

MA Cultural Astronomy and Astrology
Astrology, History, Spirit and Soul
Week 8: The Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries
Nick Campion

Historiography

Evans, Richard, *In Defence of History*, London: Granta Books 1997, chapter 7.

Thomas, Keith, 'An Anthropology of Religion and Magic, II', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, Vol. 6 no 1 (Summer 1975) pp. 91-109.
JSTOR

Curry, Patrick 'Astrology on Trial, and its Historians: Reflections on the Historiography of 'Superstition'', *Culture and Cosmos*, Autumn/Winter 2000, Vol. 4 no 2, pp. 47-56
http://www.cultureandcosmos.org/pdfs/4-1/4-1_Curry_Historical_Approaches.pdf

Primary Sources

This week's primary sources are theoretical rather than technical, and feature Ebenezer Sibly's magical esotericism and Franz Mesmer's naturalism.

Sibly, Ebenezer, *A New and Complete Illustration of the Celestial Science of Astrology*, 2 Vols., London 1787. Book 4.
<http://www.esotericarchives.com/solomon/sibly4.htm>

We recommend reading paragraphs 1059 (the opening paragraph to 1076 (paragraph numbers are in the text in blue print). Sibly's book was the first major astrology book to be published in English in the 18th century. His astrology was derived from 17th century texts, so the interest in this section is its illustration of the magical/mystical context for astrology as the 19th c approached. Sibly was a Freemason and deeply influenced by Emmanuel Swedenborg.

Mesmer, Franz Anton, *Mesmerism: being the translation of Mesmer's historic Mémoire sur la découverte du Magnétisme Animal to appear in English*, London: Macdonald 1947 [1779].

PDF on Moodle

One, ultimately unsuccessful, current in 18th century astrology was the attempt to reconcile astrology with a Newtonian universe of mathematical law and natural influence. This reached its most ambitious point in the work of Franz Mesmer, the founder of Mesmerism (later Hypnotism). Mesmer himself rejected the term 'astrology'. Mesmer's work was rejected by the medical establishment in France but was popular amongst esotericists, occultists and astrologers.

Mesmer Franz, 'Physical-Medical Treatise on the Influence of the Planets', in Bloch, George, *Mesmerism: a translation of the Scientific and Medical Writings of Franz Anton Mesmer*, Los Altos CA: William Kauffman 1980, pp. 1-22.

PDF (NOT CURRENTLY AVAILABLE SO USE THE 1947 VERSION)

Leo, Alan, *Astrology for All*, London: L.N.Fowler, 1904.

Word Doc available under Week 10

Alan Leo has a claim to being the most important astrologer in the modern English-speaking world. The whole text has been uploaded, naturally we do not expect you to read the whole book. You may just wish to select key sections on the zodiac signs and planets. This is important because of Lilly's stature as the prime interpreter of theosophical astrology.

Required Reading: Secondary Sources

Campion, Nicholas, *A History of Western Astrology*, Vol. 2 (London: Continuum 2009), chapters 12-16.

Paul Cheshire, 'William Gilbert: Macrocosmal Astrologer in an Age of Revolution', *Culture and Cosmos*, Vol. 15, no. 2, Autumn/Winter 2011, pp. 55–63.

PDF ON MOODLE

Clifford J. Cunningham and Günther Oestmann, 'Classical Deities in Astronomy: The Employment of Verse to Commemorate the Discovery of the Planets

Uranus, Ceres, Pallas, Juno, and Vesta', *Culture and Cosmos*, Vol. 17, no. 1, (Spring/Summer 2013): pp. 3–29.

http://www.cultureandcosmos.org/pdfs/17-1/17-1_cunningham.pdf

Joscelyn Godwin, 'Astral Ascent in the Occult Revival', *Celestial Magic*, special issue of *Culture and Cosmos*, Vol. 19, nos. 1 and 2, Autumn/Winter and Spring/Summer 2015, pp. 189-206.

<http://www.cultureandcosmos.org/abstracts/19-Godwin.php>

Oestmann, Günther, 'J.W.A Pfaff and the Rediscovery of Astrology in the Age of Romanticism', in Oestmann, Günther, H. K. von Stuckrad, G. Oestmann and D. Rutkin (eds.), *Horoscopes and Public Spheres*, Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter 2005, pp. 240-57.

GOOGLE BOOKS

Owen, Alex, *The Place of Enchantment: British Occultism and the Culture of the Modern*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004, chapter 1.

GOOGLE BOOKS

Perkins, Maureen, *Visions of the Future: Almanacs, Time, and Cultural Change*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996, chapter 4, 'Almanacs and Prophecy'

OXFORD SCHOLARSHIP ON LINE.