

**MA CAA HISTORY OF ASTROLOGY
WINTER-SPRING 2020**

Activities for Student Presentations and Discussion

Week 1: Sky Observation

4:00 pm Wednesday 5 February 2020

For everyone to contribute:

Please observe the sky on one clear night before your first class on Wednesday evening. You might see a rising evening planet, a particular moon phase, a planet in a constellation, a constellation itself, and so on. Just observe. Make no judgments. What do you see? Write it down exactly. Avoid bringing in any phenomenology or astrology. This is an exercise in looking, in the way of the Babylonian sky watchers. If the skies are overcast, please observe the sky during the day. We will discuss what you see in class.

Week 2: Time-Keeping

4:00 pm Wednesday 12 February 2020

We need 2 presenters for this session.

Bring along a time-keeping object that has historical value to you. It may be an astrological instrument or a book or a stopwatch that belonged to a grandparent. What do you know about it? How do you know that information? How might you use it in a history paper?

NOTES: Each presentation should be no more than 5-7 minute presentations in length. If using a PPT, please limit this to no more than 3 slides. You can also bring along the object itself to show and discuss.

The floor will then be open for discussion.

Week 3: Astrolabes

4:00 pm Wednesday 19 February 2020

We need 1 presenter for this session.

One person will compare and contrast The Chaucer Astrolabe:

The Chaucer Astrolabe:

https://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=54862&partId=1

with

The Hebrew Astrolabe:

https://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=54859&partId=1&museumno=1893,0616.3&page=1

The floor will then be open for discussion.

NOTES: The presentation should be no more than 10 minutes in length. If using a PPT, please limit this to no more than 5 slides.

Week 4: Images of Creation

4:00 pm Wednesday 26 February 2020

We need 2 presenters for this session.

One person will compare and contrast the first image from the medieval world:

God, the Divine Architect. Illumination from Bible moralisée, c. 1250. Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Codex Vindobonensis 2554

<http://www.luminarium.org/encyclopedia/divinearchitect.htm>

The other person will compare and contrast the second image from the medieval world:

The Creation of the World. Giusto de' Menabuoi, c.1376.

Baptistery of the Duomo, Padua, Italy.

https://www.wga.hu/html_m/g/giusto/padua/1dome4.html

NOTES: Each presentation should be no more than 5-7 minute presentations in length. If using a PPT, please limit this to no more than 3 slides.

The floor will then be open for discussion.

Week 5: Shakespeare and Astrology

4:00 pm Wednesday 4 March 2020

We need 2 presenters for this session.

One person will consider Shakespeare's use of astrology in the following and what this says about how audiences understood astrology in the early modern world:

A: **Shakespeare's Sonnet 98** and *All's Well That Ends Well*, 1.1 lines 177-212.

The other person will consider Shakespeare's use of astrology in the following and what this says about how audiences understood astrology in the early modern world:

B: *Troilus and Cressida*, 1.3 lines 85-110 and *The Tragedy of King Lear*, 1.2 lines 96-118.

NOTES: Each presentation should be no more than 5-7 minute presentations in length. If using a PPT, please limit this to no more than 3 slides.

The floor will then be open for discussion.

Week 6: Critical Review

4:00 pm Wednesday 18 March 2020

We need 2 presenters for this session.

Read and discuss the following paper found in your reading matter for this week's seminar:

Geertz, Hildred, 'An Anthropology of Religion and Magic, I', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, Vol. 6 no 1 (Summer 1975) pp. 71-89.

Points for everyone to think about before reading the paper:

Who was Hildred Geertz?

When was this paper published?

Who is the paper aimed at?

What is the purpose of the paper?

Questions for the first presenter:

Pages 76-77: What are Geertz's criticisms of Thomas's distinctions between religion and magic?

Pages 77-79: What are Geertz's criticisms of Malinowski's approach to religion and magic?

Questions for the second presenter:

Page 83-85: Geertz introduces the terms 'ontology' and 'plausibility.' What does she mean by these terms and how does she apply this to her understanding of Elizabethan practitioners?

Page 87-89: How does Geertz conclude her paper and what does she think this says about the 'Thing Itself'??

NOTES: 5-7 minute presentations in length. If using a PPT, please limit this to no more than 3 slides.

The floor will then be open for discussion.

Week 7: Ptolemy vs Alan Leo

4:00 pm Wednesday 25 March 2020

We need 2 presenters for this session.

One person will present the following:

Who was Ptolemy?

When was *Tetrabiblos* published?

Who is *Tetrabiblos* aimed at and why?

Who was Alan Leo?

When was this *How to Judge a Nativity* published?

Who is *How to Judge a Nativity* aimed at and why?

The other person will present the following:

Discuss two sections (**see over**) - one from Alan Leo and the other from Ptolemy. Consider the ways in which the astrology is presented. In what ways are the two passages similar? In what ways are they different?

Ptolemy – See over and in the online library

Ptolemy. 1940. *Tetrabiblos*. Translated by Frank Egleston Robbins. Vol. 435, Loeb Classical Library. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press.

Alan Leo – See over

Leo, Alan. *How to Judge a Nativity: Part 1. The Reading of the Horoscope*, 'Astrology for All' Series: Vol 3. London: L.N. Fowler, 1908, pp.28-30.

PTOLEMY

Ὁ δὲ τοῦ Διὸς μόνος τὴν κυρίαν λαχὼν καθ' ὅλον μὲν αὐξήσεώς ἐστι ποιητικός, ἰδίως δὲ περὶ μὲν ἀνθρώπους γενομένου τοῦ ἀποτελέσματος δόξας ἀποτελεῖ καὶ εὐτηρίας¹ καὶ εὐθηνίας καὶ καταστάσεις εἰρημικὰς² καὶ τῶν ἐπιτηδείων αὐξήσεις, εὐεξίας τε σωματικὰς καὶ ψυχικὰς· ἔτι δὲ εὐεργεσίας τε καὶ δωρεὰς ἀπὸ τῶν βασιλευνόντων, αὐτῶν τε ἐκείνων αὐξήσεις καὶ μεγαλειότηρας καὶ μεγαλοφυχίας. καθ' ὅλον τε εὐδαιμονίας ἐστὶν αἴτιος. περὶ δὲ τὰ ἄλογα ζῶα τῶν μὲν εἰς χρήσιν ἀνθρωπίνην δαψίλειαν καὶ πολυπληθίαν ποιεῖ, τῶν δὲ εἰς τὸ ἐναντίον φθορὰν τε καὶ ἀπώλειαν. εὐκρατον δὲ τὴν τῶν ἀέρων κατάστασιν καὶ ὑγιεινὴν καὶ πνευματώδη καὶ ὑγρὰν καὶ θρεπτικὴν τῶν ἐπιγείων ἀπεργάζεται, στόλων τε εὐπλοίας καὶ ποταμῶν συμμέτρους ἀναβάσεις καὶ τῶν καρπῶν δαψίλειαν καὶ ὅσα τοῖς παραπλήσια.

Ὁ δὲ τοῦ Ἄρεως μόνος τὴν οἰκοδεσποτίαν λαβὼν καθ' ὅλον μὲν τῆς κατὰ ἔφηρας φθορᾶς ἐστὶν αἴτιος, ἰδίως δὲ περὶ μὲν ἀνθρώπους γενομένου τοῦ συμπτώματος πολέμους ἐμποιεῖ καὶ στάσεις ἐμφυλίου καὶ αἰχμαλωσίας καὶ ἀνδραποδισμοὺς καὶ ἐπαναστάσεις³ καὶ χόλους ἡγεμόνων τοὺς τε διὰ τῶν τοιούτων θανάτους αἰφνιδίους, ἔτι δὲ νόσους πυρετικὰς καὶ τριταϊκὰς ἐπισημασίας καὶ αἱμάτων ἀναγωγὰς καὶ ὀξείας βιωθανασίας⁴ μάλιστα τῶν ἀκμαίων ὁμοίως δὲ βίας τε καὶ

TETRABIBLOS II

When Jupiter¹ rules alone he produces increase in general, and, in particular, when the prediction is concerned with men, he makes fame and prosperity, abundance, peaceful existence, the increase of the necessities of life, bodily and spiritual health, and, furthermore, benefits and gifts from rulers, and the increase, greatness, and magnanimity of these latter; and in general he is the cause of happiness. With reference to dumb animals he causes a multitude and abundance of those that are useful to men and the diminution and destruction of the opposite kind. He makes the condition of the air temperate and healthful, windy, moist, and favourable to the growth of what the earth bears; he brings about the fortunate sailing of fleets, the moderate rise of rivers, abundance of crops, and everything similar.

Mars, when he assumes the rulership alone, is in general the cause of destruction through dryness and in particular, when the event concerns men, brings about wars, civil faction, capture, enslavement, uprisings, the wrath of leaders, and sudden deaths arising from such causes; moreover, fevers, tertian agues, raising of blood, swift and violent deaths, especially in the prime of life; similarly, violence,

PTOLEMY

ὑβρεις καὶ παρανομίας ἐμπρήσεις τε καὶ ἀνδροφονίας καὶ ἀρπαγὰς καὶ ληστείας· περὶ δὲ τὴν τοῦ ἀέρος κατάστασιν
86 καύσωνας καὶ πνεύματα θερμὰ λοιμικὰ καὶ συντηκτικὰ κεραννῶν τε ἀφέσεις καὶ πρηστῆριον καὶ ἀνομβρίας· περὶ δὲ θάλατταν¹ στόλων μὲν αἰφνίδια νανάγια διὰ πνευμάτων ἀτάκτων ἢ κεραννῶν ἢ τῶν τοιούτων, ποταμῶν δὲ λευηνδρίας καὶ ἀναξηράνσεις πηγῶν καὶ φθορὰν τῶν ποτίμων² ὑδάτων· περὶ δὲ τὰ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς³ ἐπιτήδεια πρὸς χρήσιν ἀνθρωπίνην τῶν τε ἀλόγων ζώων καὶ τῶν ἐκ τῆς γῆς φνομένων σπάνιν καὶ φθορὰν καρπῶν τὴν γενομένην ἥτοι ἐκ τῶν τοῦ καύματος καταφλέξεων ἢ βροῦχον ἢ τῆς τῶν πνευμάτων ἐκτινάξεως⁴ ἢ ἐκ τῆς ἐν ταῖς ἀποθέσει συγκαύσεως.

Ὁ δὲ τῆς Ἥφροδιτης μόνος κύριος γενόμενος τοῦ συμβαίνοντος καθ' ὅλον μὲν τὰ παραπλήσια τῷ τοῦ Διὸς μετὰ τινος ἐπαφροδισίας ἀποτελεῖ, ἰδίως δὲ περὶ μὲν ἀνθρώπους δόξας καὶ τιμὰς καὶ εὐφροσύνας καὶ εὐτηρίας εὐγαμίας τε καὶ πολυτεκνίας καὶ εὐαιρεστῆσεις πρὸς πᾶσαν συναρμογὴν καὶ τῶν κτήσεων συναυξήσεις καὶ διαίτας καθαρίας καὶ ἐυαγωγούς καὶ πρὸς τὰ σεβάσματα τιμητικὰς· ἔτι δὲ σωματικὰς εὐεξίας καὶ πρὸς τοὺς ἡγεμονεύοντας συνοικειώσεις καὶ τῶν ἀρχόντων ἐπαφροδισίας⁵· περὶ δὲ τὰ τοῦ ἀέρος πνεύματα⁶ εὐκρασίας⁷ καὶ δούργων καὶ θρεπτικωτάτων καταστάσεις εὐαιρίας

TETRABIBLOS II

assaults, lawlessness, arson and murder, robbery and piracy. With regard to the condition of the air he causes hot weather, warm, pestilential, and withering winds, the loosing of lightning and hurricanes, and drought. Again, at sea he causes sudden shipwreck of fleets through changeable winds or lightning or the like; the failure of the water of rivers, the drying up of springs, and the tainting of potable waters. With reference to the necessities produced upon the earth for human use, he causes a scarcity and loss of dumb animals and of things which grow from the earth, and the loss of crops by drying as the result of hot weather, or by locusts, or by the beating of the winds, or by burning in places of storage.

Venus, when she becomes sole ruler of the event, in general brings about results similar to those of Jupiter, but with the addition of a certain agreeable quality; in particular, where men are concerned, she causes fame, honour, happiness, abundance, happy marriage, many children, satisfaction in every mutual relationship, the increase of property, a neat and well conducted manner of life, paying honour to those things which are to be revered; further, she is the cause of bodily health, alliances with the leaders, and elegance of rulers; as to the winds of the air, of temperateness and settled conditions of moist and

Alan Leo

Leo, Alan. *How to Judge a Nativity: Part 1. The Reading of the Horoscope*, 'Astrology for All' Series: Vol 3. London: L.N. Fowler, 1908, pp.28-30.

Mars is the planet of focused force, and out-going impulse. Physical heat and motion are more under the direct influence of Mars than any other planet. He governs the sense of taste in its widest application. All the animal propensities, sensations, passions, desires and appetites come under the vibration of Mars. Long and careful study and a considerable amount of firsthand experience which has been tabulated for many years has convinced the author that Mars is the ruler over the animal nature in man; and the task set for humanity is not only that of subjecting, ruling and controlling the animal nature, but also its transmutation into a higher force than that which ministers to the animal soul...

Psychologically, the influence of the planet Mars is greater and more potent through the psychic nature, acting more directly upon the sensational and emotional nature. When acting physically the Solar influence also is necessary to give vitality and full life to the whole system, but psychically the force of Mars acts directly without the aid of the solar rays. It will be seen from the foregoing how Mars will become an evil influence in any nativity where the animal side is uncontrolled. Misfortune and disaster, accident and fever, will be the result of over-excitement, impulse, rashness and over-indulgence in sensation. In fact, to control the animal passions and appetites is to control and guide the vibrations coming from the planet Mars. Force will have its outlet in some form or other, and a man may use his forces and energy, either to slay his fellows, or to save them, to become a swashbuckler, or a hero; or he may use it as energy socially and mentally.

Week 8: One Primary Source you are using in your essay

4:00 pm Wednesday 1 April 2020

For everyone to contribute:

Please be prepared to discuss a primary source that you will be using in your second essay.
