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Elias Ashmole

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Elias Ashmole 1617-1682

- Favourite of King Charles II of England, Ireland and Scotland
- Unofficial 'Royal' astrologer
- Practising alchemist
- Founder of Ashmolean Museum in Oxford



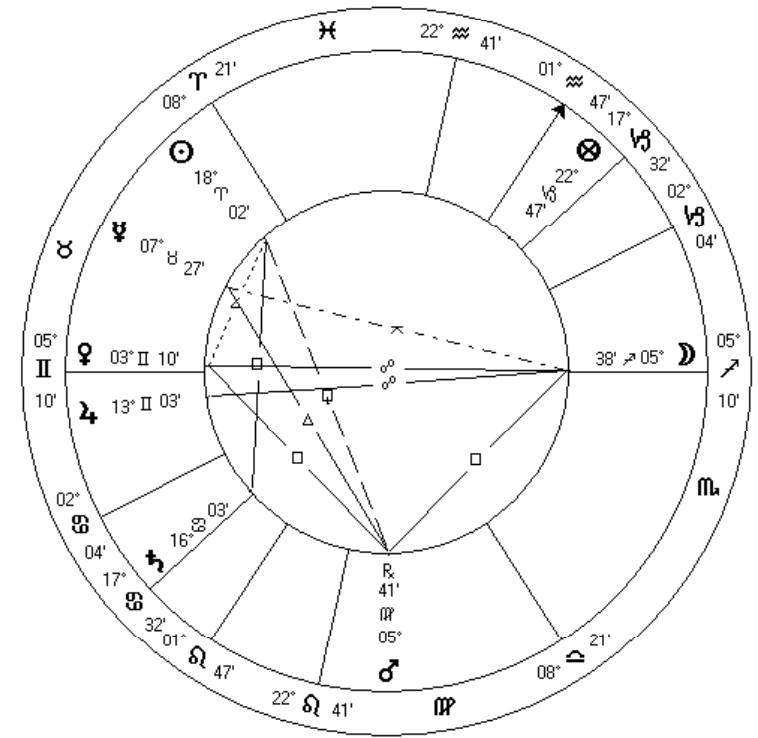


Elias Ashmole

making a sigil [talisman] of Jupiter and Venus 1

- 'I began to cast the 5 Gemini ascending/ but the metal spluttered and burnt my fingers and the sigil came not/ Mars behold[s] the ascendant with square/ Those cast about 6H.45' were for a continued health and favour with great and good men and women/'
- Josten, C.H. (ed.), *Elias Ashmole (1617 – 1692), His Autobiographical and Historical Notes, his Correspondence, and other Contemporary Sources relating to his Life and Work*, 5 Vols, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1966, Vol. 4, p. 1679.

Ashmole-Alchemy-6.45
Natal Chart (16)
7 Apr 1681 NS
07:11:40 LMT +0:00:40
London, Eng
51°N30' 000°W10'
Geocentric
Tropical
Regiomontanus
True Node





Using Textual Sources

- Ashmole's Account
- the metal spluttered and burnt my fingers and the sigil came not/ Mars behold[s] the ascendant with square
- [square – planets 'separated by fourth part of circle' Lilly, *Christian Astrology* p. 105.]
- Ascendant –so-called because 'even the sun commeth to the cusp of this (first) house, he ascends...and is visible on our horizon Lilly, *Christian Astrology* p. 51.]
- Textual Sources
- Mars – 'He is in nature hot and dry' Lilly, *Christian Astrology* p. 66
- Square – 'quartile (is) disharmonious because (it is) composed of signs of opposite kinds'.
- Ptolemy *Tetrabiblos*, I.13



Using Textual Sources

- Ashmole's Reading
- Those cast about 6H.45' were for a continued health and favour with great and good men and women'
- Horoscope Data
- Setting chart for 7.11 (which corresponds to 5 Gemini ascendant, Venus and Jupiter were rising.
- Textual Sources
- Jupiter 'is Magnanimous, Faithfull, Bashfull, Aspiring in an honourable way at high matters' (*Christian Astrology* p. 62).
- Venus is 'a Feminine Planet, not given to Law, Quarrel or Wrangling...a Company-keeper, Cheerful...a right vertuous Man or Woman'.
- (*Christian Astrology* pp. 73-4).



The Babylonian Nativity Omens

surviving from c.475 BCE

- the child born under Jupiter will have a 'regular (life)...will become rich (and) will grow old.
- the child born 'when Venus has come forth', will be have a life which is 'exceptionally calm (and) favourable' and marked by longevity.
- the child born with Mars may have a hot temper
- the child born when Saturn has come forth will live a life which is 'dark, obscure, sick and constrained'.

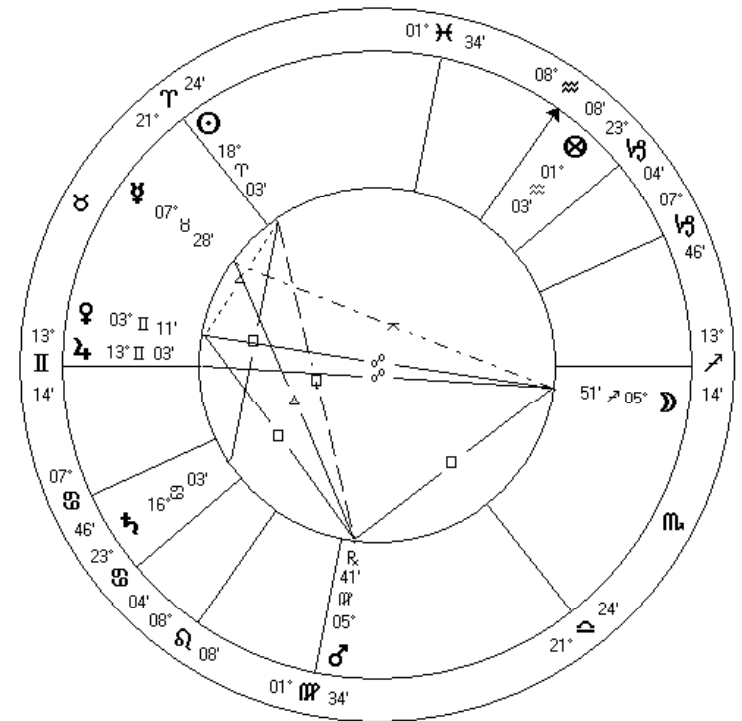


Elias Ashmole

making a sigil of Jupiter and Venus 2

- Those cast about 7: were to strengthen and enlarge memory, fancy and tongue, and wit/to assist and encourage a search into mysteries and learning.
- Josten, C.H. (ed.), *Elias Ashmole (1617 – 1692), His Autobiographical and Historical Notes, his Correspondence, and other Contemporary Sources relating to his Life and Work*, 5 Vols, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1966, Vol. 4, p. 1679.

Ashmole-Alchemy-0700
Natal Chart (13)
7 Apr 1681 NS
07:37:40 LMT +0:00:40
London, Eng
51°N30' 000°W10'
Geocentric
Tropical
Regiomontanus
True Node





Conclusions

- Ashmole's astrological statements can be sourced to astrological texts. He was working within a high literary tradition.
- The literary tradition he was sourcing can be traced to the Hellenistic world, and before then to Babylon
- Until the latter part of the 17th century Hellenistic cosmology was flourishing at the highest level of English society



Ashmole advises the king



- In 1672 Charles attempted to extend religious toleration via the Declaration of Indulgence, which his enemies thought was intended to assist the succession of his heir, the Catholic Duke of York, the future James II.
- Parliament responded with the Test Act, requiring all holders of public office to take the sacrament of the Church of England - which a Catholic like the Duke of York could never do.
- In the midst of this crisis Lord Clifford, the Lord High Treasurer, asked Ashmole (at 8.15 pm precisely on 15 January 1673, Ashmole noted) whether Parliament was likely to cut Charles' revenue as revenge for the Declaration.
- At the end of October the king himself consulted Ashmole on the crisis.
- Ashmole in turn consulted Lilly for a second opinion. The two astrologers compared the horoscopes for the times at which Clifford put their questions, with the king's birth chart and solar revolution (the exact minute at which the sun returned to its place at his birth) and suggested auspicious times for the king to act.



- On 23 October Lilly wrote to Ashmole concerning the king's proposed speech to Parliament four days later:
- **The Caball of Presbitery begins I see early; its now in Yorks power to ingratiate himself forever, but what God hath decreed must stand – The Tayle of the Comet in 1664 begins, so Saturn in Aries. And the last comet of 167 – *Cunctando restituet Rem* – so now, Carolus, *Cunctando* may effect *idem*. – Moon next promiseth well – provided Moon ad conjunction of Jupiter at 2H P.M. that aspect bee not elapsed before his Majesty make his speech.**
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- Lilly had his dates wrong. The auspicious conjunction between the Moon and benevolent Jupiter was at 2 pm on 28 October. Charles gave his speech at 1.50 am on the 27th, as planned, with the Moon approaching a decidedly more risky conjunction with Mars. Charles asserted himself and promptly prorogued Parliament, avoiding any more trouble.
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- Josten, C.H. (ed.), *Elias Ashmole (1617 – 1692), His Autobiographical and Historical Notes, his Correspondence, and other Contemporary Sources relating to his Life and Work*, 5 Vols, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1966, Vol. 4, p. 1346.
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- This cosmology included
- The attribution of ‘agency’ to the planets – they are agents of change.
- An exact attention to the timing of particular events