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Worlds full of signs: ancient Greek divination in context

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Appendix 1: terminology

This is a selective list of main vocabulary used in relation to divination. Names of compendia and methods of divination have been left out – these are discussed within the context of the argument above. I have followed the *Chicago Assyrian Dictionary* (CAD), *Oxford Latin Dictionary* and *Liddell, Scott and Jones* and provided the main meanings of the word in its relationship to divination with a number of nuances and additions according to the way they are referred to in the main text (e.g., the word 'omen' has been replaced by the word 'sign' in the translations). The actual dictionaries should be referred to for more extensive meanings, derivatives and connections between words.

Akkadian

I have restricted this list to those words attested in the Neo-Assyrian period, unless otherwise indicated.

Amūtu (A1&2)	1. Liver (general), liver used during divination, liver model. 2. Sign.
Annu (2)	(Among others) positive divine answer to a query (usually through extispicy but also astrological).
Apālu (A2d 3')	Answer from the gods in the shape of an omen.
Āšipu	Exorcist/doctor

Bārītu	Female barû (OA, SB).
Barû (A12'c & 2)	1. To look upon, to keep an eye on, to watch over, to inspect, to observe an oracle. 2. To inspect extra, to observe omens; to check, to establish by observation (not only divination).
Bārû	1. Expert of divination involved in the following activities: 2. Activities of the diviner concerned with extispicy, lecanomancy (OB only), libanomancy (OB only), and other activities in different contexts.
Rabi bārî	Chief barû.
Bārûtu	1. Act of divination (referring to extispicy). 2. Lore, craft of the barû, also referring to the paraphernalia and rituals of the barû. 3. Designation of the series of extispicy texts.
Bīru (A)	1. Divination (act performed by diviner). 2. Answer received through divination. 3. In bēl bīri 'lord of divination' usually referring to the god Šamaš
Dāgil išṣūrē	Observer of birds (expert).
Dīnu (1 3'b)	Main meaning: decision, verdict, judgment. Also used for oracular pronouncement.
Epēšu	Main meaning: to act, be active, proceed. Can also mean: (2f2') to perform a divination.
Epēšu bārûtu	To perform a divination.
Eṣeru	To draw, to make a drawing. In divinatory context performed by the gods.

Ikribu (3)	Prayer used in the divinatory ritual.
Iškaru (A6)	Literary work, collection of songs. In divinatory context: divinatory series.
Ittu (A2)	Sign
Kittu (A1)	Truth, justice, correct procedures. In divinatory context: to be provided by the gods.
Mahḥû	Ecstatic
Nipḥu (3)	A false or unreliable prediction.
Parāsu (5d)	(With (<i>w</i>) <i>arkatu</i>) to decide the future.
Paqādu (5a)	To test (by repeating an extispicy).
Purussû	1. (Legal) decision, resolution. 2. Decision, verdict by the gods. 3. Prognosis, prediction, oracular determination given by the gods (many times through celestial divination, many times through other methods). 427
Qabû (4b2')	To give an order, to decree, to enjoin (said of gods) in dreams, through divination, oracles.
Qîbu (4)	Prognosis, prognostication.
Raggimu	Prophet
Šā'ilu (1)	Expert in interpretation of dreams, practicing necromancy (OB, RS, EA, SB).
Šā'iltu (1)	Female šā'ilu (Ur III, OA, OB, SB).
Šalimtu (2b)	Sincerity, truth, reliability: referring to extispicy.
Šalmu (1e1')	Favourable, propitious – said of signs.
Šālu (A1d)	To ask gods for a sign.
Šalāmu (3)	To be favorable, propitious (said of signs and

	oracles).
Šaṭāru (1)	To write, to copy, to put down in writing, to inscribe a tablet or other object, to formulate a (legal) document.
Šīmtu (1-2)	1. Determined order, nature of things, divine decree 2. Lot, portion, personal fate
Šīru (A4)	Ominous part (examined in divination); ominous sign.
Tāmītu	Query for an oracle and the answer to it (OB, SB), referring to the diviners' query, specifying the question to which the answer is sought, referring to the answer given by the god.
Têrtu (6 & 7a & 6e)	1. Extispicy, also referring to the signs obtained during the extispicy. 2. Extā, liver as used during extispicy. 3. Exceptionally referring to portents not obtained through extispicy.
Ṭēmu (1)	Report, news, information, situation, matter – also used in divinatory context.
Bēl ṭēmi (1a)	Bearer of a report, reporter of oracular queries.
Ṭupšarru	Scribe, tablet writer.
Ṭupšar enūma Anu Enlil	Expert specialised in astronomy.
Ummanû (2b)	Scholar, sage
Utukku	Auspicious day
(W)aklu (A)	Overseer. Also: of barû.

Latin

This is a selective overview of the main Latin terms related to divination. Words that do not occur in Republican times – or shortly after – have not been included.

Augur ~uris, <i>m. (f.)</i>	1. a. Expert who observes and interprets the behavior of birds, an augur. b. (esp.) a member of the college of augurs, an official interpreter of auspices.
Augurāculum ~ī, <i>n.</i>	A place where the auguries are observed; hence, the citadel of Rome.
Auguratio ~ōnis, <i>f.</i>	Prediction by means of augury.
Augurātō <i>adv.</i>	After due observance of auguries.
Auguratus ~ūs, <i>m.</i>	The office of augur, augurship; augury.
Augurium ~(i)ī, <i>n.</i>	1. The taking of auguries; augury 429 2. The art of augury, faculty of divination 3. A sign 4. A prediction, prognostication 5. A foreboding, presentiment, surmise.
Augurō ~āre, āui, ātum <i>tr., intr.</i> ~or ~ārī ~ātus	1. a. To foretell by augury b. (intr.) to take auspices, practice augury 2. To initiate, etc., with the taking of auguries 3. To predict, foretell (from omens or other evidence) b. (intr.).
Auspicium	1. a. Augury from the behaviour of birds, auspices b. the observing of signs from birds. 2. A sign taken from birds.

3. The right of taking auspices, augural powers.
 4. Leadership, authority, auspices.
 5. An omen of any kind b. (poet) Fortune, luck.
- Carmen ~inis, *n*. 1. c. an oracle or prophecy; a riddle.
- Consulto ~āre, āvī, ātum, *tr.*, *intr.* 3. a. To apply to (a person) for advice or information, consult; (esp. absol.) b. to consult an oracle, astrologer, or other expert or means of divination: also, to consult thus about (a question).
- Consultor ~ōris, *m*. 2. One who consults: a. a lawyer b. an oracle or astrologer.
- Consultum ~ī, *n*. 2. An oracular or sim. response.
- Decemuir ~rī, *m*. Also written as two words.
 A member of a commission of ten men appointed either permanently or for a limited term, esp: a. to look after the Sibylline books.
- Dīrus ~a ~um, *a*. 1. (of things regarded as signs) Awful, dire, dreadful.
- Dīuīnō ~āre ~ārī ~ātum, *intr. tr.* 1. a. To make out or interpret things hidden from the senses, practice divination. b. to make a guess
 2. (w. acc.) To know by inspiration or intuition, foresee; (also w. indir. sp.). b. to divine, guess (something already existing or past)
- Extispex ~picis, *m*. Expert who practices divination by the observation of the entrails of sacrificial victims.
- Extispicium ~(i)ī, *n*. The examination of the entrails of sacrificial victims as a means of divination.

Fātiloquus ~a ~um, <i>a</i> .	Foretelling destinies; prophetic; (masc. as sb.) a soothsayer.
Fātum ~ī, <i>n</i> .	(Among others) a. A prophetic utterance, prophecy b. (pl.) the decrees (of a god).
Fulgurātor ~ōris, <i>m</i> .	(Among others) Expert who interprets signs given by lightning.
(H)ariolor ~ārī ~ātus, <i>intr</i> .	To speak by divine inspiration or with second sight, prophesy (in comedy often in facet. or pejorative sense); to divine.
Hariolus ~ī, <i>m</i> .	A soothsayer, prophet, expert.
(H)aruspex ~icis, <i>m</i> .	(Also (h)ari~, arre~) An expert of a class originating in Etruria; according to Cicero they were interpreters of internal organs, prodigies, and lightning.
-mantia ~ae [Gk.]	Various methods of divination.
Mirāculum ~(i)ī, <i>n</i> .	1a. An amazing object or sight, a marvel ^{43a} freak 2a. An amazing event, act or circumstance c (applied to supernatural occurrences).
Monstrum ~ī, <i>n</i> .	1. An unnatural thing or event regarded as a sign. 2. An awful or monstrous thing or event.
Monstrōsus ~a ~um, <i>a</i> .; monstrōsus, compare. ~ior, superl. ~issimus –	Portentous, ill-omened; (esp. transf.) unnatural, strange, monstrous (also used in the context of divinatory signs).
Ōmen ~inis, <i>n</i> .	1a. Something that foreshadows an event of the outcome of an event, a sign. b. ~en acci pere, to recognize a sign in an occurrence, etc;

~*en placet*, the sign is good.

Ōminor ~ārī, ātus, *tr.* (also ōminō) a. To know or tell of (a future event or outcome from signs)

b. w. reference to the use of words of good or bad omen, regarded by the ancients as constituting a prediction [...]

c.(pregn) to make gloomy prognostications.

Ōrāculum ~ī, *n.* (also ōrāclum) 1. A divine utterance usually made through the agency of a priest or priestess in a temple, shrine, or similar, an oracle.

2. The agency or mouthpiece of a divine utterance, also the place where it was given, an oracle.

3. An oracular saying, precept, maxim.

Ostentum ~s, *m.* – a.

A manifestation or occurrence foreshadowing future events, b. (in wider sense) wonder, marvel.

Portendō ~dere ~dī ~tum, *tr.* a. To indicate (some future event, good or bad), portend, presage (esp. pass.) b. (of circumstances, naturally occurring signs) c. (of the gods) to reveal by means of signs; to give (signs) by way of warning.

Portentōsus ~a ~um, *a.* compare. ~ior, superl. ~issimus a. Strange and unnatural or abnormal, monstrous, portentous.

Portentum ~ī, *n.*

1. An abnormal phenomenon, usually regarded as foreshadowing some momentous event, a sign.

2a. (without ref. to future) Something unnatu

- ral or extraordinary, a sign; (esp.) a strange or abnormal creature, monster; also, an abnormal growth, monstrosity.
- Praedicō ~cere ~xī ~ctum, *tr.* 2. To give warning of, foretell.
- Praedictiō ~ōnis, *f.* 2. A prediction.
- Praedictum ~ī, *n.* a. A statement made in advance, forewarning
b. a prediction.
- Praesāgatiō ~ōnis, *f.* The faculty of knowing the future.
- Praesāgiō ~īre ~ivī, *tr.* 1. To have a foreboding or presentiment of.
2. To give forewarning of, to forebode, portend.
- Praesāgium ~(i)ī, *n.* 1. A sense of foreboding, presentiment.
2. A forewarning, presage, sentiment.
- Praesāgus ~a ~um, *a.* 1. Feeling a presentiment, having a foreboding.
2. Portending, ominous.
- Prōdigiōsus ~a ~um, *a.* 1. a. Having the nature of a sign b. concerned with signs. 433
2. Marvellous, monstrous, unnatural.
- Prōdigiū ~īī, *n.* 1. An unnatural event of manifestation portending a disaster, etc., sign.
2. a. a monstrous event or situation, marvel b. a monstrous person, creature, thing, etc., monstrosity; also, a wonder, marvel.
- Respondeō ~dēre ~dī ~sum, *intr.* 4b To give a formal or official reply of oracles, priests, or sim.
- Responsum ~ī, *n.* [pple. of respondeo] 2a An answer given by an oracle, soothsayer, or similar.
- Signum ~ī, *n.* 5. a. A sign recognized as a regular accompaniment or precursor of a particular form of weather, disease, or other natural

	phenomenon
	b. a supernatural sign.
Sors ~rtis f.	1. A lot b. as used in divination.
	3. An oracular response (strictly one obtained by cleromancy).
Sortilegus ~a ~um, a.	Expert that predicts the future by means of lots (in quot., loosely).
Sortior ~īrī ~ītus, <i>intr.</i> , <i>tr.</i> (also ~iō, īre, iī or ~īvī ~ītum) (Among others)	1c. (<i>intr.</i>) To predict the future (by lots or other means, divine).
Uātēs (uātis) ~is, m. (f.) 1a.	A prophet (regarded as the mouthpiece of the deity possessing him).
Uāticinor ~ārī ~ātus, <i>intr.</i> (<i>tr.</i>) a.	To utter divinely inspires predictions or warnings, prophecy b. (<i>tr.</i>) to warn of or predict (an event) by divine inspiration; (sim. with acc. and inf.) c. (in bad sense) to talk wildly, rave.

Greek

This is a selective overview of the main Greek terms related to divination.

ἀκάρπτως, ον	χρησμός ἀ. an unfulfilled oracle.
ἀληθής, ἐς	Of oracles: true, unerring.
ἀμφήκης, ἐς	Of oracles: ambiguous.
ἀναιρέω	Oracle's or divinity's answer to inquiry.
ἀνυμνέω	Proclaiming by oracle.

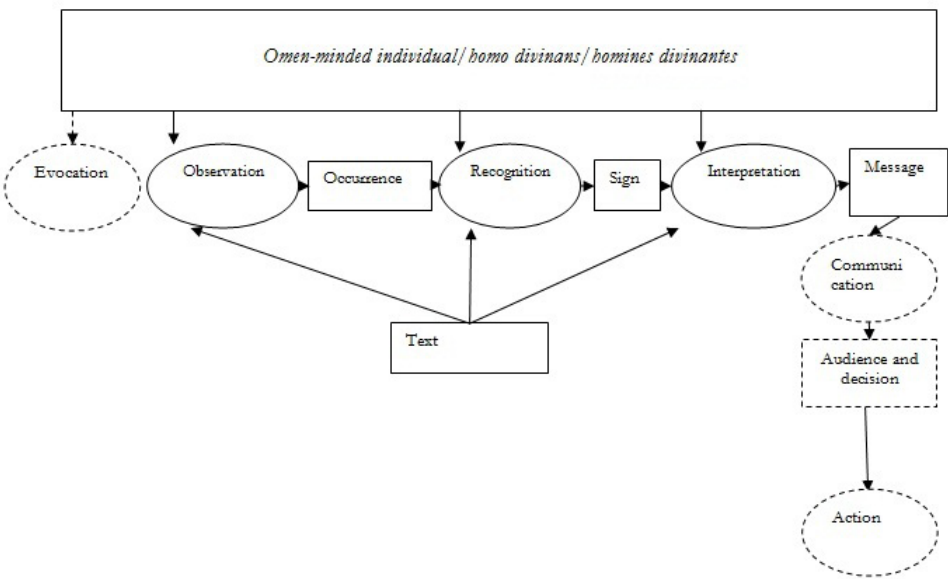
ἀποθροσπίζω	Utter an oracle.
ἀποθέσπισις, εως, ή	Oracle given.
αὐδάω	Of oracles: proclaim.
αὐδή, ής, ή	Voice or word, also: oracle.
αὐτῶρης (ᾄρνυμαι)	Proclaim a spontaneous oracle.
ἀψεύδής, ές	Without deceit, truthful, esp. of oracles and the like.
δέχομαι χρησθέν, τόν οἰωνόν δ.,	Accept the oracle, the omen.
διαμαντεύομαι	Determine by an oracle, make divinations, consult an oracle.
έκχρηστωδέω	Deliver an oracle.
έξηγητής οὐ, ό	Expounder, interpreter, esp. of oracles, dreams, or other signs.
έπιτέλέω	Complete, finish, accomplish: also of the fulfillment of oracles, visions, etc.
θεομαντις, εως, ό	One who has a spirit of prophecy, an inspired person.
Θεοπροπιέω	To provide an oracle
θεοπροπία, ας, ή	Statement of the will of the gods, oracle.
Θεορόπος, ον	Utterer of oracles, public messenger sent to inquire of an oracle.
θέσπισμα, ατος, τό	Oracles, oracular sayings.
ιατρομαντις, εως, ό	Physician and seer, of Apollo and Aesculapius.
καιρός, οὐ, ό	Due measure, proportion, fitness. Of time: exact or critical time, season, opportunity.
κιβδηλος, ον	Adulterated, base. Of oracles, etc.: deceitful, ambiguous.
κληδών, όνος, ή	Omen, presage contained in a chance

λόγιον, ου, τό	utterance.
λόγος, ου, ό	Oracle.
	A particular utterance or saying. Also: divine utterance, oracle.
λοξός, ή, όν	Of oracles: indirect, ambiguous.
μαντεία, ας, ή,	Power and knowledge of divination; oracle.
μαντεϊον, ου, τό	Oracle, i.e, oracular response, seat of an oracle, method, process of divination.
μαντειος, η, ον	Poet. for μαντικός, oracular.
μαντευμα, ατος, τό	Response of the oracle, oracle.
μαντεύω	Divine, interpret signs; consult an oracle; seek divinations; later, of the god, give an oracle.
μαντάρχης, ου, ό	President of a college of μάντιες.
μαντικός, ή, όν	Of divinatory utterances, oracular. 2. τέχνη μ. faculty of divination.
μάντις, εως, ό,	Divinatory expert.
οϊωνόμαντις, εως, ό,	Divinatory expert on the flight and cries of birds.
οϊωνοπόλος, ον	Divinatory expert on the flight and cries of birds.
οίωνος, οὔ, ό	Sign
οϊωνοσκοπέω	To interpret signs from the birds.
οϊωνοσκόπος, ου, ό	Divinatory expert on the flight and cries of birds, an augur.
όνειρόπολος, ου, ό	Expert of interpretation of dreams.
πελανός, οὔ, ό	Any thick liquid substance. Also: sacrificial offering. Consequentially later also used to indicate the 'payment' at an oracle site.
προμαντεία, ας, ή	Right of consulting an oracle first (esp. Delphi).

προμαντεύω	To divine, to consult the oracle
πρόμαντις, εως, ό, ή	Oracle (person).
προφαίνω	Show beforehand, foreshow, also of oracles and divine revelations.
προφητεία	Interpretation of the will of the gods, gift of prophecy; oracular response; office of προφήτης; oracle (place).
προφητεύω	Activity of interpreting signs from the supernatural.
προφητικός, ή, όν	Oracular, prophetic.
προφήτης, ου, ό	One who speaks for a god and interprets his will to man, interpreter, expounder of the will of various deities. Also title of official keepers of the oracle at Branchidae; interpreter, expounder of the utterances of the mantis; possessor of oracular powers. 437
Πυθία	Pythia, priestess of Pythian Apollo at Delphi, who uttered the responses of the oracle
σημαίνω	Show by a (divinatory) sign, indicate, point out. Also: sign of the Delphic oracle.
σημείον, ου, τό,	A mark or sign. Here specifically: sign from the gods.
στράτομαντις, εως, ό	Prophet to the army.
σύμβολον, ου, τό	Token, sign. When thought to come from the gods: divinatory sign.
τεκμήριον, ου, τό	A sure sign or token.
τέρας, ατος, τό	Sign, wonder, marvel. Also: monster, monstrous birth.
τερατοσκόπος, ου, ό	Observer of τέρατα, diviner.

τέραςιτος, ον	Sign, monstrous sign.
φάσμα, ατος, τό	Apparition, phantom. Vision in a dream, sign from heaven, portent, omen, monster, prodigy.
χράω	Proclaim (by an oracle), be proclaimed. Also; consulting an oracle
χρεώ	To utter an oracle.
χρησμολογέω	Utter oracles.
χρησμολογία, ας, ή	An uttering of oracles.
χρησμολογος, ον	Uttering oracles, expounder of oracles χ. ἀνήρ: diviner.
χρησμός, οὔ, ό	Oracular response, oracle.
χρησμοδέω	Deliver oracles, prophesy.
χρησμοδία, ας, ή	Oracle.
χρήστηριάζω	To give oracles, to consult oracles.
χρήστήριον, ου, τό	Oracle (place); oracle, response.
χρήστήριος, α, ον	To give oracles.

Appendix 2: etic model of divination



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This select bibliography only contains titles which have been used more than once.

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