



# **ASTROLOGY AND RELIGION AMONG THE GREEKS AND ROMANS**

**FRANZ CUMONT**

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ASTROLOGY AND  
RELIGION  
AMONG THE GREEKS  
AND ROMANS

BY  
FRANZ CUMONT

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The doctrine of sidereal immortality is certainly the most elevated that antiquity conceived. It was at this definitive formula that paganism stopped. This belief was not to perish utterly with it; and even after the stars had been despoiled of their divinity, it survived to some extent the theology which had created it. If I had not already abused your patience, it would be an interesting study to join you in searching for survivals of these pagan tenets through the Middle Ages, and in showing the forms which they assumed in the popular creed and amongst the divines. In general, souls continued to be represented as passing through the spheres of heaven in order to reach the abode of the Most High. May I remind you that Dante was still inspired by these most ancient astrological conceptions? His Paradise shows us the blest, who have practised the virtues proper to each of the planets, inhabiting the spheres of these seven wandering stars. To destroy these old eschatological ideas it was necessary for Copernicus and Galileo to overthrow the system of Ptolemy and bring down those heavens peopled by bright beings, and so to open to the imagination the infinite spaces of a boundless universe.

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