

# **Concerning Cases of Conscience About Divination**

A Translation  
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From Friedrich Balduin

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## Chapter VI

### Concerning Cases of conscience about Divination.

766. **DIVINATION**, (in Greek, *μαντική*), is a perceiving beforehand of certain things and a knowledge of future things or things that are absent.

Moreover future and absent things are known, *either in and of the things themselves*, or *in their causes*.

Those things which are known in and of themselves are predicted. This is either by their own spirit, and thus only God knows and predicts future things, and by the same name is distinguished from the good angels (4 Esdras 4:52)<sup>1</sup> and from gods of nations (Isaiah 41:23)<sup>2</sup>, or they are predicted by a revelation of God, like where the prophecies of the Prophets come from, which are not from 767. the will of men, but *they have spoken inspired by the Holy Spirit*. (2 Peter 1:21).

Those future things which are known by their own causes, *either bear an inevitable and infallible knowledge*, and these have inevitable causes, like the fixed way by which a mathematician predicts a future eclipse without fail by its own causes; *or they bear a probable knowledge*, which have related causes, which nevertheless they [the foretellers] do more often, which actually had an equal chance in themselves, so that they were equally able to happen and not to happen.

Of this way the predictions of men, which they make either from a revelation of God, or from natural causes, ought not properly to be called “divinations,” because such kinds (of

<sup>1</sup> In the KJV Apocrypha, this is 2 Esdras. Uriel the angel says that he cannot speak of a certain time in the future, for he does not know it.

<sup>2</sup> The LORD challenges the idols of the nations to tell the future, or do anything for that matter, good or bad.

predictions) do not divine anything, that is, they make nothing that is divinely inspired, but rather, they (only) suspect that which is divined. Then, however, they are said to divine, when they seize upon for themselves in some fated way a pre-announcement of future events. Like when *Hieronymus*<sup>3</sup> in chapter 3. of *Micah* says, that *divination is always accepted in a bad part*.<sup>4</sup>

However divination has circled around these things, (which are particular to GOD alone), namely the things that are hidden mysteries of grace and faith, future things that happen by chance (*fortuita*), absent things, internal thoughts of a man, and how they work out, and similar things, which are known to God alone, and which ought not to be sought by men this side of divine revelation.

Divination happens through the inspection or noting of some subject, which has nothing in common with the topic that is predicted or sought, when it is referred to false and vain arts, which are introduced by the deception of demons, as by the witness *Augustine, book 21, concerning the City of God, chapter 16*. “*Indeed every divination has come forth by the working of demons, either because have been expressly invoked for the revealing of future things , or because demons have thrust themselves upon vain inquiries of men, in order that the minds of men might intertwine with vanity,*” as in the saying of *Thomas 2,2.q 95. article 2*.

Thus truly a vast majority also are accustomed to act, so that by that way which is destructive, by the same way they try their hand at many kinds (of divinations)<sup>5</sup>; thus likewise there are various kinds of divination, that is, kinds of forbidden predictions, which I will examine briefly.

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<sup>3</sup> Probably St. Jerome. (His full name is Eusebius Sophronius Hieronymus.)

<sup>4</sup> This may be a *very* loose paraphrase of Jerome’s Vulgate translation of one of three verses of Micah 3, which speaks negatively of divinations.

<sup>5</sup> Literally, they scatter themselves about in many kinds.

*First* is the kind from the observation of stars, from which comes the term 768. *Astrology*, to which this pertains not entirely, but so far as to the point of one's own abuse (of it), insofar as it is clearly future happenings, which so far as it hand upon the judgment of man and are known to God alone, that are sought from a constellation of stars, by which [they learn] about the matter afterwards.

*Second*, which establishes prediction by the observation of elements, from which comes the term *Stereomancy*, from which in accordance with the number of elements, four other kinds of divination originated. *Geomancy* is when future things are predicted by signs and characters which stand out in the subject by some item that is earthen, wood, stone, polished iron, and similar items. *Hydromancy*, which by those inscriptions that they make in water, predicts future things, in which even *Oenomancy* is concerned, where future things are predicted with those observations that are made in wine, or in the containers in which they make it. When they make predictions from observations of changes of the air, it is called *aëromancy*. When they make predictions from perceptible things observed in fire, or by things kindled by fire, it is *pyromancy*.

*The third* kind is from the observation of things that happen in a human body, from which four other kinds result. There is *chiromancy*,<sup>6</sup> which is from the inspection of lines in hands; *pedomancy*, which is from the inspection of feet; *metoscopia*, which is from the features of the face; *onychomancy*, which is where something is prophesied concerning the future condition and fortunes of man from the inspection of the nails of undefiled boys. Bodinus exceedingly makes reference in “concerning *demons*,” *chapter 3*, that it was the studious *Lusitanum*<sup>7</sup> of *Tholosa*<sup>8</sup> who was showing that there were secret things to be seen in the nail of a little boy.

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<sup>6</sup> I.e. palmistry.

<sup>7</sup> Perhaps Artum Lusitanus, aka Juan Rodrigo de Castel-Branco a 16<sup>th</sup> century physician. For some background, see <http://www.jewishencyclopedia.com/view.jsp?artid=577&letter=J>

<sup>8</sup> Latin for Rotunda. This could be part of a title for Lusitanus, the name of the place where he is from, etc.

*The fourth* kind has observations from birds and other living things. From this source, three divinations are sought. (1) *Of auguries*, when someone observes a bird to have chattered, flown, sung, and therefore predicts the future outcome of things, so that if a crow sings from the left hand, a raven from the right hand, if birds flock together, if jays make their way toward you, he supposes what is foretold to be unfavorable: an eagle settling on the head of anybody was signifying that he was going to be king. Roosters (the birds, not the Gauls, whose name in Latin is the same word for rooster) in a town singing constantly was signifying that the army<sup>9</sup> of his town was about to have victory over an enemy. In the same way, that that bird would be silent if it were defeated, 769, but the contrary would be true if it was victorious. Likewise he considers our flock, that if a crow should caw all day on the roof of our house, guests are coming. (2) *Of auspiciousness*, when someone pre-announces future things from the feeding ground, course, and movement of flying birds, as when chickens spit out bird food, when pigeons abandon a home, when cranes come to our place, or cross through it, and so on. (3) *Of Aruspiciousness*, when future things are predicted from the bowels, intestines, entrails, and fleshy parts of birds or other animals.

*Fifth* the inspection and consideration of certain useful domestic animals gives birth to multiple divinations, which by lawful right (*in jure Canonico*) Jobanes Azorius reviews *in part* (tom.) *I. instit. Moral. Book. 9. chapter 14*. This is *lecanomancy*, when a demon is consulted by a basin and the water thrown in it, *castrumancy*, through which demons respond, not with words, but with images; *catoptrancy*,<sup>10</sup> by which he prophecies by the brightest of mirrors; *crystallomancy*, a prophesy from a cleaned and polished crystal; *dactylomancy*, when something

<sup>9</sup> Exercitum- can also mean a flock. Perhaps a play on words with the fowl about.

<sup>10</sup> Catoptritis is a shiny stone found in Cappadocia

is divined through rings<sup>11</sup> forged for certain positions of stars; *coscinomancy*, a divination through sieves; *axinomancy*,<sup>12</sup> prophesy through ax blows;<sup>13</sup> *botanomancy*, divination through herbs; *sciomancy*, prophesy through shadows; *astragalomancy*, divination by a hurled astragal;<sup>14</sup> *cottabomancy*, a prophecy through a bronze saucer; *spatulamancy*, when someone makes a divination through the fresh bone of a slain goat, etc.

*In the sixth class is oniromancy*, when a divination is made through a dream. This is the most frequent kind of divination.

Seventh, even omens have made up a peculiar class of divination, that when the first thing a person does when he departs from his house in the earliest morning, is that he observes the first man whom he meets, and if he is poor or religious,<sup>15</sup> he pre-sages that that day will be most happy. It is the same omen if he hurts his foot, or by chance he first of all brings out his left foot of his own house.


Also various signs are sought by sneezes, however the majority of them are unlucky. Therefore as it is on the old [writers],<sup>16</sup> as said in *Pliny, Book 28, natural history, c. 2.*, that it was of religion and piety that a good omen and a good prosperity is wished for in sneezes.

(770) 8. There is also divination through names. Then it is *onomatomancy*, when happiness and goodness of character is deduced by a name which had a good meaning. There is deduced from a bad name a perversion of character, where nevertheless on many occasions a word with an opposite meaning has come upon a place.

<sup>11</sup> The text is *annulum*. The dictionary root for ring only has one “n”, *anulus*.

<sup>12</sup> Pertaining to planks or boards.

<sup>13</sup> I imagine that the picture is that ax or hatchet blows are inflicted upon wooden planks and then examined.

<sup>14</sup> An *astragal* is molding profile composed of a half round surface surrounded by two flat plains (fillets). Source: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Astragal> . It looks like this. ----

<sup>15</sup> The text seems to have a typo, which has a 9 attached where a vowel might be, “religi<sup>9</sup>”.

<sup>16</sup> Perhaps, “in the old days.” *Ideo apud veteres*.

*Romans* were attributing much to these: wherefore when the Censor of the people, the Emperor was reviewing the army, he chose a man who was offering a sacrifice, whom the Emperor knew had a good name. When consuls were picking soldiers, they were observing, that the first soldier that was chosen was he who had a good name.

To this point it pertains to anagrams, when by the rearranging of the letters in a specific name, they made other words, from which the status and condition of men were judged, which is the highest foolishness in the matter.

9. Signs, portents, and even wonders are available for divining a subject matter. For indeed, they make a use of nature besides the usual one. Therefore they are sought to portend some unique thing, as the time when *Servius Tullus* was sleeping, a head was being seen to burn. For that reason, some were concluding that he himself was going to die by lightning. Others truly were concluding that he himself was going to attain a royal rank, as in the writings of *Valerius Maximum book 1.c.6*. The son of *Craesus*, when he was a child, said that they said that it showed that the power of his father and his house would be completely destroyed. *Zoroaster*, who was born on the same day, is considered to have laughed, as in the writings of *Pliny, book 7, chapter. 16* concerning which laughter *Augustine* writes in *book 21 concerning the City of God, chapter 14*. “That sign ‘laughter’ portends nothing of good for that one. For he is regarded to have been the inventor of magical arts, those very same ones which were neither able to be beneficial for a vain happiness of the present life against his own enemies. From [the time when] *Nino*,<sup>17</sup> of course, the king of the *Assyrians*, when he himself was king of the *Bactians*, was overcome by the best.

10. The shades and corpses of dead people also make a peculiar divination, which is called *necromancy*, when someone strives to indicate fortuitous or hidden futures either from

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<sup>17</sup> Nineveh = Abode of Ninus. Bactians were the Middle Eastern people among whom Zoroaster supposedly taught.

inspected lines, figures, and signs in the corpses of dead people, or when he judges concerning secret and future things from a certain infection of corpses. Or it is when someone by a prescribed pattern of words, certain [771]characters, circles and other figures, strives to evoke the spirits themselves of the dead people, and their own spirits. He supposes that he will consult them concerning future things.

11. They also make predictions of future things through lots, from where we get that kind of divinations, which is where in particular an appeal is made of soothsayers by a selected word, for something to be through a lot, like when *Haman* asked through a lot the proper day for destroying the *Jews*, (*Esther* 3:7).<sup>18</sup> Secret futures or other hidden things are revealed through a lot, such as if scraps of paper are thrown into an urn, or one is placed in a sieve with many others, that one which has the inscription of the name “Peter” is drawn up, and when you throw them together, to have the thing that says “Peter” brought up secretly by a trick, that is called divination through lot.

12. Superstitious things also are divination, when events are concluded from some chance events, whether from glad or sad ones, when some favorable days or some unfavorable days are had, when there is an occurrence of a certain ghost of a cat or a dog coming out of a home, and when that day is reckoned to be without auspices. It is when something of an unlucky thing is inferred by an accident of a foot or a head, by sneezing, by the ripping of a shoelace, by a garment stained by mice, and similar things. These are all superstitions, and they watch for this kind of divination.

13. Finally there remains a devilish divination, which is either through an expressed or through a secret invocation of a demon. It is *expressed* when someone seeks, by means of a pact into which they entered with a demon, that it reveal future things. It is *secret* when someone

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<sup>18</sup> The Latin is *Esd.* 3. v. 7, but is obviously speaking of *Esther* (*Hester*) 3:7.



makes use of the office and deeds of a man who has a partnership with a demon, and asks about future and hidden things through him. This is pertinent, because the prophets of the pagans, who being seized by the frenzy of a demon predict future things by inspiration, are accustomed to doing these things.

14. Therefore in so many ways they are able to make divinations. And when certain questions arise around these divinations, now we ourselves approach these to explain these things, so that even this matter of conscience can be consulted in kind.

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[772.] Case I.

*Can it be that simply every divination or prediction of future events ought to be condemned, to such a degree that is it possible that no one can either declare or seize upon it without sin?*

**Concerning specifics.**<sup>19</sup> Concerning this question there was much dispute among philosophers and among Christians also. Not all feel the same way.

*Stoics* were rejecting no divinations, and in this way they were practicing them, saying: “God is by nature kind and generous among men, and therefore, he foresees human affairs, and predicts future things for them.” And on account of that reason, there were auguries, auspices, lots, oracles, and the like. In this way future things were being predicted and were most holy. Even *Pythagoras* was in this opinion, who was using auguries, and was using this in place of a creed: “*Respect divination.*”

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<sup>19</sup> The font setting makes it difficult to determine if there is a separation between letters. Probably “Re sp.”

*Epicureans* were ridiculing all divinations, and whatever was being predicted about future things, they were holding for nonsense and deceits, which the cruelty of men may contrive.

*Peripatetics* were seeming to walk on the middle road.<sup>20</sup> For, as in the writings of *Cicero* book 2, *Concerning Divination* it is said that they were deciding upon two kinds of divinations. They were calling the one “*of the arts*,” which was a sharer with the arts. And they were embracing those which could be explained by inferences, or were observed and noted by events, what sort of things all these things were, these auguries, auspices, observations of portents and wonders, and secret things discovered by stars and elements, by lots, and by parts of a human corpse.

And this kind of divinations *Plato in Phaedro* calls οἰωνυστικὸν as if it were οἰονοστικὸν,<sup>21</sup> because all things were embraced, not the things that originated by a prophetic and frantic attack, but by an art from some sort of things. By causes which are easy to see (*obviis*), selected things are foretold and pre-saged.

The other they were calling *natural*, which in *Plato* is μαντικὸν, or μανία, which is constituted by no art, because they are dreams, oracles, secrets of raving men and of those who are near death. Their predictions were not being constituted by a certain art, and [773.] they were not being deduced through conjecture by preceding signs. But these were of those things which are pre-sensed by a stirring from the excitement and liberation of the soul.

They were entirely rejecting divinations by art. However they were thinking that those things which were free from art ought not to be condemned, but instead there seemed to be a natural faculty in the soul of pre-saging future things. This would be aroused by a sickly fever in

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<sup>20</sup> Pun intended?

<sup>21</sup> The text has the final sigma in the middle of the word. A similar word οἰονυστικός means “of/for an omen.”

certain men, from where come the pre-sagings of crazy and mad men. In others they are truly natural when clearly they have black bile. Hot fluid is naturally near the brain, just as if it abounds in the seat of the mind, which is from where the oracles of *Sybillus* and the prophets speak, which is the opinion of *Aristotle in the book concerning the world until Alexander and in problem. section 30.*

Truly these are from the blindness of pagans, who, ignorant of the true religion, confuse all divinations, mix devilish ones with natural ones, and no matter how much a spirit demon is shown to be sly and in favor of a man's falling, they do not pay attention.

However it is strange to learn that even among Christians, there are those who even think that divinations which are originating neither from preceding causes nor conjectures are natural! And some by their reasoning, and some by their experience and similar things, these men dare to support that very same idea! Indeed they say that the soul of man has the images and likenesses of all things in itself, even of future and secret things. Therefore as far as they are concerned [they try to make] the soul to be forsaken and free from external impediments, in order that in a dream and ecstasy they may know future and secret matters, because with the encumbered mass of the body they are not able to do those other things. *Gregory the Great* writes this in *book 4, dialogue 26*: "*finally that power of souls foresees something by its own sharpness.*" This is clear in those who are asleep, who divine more than those who remain awake. Even the insane, the fools, and those near death divine more than others, The outcome of those divinations gives answer to even more of their own predictions or pre-sages. There are even several men so perceptive, that concerning the end of a sickness or the outcome other things, that if they are not able to completely tell what something is, they are nevertheless able to predict something with the appearance of the truth. Several animals even predict future things. (Why, therefore, has

GOD [774] denied this faculty to man?) Fish are in the habit of showing storms to sailors, birds do it for farmers, cattle do it for cattle drivers. From the grunting of pigs, when they return home from the pasture, when cats lick and groom themselves, crows assemble together, violent rains gather together, mice run close together into a house from which they had gone out, all pre-sage a most near catastrophe of that house, and other things which are similar to these things.

Cratippus<sup>22</sup> was deducing natural divinations by means of two arguments: either whoever has pre-sensed and divined future things one time, even if in the matter he has been frequently in error of these things, he has in himself the faculty of divining. Or in the same way, whoever has seen heaven one time, though afterwards he never has seen it again, or in seeing it he often deviates [from earlier reports], he has the natural faculty of seeing. As far as the one who does not have this faculty, he never sees [such a vision]. Truly it is impossible to be denied that at some time or another many have dreamed things which happen, or even while awake that they have mentioned future things in advance. Therefore they have that natural faculty of divining. 2. In the same way a power is naturally attributed to a soul which is the perceiving of present things, which is called a “sense,” and the sensing of the past things, which is called “memory.” Thus it is proper that another power of future things, which is called divination, be attributed to them.

Even from sacred Scriptures they allege other things, things like when *Elijah* began to prophecy when he had been excited by music, (*2 Kings 3:15*), when *Saul* began to prophecy, when the spirit<sup>23</sup> of the Lord entered into him, (*1. Samuel 10:10*). From these they deduced that some natural power lay hidden in the soul for predicting future things, which is able to be excited

<sup>22</sup> Cratippus of Mitylene. For a brief description, see <http://www.nndb.com/people/291/000096003/>

<sup>23</sup> Lower case “s” to reflect the Latin. Also in the second to the last paragraph of Case I.

by music. Indeed the music accomplishes nothing, unless that faculty is already there beforehand. But as if lying dormant, it naturally belonged to the soul.

By these arguments certain men wished to make the persuasion that man has a natural power of predicting future things, and so then it be false what *Thomas* has formerly said: that every *divination* is from the operation of demons.

And for all these things, we respond like this. 1. The thought of the *Epicureans* is not pleasing to us, who were absolutely denying any divination at all. For we truly believe that certain sensings of future things before they happen are inherent in men, [775] whether from certain knowledge, or from natural causes, or from conjectures which are conjectures by a true foresight.

2. We are not in support of *Phisophes*, who make a natural faculty of the soul out of divination. For if it is, it is not of certain future things, that they are thus known in advance in some way, nor is it also other things, but of all future things, in the way that it is a memory of all past things. However it is clear, that in the soul there are not sights and ideas of all future matters. Indeed this is of infinite virtue. Therefore God alone is said to be conscious of all future things, who has this special faculty to such a degree, that these things are turned about by his essence. To a certain degree, it is not communicated with any creature.

What is more, it is false that the human soul has in itself a images of these things. For whatever it knows, it learned by revelation either from God or from the senses. Nevertheless it happens unencumbered, as long as it is not impeded by external things, like when it is in sleep or in rapture.

And this is how the saying of *Gregory* ought to be understood, that whatever that power of souls sees beforehand by its own sharpness, one may know either from the judgment of the

senses, or from a special revelation of God, like it is in the prophets, or even from a collection of natural cases, like it is in the predictions of physicists.

The soul is not able to know future things that come to pass on its own, either because they are hidden and secret to the senses, (the sort of things God has reserved only for Himself), or because they are dependent on the free will of man, and are liable to changeability, such as whether one is going to be consul or king, whether he will be rich or poor, or whether he will die by a certain kind of death. Therefore Augustine rightly denied a natural divination of the human soul, *book 12 on Genesis, ad lit. chapter 13*, where he says, “*several think that there is some power of divination in the human soul.*” But he demonstrates there in many ways that this is false.

Divinations of the dying, of fools, of madmen and of those near death, these are hardly pre-sages, and are conjectures.

Sleepers pre-sage something more easily, because at that time, since the souls have been drawn in on themselves and freed from external matters, they better perceive images of things that were supplied through the senses. Therefore even God mostly has spoken to the prophets by night, and they mostly had visions [776] by night. Therefore after they had been advised, they responded eventually the next day. Therefore the prophetess *Huldah* ordered the envoys of King Josiah to expect [a divination] in the night,<sup>24</sup> and *Balaam* ordered the envoys of king *Balack* to do the same, (*Num 22:8*).

Even madmen predict future things. However they are madmen either by *possession of a devil*, who through those men predicts those future things that it knows from certain signs, or by *sickness*, like in fevers and fits of madness. *Augustine* examines an example of these in *book 12 concerning Genesis ad lit. c. 17*. He says, “*We know without a doubt that a fit of madness has*

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<sup>24</sup> There is no mention in either 2 Kings 22:14 or 2 Chronicles 34:22 of her vision happening at night.

*predicted the future death of a certain woman, certainly not by a type of divining, but in fact also as a recalled past event. For when his remembrance came to him, he said, 'She was dead. I saw her carried out. They had crossed through with this corpse of hers,' while that one was still living unharmed. However after a few days, suddenly she was dead, and she was carried out through that place which he had predicted."* He makes reference concerning a certain boy, that among the worst sufferings when he was snatched away from all his senses, he laid down with eyes wide open and saw nothing. After waking up somewhat, those things which he had seen, he spoke about. Concerning these thing *Augustine* discusses with reserve *in the following chapter*. *"They say similar things by dreams, in which there are many false things that are true to some extent, sometimes disturbed things, sometimes tranquil things. However there are similar things of the future that are entirely true, or are sometimes spoken openly with obscure outward signs and announced in advance as if by fashioned words."* Finally he concludes: *"To whom it is not sufficient to know this, as to how such a thing arises, let his ask others. I confess that I do not know."*

Others attribute divination to the talkativeness of madmen. For while they chatter much, it is intermittent, so that they blurt out even that which is about to happen. It is just like those who train themselves every day by throwing a javelin, now and then even they throw in a straight line<sup>25</sup> to their target, granted that they are inexperienced at the art of throwing a javelin.

Fools and idiots therefore say that they divine to a greater extent than others, because they have a natural divination by wisdom, just as certain beasts pre-sage more easily than men. Because indeed they are not able to investigate from their own causes, they make conjecture that it is by a certain natural perception. [777.]

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<sup>25</sup> Instead of collimo, look up the dictionary form of collineo, to direct in a straight line, to aim.

It even has the semblance of truth that God distributed such a great power to these miserable men, that they may be the masters of the first of men (in whose family there lives even more). Indeed while although they are wise, they are unwilling to listen. Rarely are they not instructed by these fools, just as *Balaam* was instructed by his own donkey.

Those who are close to death, even sometimes predict certain future things. *Gregory* mentions an example of these in writing in book 4, dialogue chapters 26 and 27 and he believes that souls that have gone out from the body know future things through revelation.

Concerning the Holy Scriptures this reasonably has the appearance of truth. In this way *Jacob* the patriarch gathered his own sons before his death, in order to announce to them those things which were coming, (*Genesis 49:1*). Concerning *Moses*, it is said that when his death was close by, he predicted certain things to the Israelites, *Deut 33.1*.

Others about to die have known beforehand a change of the body, a calm condition or a storm of the air, an agitation of the sun, or similar things easily by other [means?], because at that hour of death, by senses which were summoned within and dormant, an accurate and right mind contemplates matters, and easily perceives those changes in its own body.

Doctors sometimes are able to predict the outcome of a sickness, through natural σοχασμὸν, that is, through natural skill, which *Galenus*<sup>26</sup> seeks in medicine, and from which by his accepted writing an understanding is established concerning the kind and causes of death, concerning the strength of nature, concerning the infected area, concerning the symptoms that follow, and concerning the deterioration and the getting well again. This has nothing in common with prohibited divination.

There is even a certain instinct of nature in certain animals, by which they deduce certain future things, which indeed have their own causes, but the causes are unknown to the animals.

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<sup>26</sup> Claudius Galenus of Pergamum. For a brief history, see <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Galen>



And because they greatly affect the bodily senses, also the souls of beasts are greatly affected with their bodies, hence it is that the beasts perceive future beginnings with their own senses more often than they who are gifted with reason. Indeed in the way indeed blind men<sup>27</sup> hear more accurately and remember things more easily, because their hearing and recollection has no impediments from the outside, so also beasts sense more accurately.

[778.] These things that *Cratippus* holds to as a summary are not conclusive. For 1) those things which are natural happen not once or twice, but often. Moreover those things which happen from a cause, they scarcely happen only once or very rarely. Thus it is able to happen by chance that someone may predict something that happens. If he does it by a natural ability, he does not frequently deviate to such an extent in his other predictions. For the things which happen naturally do not fail unless by some added external impediment.

2) Memories are wrongly thought to be abilities of divining. For if there is a sense of past and present things, it does not follow that there is also [a sense] of future things. If indeed it is possible for there to be kinds of present and past things in the mind, it does not have to be the same way for future things, unless it is evident from something added, from those past and present things themselves.

Finally those things which are reported from the Holy Scriptures are not at all accepted as a natural power of divination. For the music did not stir up in *Elijah* his natural ability for prophesying, because he was not predicting anything except those things which he had by revelation from God. But he was predisposing the mind by exciting it and by dragging away from the senses in order to divine. For by as much as the mind is dragged away by the things of this world, by that degree it is more suitable for the contemplation of the things of God.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>27</sup> Instead of coecus, look up the dictionary form of caecus, blind.

<sup>28</sup> Latin *divinarum*, rendered this way so as not to cause confusion with the action, *divinandum*.

*Saul* was beginning to prophesy, not by a certain excited inward natural ability, but because the spirit<sup>29</sup> of the Lord was rushing into him, as the text has it. Indeed every prediction<sup>30</sup> of future things which are not from natural causes nor guesses, are either from God, so that they are prophecies of the holy prophets, or from the Devil, so that they are thus properly called divinations.

It is well known by these words that these are generally the things to which some men are accustomed to oppose, namely those men who judge that divination is allowed, even when it is not agreed with natural causes, which make more than nothing for the matter. Indeed there are many predictions of this kind by natural causes, from which no one denies that in certain way an effect is able to be obtained. Indeed I agree with certain specific effects.

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<sup>29</sup> Lower case "s" to reflect the Latin.

<sup>30</sup> Suddenly the publisher uses the letter "e" with a hook underneath. Apparently this is an abbreviation for "ae." Also three times with "que" in the following lines.

## Bibliography

Balduin, Friedrich. Tractatus luculentus, posthumus, toti reipublicæ christianæ utilissimus: e materiâ rarissime antehac enucleatâ, casibus nimirum conscientiæ: summo studio elaboratus a Friderico Balduino... et jam ad implendum desiderium plurimorum post beatam authoris mortem in lucem editus. Liber III, Caput VI, De Cvasibus conscientiae circa Divinationem. Wittenbergæ: impensis Pauli Helwigii Bibl., 1628. BV4610 .B3 1628.

Other sources are mentioned in footnotes for personal reference only, and are not quoted in the translation.

## Note

Page numbers from the Latin are included throughout the translation for easy reference.