

School of Childhood and Education Sciences

MA in Myth, Cosmology and the Sacred

Dissertation

**She Who of the Gods and Mortals
Knows the Most**

**A dissertation on astrology, transformative education
and Metic thought**

Student: Simão Cortês

Supervisor: Geoffrey Cornelius



To Exú, the first in all matters;

To Metis, who came to me in dreams with wise counsel;

And to Niara, without whom this dissertation could not have been written.

Abstract

In this dissertation I explore some of the most important debates in today's astrological community, in particular its epistemological status. Using a sympathetic and imaginative approach I look at some of the arguments that have been advanced both amongst astrologers and in academia in order to present the main dilemmas of this practice. I also advance that a focus on transformative education while teaching astrology may be a valuable tool for astrologers to develop the *a priori* necessary attitude to approach their craft.

Approx. 15.000 words

Contents Page

Introduction -----	p. 5
A Brief History of Astrological Thought -----	p. 8
Moving away from the Literal -----	p. 13
Astrology as Divination -----	p. 18
Metis -----	p. 29
Transformative Education and Astrology -----	p. 33
Conclusion -----	p. 43
Appendix 1 - For Astrologers -----	p. 44
Reference List -----	p. 45

Introduction

It is a rather uncomfortable exercise to write a Masters dissertation about the subject of astrology. Despite the fact that this work has emerged in a very specific context with many like-minded people, it is almost impossible to avoid a feeling of self-consciousness and transgression while writing it. This happens because there are many contradictory positions that must be indulged and addressed in a work of this type. It is important for the work to be fair both to academia and the astrological community, for it to present a consistent critique of both, and somewhere in between all this negotiation, for my own ideas to be clearly expressed. All of this with the looming danger of transgressing the accepted limits of knowledge too far. But the truth is that I could not have written my dissertation on any other topic. I have worked as an academic before and gave up on the career I was building precisely because I was enticed by astrological symbolism; and so, I believe this is the covenant I must above all respect in my intellectual pursuits.

Astrology is in a difficult position nowadays. It has been almost completely expelled from any serious intellectual circle but despite this many astrologers still hope that one day astrology will be recognized as an intellectually valid endeavour (Cornelius, 2003, p.1). Besides, in a post-modern world that so aggressively reacts to labels and categorizations of any sort, astrology seems to be precisely the kind of poisonous endeavour that creates binding stereotypes. Nevertheless, astrology is still an enormous part of our cultural life in the West with 25% of people reporting a belief in it in the UK (Lyons, 2005). Perhaps due to this it has seen a modest come back into universities, mainly in the fields of historiography but also in more sympathetic environments (cf. Bird, 2006, ch.10).

In the name of its academic appropriateness, I believe I could say this dissertation is an imaginative attempt to address some of the most intense dilemmas and discussions within the astrological community at the moment, and how transformative education may play a vital role in negotiating these problems within the community. The use of 'imaginative' here does mean to be a synonym of inventive; rather, and as it will become clear, it is a direct mention to the

method I use, a method I believe necessary to understand divinationary practices claim to truth. It is through this perspective that I look at some of the raging debates within the astrological community, in particular in those spaces where there is some intersection with academia – for example, with astrologers like Geoffrey Cornelius and Patrick Curry. I then advance the possible advantages of transformative pedagogies for such debates.

Thus, the majority of my dissertation is an exposition of the arguments concerning two crucial questions on the topic of astrology: “How does it work?” and “What purpose does it serve?”. These are rather big questions irrespective of the area of study and I do not have the pretension to have a final answer to them. I do want, however, to look at some of the more interesting arguments that have been advanced and then extrapolate on the value of transformative education for the contemporary astrological community.

For this purpose, I divided this work in 6 sections. In the first section I present a brief history of the two main approaches to astrology that can be identified throughout its history; in the second section I discuss the dilemma of literal and symbolic modes of approaching reality; in the third section I discuss contemporary approaches to astrology, in particular divinatory approaches; in the fourth section I discuss Metic thought and its implications for astrology; in the fifth section I present some basic notions about transformative education and how it could be used to develop Metic thought in astrology; and in the final section I present some concluding remarks.

It is important to clarify that my stakes in this dissertation are rather personal, and that it appears in an academic context where the introduction of the researcher in their research is valued. I am both an astrologer and a teacher of astrology (albeit I am by all standards a beginner in both enterprises) so that, in a sense, this work stems from my own experience in these fields. However, despite the fact that I have this sort of emotional investment, I am not interested in doing an autoethnographic work here. Instead, I wish to present this set of dilemmas to a sympathetic audience, whether that means an astrologer, an academic, or any other type of reader that is interested in the subject. And I want to do it in a more or less detached way, looking at the arguments presented by others, with my personal views more as a translucent background than the focus of the work.

There is a set of keywords that will be used in this dissertation and I should say something about them in advance. I will be using “divinatory”, “participatory”, and “Metic” as descriptors of a specific relationship with astrology. The nature of this relationship will become clear in the dissertation itself but it is important to keep in mind that they are used somewhat interchangeably. The reason for this is that they all originate in a specific type of work done with astrology that, despite differences between its proponents, can actually be considered as a more or less identifiable trend. Because of the short length of this work, it is not necessary to scrutinize these differences further, although it could be an interesting future exercise.

Conversely, I will be using the terms “scientific”, “objective”, “Ptolemaic”, “Thematic”¹ or “Apollonian” to describe another specific approach to astrology. Once again, I will be using these terms somewhat interchangeably, depending on context, to identify a type of attitude towards astrology that will become clear along the work. The reason is the same as the above: although some semantic differences can certainly be identified between these words, they are far beyond a work of this nature.

¹ I will be capitalizing the word “Thematic” because I want to explicitly connect it with the mythological figure Themis.

A Brief History of Astrological Thought

Astrology has attracted some academic attention in the last decades, not so much for its scientific study, but for the study of its history and symbolism. It seems to me that the first step in this interest were the two Master's programs that looked at astrology in a cultural and symbolic context: the MA in *Cultural Astrology and Astronomy* at Bath and the MA in *Cosmology and Divination* at the university of Kent (cf. Bird, 2006, ch.10). Both these MAs have now changed their location but they still exist and some interesting research has been produced both by tutors and students in this area of studies.

Regardless of academic interest, astrology continues to be a cultural phenomenon that attracts many people. Data from 2005 shows that at least one quarter of the population in the UK believes in astrology (Lyons, 2005), and the same numbers hold for both Canada and the United States of America. These numbers show an enormous interest on the part of the public if we take into account that astrology has been discredited by the scientific community at least since the 18th century (Cornelius, 2003, p.1), and that most intellectuals publicly oppose it as something dangerous, as can be seen in the famous 1975 manifesto against astrology (Bok et al., 1975).

It is a wondrous feat that astrology has survived for so long, and it would be interesting to sketch only a brief history of its survival, since this subject has been more completely discussed elsewhere (cf. Taylor, 2015, ch.1). In ancient cultures, astrology was conceived as a form of divination (Cornelius, 2003, p.129). This form of astrology was highly participatory, since it implied a dialogue between the astrologer and the cosmos. There was no notion of causality, in which the planets influence the events on earth, or of "predicting the future". Astrology, as any other kind of augury, was a way of interpreting the will of the gods (Ibid., p.130). This understanding of divination is therefore not separable from the fact that in Greece and Rome divination was considered an important part of religious life (Ibid.).

However, as Greece and Rome started valuing reason in opposition to faith, this approach was superseded (Ibid. p.126) and critiques of divination started to appear. Perhaps the most famous example can be said to be Cicero's *De Divinatione* in the 1st century CE, that heavily

criticized Stoic conceptions of divination, including astrology. After this, practitioners of divination needed either to present more sophisticated versions of their practices than the one presented by Cicero, or they needed to try to avoid the subject at all costs, and move their art away from the concept of divination. Because astrological symbolism is grounded in natural and predictable phenomena, it was not difficult to move from a divinatory approach into a scientific one, and this was famously done by Ptolemy who presented astrology in terms of the influence planets exert on earthly events. In his own words:

“For the cause both of universal and of particular events is the motion of the planets, sun, and moon; and the prognostic art is the scientific observation of precisely the change in the subject natures which corresponds to parallel movements of the heavenly bodies through the surrounding heavens (...)” (Ptolemy, 1980, p.221).

This causal model gave rise to the “doctrine of origin”, i.e. the idea that the moment when something starts to exist defines the nature of said thing (Cornelius, 2003, 87). This idea was taken so seriously that Ptolemy also considers the moment of conception as relevant for the fate of the person (for a more in-depth discussion cf. Cornelius, 2003, p.82). The Ptolemaic paradigm necessarily results in a “machine of destiny” of sorts where the planets influence the events as clockwork, and the role of the astrologer is no longer that of being in a dialogue with a living cosmos, but that of a scientist looking at the objective causes of a mechanical cosmos (Ibid. p.173). In this particular cosmology the planets are ever-moving and influencing everything on earth, and this results in the possibility of exact prediction of these influences. Astrology becomes not only objectified, but a kind of curse mechanically acting *on everything*.

Early Christian thinkers, however, were not convinced by this approach. Saint Augustine claims in *The City of God* that all true knowledge deriving from astrology has been obtained through consort with demons (Book V, section 7) because the idea of such a “machine of destiny” would go against the Christian notion of free-will (Ibid., section 9). Although this perspective aims at criticizing astrology, in doing so it retains the previous dialogical divinatory approach that Ptolemy tried to leave behind with his theory of the seed moment and planetary

influences. Nevertheless, since the bible forbids the reading of omens² (cf. *Deuteronomy* 18:10-2) this prohibition completely obliterates the possibility of astrology being practiced in a Christian context.

Later on Thomas of Aquinas tried to reinstate the Ptolemaic notion of astrology as the science of the celestial influences upon the sublunary bodies.

“Thomas Aquinas reconciled astrology within a Christian context by separating natural astrology from judicial: natural astrology reflected the idea of a hidden underlying order in the natural world via correspondences and came to underpin both science and medicine; by contrast, judicial astrology involved the destiny of the individual and the influence of the stars on the human soul, and in Christian terms constituted forbidden knowledge gained via consort with daemonic forces” (Taylor, 2005, p.12).

Astrology could therefore be applied to the understanding of the material world³, while maintaining the Christian notion of free will. This mode of scientific astrology is, in very simplistic terms, the one that we have inherited to this day precisely because it was the one capable of surviving in the Christian context of the Middle Ages. Nevertheless, there were some attempts of reviving a symbolic, participatory approach to Astrology, mainly by Dante in the late middle ages, Ficino in the renaissance, and William Lilly in early modern England.

Dante was particularly critic of medieval astrology, having placed Guido Bonatti⁴ in Hell (*Inferno*, Canto XX). However, his rendition of *Paradiso* is structured like the cosmology of the time, following the astrological meanings of the planets by putting certain kinds of souls inhabiting the planets which nature matched said souls.⁵

Ficino and Lilly were also critic of Astrology as an objective and deterministic pursuit. Ficino attempted to build a critique of scientific astrology, naming the astrologers who practiced it “petty ogres” (Voss, 2000, p.30). For Ficino, this form of astrology was flawed because it

² However, there are counter examples of divination being performed in the bible by holy men, cf. *Genesis* 37-45 or *Judges* 6:36-40.

³ For example, the French Academy of Medicine justified the Black Death using an astrological configuration (Johnson, 2009, p.7)

⁴ Guido Bonatti was an influential medieval astrologer that made many islamic sources available in Europe (Cornelius, 2003, p.106).

⁵ A good example is the placing of the souls of crusaders in Mars, the planet of war. (Dante, *Paradiso*, Canto XIV).

“lacked symbolic understanding” (Ibid. p.29) and the true nature of astrology was “fully revealed in the Platonic and Hermetic traditions” (Ibid.). In Cornelius’ words “[Ficino] was a symbolist struggling against a deterministic conception, but he did not see clearly how to resolve the problem” (2003, p.14). Unfortunately, the Neoplatonically inspired version of astrology that Ficino presented in his *Three Books on Life* has largely disappeared from contemporary debate (Ibid.).

William Lilly had a non-objectivist approach to astrology that is clearly revealed throughout his work. One good example is this quote by him presented by Cornelius describing the nature of astrology “it was well said, *A te & a scientia*” (2003, p.303) meaning that craft must always be combined with personal discretion.⁶ Another good example is this comment from his “Letter to the Student in Astrology”: “being confident, the more holy thou art; and more neer to God, the purer Judgement thou shalt give” (Lilly, 2003, p.6). Naturally, an objective craft does not directly depend on one’s proximity to God, it can be practiced by anyone. But here we can once again detect the function of the diviner-priest, typical of ancient approaches to astrology. Despite these efforts, contemporary astrology is still rooted in an objectivist paradigm and according to Patrick Curry’s division of strands in astrological practice today, only one these strands is completely innocent from objective perspectives and the machine of destiny (Willis & Curry, 2004, ch.6).

The Enlightenment brought the end of Astrology as a serious intellectual pursuit (Cornelius, 2003, p.1). Most of the Aristotelic assumptions that sustained the entire system had already been abandoned with Galileus’ defense of heliocentrism and the Copernican revolution and when approached by the modern scientific method astrology seems to present little to no results. (Ibid., ch.3-4) But although astrology was abandoned as a scientific pursuit, most of its paradigmatic assumptions have not been questioned by astrologers themselves, who tend to blame poor methods as the reason why astrology has never been scientifically demonstrated despite continuous efforts by researchers (Ibid., p48). Not only that, but every time someone actually shows a statistical correlation between the planets and people’s lives, like the French researcher Michel Gauquelin, some of these results seem to directly contradict the astrological

⁶ Cf. Cornelius, 2003, p.303-5 for a good discussion of this passage.

tradition (Taylor, 2015, p.21). As Carol Taylor puts it in her dissertation on astrology: “ perhaps worse than a negative result [for astrology] is a positive result which only partially proves astrology and leaves the rest in limbo” (Ibid.).

Taylor discusses these same issues in her dissertation and also makes a distinction between these two broad modes of approaching astrology. She writes, quoting from Willis and Curry:

“(…) from the beginning, there have been two broad strands within astrology, reflecting objective/scientific and subjective/participatory modes. The former is exemplified by Ptolemy's systematisation of astrology into an 'abstract theoretical structure' (Willis & Curry 2004, p.60) (...) The latter revolves around the notion of dialogue, an interplay between observer and observed – 'the grand conversation of earth and heaven' as the 'true business of astrology' (Willis & Curry 2004, p.3). It privileges the working of symbol over the image of the chart as a repository of objective knowledge” (Ibid. p. 14).

This distinction between scientific and participatory modes is precisely the distinction that becomes evident in this very brief and schematic history of astrology. The Ptolemaic approach attempts to look at astrology as an objective science that studies the way planets and the world relate, while the ancient diviners, Ficino, Dante and Lilly imagine themselves in a dialogue with the cosmos or God, astrology being the craft or tool of such dialogue.

Moving away from the Literal

The astrological community nowadays is the heir of this particular tension we have been discussing and different strands of astrologers seem to align themselves with different approaches within the spectrum between these two poles. In *Astrology, Science and Culture*, Patrick Curry describes how the major distinction across the main strands of astrological practice today seems to be precisely the distinction between objective and participatory modes. (2004, ch. 6). Curry divides the variety of astrological experience nowadays in five types: openly divinatory, Hermetic/Neoplatonic, Aristotelian/Ptolemaic, scientific and psychological.⁷ Of these five types he only considers one of them to be completely free of the Ptolemaic machine of destiny and objectification of astrology: the openly divinatory.

Why is that, although astrology started mostly as a divinatory practice within religious systems, most schools of astrology are so seduced by the Ptolemaic approach? The reason seems to be two-fold. On the one hand, the objective approaches to astrology allowed it to survive, as we have seen with the specific case of Thomas of Aquinas in a Christian environment. In Cornelius's own words, "this tradition, sustained by and sustaining a spiritualised scientific cosmology, allowed a remarkably enduring meld of science and art. It has bequeathed to us the marvellous form that we [astrologers] still practise today" (Cornelius, 2013, p.2).

This line of reasoning shows that the Ptolemaic idea is so widespread in astrology because it was precisely this idea that allowed astrology to survive their critics until today, as a more or less unbroken tradition. But one would think that the pressure of the scientific method would have already forced astrologers to admit that the Ptolemaic idea does not hold against scientific scrutiny, so why not just eliminate it altogether? The problem, as is pointed out in a public talk by John Heaton in one of the transcribed interventions of the public, is that the structure of astrological symbolism is itself prone to objectivization (Heaton, 1989, p.17). The planets are as out there as they can be, far away in the sky. The Moon and the Sun produce observable objective changes in the environment, which makes it easier to amplify astrology into

⁷ In his introduction to "An Aporia for Astrology" (2015) Curry adds one more type: "traditional astrology". This type is defined by marked traditional and anti-intellectual positions (p.ii).

a system of larger planetary causes. Moreover, and perhaps worst of all, the horoscope of a person does not change at all during their lives. The most commonly practiced version of horoscopy, generally described as “natal astrology”, takes the place and time of birth of a native and analyses the planetary positions at that time for that particular place. This establishes a clear correlation between sky and moment that seems quite inescapable. Assuming for the sake of argument that astrology is indeed divinatory, this unchangeability gives it a completely different status from other popular methods of divination. One can be very unsettled by a tarot spread, for example, but the spread will change the next time one decides to consult this particular oracle. The horoscope, however, will always be there with the exact same positions.⁸

Astrology can become quite binding because of this. One of the things that lead me into this dissertation is the fact that I teach astrology in a school in Portugal and I have seen this process first hand. At first the student is enchanted by astrological symbolism, and feels quite liberated in having a symbolic system through which they can conceptualize their own experiences. But after a short period of time studying astrology they will become anxious about their horoscope, regarding it as a sentence, complaining about it as it were curse, and checking it before doing anything at all – a process Patrick Curry has called “neurotic dependency” (Willis & Curry, 2004, p.91). This happens because astrology is rooted in a specific moment that no one can in any sense influence, and the things said by an astrologer will necessarily be contrasted with this background. This creates a very real problem, especially for astrologers who have a more participatory and dialogical approach to astrology. How can one avoid the total literalization or objectification of a symbol that seems to be so static as a birth horoscope?

The tension between literalization or objectification and participatory or symbolic approaches is not exclusive of astrology, and it has been a source of problems in metaphysical thinking of all sorts. As Jeffrey Kripal says, “we must stop operating with the comfortable, if politically correct, illusion that these are not fundamentally religious problems” (Kripal, 2007, p.14). Religious fundamentalism certainly seems to be amongst these problems, which may show that religious, mythological or metaphysical practices seem to be particularly susceptible to literalization. American psychoanalyst James Hillman was very critic of all forms of

⁸ I am much indebted to Geoffrey Cornelius for long discussions on this subject.

literalization, including in astrology and attempted to show on many occasions that the aim of any sort of metaphysically inclined thought should be moving away from literalisms (1997). In *The Soul's Code*, Hillman tells the story of a sleeping giant whose head is being smashed by Thor's hammer. The giant wakes up several times but every time he assumes it is just a leaf, or rain or other such natural event. For Hillman this is a mythological realization of the tension between symbolic modes of approaching reality and literal ones (1996, 278-9). The giant, cursed by literalism, is unable to recognize the call of the god as anything other than natural phenomena. One can wonder if this is the most pressing problem that any metaphysical system presents us with.

This tension is at the heart of religious texts and myth. Myths, because they are stories, can be interpreted on different levels. This was a fundamental point of medieval Christian hermeneutics (cf. Cornelius, 2003, ch.14), which divided the interpretation of sacred texts in four different levels of interpretation: the literal, which was the truth of the story as told; the metaphorical, which was the hidden general meaning of that story; the tropological, which was the moral realisation that the reader would have about themselves while reading the story; and the anagogical level, which represented a transcendent religious truth of the story. Cornelius explains this wonderfully in *The Moment of Astrology* giving the example of the story of Moses leading his people out of Egypt. On a literal level it is a story about Moses leading the sons of Jacob out of Egypt; metaphorically it is a prophecy about the coming of Christ leading everyone out of sin; tropologically it is about the reader being led by Christ out of sin; and anagogically it could be described as the communion of the holy soul with God (cf. Ibid. in particular p.280).

Before medieval hermeneutics, Sallust, a roman theologian, had already developed five types of myth interpretation. In his own words:

“Of fables, some are theological, others physical, others animastic, (or belonging to soul,) others material, and lastly, others mixed from these. Fables are theological which (...) speculate the very essences of the gods; such as the fable which asserts that Saturn devoured his children: for it obscurely intimates the nature of an intellectual god, since every intellect returns into itself. But we speculate fables physically when we speak concerning the energies of the gods about the world; as when considering Saturn the same as Time, and calling the parts of time the children of the universe, we assert that the children are devoured by their parents. But we employ fables in an

animastic [sic] mode when we contemplate the energies of the soul; because the intellections of our souls, though by a discursive energy they proceed into other things, yet abide in their parents. Lastly, fables are material, such as the Egyptians ignorantly employ, considering and calling corporeal natures divinities; such as Isis, earth; Osiris, humidity; Typhon, heat..." (Sallust, *On the Gods*, ch.4)

These examples of hermeneutical approaches are fundamental in order to move away from a literalization of myth. As one can easily see, Sallust is not particularly interested in demonstrating that there has been a physical titan devouring his children. What Sallust is interested in is the sort of metaphysical truths about the gods and humans that are hidden in a story such as the Saturn myth. This suggests the possibility that stories springing from our imagination have some sort of truth value that should be taken seriously.

It is beyond the scope of this dissertation to give a complete account of the theories of imagination, but some words should be said. Throughout history there have been some intellectuals who have put forth the idea that imagination is beyond mere fancy. One of the most recent intellectual movements where this was widely discussed has been romanticism, with examples like the poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge, who has made a stark distinction between "imagination" and "fancy" (Cornelius, 2013, p.5), or John Keats who has famously written in a letter to Benjamin Bailey "I am certain of nothing other than the holiness of Heart's affections and the truth of Imagination" (2002, p.54).

More recently, the French historian of sufism Henry Corbin coined the neologism "mundus imaginalis" to refer to a tripartite conception of reality described by the 13th century Platonist sufi mystic Ibn Arabi. In this cosmology there are three worlds, the sensory world, the spiritual world where God resides and a world in-between. Each of these worlds can be perceived using a different form of perception, the sensory world using senses like sight and hearing, the spiritual world using intellect, and the middle world using the imagination. In Corbin's own words:

"The world of the image, the mundus imaginalis: a world that is ontologically as real as the world of the senses and that of the intellect. This world requires its own faculty of perception, namely, imaginative power, a faculty with a cognitive function, a noetic value which is as real as that of sense perception or intellectual intuition. We must be careful not to confuse it with the

imagination identified by so-called modern man with "fantasy", and which, according to him, is nothing but an outpour of 'imaginings'" (Corbin, 1999, p. 9).

The radical proposition here is that one can train and use the imagination to perceive things that are more real than the world of the senses.⁹ Although departing greatly from Corbin's islamic cosmology, James Hillman also developed the concept of the imaginal in his work, talking about a discipline of imagination (Hillman, 2008, 35%) and claiming that using the imagination to work with an image is a way of "bringing soul-laden imagery by means of which the brilliant impulses of the spirit can find witness and know themselves" (as cited by Voss, 2018).

⁹ Ibn Arabi's tripartite cosmology is based on the concept of the Great Chain of Being where being is organized hierarchically. In this hierarchy each superior layer contains all traits of the inferior layers plus some of its own. The highest layer is God. In this sense ontology is not a positive or negative value (something either is true or false) but a qualitative scale. Higher levels have more ontological value than lower levels (cf. Lovejoy, 2001, pp.58-9).

Astrology as Divination

I hope this brief introduction to the subject of hermeneutics and imagination has been enough to show that it is possible to take highly sophisticated approaches to texts and practices that seem deeply rooted in literalism. There is no footnote in the myth of Saturn saying a physical titan called Saturn did not literally eat his children, and so it could be easy to take it at face value. In a similar vein, although the very structure of natal horoscopes seems to suggest a “machine of destiny” or a binding curse, it is possible to take a more sophisticated, hermeneutical and imaginative approach to the horoscope. “Pioneering this approach have been Geoffrey Cornelius, Maggie Hyde and Patrick Curry, who have all questioned the Ptolemaic inheritance of astrology as a form of natural science” (Taylor, 2015, p2). We will spend some time discussing in particular Cornelius’ and Curry’s arguments to see to what extent they challenge the determinist and objectivist views of astrology we have been criticizing.

Geoffrey Cornelius’ book *The Moment of Astrology* focuses precisely on the problem of the moment of astrology, that is, the belief that the relationship established between an earthly event and the planets or stars is rooted in a specific, objective moment. Cornelius attempts to address both the Ptolemaic and the Platonic notions of an objective defining moment in astrology. In his own words

“What is this mysterious quality of the time-moment? There are two approaches found in traditional astrology, often woven together - or muddled - in the attitudes of the same author. The orthodox classical position has an Aristotelian foundation, and is a species of *celestial causation*. The quality of the time moment is determined by the disposition of the influencing heavens ‘at that moment’. The second approach is Platonic in its inspiration. It may be characterised as *cosmic sympathy*: the planets and their positions *mirror* the occult quality of the totality of the macrocosm-microcosm ‘at that moment’ (...) The distinction of these two positions tends on the one hand to an astrology of *causes*, and on the other to an astrology of *signs* (...)” (Cornelius, 2003, p.81).

In order to address both the Platonic and Aristotelian approaches to the objective moment in astrology, the author discusses in chapter 2 the random chart that was presented in the 1972 anti-astrology manifesto as an example of an astrological chart and attempts to show that this

horoscope (a 1907 horoscope) produced relevant symbology for the manifesto itself. This would mean that the relationship between the horoscope and the event does not depend on time at all, but on a meaningful and contextual hermeneutical relationship that emerges from the simple fact that that horoscope has been symbolically associated with an event. I have presented similar astrological arguments in an essay analysing horoscopes from fictional characters and events (Cortês, 2017). These horoscopes do not correspond with a real moment in time (for example the publication of the book in question) but with the fictional date provided by the book. Once again, the relationship here cannot be literal. These claims are tremendous because they shatter the most basic assumption of most astrologers: the objective role of time in astrology.

Cornelius presents several other arguments in favour of this claim throughout the book, the best examples being those of wrong charts working in consultation or two different charts with different times for the same person both resulting in relevant astrological symbolism (Cornelius, 2003, pp.230-248). What is astrology then, if not the relationship in time between planets and earthly events? Cornelius writes that “the ground for the coming-to-pass of astrological effects or showings is not founded in a coincidence in objective time of heavens above and event below”; instead “we should look in the direction of significant presentation of the symbol to consciousness” (Cornelius 2003, p.38). And we should keep in mind Carol Taylor’s words on the implication of this statement:

“On this view, the chart becomes a device used to focus the imagination; its symbols are taken up as meaningful by the astrologer, as an imaginative metaphor for the current situation. In other words, astrology is an invitation to view a situation from a symbolic viewpoint and the casting of a chart a ritual to open awareness – a statement of intention on the part of both client and astrologer requiring a divinatory 'presentiment', a belief that such a process will yield the truth of things” (Taylor, 2015, p.15).

This means that the entirety of astrological practice becomes read as a human construct that allows for a specific type of cognition and hermeneutics to emerge. In chapters 13 and 14 Cornelius describes a model of hermeneutics of astrology heavily based on the medieval hermeneutical system I discussed in the last section. This model would allow the astrologer to interpret the symbol on several layers that are important for the consultant, and would permit the

astrologer to be in an interpretative frame of mind that allows the symbol to present itself to consciousness in deeply meaningful ways.

From this point of view, the careful rectification of birth times and the preoccupation with the exact moment things happened may be read as a ritualistic device more than an objectively real need. This does not mean that the existence of a previously defined language and tradition is not necessary, that is fundamental to ensure “that our emotions are to some degree engaged” with the context where divination is occurring (Cornelius, 2003, p.251). The author establishes a good comparison between astrology and chess: “they are cultural creations that cannot be found anywhere in nature and they exist in the domain of human significance. By playing the game a certain result is achieved just as by applying the precepts of astrology a certain interpretation is attained” (Ibid., p.289). It is interesting that in a talk about astrology in 1997, James Hillman suggested something strikingly similar:

“Two sorts of literalisms afflict astrology, so that astrology like psychoanalysis may run the risk of becoming a fundamentalistic faith. The first has to do with time.

Call it Temporal Literalism. It is reinforced by calculations, tables, exactitudes, minutes and seconds. It does not enough question the idea of time, but is caught by time. I think it possible to still do these mathematical calculations, but to regard them less as accurate measurements of time and rather as a ritual service, a necessary theurgic mumbo-jumbo to constellate psychic insight, focus intensity, elaborate a distancing procedure ... all this is a ritual to focus intuition and refine one’s skills rather than to present the truthful facts of what is actually taking place, or will, or has, in an unknowable invisible sphere, that other half beyond this world...” (Hillman 1997, p.3)

Essentially astrology becomes an art of the imagination, a symbolic language created to allow the astrologer to focus a certain kind of attention, enter a certain kind of allegorical cognitive realm that allows for, Cornelius argues, divinatory insight (cf. Cornelius, 2003, ch.16).

Hillman has provided us a fascinating work to help us negotiate the tensions between literalisation and symbolism. In one of his last great books, *The Soul’s Code*, Hillman presents a theory of the soul that draws heavily on Platonic conceptions, especially the myth of Er. In the myth of Er, presented by Socrates in Plato’s *Republic*, the souls decide their fate before they incarnate (book X, §614-21). Hillman has actualized this concept by saying that everyone has an

image that works as their fate or daemon¹⁰. This image is not subject to maturation and does not respect the objective limitations of the person, but it calls them fiercely into an imaginative destiny (Hillman, 1996, pp.3-14). Hillman described this theory as a symbolic realisation of the *Puer Aeternus* because it fiercely resists notions of development or parental influence as perceived in most psychoanalysis (Ibid., pp.281-83). Nevertheless, Hillman is highly keen on showing that this image should not be literalized, or given a final form at any point. The image is in control and all one can do is to imaginatively reach out and try to understand it. The image will have left clues throughout one's life, including childhood, and one's role is to imaginatively look at one's biography in order to find these clues (Ibid., p.8).

It is remarkable how similar this idea can be to astrology, especially because our horoscope is an image that will accompany us throughout our lives. But it is important to make clear that Hillman is not trying to be deterministic in the sense that he does not believe one's entire life is scripted. What he believes is that there is a symbolic image, an oak inside an acorn, that calls upon the soul. Although this image never changes, it will lead the soul to radical different experiences at different times of their lives. There is no machinery here, but an image calling unto you and your own negotiation of this image. The tool of this negotiation is imagination (Ibid., ch.9).

Despite the fact that Hillman's idea of an acorn is not divinatory in essence, his resistance to literalism and his use of imagination when dealing with a static image are fundamental for the present discussion of astrology. What this approach means is that anything can be deliteralized when a specific frame of mind is adopted. I will discuss this more fully later.

Cornelius has also advocated for an imaginative approach to astrology claiming that "without imagination there is no Astrology" (Cornelius, 2013, p.1). For him, the acceptance of imagination as an organ of perception is precisely what can help astrologers move from a literalist and scientific approach into a participatory one. In his own words:

"(...) the astrological imagination is not simply a reworking of physical sensory impressions, which is the lesser meaning of imagination. Neither is it an order of the cosmos outside of us or from which we may stand apart. It is enacted in our seeing of it, the psycho-spiritual presentation

¹⁰ The daemon is a tutelary figure akin to the guardian angel with origins in antiquity (cf. Cornelius, 2003, p.178).

of the people, their desires and dreams, together with all the events and objects known to us as ‘world’. The seeing is through symbol, with imaginal and literal transfigured in a unified perception” (Ibid p.7).

Another thinker who has opposed astrology’s scientific objectification and literalization is Patrick Curry, his arguments following a different direction. In the book *Astrology, Science and Culture* he tries to demonstrate that originally astrology depended on a specific kind of cosmology, what he calls an enchanted world (Willis & Curry, 2004, p.86-7). In this type of cosmology there is no subject/object split, meaning that it is hard to make a very stark distinction between objective truth and subjective perception (Ibid. p.112). The enchanted cosmologies that gave rise to astrology, according to Curry, are markedly non-monist (Ibid. p.80) and allow for a dialogic communication with the world around the individual. In his own expression, “to experience the cosmos as a Thou” (Ibid. p.124). According to the author these cosmologies do not look for an explanation in today’s scientific standards and allow for a world where mystery is still experienced without the need to explain it away (Ibid. p.88). Enchanting the world – bringing non-monist, non-hierarchical and dialogical forms of organization into the world – is an important way to oppose today’s disenchanting scientism and anti-ecological industrial *ethos*. Astrology, if restored to a non-scientific mindset, may perform these tasks meaningfully¹¹ (Ibid., p.75).

It is important to stress how different this argument is from the line of thought followed by Cornelius. Curry is not reporting to what astrology can or cannot do as a craft, he is reporting to what astrology as a way of approaching the world can achieve: resistance to a specific socio-cultural contingency. The importance of restoring astrology as a participative and divinatory practice is fundamental because otherwise its symbolic system has been swallowed by today’s *zeitgeist* and astrology works in its favour more than against it. As Curry himself recognises, this also implicates that astrology should not try to conquer a place of power in today’s intellectual landscape, since it might do that at the expense of its own soul and ability to enchant (Ibid., 113-14).

¹¹ Note that Curry believes enchantment is by definition wild and cannot be applied programmatically. One can attempt to bring enchantment into the world, and some things enable this enchantment, but there is no guarantee that enchantment will result from a specific set of acts (Curry, 2012, pp.2-3).

I have presented epistemological arguments for the deconstruction of objectivist astrology. Astrology appears to work regardless of a defined temporal relation between chart and event; the symbology of time is maintained for ritualistic reasons while having no “objective” value; and astrology was originally a divinatory dialogue with the cosmos. We also have a deontological argument: we should restore astrology as a divinatory dialogue with the cosmos because it is enchanting and presents a way of resisting the destructive traits of industrial society. I would like to comment on two of these arguments somewhat extensively, namely the original status of astrology and its ability to enchant. When looking closely at the type of cosmology that allowed astrology to arise, like it is done in *Astrology, Science and Culture*, it is very important to underline that one is not attempting to argue that the original status of astrology was by definition better. This would be falling into the Ptolemaic way of thinking again, saying that astrology’s essence is defined by its original, pristine status. But the original status of astrology is in fact fundamental in this context precisely because it shows that it is possible to approach astrology in a non-objective, non-deterministic way, since it has already been done in the past. What becomes clear when we consider that astrology emerged as a dialogical practice where the frontiers between subject/object were muddled is that astrology is not *intrinsically* objectivist, even if its structure would seem so to a modern mind. In this sense, the argument is not so much a Ptolemaic claim of its essential origin but a demonstration of the possibility of a different mindset when approaching astrology.

I am slightly more skeptical of the idea that astrology is an intrinsically non-monist and non-hierarchical form of enchantment. Astrology has very strongly defined monist (the Sun, Jupiter) and hierarchical (Saturn) actors, as opposed to more pluralistic (Mercury) or anarchic (Uranus) ones. It does not seem necessary to me to exclude the totality of monist or hierarchical narratives in order for a system to be enchanting. I think the problem has more to do with the emergence of a unique center of epistemological power in a society, in this case an ideological monism, and not with monist forms that organically integrate a landscape of different and contradictory beliefs in society. The philosopher of science Paul Feyerabend envisioned an intellectual environment where many different narratives may emerge, and the tension between them is what actually propels new knowledge to emerge (2010, ch.2). In this particular society

there would be competing or cohabiting monist and pluralist ideas, as well as all sorts of ideas, without the attribution of an absolute epistemological power to one specific narrative.

Feyerabend denied accusations of being an extreme relativist because he is not advocating for the truth of every view. Instead, he is advocating for the positive effects of having a fair space where every view can be expressed and allow the tensions between worldviews to play out (Ibid., pp. 283-287). I believe this to be much more enchanting than a system that simply rejects monist view-points.

One can argue that a system which contains both monist and pluralist actors is by definition pluralist, but it seems to me this would be missing the point. One needs only to remember that the Sun is fundamentally monist according to the words of many Neoplatonists.¹² What I am attempting to convey here is the possibility of a system where monist and pluralist narratives coexist, albeit contradictory. This sort of behaviour seems to be quite current in Greek culture. A good example would be the Orphic Hymns where divinities are constantly given contradictory attributes.¹³

I believe that one interesting mythological theme to invoke here is the typical rivalry between gods with monist connotations and gods with pluralist connotations. Perhaps the most well-known example in the Western world is the relationship between Apollo, who has a strong monist connotation as we have seen, and Hermes, a trickster god of language and patron of hermeneutics, who can easily be associated with pluralist and relativist narratives. In the Homeric hymn to Hermes (Evelyn-White, 1982, pp.362-405), after the god is born he steals Apollo's cattle and is a general nuisance to him, but with time they become good friends. Hermes gives the lyre to Apollo, and it becomes his favourite instrument. Apollo gives Hermes the gift of prophecy, but he makes a list of very strict demands about this gift, giving Hermes permission to dabble only on lower and fallible forms of fortune telling (Ibid., pp. 403-5). This relationship is fascinating because despite the fact that it results in a friendship, the tension is still maintained by the clear dominion of Apollo over Hermes, who is allowed to behave

¹² Cf. Plutarch's "On the E at Delphi", Julian's "Hymn to King Helios" or Ficino's *Book of the Sun*.

¹³ cf. "All-parent, principle and end of all" in hym XIV to Jupiter vs. "From which the various forms of being shoot" in hymn XII to Saturn. (Taylor, 1792, *The Hymns of Orpheus*) What it seems is that there is an imaginal ritual space where Saturn is the all father *while* we address Saturn and Jupiter is the all father *while* we address Jupiter.

pluralistically only within certain limits. It is important to note that it was fundamental for both the gods to establish a close relationship. This relationship is astrologically codified in the fact that Mercury can never be very far from the Sun in the ecliptic.

A similar mythological rendition of this theme can be found in the myths of the Yorubá people, in the rivalry between Oxalá and Exú. Oxalá is the king of the pantheon, demiurge and all-father, and therefore he is a monist figure in the lines of Zeus or Apollo. Exú is the trickster god that establishes the communication between the humans and the other gods, he usually bends the truth and can be taken as symbolic of pluralist narratives, very much like Hermes. In many myths Exú tricks Oxalá, overtly subverting his power. One example is the creation myth: when Oxalá was going to create the world, he was given a bag with the contents of creation by Olodumaré¹⁴. Exú, however, tricked Oxalá into drinking too much palm wine and he fell asleep, losing his opportunity to create the world at the proper moment. As a punishment, Olodumaré did not allow Oxalá to create the world, but only to create all living beings (Verger, 1998, 86-92%). Another myth says that one day they decided to compete to see which of them is the oldest and most powerful, and after an intense competition Oxalá grabs the bowl where his Axé¹⁵ is stored, and after Exú contemplates it he immediately yields to Oxalá (Ibid., 75-8%).

Although both both gods contend in the beginning, with the trickster god being particularly mean to the monist figure, they end up arriving at a certain compromise. In the case of Apollo and Hermes the symbolic resolution ends in a strong friendship with Apollo saying he shall love no other among the immortals as he loves Hermes (Evelyn-White, 1982, p.401). Monism and pluralism assume they are half-brothers, although monism is clearly dominating. In the case of Exú and Oxalá the resolution is even more tense, and Exú has to admit to yield to a monist narrative when in its presence, while keeping his typical behaviour everywhere else. I believe these myths point to the need to have both monist and pluralist characters that act out a very specific tension.¹⁶ The idea should not be that one of them becomes dominant, but that they both express themselves in ways that allow the tension to play out. Of course the monist actors

¹⁴ Olodumaré is the God above the gods and before being for the Yorubá people (Verger, 1998, 86%).

¹⁵ Axé is the Yoruba life force like the Greek pneuma or Chinese chi, and it represents quality of the power of each specific god (Verger, 1998, 21%).

¹⁶ Cf. Appendix 1.

tend to act through a raw display of power, and the pluralist ones work through subtle undermining of the other's efforts. Nevertheless, both figures are fundamental in the ecology of the pantheon and deserving of religious worship.

I am convinced that this theme is a starting point for us to think about the value of a system that presents us with such dichotomies like astrology does. Astrology seems to be grounded in a moment, but then it seems not to be. It has monist characters, but its ability to enchant depends on its pluralism. It has the power both to bind and to liberate depending on how it is approached, so on and so forth. What these myths seem to point out, much in line with Feyerabend's ideas, is that unless we allow the tension between all these elements to play out, we will fail to achieve any sort of resolution and we will be left with a very reduced perspective of the world.

We are thus faced with what seems to be an insurmountable dilemma. Astrology is particularly elusive to definition, and it is such a malleable system that any astrologer can simply project their narratives into it. While I tend to agree with Cornelius' and Curry's definition of astrology as divination, in particular because this is the philosophical position that seems to better address its critics, it is extremely difficult to have the final word in this argument. Despite the fact that some claims about the scope of astrology's functions can be made, these claims are ever more elusive because they depend so strongly on the role of the astrologer. The fact that astrology is so slippery to any commonly accept method of validation makes it easy to dismiss claims like the ones made by Cornelius.

More literally minded astrologers will make little use of these arguments and will claim the effects presented are simply the result of luck or sloppy methodology.¹⁷ And even if we accept Cornelius' arguments, it must be noted that while some technical effects of astrology point to the divinatory/dialogical nature suggested by his book, many other traits of the craft point in different directions. Perhaps the most obvious of them all is that the chart always locates the planets in time, so it becomes particularly hard not to be a literalist of time as Hillman suggests.

¹⁷ Interestingly enough this is the same line of argument a scientist would use to explain away this kind of astrologer.

One good example of this problem is the discussion about horary astrology. Horary astrology is an explicitly divinatory form of astrology where the astrologer attempts to judge the resolution to a question based on the chart of the time the question was asked. Cornelius argues in *The Moment of Astrology* that horary necessarily forces one to change the “machine of destiny” cosmology (2003, p.102) but this claim does not seem to work in practice. John Frawley, one of the most famous horarists in the world, fiercely claims that horary is an exact craft. In the excerpt below Frawley is discussing the topic of radicality, i.e. the adequacy of the chart’s symbolism to the question being asked. Many horarists will first consider if the chart properly reflects the matter at hand before attempting to interpret the chart, but Frawley thinks otherwise:

“There are astrologers (...) deliberating long over whether a chart is ‘radical; by which they mean ‘capable of being judged’. These astrologers have their own translation of that famous Hermetic dictum, running ‘As above, so every now and again so below’. Every chart can be judged. Astrology does not stop working” (Frawley, 2005, p.141).

In this quote, Frawley very clearly draws on the Platonic conception we have seen Cornelius criticising before, the ‘astrology of signs’. The most explicitly oracular form of astrology is reduced yet again into a version of the machine of destiny where the skies provide answers to question like a rather well oiled machine. Horary astrology is read here, in Frawley’s own words, as “quick, simple and effective, providing concrete, verifiable answers” (Frawley, 2005, p.1).

It seems to me that it is reasonable to assume, based on the examples I just provided, that it is very difficult, if not impossible, to extrapolate the correct attitude to have towards astrology from the tradition itself. Even what looks to Cornelius as the most explicit break with the machine of destiny within astrology can be read by Frawley as a manifestation of said machine. The mindset with which the astrologer approaches astrology seems to be fundamental in defining what *can* and *should* be done with astrology. That being said, it seems more reasonable to admit that we need a meta-system to look at astrology, an a priori explicitly defined mindset or framework that allows us to negotiate the apparent contradictions and fluidity of astrology. We

also need to use external arguments in favour of a participatory attitude towards astrology, because this approach does not obviously sprout from the tradition itself.

I believe some of the arguments already presented suffice to this purpose. A participatory approach to astrology has advantages that do not depend on the tradition itself. This approach is particularly successful at meeting the criticisms made to astrology, it is useful to make astrology less binding and therefore it allows its practitioners to feel less anxious about their chart. Moreover, it has an enchanting ability that provides resistance against some of the worst traits of our contemporary political system. These reasons alone seem enough to justify a participatory approach, but they still beg the question of what sort of mindset could be appropriate to make sense of an art as elusive as participatory astrology.

Metis

In the 19th century, philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche described two categories of modes of thought that have permeated Western history and that, according to him, could be spotted in a mythological theme in classical Greece. These modes were Apollonian and Dionysian, named after the two deities, imagined here as a polarity. The Apollonian mode would be connected with intellectual striving, purity, aversion to the body, a clear division of spirit/matter and self-control, while the Dionysian mode would be connected with ecstatic experiences, sensorial hedonism, chthonic pulsions, spiritual pursuits through the body, etc.¹⁸ It is beyond the scope of this work to make a critique of this division, that can be quite unfair to the mythological figures of both Dionysus and Apollo, and I suggest anyone interested in this subject from a pagan theology point of view reads the section 9 of “On the E at Delphi” by Plutarch where he discusses how Dionysus and Apollo can be seen as different qualities of the same god. Despite this critique of Nietzsche’s division I believe it can be extremely useful when thinking about modes of interacting with the world and so I will be using it.

Psychotherapist John Heaton, in a talk about astrology and the goddess Metis, discusses a third type of cognitive mode that does not fit either the Apollonian or Dionysian modes, and that may be particularly apt to approach astrology. This is the Metic mode, associated with the goddess Metis. Heaton describes her as

“(…) the incarnation of a particular type of intelligence which is translated by Detienne as cunning intelligence (…)

There are no treatises on Metis, Metis is nothing to do with logic and system, Metis is always below the surface, she is never concerned to make herself explicit, she is always implicit. The sort of thing she is is variously translated as wisdom, forethought, subtlety of mind, vigilance, experience over years, deception and she above all applies in situations which are transient, fluctuating, disconcerting and ambiguous. Situations that don’t lend themselves to precise measurements” (Heaton, 1989, p.4).

¹⁸ It is hard to give a page with such an organized list by Nietzsche, but these concepts are thoroughly explored in his *The Birth of Tragedy* (Nietzsche, 2017). For the original point where he makes this distinction cf. section 1 of this book.

Notice how Heaton's description of Metis applies precisely to the problem at hand. Astrology appears to resist definition, to present uncomfortable contradictions and to seduce by the wisdom it may impart. Metic thought seems to be the tool that best fits the traits of astrology we have discussed so far. Heaton proceeds to compare Metic with Apollonian and Dionysian modes of cognition:

“(…) the very basic western way of thinking of things is in terms of the intelligible, the eternal, the necessary; mathematical [sic] truth which tends to be thought of as heavenly and male, versus the transient truth which tends to be thought of as female or Dionysian, the intelligible versus the sensible. The intelligible is the necessary that goes by rules, it is what is plotted out or attempts to be plotted out by physics (…). That is Apollonian in contrast to the Dionysian which is wild and feminine. So the point is that Metis transcends this, she doesn't fit into either of these categories (…) she is in the stomach of Zeus. Metis is concerned with a multiple changing world but she closes it and always proves more multiple than the adversary. When pursuing a goal she always goes obliquely (…)” (Ibid. p.4-5).

Metis was the first wife of Zeus. After it was prophesied that she would bear a son to Zeus that would overthrow him, Zeus swallowed her and immediately after Athena was born from his head (Hesiod, *Theogony*, ll. 885-900 & l. 929). Zeus has Metis because the goddess operates from his belly (Ibid., p.3). Interestingly enough Athena did attempt to overthrow Zeus together with Hera and Poseidon but failed (Homer, *Iliad*, book I vv. 397-400). By having Metis Zeus was able to escape the prophecy that neither his father Chronos or his grandfather Ouranos had been able to escape. This ability is, of course, recognizable in many other instances of mythology. Odysseus, for example, has a Metic kind of intelligence, and it is that kind of intelligence, not Apollonian or Dionysian, that allow him to survive the Trojan war and his infamous return home. Heaton quotes an episode when, after arriving in Ithaca, Odysseus meets Athena who is disguised. When Athena asks Odysseus who he is, Odysseus attempts to fool her as well and she laughs out loud because they are “two of a kind” (Heaton, 1989, p.11). This is precisely the kind of intelligence we are talking about here.

This type of intelligence has been associated with witch-doctors inside and outside the academy. The expression “cunning man” or “cunning woman” is a good example of how it is assumed that a certain sort of spiritual worker will be cunning. In academic studies about

divination this cunning intelligence has been identified by Cornelius as a sort of chicane (2009). While the student learns the art of healing, the teacher will gradually present him to certain tricks that make the patient believe they have been cured. These tricks are obviously not regarded as a failure of “true witch-doctors”, they are a secret shared by the initiates (Cornelius, 2009, p.12). But the use of cunning intelligence is fundamental to allow the spirits, or “medicine”, to work from the witch doctor’s point of view, and he must do all in his power to enable the cure. Instances where the chicane is explicitly part of the witch-doctor’s array of techniques are, therefore, excellent examples of how Metis cunning works in practice and for the benefit of the community. However, Cornelius’ discussion of an episode narrated by the anthropologist Evans-Pritchard points out that the initiate or the student cannot learn about the chicane before the time is right. In this episode, the pupil of the witch-doctor discovers about the chicane too early because the anthropologist sets a trap that exposes the witch-doctor’s sleight of hand. By learning this too soon, the student has a crisis of faith and wants to give up on his pursuit (Ibid.). This is why first the student must accept the truth of the art and only then move into its cunning secrets. This side of Metis is probably the one that has been translated as “experience over the years”.

Interestingly enough, one can find another relevant polarity involving Metis. After Zeus swallowed her, he married Themis, another goddess connected with oracles. However, her characteristics are diametrically opposed to Metis. Heaton says:

“Themis is the patron of the oracles of the earth, in contrast to Metis who is the patron of the oracles of water. So Metis is the more primal watery goddess. The difference between Metis and Themis is shown partly in the very word Themis, a theme. A theme is something specific which is different from what Metis deals with; Metis relates to the future from the point of view of uncertainty. (...) Now Themis (...) spells out the future as already written. She gives no advice but pronounces a sentence (...) She’s the mother of the Horae, the seasons, and she indicates what is forbidden, what the limits are. So you see Themis deals with constant things, laws, the seasons, and tells you what you mustn’t go beyond, whereas Metis is much more difficult, she deals with more primaeval things that are moving and shifting. This may be interesting, whether there are two different ways in which astrologers work, perhaps sometimes they follow Themis and perhaps at other times they follow Metis” (Heaton, 1989, p.9).

The Ptolemaic approach to astrology is thematic in essence and therefore it will necessarily result in a judgement that feels like a sentence, as we have seen before. However, a Metic approach will work well with participatory version of astrology because it allows the astrologer to navigate through tensions that are constantly moving and shifting. One interesting remark made by the audience in Heaton's talk that we have been discussing claims that although astrology seems to work Metically, there is a Thematic *mythos* that is created around the astrologer (Heaton, 1989, p.18). It is important to notice that the astrologer may be working to create a certain *mythos* around himself but this does not mean that he actually behaves like the *mythos* suggests. This might be an interesting realization of the chicane in astrology.

What I wish to suggest here, is that if the astrological community wants to break the shackles that result from a literalist or Ptolemaic approach to astrology, then the focus should be on developing a Metic attitude to the subject. A viable course of action for astrologers who wish to bring about a participatory approach to astrology would be to attempt to instill such an attitude in the student of astrology as they progress through their study, especially if it can be done implicitly rather than explicitly. The idea here is to a certain extent mimic the initiatory process we discussed in the chicane episode. We allow the student to accept the truth of astrology before explicitly introduce them to the chicane, but also encourage them to develop a chicane-like mentality during the course of study in the art of astrology. For this, I will discuss some ideas in the field of transformative education that could be applied to the teaching of astrology, in order to create a less Apollonian environment that would allow the student to both learn the technical craft as well as the attitude that allows the craft to work. It must be noted that this is no easy task or panacea, since I do not believe any approach to this material can ever solve the risk of literalism. However, the development of an attitude that is so antagonistic to literalism of any kind may be an important step to make sense of this particular experience in our post-Enlightenment world.

Transformative Education and Astrology

In this section I wish to discuss the problem of education in astrology. Astrology, being an art with metaphysical inclinations, was probably not always taught in a merely Apollonian/Thematic way. Although much of our academic tradition is owed to Plato, many things are manifestly different in today's academy than in old, classical academies. Despite the fact that we do not know much for certain about the Platonic academy, we suspect that in the beginning its methods were more dialectic and less expositive (Lindberg, 2007, p.70). The intellectual inquiry was accompanied by other practical activities like worship to the gods (Pausanias, *Description of Greece*, book I, 30.2). Not only that but Plato's academy was positioned in a place where important religious ceremonies happened, namely Dionysian rites (Ibid., 29.2). This is possibly connected to Socrates' notion that education and knowledge cannot easily be separated from action. The popular dictum attributed to Socrates, "to know the good is to do the good", is best expressed by this quote from *Gorgias*: "he who has learned anything whatever is that which his knowledge makes him" (§460b). This gives us a stark vision of education that makes clear why the academy encompassed so many apparently non-academic pursuits: the knowledge of something necessarily *transforms* the one who knows. From this point of view any sort of educational enterprise will have to take into account the fact that your knowledge of something will necessarily work in you and transform you. How could the members of the Platonic Academy study piety and God if they did not perform religious obligations themselves?

This is quite evocative of the process through which the witch-doctor learns the chicane, by observing it and allowing the realisation of the process to derive from experience. What this suggests, is that a particular subject of learning tends to be accompanied by the development of a specific attitude or behaviour. If we keep our rough division between Apollonian, Dionysian and Metic modes we can say that a mathematician is expected to develop an Apollonian attitude, for example. We can argue, however, that an actor should develop a Dionysian one. The development of the attitude is fundamental, because as we have seen the attitude is the necessary

background for the knowledge to play out. As such, the witch-doctor and the diviner must develop their Metic attitude alongside their craft, because craft alone is not sufficient.

One may argue that today's universities are full of extra-curricular activities, societies, sports teams, and it is true that this kind of academic spirit resembles what was just described about the Platonic academy. However, none of these activities is regarded as *fundamental* for the learning process. A brilliant student may finish his education with the highest possible grades without ever participating in any such activities. Herein lies the great difference: for the mainstream environments of education, learning is an acquisition of abstract knowledge that does not at all imply a change or transformation in one's typical patterns of behavior or perception (Dirkx, 1998, pp.1-2).

Interestingly enough, one cannot say that the transformative perspective described above has completely disappeared from pedagogy. In the last decades there has been a movement of academics that explore the notion of transformative learning or education, an avenue of teaching that attempts to cause deep transformation in those undertaking it, much like what was done in the Platonic academy. According to Patricia Cranton and Edward Taylor (2012, p. 5) the first comprehensive structuration of transformative learning theory was *Transformative Dimensions of Adult Learning* (1991) by Jack Mezirow, however we can already identify the beginnings of this traditions in Paulo Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (first published in 1968) that presents education as a tool of emancipation through a Marxist lens.

It is generally accepted that despite great differences in the approaches of various theoretical orientations, transformative education aims at “a deep shift in perception, leading to more open, more permeable, and better justified meaning perspectives” (Ibid., p.3). The educator will focus on providing the student not only with a set of predefined skills but also with the ability to understand whatever knowledge they are receiving contextually. In Mezirow's own words:

“As there are no fixed truths or totally definitive knowledge, and because circumstances change, the human condition may be best understood as a continuous effort to negotiate contested meanings. (...) That is why it is so important that adult learning emphasize [sic] contextual

understanding, critical reflection on assumption, and validation of meaning by assessing reasons” (Mezirow, 2012, p. 73).

Notice how similar the dilemma we have been focusing on is to the one Mezirow is raising. In many situations it is fundamental to recognize the limitations of knowledge and find strategies to negotiate competing narratives that are presenting themselves to consciousness. This is naturally true of the objective/participatory dilemma in astrology, but it is also true of astrological symbolism itself. By virtue of its symbolic nature a certain astrological configuration may present hundreds of possible interpretations¹⁹ that the astrologers are negotiating not only through their craft but also their context. This context includes the person sitting in front of them, the expectation of the encounter (is it between friends or a paid service?), the astrologers’ own intuition, etc. It is also because of this negotiation between craft and context that a Metic perspective is very important to develop for astrologers, and this passage by Mezirow seems to set us in the right direction.

However, it is important to keep in mind that Mezirow in particular moves from the dilemma into a typically Apollonian answer. The student has to learn to look at the situation in context and to negotiate competing narratives, but the way to do it is to acquire critical and reflexive skills that will allow for a better assessment of the situation. This, of course, is not the kind of perspective we are looking for because the solution will necessarily lead us into the same trap unless tempered by something else. Transformative education theorist John Dirkx says, drawing on Boyd, that “Mezirow’s theory, focuses on the adaptative task of instrumentally responding to reality demands (...)” (Dirkx, 2012, p. 117).

Dirkx and Boyd, on the other hand, have attempted to develop a theory of transformative education that draws many elements from depth psychology, in particular the works of Jungian and post-Jungian theory. This Jungian inclined environment of transformative education aims at a change process that

“(...) involves and occurs in relationships that range from the relationship of the learner with unknown aspects of himself or herself to relationships with other learners, teachers, groups, the

¹⁹ For example, according to Lilly, Saturn alone can stand for elderly people, a father, a clown, a dog, a graveyard, suspicion, among many, many other meanings (2003, ch.8).

organization and broader society. To bring about the deep and lasting change that is the aim of transformative learning is to bring about deep and lasting change in these relationships” (Ibid., p. 126).

In this interpretation of transformative education it becomes clear that the transformation being discussed is much deeper than the acquisition of critical skills. Here the learner is expected to actively change the relationships to everything around them *through* the set of relations that emerges during the course of study, all of this using a Jungian background. Despite the fact that I am not specifically using a Jungian framework, this is much closer to what I mean when I said that transformative education could be a good way to develop an *attitude* alongside a skill.

It is important to make extremely clear that it is not my purpose to indoctrinate the students. In Mezirow’s words

“Adult educators do not indoctrinate (...); in our culture they create opportunities and foster norms supporting freer, fuller participation in discourse and in democratic social and political life. They make every effort to transfer their authority over the learning group to the group itself as soon as this is feasible, and they become collaborative learners” (Mezirow, 2012, p.73).

The idea would not be to force a Metic attitude into the students of astrology because transformative education aims to be an exercise of freedom, instead the idea is to facilitate a learning environment where a Metic attitude can be developed through personal realisations that stem directly from the relationship the student has with the material being studied. This means that a number of exercises could be used in order to help develop the attitude we are interested in.

Dirkx also argues that *pathos* may be an interesting measure of the students investment in the subject. For example, he tells an anecdote about a discussion in class that was very heated and extrapolates from there that the effect of the material on the students was being transformative (2012, p.122). I believe this comment is especially perceptive because the introduction of *pathos* in a learning environment has very interesting implications. If we want to move away from classical Apollonian or Thematic approaches to teaching, the introduction of pathetic elements is undoubtedly one of the easiest ways to do it, precisely because it will blur

the line between learning and feeling, heart and brain. As Dirkx argues, the introduction of *pathos* in a learning environment may be a path to transformation. I also believe that it can be an interesting way to develop *Metis*. There is nothing as changeable as human emotions, and the development of an ability to negotiate them along with astrology may be an interesting way of becoming more *Metic*. Not only that, but the negotiation between learning the craft and expressing one's feelings also requires a certain level of *Metis*. In the remainder of this section I will discuss a set of practices and exercises that I consider may be valuable in order to develop a *Metic* approach to astrology. I will be drawing from my experience both as a student and teacher of astrology, while trying to argue for each specific point I make.

Although some astrology schools are sceptical of using one's own horoscope in the course of study, I believe this is fundamental in order to develop a *Metic* approach. Not using one's horoscope immediately falls into the Apollonian trap of objectification and the subject-object split. Studying one's own horoscope, however, may be a way to resist the subject-object split by making oneself both the subject and object of study. On the other hand, studying one's own horoscope leads into a more divinatory approach to astrology precisely because as the study progresses, and the student's context changes, things that seemed to have a very well defined meaning will change and appear through a new light. For example, a specific aspect that has always been read as a propensity to lie, suddenly is read as a gift in story-telling. The reading changes according to the student's context and because the class allows an intimate enough relationship with the horoscope there is room for new interpretations to sprout at different moments.

There are more advantages to the focus in one's own horoscope, especially the fact that other people in class will probably have some similar astrological configurations. Let us imagine, for example, that two students have a very similar Venus in the horoscope. Venus tends to be associated with matters of love and it is quite probable that these two students will realise very fast that their love lives have little to nothing in common. This will lead into the need to negotiate the fact that astrology is clearly working for oneself, but manifesting completely different results in others. The situation itself cannot be solved by anything other than the denial of the difference (e.g. "the other person is lying because she is ashamed of being such a flirt!"),

or the development of a Metic perspective that allows both interpretations to be radically dependent on context. And, of course, the study of one's own horoscope is the gateway to the *pathos* we have been talking about.

Lastly, if we accept that astrology works as a divinatory practice and is participative, this means that it is highly rooted in the context where divination is happening. Generally, there will be a specific question that needs answering and the act of asking the question itself will be clothed in very different form depending on several variables like the type of relationship between the astrologer and the querent or if the relationship is commercial or non-commercial. This creates a challenge to astrology classes because generally the charts presented as examples will not be grounded in such a context and will not arise from an organic divinatory moment. This means that the learning of astrology will need to be by necessity a process of amplification where divinatory moments are faked in order to present interesting symbols from other horoscopes.²⁰ However, if the student is looking at their own horoscope the process will be partially one of amplification and partially divinatory. The reason for this is that I believe most people have questions about their lives, so their own horoscope will always be approached with divinatory intention (e.g. "will I have a faithful husband?" "how can I manage my excess of aggressiveness?", etc.). Although we cannot say that every moment of every class will be spent in spontaneous divinatory moments, the likeliness of a real divinatory moment emerging in a class where the subject of study is the students' horoscopes is much higher, and will transport them into the Metic mentality in which we are interested..

Thus, the use of one's own horoscope creates a kind of embodied hermeneutics where the ability to interpret a symbol informs the experience of that same symbol and vice versa. The student learns about specific traits of the horoscope by experiencing them in life and in turn can understand events in life better by using astrological symbology as a frame of reference.

We still need to keep in mind the possibility that such a strong focus in one's natal chart may enable some egotistical behaviour. It is important that the focus on the student's chart does not become the source of self-obsession. Although I do not have literature on this, I have observed it happening occasionally in my teaching and the results may be frightening. Not only

²⁰ I am indebted to Maggie Hyde in a personal discussion for this point.

does the student become completely bound by astrological language, using it to describe the smallest occurrences in life, they become obsessed with their chart. The symbol is then objectified in a different way, as a means to an end. The end will vary from case to case, but many times there is a general projection that the solution for anything in their lives can be found through the natal chart.

It is thus important that we find countermeasures that allow the student to be highly involved with the material in a pathetic sense while not becoming trapped by it. The group dynamics here is fundamental, and Dirx's ideas work as an important compass. By using the charts of the students as the main source of study material, each individual student will not only be focusing on their chart, but also on the charts of their peers. This means that the range of emotional negotiation will be much larger than if the student were to look just at their own chart. The situation established here allows for an interesting mix of subjective and objective approaches, because at certain moments one particular student may become the interpreter of a divinatory moment for one of their peers. This allows astrology to play out as it is in the classroom, because the student interpreting will be negotiating what they know about their peers, their knowledge of the astrological craft, and what is and is not appropriate to say at any given moment. This process is much more difficult to achieve when face to face with the horoscope's native, because it requires the ability to navigate the situation. It requires Metis. When the chart being analysed is not from someone present, it is much easier to wildly speculate about meanings, completely departing from the grounding context of class.

There is another, more radical way of avoiding excessive egotistical focus, which are certain types of embodied exercises. Portuguese astrologer João Medeiros in his CEIA school²¹ and English astrologer John Wadsworth in his Kairos Astrology school²² have both developed exercises of this kind.²³ I will focus more on Medeiros's approach because I teach in his school and I am more acquainted with it, occasionally referring to Wadsworth's approach.

²¹ Cf the school's website: <https://www.ceia-astrologia.com/>

²² Cf. the school's website: <http://www.kairosastrology.co.uk/>

²³ It is important to note that I am not claiming these astrologers invented these techniques, I am exploring the way they apply them for educational purposes. For more on techniques like this is astrology cf. Schermer (1989).

Medeiros' way of achieving this sort of embodied exercise has been to use a synthesis of familiar constellations and astrology. Familiar constellations were created by Bert Hellinger (Cohen, 2006, p.229) and are

“a therapeutic intervention that integrates family systems therapy (Moreno, Satir, Boszormenyi-Nagy), existential-phenomenology (Brentano, Husserl, Heidegger), and the ancestor reverence of the South African Zulus. Although it is rooted in the psychotherapeutic tradition, the method is distinguished from conventional psychotherapy in that (a) the client hardly speaks and (b) its primary aim is to identify and release prereflective, trans-generational patterns embedded within the family system, not to explore or process narrative, cognitive, or emotional content” (Ibid.).

The technique is inspired by psychodrama (Ibid.) and their practitioners claim that “in the silence and stillness of the constellated scene, the client and representatives are able to tune into the unconscious, collective will of the family system” (Ibid.). Each participant is assigned a role representing an actor in the constellated family. They stand very still in the beginning, and then the constellator will interpret their interaction with each other according to a well defined symbolic language and scheme:

“The Family Constellation process removes the “drama” from Moreno’s psychodrama and the ‘sculpting’ from Satir’s family sculpting to create an experience that is silent and still instead of vocal and kinetic. As the participants adjust to this emptiness, the prereflective dimension of fundamental structures (Colaizzi, 1973; Husserl, 1964) comes into view. In phenomenological terms, Constellations create a three-dimensional matrix of the ancestral lineage that is not generally presented to consciousness in material form. “Constellations function by transforming unreal field dimensions of human experience into real spatial symbolic representations, thereby allowing them to be worked with directly” (Donnan, 2005)” (Ibid., p.229).

This process not only creates deep realisations in the participants but it also allows the constellator either to facilitate a symbolic resolution of the tensions in the scene, or to diagnose the source of some of the problems in the family system that are manifesting negatively in the analysand’s life.

Constellations have been used together with astrology for some time, perhaps most famously by Venezuelan astrologer Enzo di Paola.²⁴ In this kind of synthesis instead of representing a family member, the participants represent a piece of astrological symbolism, e.g. an element or a planet, and interact with the other participants on this basis. João Medeiros' approach consists in using this technique as part of the learning process in class. Astroconstellations not only intensify the negotiation of *pathos* in the class context, they also allow the student to phenomenologically experience symbols that may be completely alien to their own chart. In this way, the student can still make use of a strong embodied hermeneutics while experiencing astrological symbols that do not belong to the range of symbols attributed to them by their own horoscopes. In my personal experience teaching in this school, many students have claimed to have finally understood a certain piece of symbolism that had never made sense to them through this exercise. As an interesting anecdote, one student once told me they had finally understood what the adjective “deep” meant when connected with the astrological element of water, because they had felt such a strong feeling of “deepness” while representing that element in the constellation. This is all the more interesting because this student had no water in their own horoscope.

John Wadsworth uses similar elements in his own teaching. He introduced astro-drama as part of his teaching technique.²⁵ He uses this technique to “play out whole chart scenarios” and to create “a profound astrological journey of self-discovery through the twelve gateways of the Zodiac” (Wadsworth, 2018). Other methods used in the school include all sorts of experiential techniques like “practical enquiries, exercises, stories, music and meditation” (Ibid.). I know from my experience in one of his workshops that one of the exercises consists on putting on a mask representing an astrological sign, and to dance to music in order to embody and express the meanings of that sign. This then is supposed to allow the student to both learn the meaning of the sign and be changed by it. Although I cannot comment on the results of these techniques as well as on the results of Medeiros' techniques, it seems to me that they must be rather similar. Both teachers focus on an experiential, phenomenological approach to the astrological symbol that

²⁴ Cf. his personal website: <http://www.hijosdeacuaro.com/enzo/>

²⁵ As the name indicates, astro-drama is a fusion between the psychotherapeutic psychodrama and astrology (cf. Schermer, 1989).

allows the student to transcend their own horoscope while keeping them grounded in an emotional framework that elicits divinatory responses and a Metic approach.

All the techniques I have described in this section attempt to create an environment where the student is allowed to change while learning astrology, but also an environment that places strong negotiating demands on the student. The student must not only learn the astrological symbolism and technique, but they also must be able to negotiate their own anxieties facing their own chart and the anxiety of others when facing their charts. This allows very interesting group dynamics to emerge and the student is immersed right from the start in activities that must be faced by developing the necessary cunning and experience that are associated with Metis. I believe that if these techniques are applied by someone with an explicit belief in the value of Metis for astrology, then they can start changing drastically the way students learn and practice this craft, bringing them closer to the Metic and participatory approach that has been discussed in this work.

Conclusion

In this work I attempted to show that the development of Metic thought as a meta-approach to astrology may be one of the best ways to avoid its literalization. As we have seen, the connection between Metic thought and astrology is not new, and several thinkers referred to it in the past. However, I believe that my point about not being possible to extrapolate astrology's functions from its system and the need for an a priori defined philosophical attitude to approach it is relatively new. I also think that the idea that transformative education may be used to develop this attitude intentionally is new, as far as any idea can be new. I want to, however, make an aporia for myself and reiterate that I am standing in the shoulders of giants that have been attempting to think astrology in interesting, deeply philosophical ways. Without their thought I could not have advanced a single interesting idea in this work.

I also wish to underlie that anything in this dissertation that seems to be a conclusion is nothing more than an imaginative exploration of these subjects. I wish to pursue the subject of transformative education and astrology, together with other ancient wisdom traditions, in further levels of study, but for now this short work does nothing more than advancing some hypotheses that may work as my framework hereafter.

The purpose of this dissertation was to explore some of the most heated debates in the astrological community and to think about tools that may address the problems they raise. As with any philosophical question, I do not have a pretension that we will ever have a definitive answer, much less that this answer could be provided by me. I hope, however, to have joined my voice to a chorus of voices that have been doing intellectual work with astrology that interests me very much, and I hope that I did this in a way that is appealing to academics, astrologers, and sympathetic members of the public. As for the rest, it is best to let the gods decide.

Appendix 1 - For Astrologers

I decided to write this short appendix for astrologers in order to show an interesting piece of symbolism that arose during the writing of this dissertation. One of the philosophical problems I struggle with the most, as might have become explicit in the course of the dissertation, is the tension between monist and pluralist forms of approaching the world, and in particular metaphysical experiences. I described this tension making reference to myths where a trickster god purposely boycotts figures with highly monist connotations. Right after the moment I finished this dissertation I realised this tension is symbolically represented in my horoscope, in a square between Mercury (the pluralist element) and Jupiter (the monist element). Interestingly enough both planets also compete for the role of Almuten Figuris, one technical name used to describe a particularly powerful planet in the horoscope that is sometimes read as the guardian angel or the daimon. Jupiter beats Mercury for a single point, representing, once again, this tension.

Simao Cortes
Natal Chart
2 Jun 1993, que
10:15 CEDT -2:00
Lisbon, Portugal
38°N43' 009"W08'
Geocentric
Tropical
Placidus
Mean Node

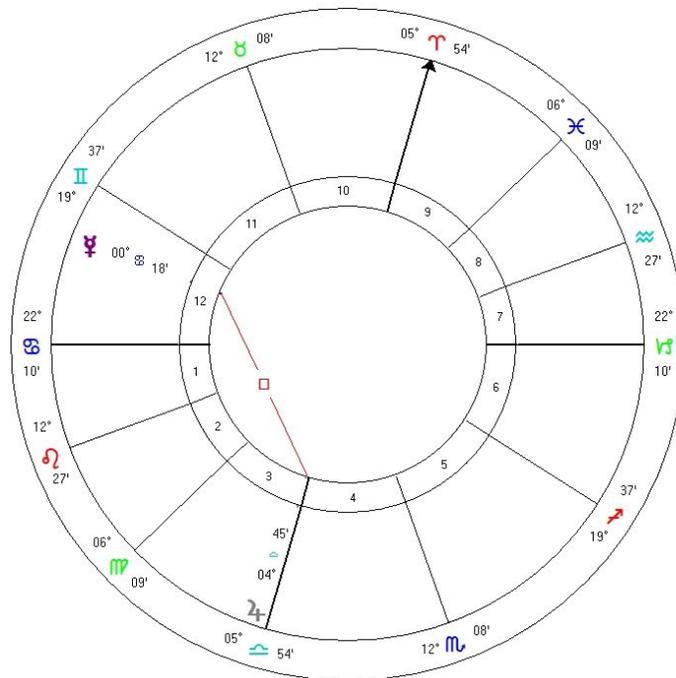


Chart made using Solar Fire v.9.0.17

Simão Cortês
September 2018

Reference List

Books and Essays

St. Augustine (2014) *The City of God*, trans. Marcus Dodds, Project Gutenberg. Available at <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/45304/45304-h/45304-h.htm> last accessed 22 September 2018.

Bird, A. (2006) *Astrology in Education: An Ethnography*, Ph.D thesis, University of Sussex. Available at http://www.cosmocritic.com/pdfs/Bird_Alie_Astrology_in_Education.pdf last accessed 22 September 2018.

Bok, B. J., et al. (1975) “Objections to Astrology: A statement by 186 Scientists” in *The Humanist*, September/October. Available at <http://www.astrology.co.uk/tests/objections.html> last accessed 23 September 2018.

Cicero. (1923) *De Senectute De Amicitia De Divinatione*, (trans.) W. A. Falconer, Cambridge MA, London, England, Harvard University Press. Available online in: <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A2007.01.0043%3Abook%3D1%3Asection%3D1> last accessed 16 September 2018.

Cohen, D. B. (2006) “ ‘Family Constellations’ - An Innovative Systemic Phenomenological Group Process from Germany” in *The Family Journal*, vol.14(3).

Corbin, H. (1999) *Swedenborg and Esoteric Islam*, trans. Leonard Fox, ed. Barbara Phillips, Swedenborg Studies Monograph Series, West Chester, Pennsylvania, Swedenborg Foundation.

Cornelius, G. (2003) *The Moment of Astrology*, The Wessex Astrologer.

Cornelius, G. (2009) “Chicane: Double-thinking and Divination amongst the Witch-doctors” in *Divination - Perspectives for a New Millenium*, ed. P. Curry, London, New York, NY, Routledge.

Cornelius, G. (2013) “Astrology, Imagination and the Imaginal”. Available at <https://www.learn.canterbury.ac.uk> last accessed 23 September 2018.

Cortês, S. (2017) “Real and Unreal: How Fictional Charts Show Us Astrology’s Symbolic Nature” in *The Astrological Journal*, vol. 59, n.2.

Cranton, P. & Taylor, E. W. (2012) “Transformative Learning Theory: Seeking a More Unified Theory”, in *The Handbook of Transformative Learning - Theory, Research, and Practice*, eds. Edward W. Taylor & Patricia Cranton, San Francisco, La, Jossey-Bass.

Curry, P. (2012) “Enchantment and Modernity”, draft. Available at <http://www.patrickcurry.co.uk/papers/Enchantment%20and%20Modernity%20for%20PAN.pdf> last accessed 23 September 2018.

Curry, P. (2015) “On ‘An Aporia’” in “An Aporia for Astrology”, cosmocritic.com. Available at http://www.cosmocritic.com/pdfs/Curry_Patrick_Aporia.pdf last accessed 23 September 2018.

Dante Alighieri. (2004) *The Vision of Paradise, Complete*, trans. Rev. H. F. Cary, Project Gutenberg. Available at <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/8799/8799-h/8799-h.htm> last accessed 23 September 2018.

Dante Alighieri. (2009) *Hell*, trans. H. W. Longfellow, Project Gutenberg. Available at <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/1001/1001-h/1001-h.htm#CantoXX> last accessed on 23 September 2018.

Deuteronomy, 18:10-2, King James Version.

Dirkx, J. (1998) “Transformative Learning Theory in the Practice of Adult Education: An Overview” in *PAACE Journal of Lifelong Learning*, vol. 7.

Dirkx, J. (2012) “Nurturing Soul Work: A Jungian Approach to Transformative Learning”, in *The Handbook of Transformative Learning - Theory, Research, and Practice*, eds. Edward W. Taylor & Patricia Cranton, San Francisco, LA, Jossey-Bass.

Feyerabend, P. (2010) *Against Method*, London and Brooklyn, Verso.

Ficino, M. (2006) *The Book of the Sun*, in *Marsilio Ficino*, ed. A. Voss, Western Esoteric Masters Series, North Atlantic Books.

Frawley, J. (2005) *The Horary Textbook*, London, Apprentice Books.

Freire, P. (2017) *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Penguin Modern Classics.

Genesis, 37-45, King James Version.

Heaton, J. (1989) “Metis: Divination, Psychotherapy and Cunning Intelligence”, The Company of Astrologers. Available at http://www.cosmocritic.com/pdfs/Heaton_John_Metis_Truth.pdf last accessed on 23 September 2018.

Hesiod. (1982) *Theogony*, in *Hesiod, the Homeric Hymns and Homeric*, trans. H. G. Evelyn-White, ed. G. P. Goold, Cambridge, MA, London, Harvard University Press.

Hillman, J. (1996) *The Soul's Code - In Search of Character and Calling*, New York, Random House, Inc.

Hillman, J. (1997) “Heaven Retains within its Sphere Half of all Bodies and Maladies”, Spring Publications.

Hillman, J. (2008) *Animal Presences*, Uniform Edition of the Writings of James Hillman, Vol.9, Putnam, Connecticut; Spring Publications.

Johnson, R. (2009) “From Sin to Science: Astrological Explanation for the Black Death, 1347-1350” in *Ex Post Facto*, vol. 18.

Judges, 6:36-40, King James Version.

Julian. (1913) “Hymn to King Helios” in *The Works of Emperor Julian*, vol.1, trans. E . W. C. Wright, Loeb Classical Library. Available at https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Hymn_to_King_Helios last accessed 23 September 2018

Keats, J. (2002) *Selected Letters of John Keats*, ed. G. F. Scott, Cambridge, MA, London, Harvard University Press.

Kripal, J. J. (2007) *The Serpent’s Gift*, Chicago, London, The University of Chicago Press.

Lilly, W. (2003) *Christian Astrology: Book I An Introduction to Astrology*, World Astrology Network. Available at <http://www.astrologiahumana.com/CA-I%20copy.pdf> last accessed 23 September 2018.

Lindberg, D. C. (2007) *The Beginnings of Western Science*, Chicago, London, University of Chicago Press.

Lovejoy, A. O. (2001) *The Great Chain of Being - A Study of the History of an Idea*, Cambridge, Massachusetts & London, England; Harvard University Press.

Lyons, L. (2005) “Paranormal Beliefs Come (Super)Naturally to Some”, Gallup New Service.

Available at

<https://news.gallup.com/poll/19558/paranormal-beliefs-come-supernaturally-some.aspx> last accessed 22 September 2018.

Mezirow, J. (2012) “Learning to Think Like an Adult - Core Concepts of Transformation Theory”, in *The Handbook of Transformative Learning - Theory, Research, and Practice*, eds. Edward W. Taylor & Patricia Cranton, San Francisco, CA, Jossey-Bass.

Nietzsche, F. (2016) *The Birth of Tragedy*, trans. W. H. Haussman, Project Gutenberg. Available at <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/51356/51356-h/51356-h.htm> last accessed on 23 September 2018.

Pausanias. (1918) *Description of Greece*, trans. W. H. S. Jones & H. A. Ormerod, Cambridge, Massachusetts, Harvard University Press, London, England, William Heinemann Ltd. Available at <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus:text:1999.01.0160> last accessed 23 September 2018.

Plato. (1967) *Plato in Twelve Volumes*, Vol. 3, trans. W. R. M. Lamb, Cambridge, Massachusetts, Harvard University Press, London, England, William Heinemann Ltd. Available at <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus:text:1999.01.0178> last accessed 23 September 2018.

Plato. (1969) *Plato in Twelve Volumes*, Vols. 5 & 6, trans. P. Shorey, Cambridge, Massachusetts, Harvard University Press, London, England, William Heinemann Ltd. Available at <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus:text:1999.01.0168> last accessed 23 September 2018.

Plutarch. (1874) *Plutarch's Morals*, trans. various hands, rev. W. Goodwin, Cambridge, Press of John Wilson and son. Available online in:

<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/searchresults?q=Plutarch> last accessed on 16/05/2018.

Pseudo-Orpheus. (1792) *The Hymns of Orpheus, Translated from the Original Greek with a Preliminary Dissertation on the Life and Theology of Orpheus*, trans. T. Taylor, London, T. Payne, at the Mews-gate; B. White and Son, Fleet-street; G. Nicol, Pall-Mall; R. Faulder, New Bond-street. Available at <http://www.sacred-texts.com/cla/hoo/hoo00.htm> last accessed on 23 September 2018.

Ptolemy. (1980) *Tetrabiblos*, trans. F. E. Robbins, Cambridge, Massachusetts, London, England Harvard University Press.

Sallust. (1793) *On the Gods and the World in Sallust On the Gods and the World; and the Pythagoric Sentences of Demophilus; and Five Hymns by Proclus, in the original Greek with a poetical version. To which are added, Five Hymns by the Translator*, trans. T. Taylor, London, Edward Jeffrey, Pall Mall. Available at https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Sallust_On_the_Gods_and_the_World/Sallust_on_the_Gods_and_the_World, last accessed September 23 2018.

Schermer, B. (1989) *Astrology Alive: Experiential Astrology, Astro drama and the Healing Arts*, Aquarian New Directions in Astrology, Aquarian Press.

Taylor, C. (2015) *Imagining the World: Contemplating the Reality of the Astrological Horoscope*, MA dissertation, Canterbury Christ Church University. Available at <http://gnosticacademy.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Carole-Taylor-dissertation-Imagining-the-World.pdf> last accessed 23 September 2018.

Unknown. (1982) “To Hermes” in *Hesiod, the Homeric Hymns and Homeric*, trans. H. G. Evelyn-White, ed. G. P. Goold, Cambridge, MA, London, Harvard University Press.

Verger, P. F. (1998) *Lendas Africanas dos Orixás*, trans. M. A. Nóbrega, Fundação Pierre Verger, Carybe e Corrupio Edições e Promoções Culturais.

Voss, A. (2000) “The Astrology of Marsilio Ficino: Divination or Science”, in *Culture and Cosmos*, vol.4, n.4.

Voss, A. (2018) *A Pandaemonium of Images*, [PowerPoint for MA in Myth, Cosmology and the Sacred], 13 January.

Willis, R. & Curry, P. (2004) *Astrology, Science and Culture: Pulling Down the Moon*, Oxford, New York, NY, Berger.

Websites

Medeiros, J. (no date) *CEIA - Astrologia*. Available at <https://www.ceia-astrologia.com/> last accessed 23 September 2018

Di Paola, E. (2017) *Astrogenealogia*. Available at <http://www.hijosdeacuاريو.com/enzo/> last accessed 23 September 2018.

Wadsworth, J. (2018) *Kairos Astrology*. Available at <http://www.kairosastrology.co.uk/> last accessed on 23 September 2018.

Software

Astrolabe (no date) *Solar Fire* (Version 9) [Computer Program]. Available at <https://alabe.com/solarfireV9.html> last accessed on 23 September 2018

Image

Detail of a winged goddess in the birth of Athena scene, probably Metis. 550-25 BC. Source:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Metis_\(mythology\)#/media/File:Winged_goddess_Louvre_F32.jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Metis_(mythology)#/media/File:Winged_goddess_Louvre_F32.jpg)