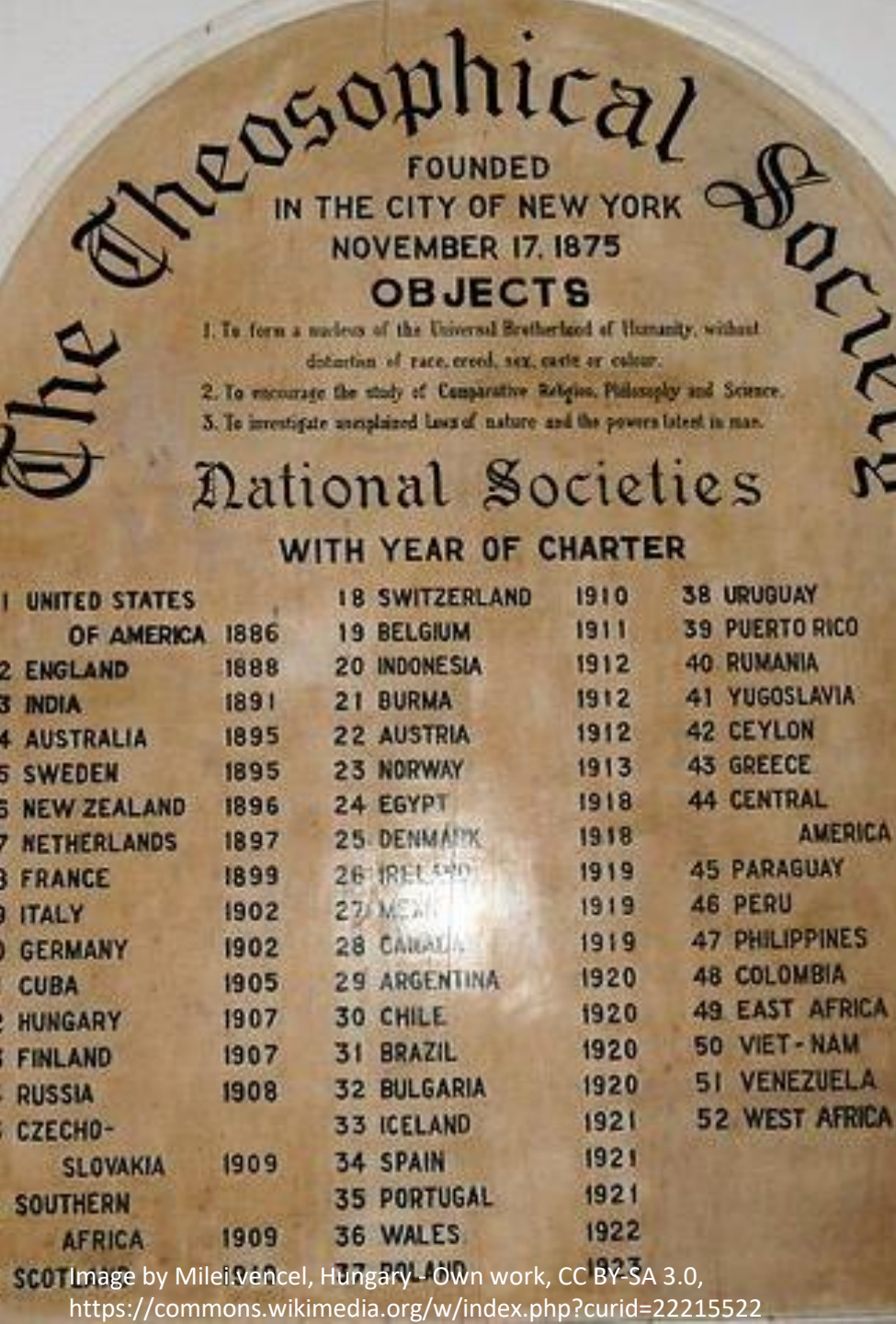


Theosophical Influence on Psychological Astrology

DR.FRANCES CLYNES



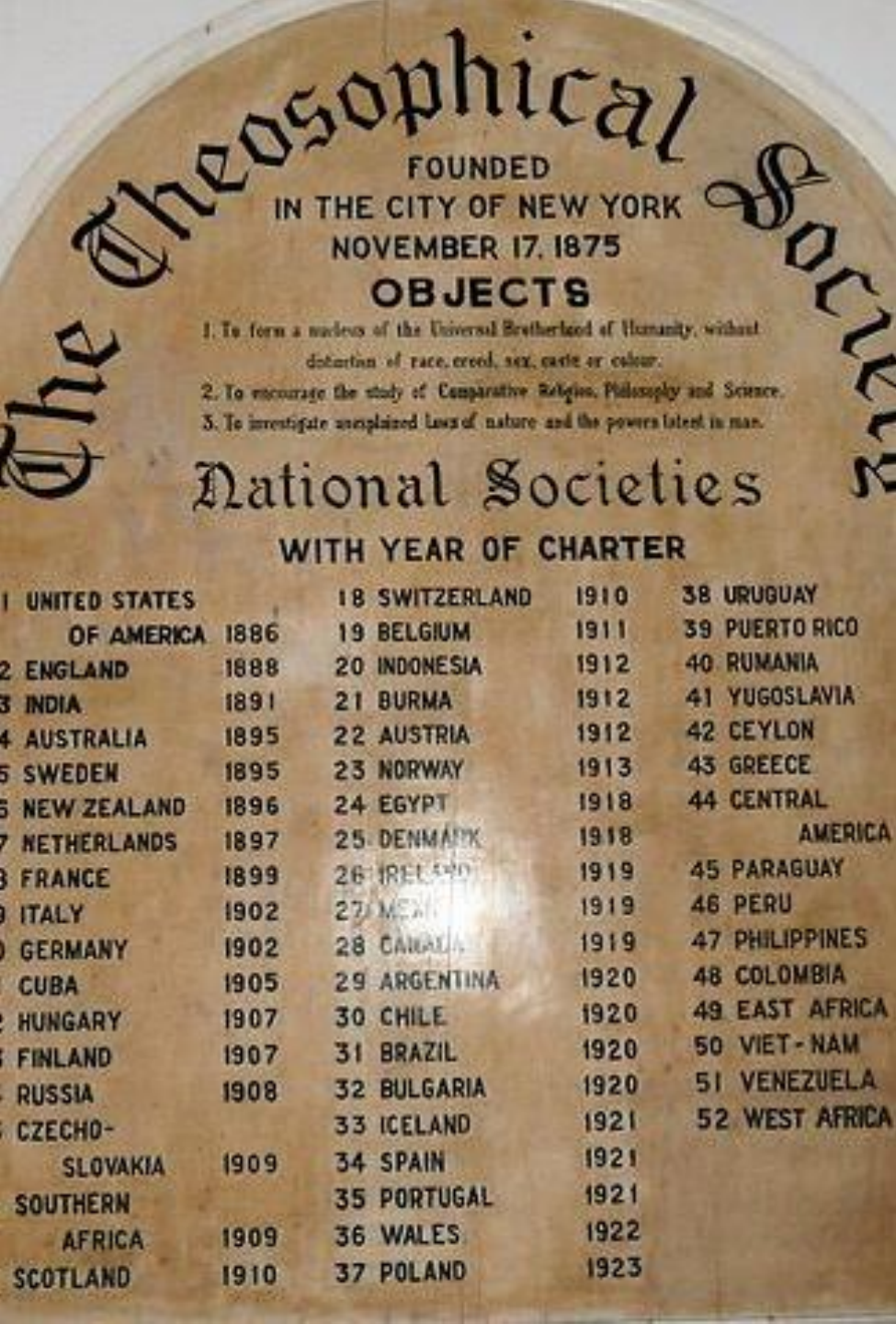


Theosophical Society

Founded on 17th November 1875 in New York by Helena Petrovna Blavatsky and Ron Olcott

Movement spread throughout the world

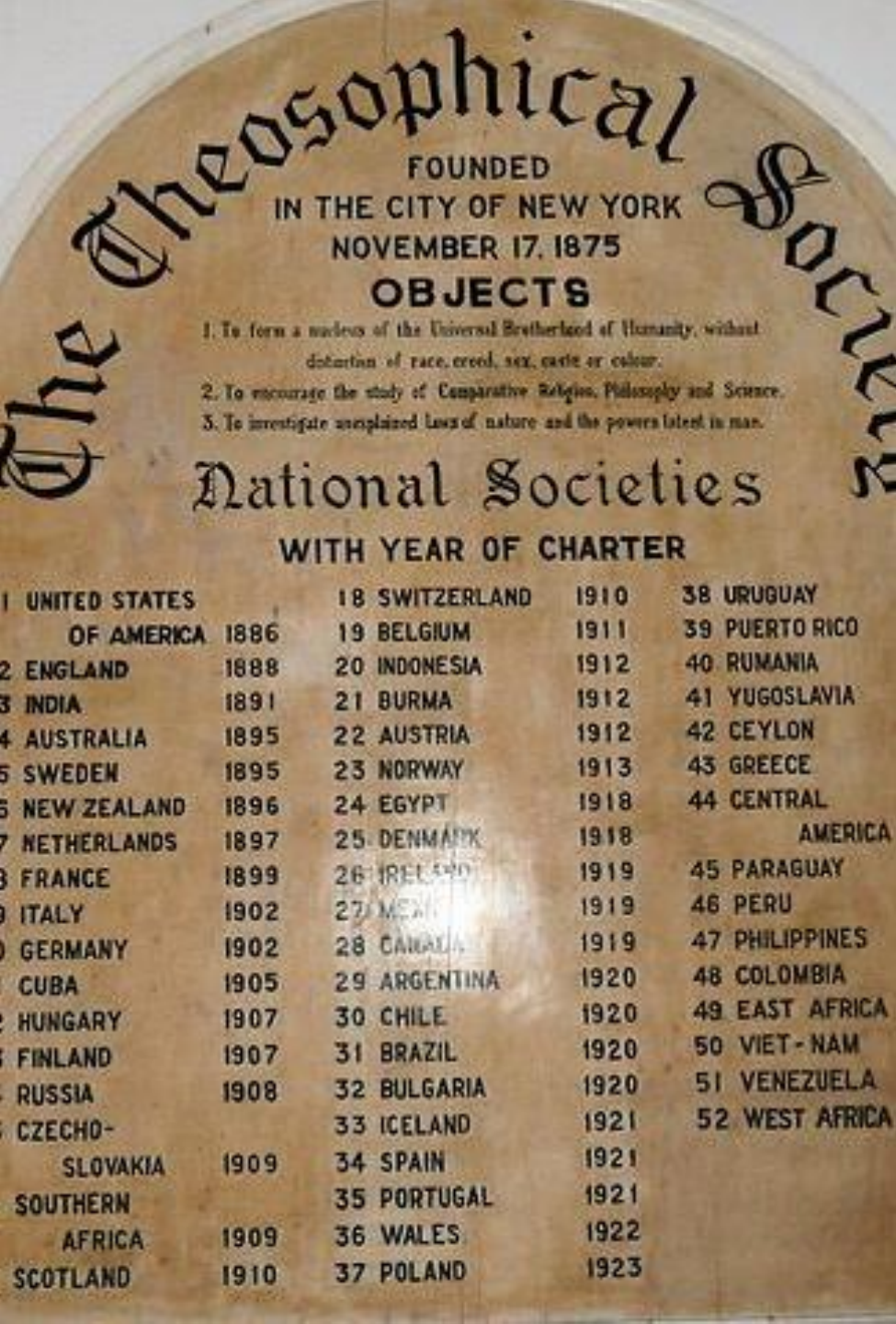
- 'The Theosophical Society, and its prime proponent, Helena Blavatsky, represents one of the few pivotal moments in religious history alongside the moments of impact caused by Emperor Constantine, Martin Luther, and the critical voices of the Enlightenment'
- Hammer and Rothstein, *Handbook of the Theosophical Current*, p. 1
- 'One of the defining cultural movements of the late nineteenth century'
- Campion, *A History of Western Astrology Volume II*, p. 229



Theosophical Society

‘It still exists but as a shell of its former self. Yet the society’s revolutionary impact is central to any real understanding of the fin de siècle, the gestation of Modernism, the ideology of the counter-culture of the 1960s and the late-twentieth-century flowering of New Age and alternative spiritualities.’

Campion, *A History of Western Astrology Volume II*, p. 229



Theosophical Society

Eastern and Western Theosophy

Eastern

- Hindu and Buddhist teachings
- Blavatsky and Olcott
- Alan Leo

Western

- Rudolf Steiner
 - Split in 1912/13 and formed the Anthroposophical Society
 - European esoteric traditions
 - Care and nurturing of the soul



Helena Petrovna Blavatsky (1831-1891)

‘Blavatsky set herself two goals. The first was to recover what she considered to be the lost wisdom of a once-universal human civilisation by bringing together its surviving fragments from Indian, Platonic, Hermetic and Kabbalistic thought. The second was to form a body of people who, by studying and practising ancient wisdom, could prepare the world for the imminent shift into a new historical era.’

◦ Campion (2012), p. 23



Aryan Theosophical Society, of which
with H. P. B.'s & W. W. W.'s good
London, October, 1888

Objectives

Form a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, gender, caste or colour, devoted to the pursuit of truth

To encourage the study of comparative religion, philosophy and science

To demonstrate that all religions have a single origin and contain the same core of truth

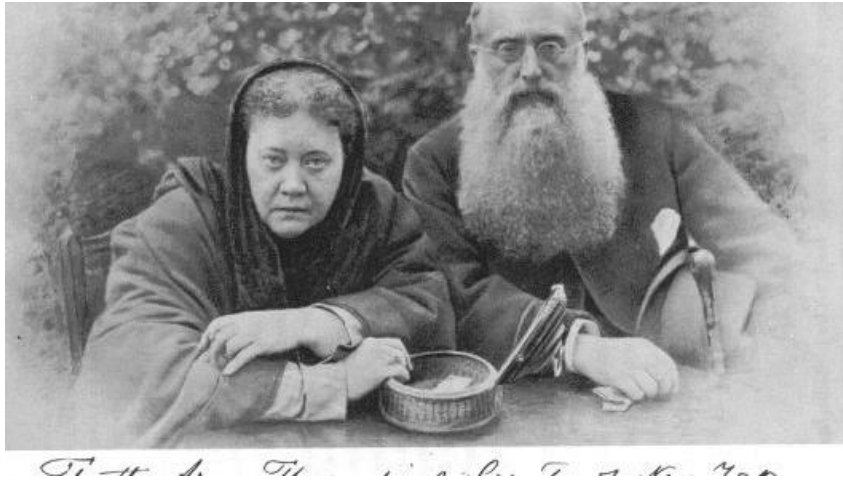
To investigate unexplained laws of nature and the powers latent in mankind

To move the world to its next great historical phase through personal spiritual enlightenment

- H. P. Blavatsky, *The Key to Theosophy*, (Theosophy Trust, 2007 [1888]), p. 30.

Objectives

To demonstrate that all religions have a single origin and contain the same core of truth



‘ENQ. In the days of Ammonius there were several ancient great religions, and numerous were the sects in Egypt and Palestine alone. How could he reconcile them?

THEO. By doing that which we again try to do now. The Neo-Platonists were a large body, and belonged to various religious philosophies; so do our Theosophists. In those days, the Jew Aristobulus affirmed that the ethics of Aristotle represented the *esoteric* teachings of the Law of Moses; Philo Judæus endeavoured to reconcile the *Pentateuch* with the Pythagorean and Platonic philosophy; and Josephus proved that the Essenes of Carmel were simply the copyists and followers of the Egyptian Therapeutæ (the healers). So it is in our day. We can show the line of descent of every Christian religion, as of every, even the smallest, sect. The latter are the minor twigs or shoots grown on the larger branches; but shoots and branches spring from the same trunk—the WISDOM-RELIGION. *To prove this was the aim of Ammonius, who endeavoured to induce Gentiles and Christians, Jews and Idolators, to lay aside their contentions and strifes, remembering only that they were all in possession of the same truth under various vestments, and were all the children of a common mother. This is the aim of Theosophy likewise.*

The Key to Theosophy, p. 4



Theosophy

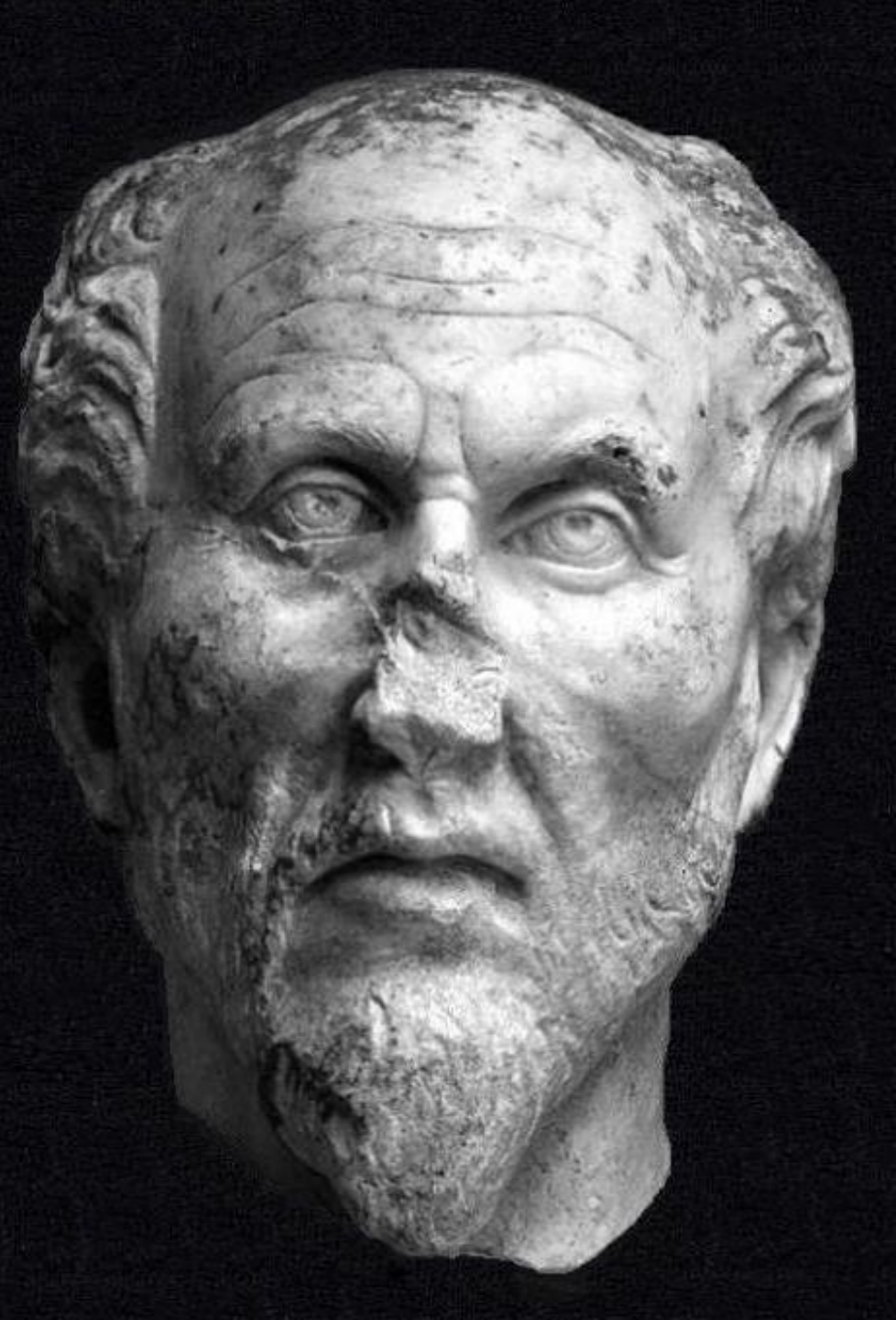
The Absolute is the One Infinite Eternal Divine Principle

The Logos is the expression of the Absolute which radiates from the Absolute to bring the world into being

At the heart of the spiritual universe is the Central Spiritual Sun

Every atom is a spark of the One, so everything in the universe contains life and consciousness

- H. P. Blavatsky, *Isis Unveiled Vol. 1*



Plotinus' Cosmology

The One or the Good

Transcendent and self-sufficient

The One is the cause of everything in the universe

- By an emanation of its essence
- Likens it to rays of light emanating from the Sun

◦ *Enneads* V.1

ΝΤΕΙΜΕΝΕ ΛΥΩΝΔΙΛΥΤΑΛΥΝΔΙ
ΝΟΥΜΥΣΤΗΡΙΟΝ ΛΥΩΝΤΟΥΝΟΥ
ΛΥΡΑΤΟΥΩΝΕ ΕΒΟΛΜΗΤΕΥ ΑΤΟΕΒΟΛ
ΛΥΩΔΕΙΩΛΗΕΥΕΥΒΡΑΛΘΗΠΗΕΛΤΕ
ΟΥΩΕΡΟΟΥΝΝΕΝΤΑΠΙΩΡΧΟΟΥΝΔΙ
ΙΕΤΕΧΡΕΛΛΜΗΝ

ΚΑΤΑ ΙΩΑΝΝΗΝ
ΑΠΟΚΡΥΦΟΝ

ΝΛΕΙΝΕΝΩΔΕΕΘΗΠΤΕΝΤΑΙΣΕΤΟΝ
ΧΟΟΥΛΥΩΛΥΩΛΥΩΝΟΙΔΙΔΥΜΟΣ
ΙΟΥΔΑΙΣΘΩΛΙΣΛΥΩΠΕΧΛΥΔΕΓΓΕ
ΤΑΔΕ ΕΘΕΡΜΗΝΕΙΛΝΝΕΕΙΩΛΧΕΥΝΑ
ΧΗΠΕΛΗΜΠΜΟΥΠΕΧΕΙΣΜΝΤΡΕΥ
ΛΟΝΔΙΠΕΤΩΙΝΕΕΥΩΙΝΕΩΛΝΤΕΥ
ΘΙΝΕΛΥΩΖΟΤΑΙΕΥΩΛΝΟΙΝΕΥΝΔ
ΩΤΡΤΡΛΥΩΕΥΩΛΝΩΤΟΡΤΡΥΝΑΡ
ΩΤΗΡΕΔΥΩΥΝΑΡ
ΡΡΟΕΧΜΠΠΗΥΠΕΧΕΙΣΧΕΕΥΩΔ
ΧΟΟΟΝΗΤΝΝΟΙΝΕΤΩΚΖΗΤΗΥΝ
ΧΕΕΙΣΖΗΤΕΕΤΜΝΤΕΡΟΖΗΤΕΕ
ΕΙΕΝΖΩΗΤΝΑΡΩΟΡΠΕΡΩΤΝΝΤΕ
ΤΠΕΕΥΩΛΝΧΟΟΟΝΗΤΝΧΕΕΖΗΘΑ
ΛΙΣΣΕΕΕΝΤΒΓΝΑΡΩΟΡΠΕΡΩΤΝ
ΛΛΗΤΜΝΤΕΡΟΟΜΠΕΤΝΖΟΥΝΛΥΩ
ΣΜΠΕΤΝΒΛΖΟΤΑΝΕΤΕΤΝΩΛΝ
ΟΥΩΝΤΗΥΝΤΟΤΕΣΕΝΑΟΥΩ

Gnosis

‘Through his body and his soul man is a part of the world and subjected to the *heimarmene*. Enclosed in the soul is the spirit, or “pneuma” (called also the “spark”), a portion of the divine substance from beyond which has fallen into the world; and the Archons created man for the express purpose of keeping it captive there.’

◦ Jonas, *The Gnostic Religion*, Loc. 1241



Theosophy

The universe begins as pure spirit

Spirit condenses into matter and the physical world appears

Eventually the process is reversed and all return to spirit

At time of writing, HPB believed that the return to spirit was imminent

- The world needed to prepare for this new age



Theosophy

‘The universe is essentially spiritual in character and the material world is essentially an illusion concealing spiritual reality. Evolution is cyclical and begins with the cosmos in a state of pure spirit. Spirit gradually condenses into matter and, as it does so, physical beings appear, including humanity. Eventually the process begins to reverse and physical begin to return to spirit until the entire cycle is complete. She believed the whole universe is currently at its most corrupt, crudely physical condition and that the beginning of the return to spirit was immanent. The whole relates to one passage through the zodiac, which is why her followers labelled the coming phase the Age of Aquarius’.

- Campion (2012), p. 231



Precession of the Equinox

- 'The history of the world since its formation to its end is written in the stars'
 - Blavatsky, *The Secret Doctrine*, Vol 1, p.438
- Vernal Equinox moving backwards through zodiac
- Each sign or age lasts 2,160 years and ushers in a new age
- Currently believed to be in Pisces
- Move backwards into Aquarius was immanent



Theosophy

Reincarnation

- A cycle of death and rebirth concerned with spiritual evolution
- Humans are spiritual beings descended into matter, to gain experience and evolve
 - 'The cause of reincarnation is ignorance of our senses, and the idea that there is any reality in the world, anything except abstract existence. From the organs of sense comes the "hallucination" we call contact; "from contact, desire; from desire, sensation (which also is a deception of our body); from sensation, the cleaving to existing bodies; from this cleaving, reproduction; and from reproduction, disease, decay, and death."
- *Isis Unveiled*, p. 150



Theosophy

Karma

- A law of nature under which every action produces a corresponding reaction
- Balances out over several lives
- Purpose is to teach and bring about spiritual development
- 'Thus, like the revolutions of a wheel, there is a regular succession of death and birth, the moral cause of which is the cleaving to existing objects, while the instrumental cause is karma (the power which controls the universe, prompting it to activity), merit and demerit.'

◦ *Isis Unveiled*, p. 150



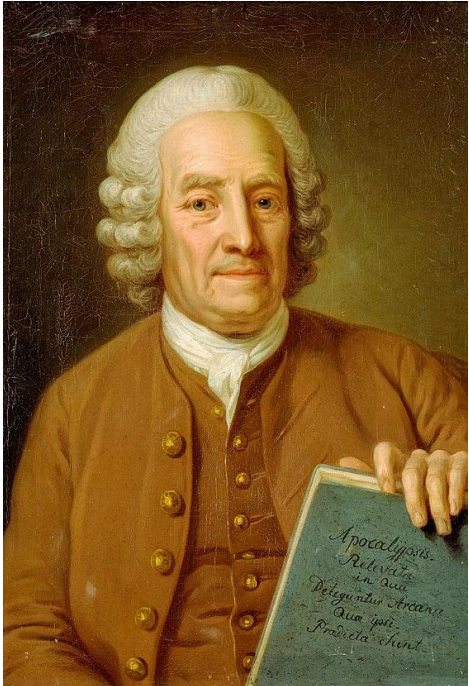
Emphasis on Self-Development

The world can only move to its next great historical phase if individuals become spiritually enlightened

People need to consciously work towards spiritual enlightenment

- 'It is our decided impression and conviction, that to become a genuine spiritual entity, which that designation implies, man must first create himself anew, so to speak--i.e., thoroughly eliminate from his mind and spirit, not only the dominating influence of selfishness and other impurity, but also the infection of superstition and prejudice.'
- Isis Unveiled, p. 20

New Age as Spiritual Enlightenment

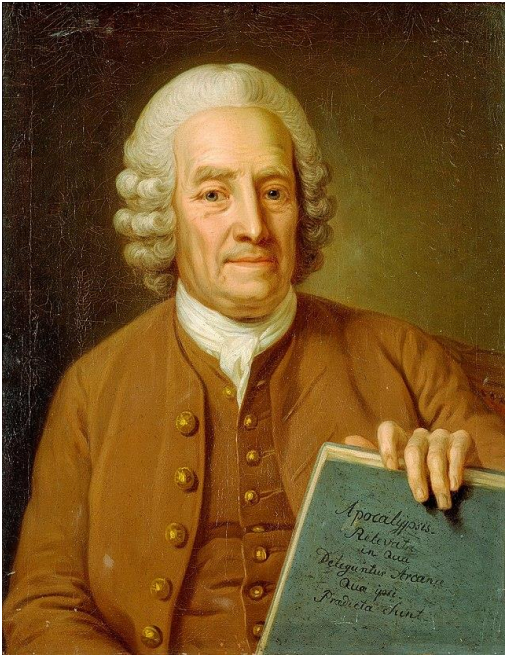


- Emmanuel Swedenborg (1688-1782)
 - Visions of heaven and hell
 - Sought to reform Christianity
 - Change on an inner level needed in order that society could change
 - Second coming of Christ had already occurred on a spiritual level
 - ‘Those who understood these words according to the sense of the letter have no other belief than that during that latest period, which is called the final judgment, all these things are to come to pass just as they are described in the literal sense ... that the whole visible universe will be destroyed, and afterwards a new heaven with a new earth will come into being... But those who so believe are ignorant of the arcana that lie hid in every particular of the Word. For in every particular of the Word there is an internal sense which treats of things spiritual and heavenly, not of things natural and worldly, such as are treated of in the sense of the letter.’
 - Swedenborg, *Heaven and Hell*, <https://sacred-texts.com/swd/hh/hh01.htm>

Influence of Swedenborg

‘Whenever the visions of Swedenborg, the greatest among the modern seers, run astray from philosophy and scientific truth, it is when they most run parallel with theology.’

- Blavatsky, *Isis Unveiled*, p. 302





Theosophy and New Age

‘From the moment of its foundation in 1875 the Theosophical Society fulfilled this purpose, having a clear mission to prepare for the coming of the New Age through organised activity, primarily spiritual activity and education.’

- Champion (2012), p. 32

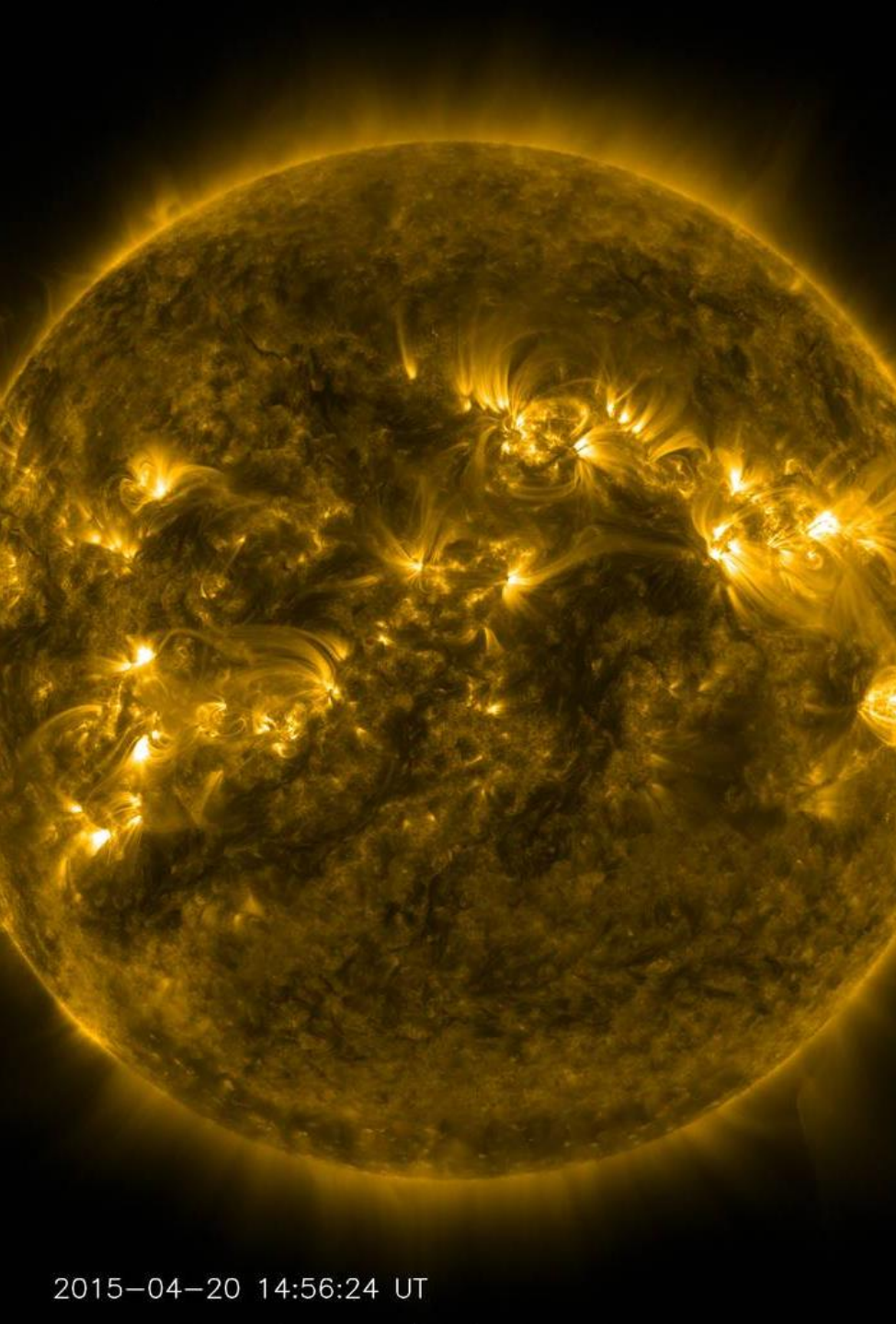


Theosophy and Astrology

An astrology based on spiritual development rather than prediction

- 'Astrology is a science *as infallible* as astronomy itself, with the condition, however, that its interpreters must be equally infallible ... that has always proved a stumbling-block ... In astrology and psychology one has to step beyond the visible world of matter, and enter into the domain of transcendent spirit.'

◦ *Isis Unveiled Vol. 1*, p.259



Central Spiritual Sun

The Sun in the chart represents the Central Spiritual Sun of theosophy

The Sun's position in the chart was paramount

It is the Solar Logos or divine reason

‘There is but One Life within the Universe – the Supreme Life of God, streaming through the Sun’

◦ Alan Leo (1904), p. xix

The more developed the individual, the more the Sun dominated the chart



Theosophical Beliefs

Age of Aquarius

Karma and Reincarnation

- 2004 – A high level of belief in karma and reincarnation among astrologers

Self-Awareness and Spiritual Growth

- 2004 – Majority of astrologers view astrology as a tool for self-development and growth
- Nicholas Campion (2004)



Mark Jones, Website
<https://www.plutoschool.com/about/evolutionary-astrology>

Evolutionary Astrology

‘From an analysis of this nature the very core desires of the individual can be approached immediately within a chart reading, allowing for an intense understanding of the premises of an individual life. With the understanding of the prior life circumstances and causes of the present life, a new perspective can be brought to traditional Astrological understanding that vastly increases its scope and efficacy. In this way, an individual examining their chart can gain a unique understanding of the unfolding self, in a way that bypasses 'cookbook' understanding of Astrology, in which a planet in a given sign always means the same thing. *Within this approach the aspect and position of every planet can be interpreted within the context of the ongoing evolution of the Soul from life to life.*’

Soul Centred Astrology

‘There is a new awakening which is expanding and transforming the minds and hearts of a great multitude of humanity. Those of you reading these words are part of this evolutionary current of our collective experiences.’

◦ *Soul Centred Astrology*, p. 3

‘The aspirations to Soul alignment – the endeavour to merge the personality life of external, material existence with the increasing inner experience of Soul perceptions and the Life Force – creates a very different life perspective.’

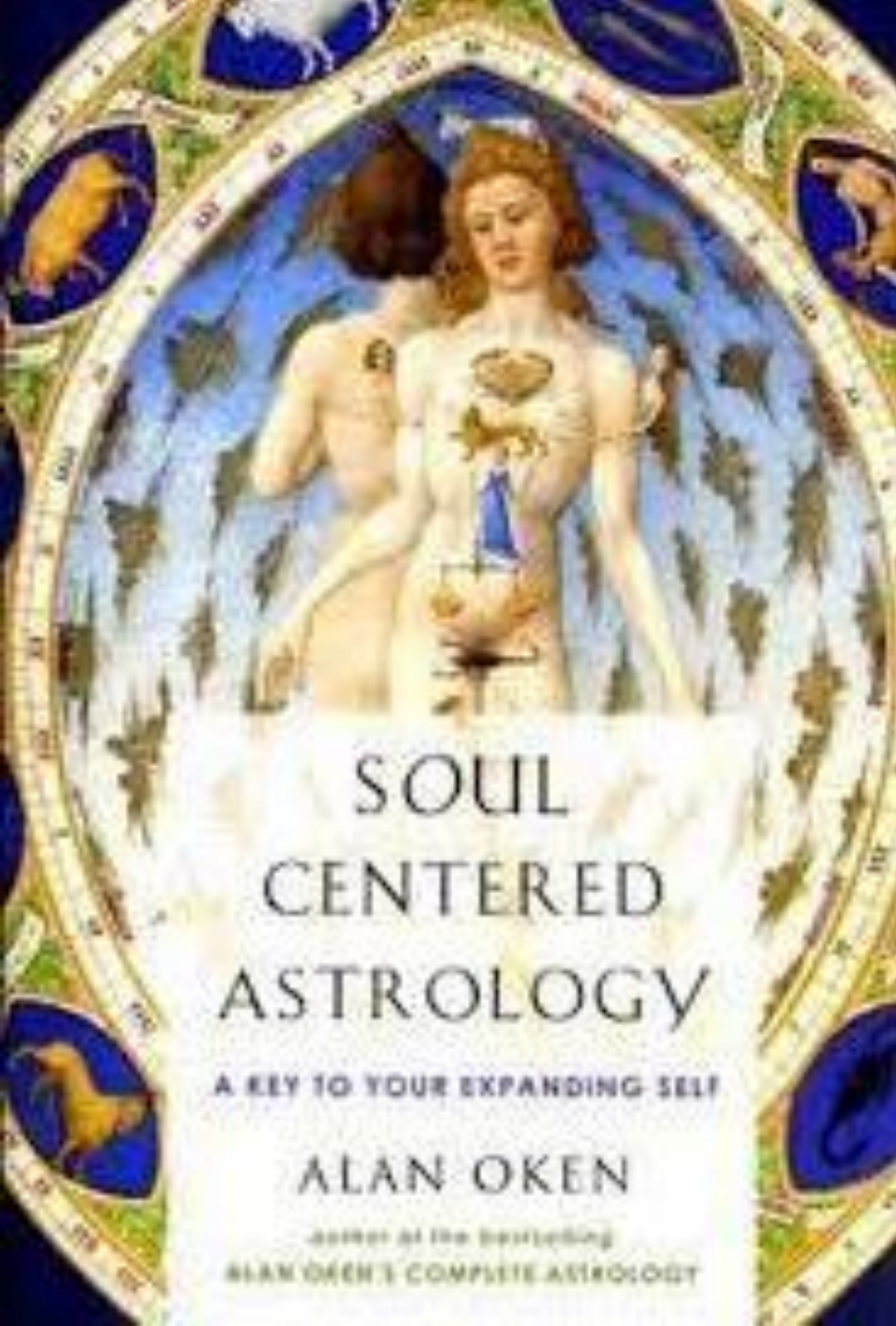
◦ *Soul Centred Astrology*, p. 4

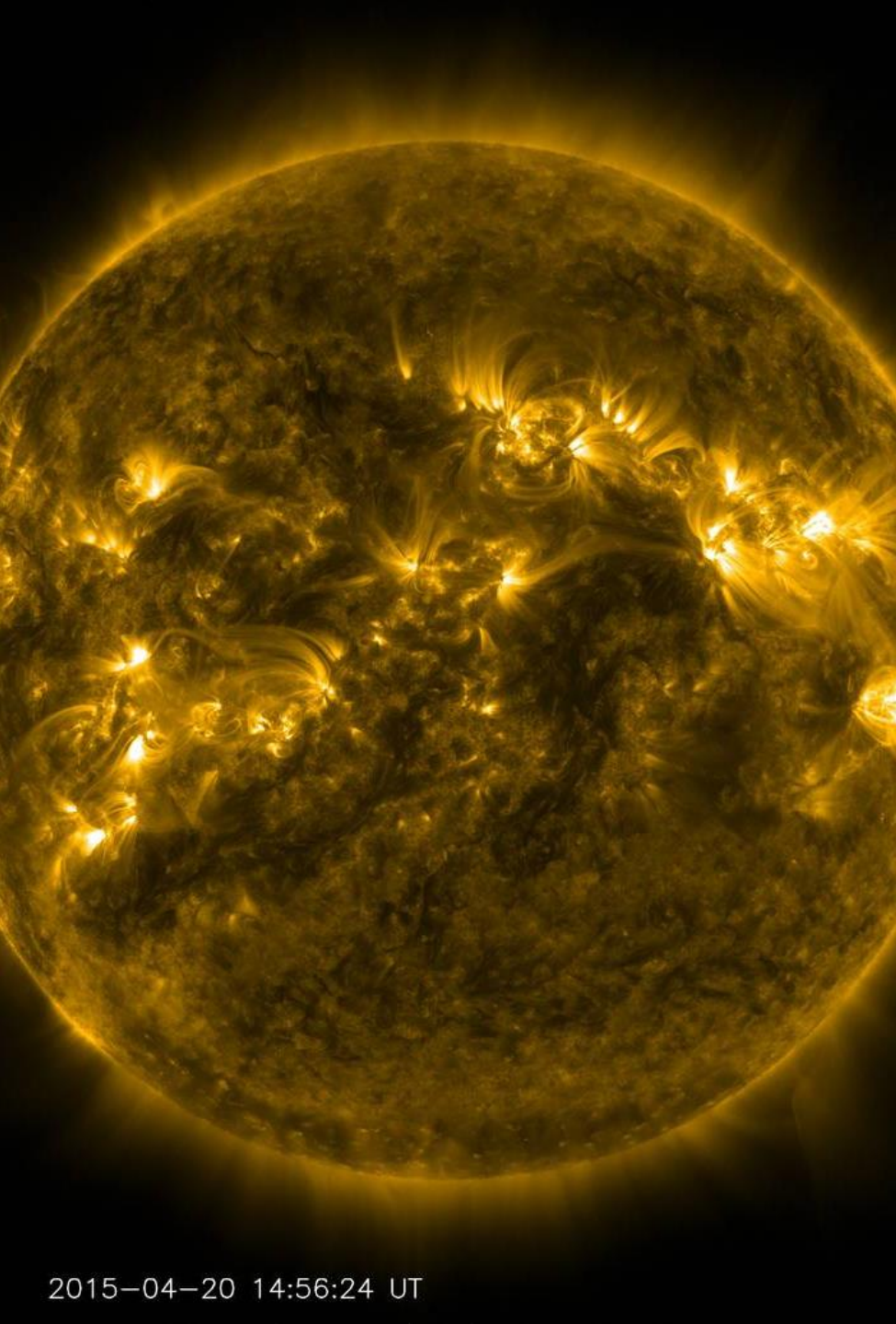
‘We are One Essential Whole, expressing Itself through a limitless number of forms and varieties. Astrology – especially esoteric astrology, and the Soul Force Itself – seeks to give a structure and force of this process of Self-realization.’

◦ *Soul Centred Astrology*, p. 5

‘The symbols of astrology give a structure to the rational mind so that a relationship between external events and their more subtle factors of causality may be perceived, predicted and appreciated. It can thus be a successful interpreter of human evolution and events, even as the quality of human consciousness, and the forms of those events, change. *Astrology is, after all, a system that seeks to interpret the nature of the Universal Life Force as It moves, shapes, and creates human life and all events. The planets, signs, and houses, in any case, are not the causal elements of manifestation. They are, rather, the reflections of a transcendental synchronicity manifesting through the rhythms and timing of a cosmic clock.*

◦ *Soul Centred Astrology*, p. 5





The Sun

‘The Sun, which is at the heart of the solar system and the single most important symbol within the birth chart...reflects the individual’s urge to become himself.’

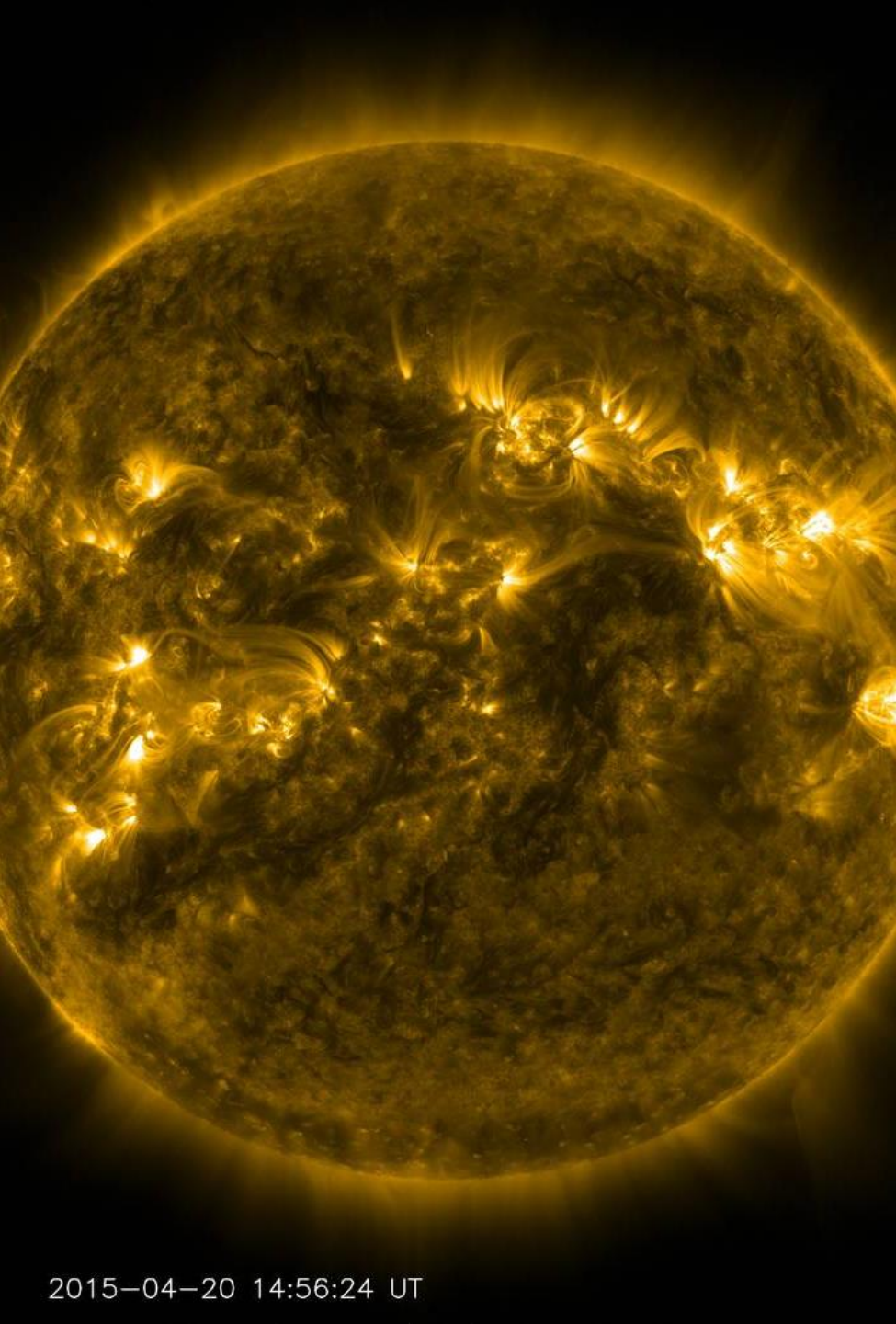
- Liz Greene (1977), p. 30

‘Solar goals are inner and are concerned with self-realisation and experiencing one’s life as special and meaningful.’

- Liz Greene (1992), p. 85

‘The Sun is the foundation stone of the human being. In a natal chart, it represents the life journey and story which will be undertaken by the individual seeking awareness.’

- Bernadette Brady (1992), p. 3



The Sun

Sun-Signs as Description of Character

- 'All astrologers refer to their friends and colleagues by the zodiac shorthand of 'Arien', 'Taurean', and so on, even though when criticised, they respond that there is far more to astrology than just the Sun: rhetoric and practice do not always coincide'
 - Nicholas Campion (2012) p. 70
- 'Thus the Sun sign is important, for it reveals the myth or story that the individual follows through life.'
 - Bernadette Brady (1992), p. 3

References

Blavatsky, Helena Petrovna, *Isis Unveiled: Both Volumes - A Master-Key to the Mysteries of Ancient and Modern Science and Theology* (London: Pantianos Classics, 1877)

Blavatsky, Helena Petrovna. *The Secret Doctrine*. Theosophical University Press Online 1888. <http://www.theosociety.org/pasadena/sd/sd-hp.htm>.

Blavatsky, Helena Petrovna, *The Key to Theosophy*: Theosophy Trust, 2007 [1888]).

Brady, Bernadette *Predictive Astrology: The Eagle and the Lark* (York Beach: Samuel Weiser, 1992)

Campion, Nicholas, *A History of Western Astrology Volume II: The Medieval and Modern Worlds* (London and New York: Continuum, 2009)

Campion, Nicholas, *Astrology and Popular Religion in the Modern West: Prophecy, Cosmology and the New Age Movement* (Farnham: Ashgate Publishing Ltd., 2012)

Liz Greene, 'How We View Life is How We Read Charts', (paper presented at the Astrological Association Conference Staverton, 19-22 September 2008, available at: https://www.astro.com/astrology/in_lifeview_e.htm

Liz Greene & Howard Sasportas, *The Luminaries: The Psychology of the Sun and Moon in the Horoscope* (York Beach: Samuel Weiser, 1992)

Hammer, Olav and Rothstein, Mikael, "Introduction," in *Handbook of the Theosophical Current*, ed. Olav Hammer and Mikael Rothstein (Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill, 2013)

Oken, Alan, *Soul Centred Astrology: A Key to Your Expanding Self* (Lake Worth, Florida: Ibis Press, 2008)

Swedenborg, Emanuel, *Heaven and Hell*, originally published 1798, trans. John C. Ager, 1900. Available online at: <https://sacred-texts.com/swd/hh/hh01.htm>