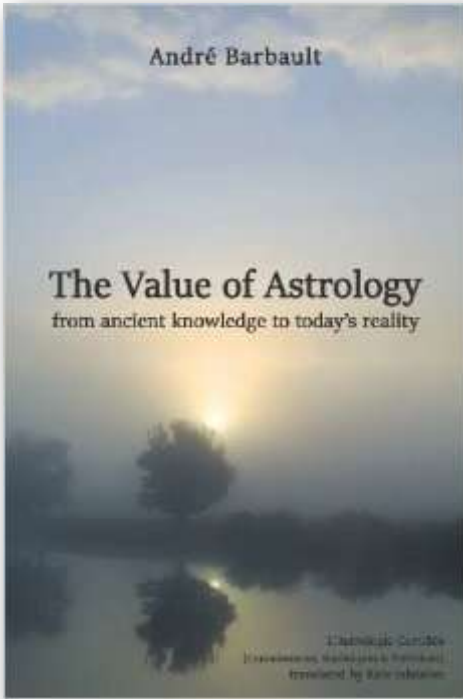


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# Reviews



[*Connaissances, Statistiques & Prévisions*] (Knowledge, Statistics & Forecasting). The translation by Kate Johnston is superb: Barbault is extremely erudite, using his knowledge of the French language to elaborate subtle nuances and succinctly express complex issues. It makes you pause and contemplate the full significance of what he says.

This book has a bit of everything: he extrapolates useful ideas from the early history of astrology; from natural to genethliacal, from Mesopotamia to Mesoamerica. He considers peak astrological progress through Hellenistic times to the Renaissance and throughout Europe, describing those for, and against, astrological philosophy, while picking apart the arguments of astrology's detractors.

Illustrating his point with quotations from Ptolemy's *Tetrabiblos* (Dr Doreen Greenbaum aided the choice of English translation) he reminds us that 'the science of astronomical certainty and astrological conjecture shouldn't be confused.'<sup>1</sup> It

*The Value of Astrology: from ancient knowledge to today's reality.* by André Barbault, translated by Kate Johnston. Astrological Association, London 2014.

Reviewed by Anna Estaroth

This is the first English translation of Barbault's 2006 book, originally entitled *L'Astrologie Certifiée*

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<sup>1</sup> André Barbault *The Value of Astrology* trans. Kate Johnston (London: Astrological Association, 2014). p.55. [Hereafter Barbault].

is Barbault's extensive knowledge of European philosophical thought that ties together the scholarly tradition, as he explores the works of Morin, Brache, Kepler, Krafft and Descartes, amongst others. He explains how the psychological character of astrology was 'sacrificed for the benefit of external reality,' then proceeds to explain how astrology's perspective is compatible with 21<sup>st</sup> century physics, from 'biological clocks' to 'chronogenetics.'<sup>2</sup>

His section on statistical analyses is comprehensive; discussing the works of Michel Gauquelin, Paul Choisnard and Didier Castille, he takes us further in. He describes the relevance of hereditary similarities and places this firmly in Plotinus' philosophical framework of 'sympathetic action' and 'harmonic correspondence.'<sup>3</sup>

Barbault favours demystifying astrological forecasting and focuses on mundane cycles. Citing examples, from his pioneering published predictions of détente during Sun-Jupiter conjunctions, he describes the resolution of major world conflicts of the 20<sup>th</sup> century as well as the roles of larger cycles such as Saturn/Neptune.

He also explores the psycho-analytical approach: by projection we 'anthropomorphise' the stars, and by

introjection we 'cosmomorphise mankind.'<sup>4</sup> This section is most poetic – writing about instincts he says "it is in this dark night of the being that 'astral determinism' lies."<sup>5</sup> A chapter is devoted to fate and free will.

Discussing the metaphysical rationale for astrology he delineates the effects of the environment, to neutralise, or amplify, innate character and asks if liberty is an illusion; concluding that enhancing potential is a valid astrologer's role.

Barbault even ventures into possible pitfalls in practicing astrology, recommending simple, realistic language during consultations, which he describes as voyages of discovery. Using the four elements to access the 'soul' of the artist, his expert portrayal of Pablo Picasso's birth chart is intriguing.

Finally he pleads eloquently for astrology to be taken seriously in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This book does not attempt to summarise Barbault's considerable expertise, but it provides fresh avenues of thought and a much-needed scholarly approach to a neglected subject in the academy.

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<sup>2</sup> Barbault. p.65.81-82.

<sup>3</sup> Barbault. pp. 99-100.

<sup>4</sup> Barbault. pp.167-168.

<sup>5</sup> Barbault. p.172.