/5/>

Samuel, G., H. Gregor & E. Stutchbury (eds), 1994. *Tantra and Popular Religions in Tibet*. Delhi: Pradeep Kumar Goel. **Available from UWTSD Library**

Samuel, G. 2005. *Tantric Revisionings: New Understandings of Tibetan Buddhism and Indian Religions*. UK: Ashgate. **Available from UWTSD Library**

Samuel, G. 2008. *The Origins of Yoga and Tantra: Indic Religions to the Thirteenth Century*. Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press. **Available from UWTSD Library**

White, D. G. 2000. *Tantra in practice: Mapping a Tradition*, in (ed.) White, D. G., *Tantra in Practice*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press. **Available from UWTSD Library**

Week 7

Hellenistic Astrology and its Place within Divinatory Practice

Required Reading

Barton, Tamsyn. *Ancient Astrology*, London/New York: Routledge, 1994. Chapters 1 and 2

Greenbaum, Dorian Gieseler. *The Daimon in Hellenistic Astrology: Origins and Influence*. Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2015. pp. 40-45, 399-415; also, see index under 'divination' **available from UWTSD Library as an e-book**

Greenbaum, Dorian Gieseler. 'The Origin of Questions in Astrology'. In *Astrologers at Work: Essays on the Practices and Techniques of Astrology in Memory of Helena Avelar*, eds Luís Campos Ribeiro and Charles Burnett. Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2025, pp. 1-58 **(Available as a pdf from tutor)**

Holden, James Herschel. *A History of Horoscopic Astrology from the Babylonian Period to the Modern Age*. Tempe, AZ: American Federation of Astrologers, 1996. pp. 1-19

Waterfield, Robin. 'The Evidence for Astrology in Classical Greece'. *Culture and Cosmos* 3.2 (1999): 3-15. **Available pdf at the Culture and Cosmos website:** <http://www.cultureandcosmos.org/issues/vol3.php>

Additional Reading (most 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 9 and 10: Archaic and Classical Greece (Homer, Hesiod and Plato); Chapters 11, 12 and 13: Hellenistic cosmology and astrology; Chapter 14: Roman astrology.

Edson, Evelyn and Emilie Savage-Smith, "An Astrologer's Map: A Relic of Late Antiquity," *Imago Mundi*, Vol. 52, (2000), pp. 7-29: **Available on JSTOR**

Greenbaum, Dorian Gieseler. 'The Hellenistic Horoscope'. In *Hellenistic Astronomy: The Science in Its Contexts*, eds Alan C. Bowen and Francesca Rochberg, 443-471. Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2020. **(pdf available: please ask if you are interested)**

Greenbaum, Dorian Gieseler. 'Divination and decumbiture: Katarchic astrology and Greek medicine'. In *Divination and Knowledge in Greco-Roman Antiquity*, edited by Crystal Addey, 109-37, London/New York: Routledge, 2022. **Available from UWTSD Library as an e-book**

Greenbaum, Dorian, and Alexander Jones. 'P.Berl. 9825: An elaborate horoscope for 319 CE and its significance for Greek astrological practice'. *ISAW Papers* 12 (2017). Available at <http://dlib.nyu.edu/awdl/isaw/isaw-papers/12/> (<http://doi.org/2333.1/brv15m2n>)

Greenbaum, Dorian Gieseler, and Micah T. Ross. 'The Role of Egypt in the Development of the Horoscope'. In *Egypt in Transition: Social and Religious Development of Egypt in the First Millennium BCE*, eds L. Bareš, F. Coppens and K. Smolarikova, pp. 146-82, Prague: Faculty of Arts, Charles University in Prague, 2010. **(pdf available: please ask if you are interested)**

Heilen, Stephen, "Teaching 'Astrology in Greece and Rome'. *The Classical Journal*, Vol. 98, No. 2 (Dec., 2002 – Jan., 2003), pp. 201-210: **Available on JSTOR**

Jones, Alexander, "The Adaptation of Babylonian Methods in Greek Numerical Astronomy". *Isis*, Vol. 82, No. 3 (Sep., 1991), pp. 441-453: **Available on JSTOR**

Lawrence, Marilyn. 'Astral symbolism in theurgic rites'. In *Divination and Knowledge in Greco-Roman Antiquity*, edited by Crystal Addey, 270-94, London/New York: Routledge, 2022. **Available from UWTSD Library as an e-book**

Lehoux, Daryn, 'Parapegmata: Astrology, Weather and Calendars in the Ancient World', PhD Thesis, University of Toronto', 2000.
<http://www.collectionscanada.ca/obj/s4/f2/dsk2/ftp03/NQ53766.pdf>

Neugebauer, O., 'Demotic Horoscopes'. *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, Vol. 63, No. 2 (Apr. – Jun., 1943), pp. 115-127: **Available on JSTOR**

Neugebauer, O. and H. B. Van Hoesen. *Greek Horoscopes*. Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society, 1959, repr. 1987. **Available to read and/or download at the Ancient World Digital Library, <https://dlib.nyu.edu/ancientworld/> (search 'Greek Horoscopes')**

Pingree, David. *From Astral Omens to Astrology: From Babylon to Bīkāner*. Rome: Istituto italiano per l'Africa e l'Oriente, 1997.

Riess, Ernst, 'The Influence of Astrology on Life and Literature at Rome'. *The Classical Weekly*, Vol. 27, No. 10 (Dec. 18, 1933), pp. 73-78: **Available on JSTOR**

Riley, Mark, 'Science and Tradition in the *Tetrabiblos*', *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, Vol. 132, no 1, pp. 67-84, 1988. **Available on JSTOR**

Riley, Mark, 'Theoretical and Practical Astrology: Ptolemy and His Colleagues', *Transactions of the American Philological Association*, 117, (1987), pp. 235-256: **Available on JSTOR**

Sarton, George Reviewed work(s): Astrology in Roman Law and Politics by Frederick H. Cramer. *Speculum*, Vol. 31, No. 1 (Jan., 1956), pp. 156-161: **Available on JSTOR**.

Additional Reading (other)

Aaboe, A. "Scientific Astronomy in Antiquity." *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London*. Series A, Mathematical and Physical Sciences, Vol. 276, No. 1257, The Place of Astronomy in the Ancient World (May 2, 1974), pp. 21-42.

Beck, Roger, *A Brief History of Ancient Astrology*, Oxford: Blackwell, 2007.

Cramer, Frederick H., *Astrology in Roman Law and Politics*, Chicago: Ares Publishers, 1996.

Evans, J. (2004), 'The Astrologer's Apparatus: A Picture of Professional Practice in Greco-Roman Egypt', *Journal for the History of Astronomy* 35.1: 1-44. **Available here:** <http://adsabs.harvard.edu/full/2004JHA....35....1E>

Fowden, G., *The Egyptian Hermes* (1986), esp. pages 75-94 on *sympatheia*, *daimones* and Egyptian and Graeco-Roman magic

Noegel, Scott (ed.), *Prayer, Magic, and the Stars in the Ancient and Late Antique World*, Philadelphia: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2003.

Week 8

Anthropological Perspectives on Divination and Magic

Required Reading

Evans-Pritchard, E.E. *Witchcraft, Oracles and Magic among the Azande*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1976 (first edn. 1937). **Available at the Lampeter Campus Library Main Collection (301.21 EVA); available to borrow digital version, with a free account, from the Internet Archive,** <https://archive.org/details/witchcraftoracle00evan>

Greenwood, Susan. *The Anthropology of Magic*, London: Routledge, 2009 [eBook published Taylor & Francis 2020]. Chapters 1, 4 & 6. **Available from TSD Library as an e-book from the database Askew and Holts, VleBooks**

Additional Reading (available online)

Addey, Crystal. *Divination and Theurgy in Neoplatonism: Oracles of the gods*, Farnham: Ashgate, 2014 **available from TSD Library as an e-book:** see especially Chapter 5 on Rationality and Ritual for comparative purposes.

Evans-Pritchard, E.E., 'Oracle-Magic of the Azande', *Sudan Notes and Records* 11 (1928), 1-53: **Available on JSTOR**

Triplett, T. 'Azande Logic versus Western Logic?' *The British Journal for the Philosophy of Science* 39.3 (1988), pp. 361-366: **Available on JSTOR**

Additional Reading (other)

Bowie, Fiona, *The Anthropology of Religion: An Introduction*, Oxford: Blackwell, 2006 (first edn. 2000): especially Chapter 8: Witchcraft and the Evil Eye.

Good, Byron J., *Medicine, Rationality and Experience: an Anthropological Perspective*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994.

Greenbaum, Ellen, Nuer Women in Southern Sudan, Michigan State University, 1990.
https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&source=web&rct=j&opi=89978449&url=https://gencen.isp.msu.edu/index.php/download_file/view/50/398/&ved=2ahUKEwjE6dGpyqKSAxV4W0EAHZ0WM4QQFnoECB0QAQ&usq=AOvVaw2GzGHtq6-oRPEsZe1DHTWe

Greenwood, Susan, *The Nature of Magic*, Oxford: Berg, 2010.

Levy-Bruhl, L. *How Natives Think*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1985 (first published in 1910)

Lucien Levy-Bruhl, L. *The Notebooks on Primitive Mentality*, Oxford: Blackwell, 1975 (first published in 1949).

Lévy-Bruhl, Lucien, 'A Letter to Evans-Pritchard', *British Journal of Sociology*, 3 (1952), pp.117-23.

Tambiah, S.J., *Magic, Science, Religion and the Scope of Rationality*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991.

III. Ancient Texts and Sources

Ancient Texts: Essential Reading

Note: for Greek and Latin texts, the full text in Greek or Latin, with English translation, is available on the UWTSD database, Loeb Classical Library, hereafter marked in red.

Cicero, *De Divinatione (On Divination)*, trans. W.A.Falconer, Loeb Classical Library, Cambridge Mass: Harvard University Press, London, 1929
http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Cicero/de_Divinatione/home.html
Loeb Classical Library

Plutarch, *The Obsolescence of Oracles (De defectu oraculorum)*: Frank Cole Babbitt (trans.), Loeb Classical Library, Moralia vol. V, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1936.

UWTSD online database, Loeb Classical Library.

Not required for 2026, though recommended if you are interested in this topic
Iamblichus, *On the Mysteries (De mysteriis)*: Emma C. Clarke, John M. Dillon and J.P. Hershbell (eds.), Iamblichus: *On the Mysteries*, Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003

Plato, *Apology*, translated by B. Jowett
<http://classics.mit.edu/Plato/apology.html>

This is the account of Socrates' trial and defence-speech. Socrates relates how his philosophical mission and journey was catalysed by an oracle received from the prophetess at Delphi given to his friend which claimed that Socrates was the wisest person in Greece; Socrates could not accept the oracle at face value and set out to discover someone wiser than him – this represents the beginning of his philosophical journey. Also [Loeb Classical Library](#)

Plato, *Ion*, translated by B. Jowett
<http://classics.mit.edu/Plato/ion.html>

Socrates and the rhapsode (singer of Homeric epic) Ion discuss prophetic and poetic inspiration as parallel examples of divine inspiration and possession by the gods. Line numbers 533-536 are particularly relevant. Also [Loeb Classical Library](#)

Plato, *Phaedrus*, translated by B. Jowett
<http://www.fullbooks.com/Phaedrus2.html>

The whole dialogue is relevant, but particularly line numbers 244-245 where Plato draws the distinction between inspired/natural types of divination (oracles etc.) and inductive/artificial types of divination (haruspicy, augury etc.). Also [Loeb Classical Library](#)

Plato, *Timaeus*, translated by B. Jowett
<http://classics.mit.edu/Plato/timaeus.html> Also [Loeb Classical Library](#)

Plotinus, *On Whether the Stars are Causes*, Book 2, Third Tractate of the *Enneads*
Translated by Stephen Mackenna and B.S. Page
<http://classics.mit.edu/Plotinus/enneads.2.second.html> Also [Loeb Classical Library](#)

Ptolemy, *Tetrabiblos*, translated by F. E. Robbins. [Loeb Classical Library](#)
<http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Ptolemy/Tetrabiblos/home.html>
Also [Loeb Classical Library](#)

Ancient Texts: Additional Reading

Artemidorus, *The Interpretation of Dreams (Oneirocritica)*, ed: R.A. Pack (1963),
Artemidori Daldiani Onirocriticon Libri V, Leipzig: Teubner.
English. translation: R.J. White (1975), *Artemidorus: The Interpretation of Dreams*, Park Ridge, New Jersey: Noyes Press.

Chaldaean Oracles (fragments):
The Chaldean Oracles: Text, Translation and Commentary, trans. Ruth Majercik,
Leiden: Brill 1989, second edition: Westbury, Wiltshire: Prometheus Trust, 2013.
Available from the Prometheus Trust: see www.prometheustrust.co.uk.

Oracles and Mysteries, trans. T. Taylor, Westbury, Wiltshire: The Prometheus Trust.
Available for £14.40 from the Prometheus Trust: see www.prometheustrust.co.uk .

Eunapius, *Lives of the Philosophers and Sophists*, trans. Wilmer Cave Wright, Loeb Classical Library, Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1921, reprinted: 2005. [Loeb Classical Library](#)

Iamblichus, *Fragments (Iamblichi Chalcidensis In Platonis Dialogos Commentariorum Fragmenta)*, trans. and ed. John Dillon, Westbury, Wiltshire: The Prometheus Trust, 2009.

Available from the Prometheus Trust in hardback for £19.20 (includes Greek text and English translation): see www.prometheustrust.co.uk.

Philostratus, *The Life of Apollonius of Tyana (Vita Apollonii)*, trs: F.C. Conybeare (1922), 2 vols. Loeb, London: Heinemann. [Loeb Classical Library](#)

Plato, *Apology*, trs: H.N. Fowler (1914; repr. 1982), *Plato: Euthyphro, Apology, Crito, Phaedo, Phaedrus*, Loeb, London and Cambridge, MA: Heinemann and Harvard University Press. [Loeb Classical Library](#)

Plato, *Ion*, trs: W.R.M. Lamb (1925; repr. 1952), Loeb, Cambridge, MA and London: Heinemann and Harvard University Press. [Loeb Classical Library](#)

Plato, *Phaedrus*, trs: H.N. Fowler (1914; repr. 1982), *Plato: Euthyphro, Apology, Crito, Phaedo, Phaedrus*, Loeb, London and Cambridge, MA: Heinemann and Harvard University Press. [Loeb Classical Library](#)

Plato, *Timaeus*, trs: R.G. Bury (1929), Loeb, London and Cambridge, MA: Heinemann and Harvard University Press. [Loeb Classical Library](#)

Plotinus, *Enneads*, ed. and trs: A.H. Armstrong (1966-88), 7 vols. Loeb, Cambridge, MA and London: Heinemann and Harvard University Press. [Loeb Classical Library](#)

Plutarch, *The E at Delphi; The Oracles at Delphi no longer given in verse; The Obsolescence of Oracles; Isis and Osiris*, in Plutarch's *Moralia*, Volume 5, trans. F.C. Babbitt, Loeb Classical Library, Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1936, reprinted: 2003. [Loeb Classical Library](#)

Sallustius, *Concerning the Gods and the World*, in *Collected Writings on the Gods and the World*, trans. T. Taylor, Westbury, Wiltshire: The Prometheus Trust. Available from the Prometheus Trust in hardback (£16) and paperback (£9.60): see www.prometheustrust.co.uk

Synesius, *Concerning Dreams (De Insomniis)*, ed: N. Aujoulat (2004), *Synesios De Cyrene: Opuscles*, 4 vols., Paris: Les Belles Lettres.
English. translation: A. Fitzgerald (1930), *The Essays and Hymns of Synesius of Cyrene*, 2 vols., Oxford: Oxford University Press.
On Prophecy, Dreams and Human Imagination: Synesius, De insomniis: Introduction, Text, Translation and Interpretive Essays. Eds D. A. Russell and H.-G. Nesselrath, Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2014

IV. Additional General Reading

Annus, Amar (ed.), *Divination and Interpretation of Signs in the Ancient World*, Chicago: The University of Chicago 2010.

<https://oi.uchicago.edu/sites/oi.uchicago.edu/files/uploads/shared/docs/ois6.pdf>

Barb, A., 'The Survival of Magic Arts,' in A. Momigliano (ed), *The Conflict between Paganism and Christianity in the Fourth Century*, Oxford: Oxford University Press 1963.
Barton, Tamsyn, *Ancient Astrology*, London: Routledge, 1994.

Beerden, Kim, *World Full of Signs: Ancient Greek Divination in Context*, Leiden-Boston: Brill 2013.

Blacker, Carmen and Michael Loewe, *Oracles and Divination*, Boulder: Shambhala, 1981.

Blumental, H.J. and E.G. Clark (eds.), *The Divine Iamblichus: Philosopher and Man of Gods*, Bristol: Bristol Classical Press, 1993.

Bowden, Hugh, *Classical Athens and the Delphic Oracle: Divination and Democracy*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2005.

Burkert, Walter, *Ancient Mystery Cults*, Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press 1987.

Burnett, Charles and W.F. Ryan (eds), *Magic and the Classical Tradition*, London and Turin: The Warburg Institute and Nino Aragno Editore, 2006.

Ciraolo, Leda, and Seidel, Jonathan (eds.), *Magic and Divination in the Ancient World*, Leiden-Boston: Brill/Styx, 2002.

Copenhaver, Brian P., *Hermetica*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992.

Cramer, Frederick H., *Astrology in Roman Law and Politics*, Chicago; Ares Publishers, 1996.

Dickie, M., *Magic and Magicians in the Graeco-Roman World*, London: Routledge, 2001.

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.

Faraone, C., D. Obbink (eds), *Magika Hiera: Ancient Greek Magic and Religion*; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991.

Fowden, Garth, *The Egyptian Hermes: A Historical Approach to the Late Pagan Mind*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986.

Flint, V., R. Gordon, G. Luck, D. Ogden (eds), *The Athlone History of Witchcraft and Magic in Europe Volume 2: Witchcraft and Magic in Europe: Ancient Greece and Rome*, London: Athlone Press, 1999.

Graf, F., *Magic in the Ancient World*, Cambridge Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1997.

Hordern, J.H., 'Love Magic and Purification in Sophron PS1214a, and Theocritus' *Pharmakeutria*', *The Classical Quarterly* 52.1 (2002), 164-173: **Available on JSTOR**.

Jacq, C., *Egyptian Magic*, Warminster: Aris and Philips, 1985

Janowitz, Naomi, *Icons of Power: Ritual Practices in Late Antiquity*, University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University, 2002.

Johnston, Sarah Iles, *Ancient Greek Divination*, Oxford: Wiley Blackwell, 2008.

Johnston, Sarah Iles and Peter Struck, *Mantike: Studies in Ancient Divination*, Leiden: Brill, 2005.

Kajava, Mika (ed.), *Studies in Ancient Oracles and Divination*, Roma: Institutum romanum Finlandiae 2013.

Kee, H.C. *Medicine, Miracle and Magic in New Testament Times*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986.

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