

# Hellenistic Astrology: Second Thoughts

by

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Roughly 2000 years ago, Hellenistic Astrology was TNBT (The Next Big Thing). After much of its teachings disappeared by the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> centuries, Hellenistic Astrology (H.A.) pretty much disappeared (for all intents & purposes). Now in the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, H.A is TNBT once again! : )

In those terms, Hellenistic Astrology is both ancient and new. It is The Name Of The Game currently in terms of astrological focus. The recent revival of H.A. started to gain steam in the mid-1990's with the arrival of Project Hindsight (founded by Robert Schmidt, with two other principals initially involved). I attended such intensives at that period, and purchased cassette tapes of other lectures I could not attend. Being the innate curious soul that I am (Mercury in Gemini in the 9<sup>th</sup>, Venus in Gemini ruling my Libra Ascendant in the 8<sup>th</sup>, etc.) I wanted to get involved in the early stages in TNBT. Of course my background in astrology is firmly established with modern astrology, especially the integrative, humanistic, principles-oriented approach championed by Zipporah Dobyns, my teacher.

My second thoughts about Hellenistic Astrology, after my initial enthusiasm when I first studied it 20 years ago and intervening study, is that it tends to be a highly materialistic & deterministic events-oriented approach. My concern is that the present accelerated revival of H.A. now in the second decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century might bring back an unquestioning embrace of that limited approach that really should have stayed in the ancient era. This includes the doctrine that four of the twelve houses (or "Places") are "evil" or otherwise unfortunate by their own nature primarily because of their "aversion" to the first house/Place. More on this arbitrary or limited perception later.

Now don't get me wrong. I do not dislike Hellenistic Astrology. I approve of the actual study of Hellenistic Astrology for historical purposes, to uncover their techniques of divination. I want H.A. its best value fulfillment and growth now in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It's terrific that the ancient texts by Valens, Rhetorius and others were translated. It is not unlike the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls. Although I believe H.A.'s proper time has already come & gone many centuries ago (best or most fitting *then*), it is nevertheless good that great energy is now being injected into its revival for study purposes. In hibernation for such a long time, it is now being reactivated, but let's be careful it is not too faithfully restored in terms of how it was practiced way back then. Let's be wary of seeing H.A. and its forgotten techniques and concepts as some sort of "Golden Key" to better astrology, especially when practiced upon impressionable clients. Let's separate the chaff from the wheat. I don't want to give H.A. a bad rap but it pretty much has put the noose over its own head with its many unfortunate and limiting teachings. There is an old saying, "History repeats itself." Well, learn from H.A. history but don't repeat it exactly. Learn from their mistakes and dispense with certain false core beliefs. At this stage of revival and increased popular focus on its modus operandi (such as the Whole Sign chart), I very much doubt that H.A. will wither on the vine, but let's make sure that it is intelligently and properly trimmed! : )

The goal is synthesis, bringing the ancient & the modern together into a favorable & helpful gestalt. I find it humorous when I see how thoroughly many of the notable H.A. revivalists out here have simply abandoned much of standard & proven modern techniques and have gone whole hog into the ancient methods. They tout on social media sites, in lectures and printed interviews, for instance, how the Whole Sign horoscope is so much better than, say, the tropical placidus modern horoscope; in fact, they declare how they now *only* use Whole Sign. The latter is so superior to them, and the former so inferior in comparison, that it is a no-brainer to dispense with the modern house system. But as Zip Dobyns often noted: Life is not an Either/Or, it's an And. Frankly I find both approaches interesting and useful. Each system has its strong points and weak points. For instance, I find the Time Lords Zodiacal Releasing method of H.A. of interest, but as a divination tool, I find the tried & true secondary progressions of modern astrology as a more reliable and sophisticated indicator of determining current patterns. The timings given in the Time Lords system is from a Lots formula based not on an actual planet that was in the sky when progressed (as in the secondary progressions). But I will use both systems.

Okay. Let's now start to get into the nitty-gritty: My core objections about the perpetuation of the negative, limited and, most importantly, *false* teachings of Hellenistic Astrology, IMHO. Certain features of H.A. (certainly not all, of course, but important ones) need to be exposed and debunked.

The most offensive (and also intellectually weak & metaphysically bereft) doctrines of H.A. are the concept of "evil" houses, automatic malefics (and conversely "benefics") of certain planets, and the root assumption of complete or partial determinism (no or very little factoring of free will). Teaching such doctrines is an accident waiting to happen. These ancient sages (that are so seemingly deified by some current H/A revivalists) were asking for trouble settling on these unfortunate beliefs. Now: It is understandable that this was taught during the end of the Arian Age and the beginning of the Piscean Age considering the way culture was en masse. The times then were quite deterministic in terms of cultural expectations (women seen as possessions, slavery was rampant, life spans were exceedingly short compared to modern times, diseases were virtually uncontrolled or not prevented, no democracies per se, etc). But to perpetuate the concept of evil and complete determination *now* in this Age of Aquarius is a giant step backwards for mankind.

Hopefully practitioners of Hellenistic astrology and other old traditions will eventually evolve into modern times and apply holistic, balanced interpretations. Traditionalist Hellenistic types (ancient and current) consider a third of the houses (or "Places") as "bad" (2nd, 6th, 8th & 12th houses) or otherwise unfortunate and not-well-placed (for planets to be in). Two of them are particularly cursed--the 6th and the 12th. The 6<sup>th</sup> Place, for instance, is labeled the place of "Bad Fortune." Within that categorical label are subset associative terms: Troubles, injuries, sickness, enmities, plots. The 12<sup>th</sup> place is considered the worst house, the place of "Bad Spirit." It too has a sorry subset of equivalences such as enmities, suffering, secret enemies, weakness, dangers and downfall. Whereas the 11<sup>th</sup> house or place is the place of "Good Spirit." You almost can't go wrong here because it involves "friends" and "gifts" and "hopes." In fact, the 11<sup>th</sup> place from the lot (part) of fortune is considered the house of Acquisition—so great potential gain ascribed to this place. The 10<sup>th</sup> place or house was also largely granted great esteem by the ancients as well. The 8<sup>th</sup> place or house is considered the house of death, or otherwise the "Inactive" Place. The 2nd

house is called the "Gate of Hades" but other than the formidable name, this is probably the best or easiest of the four Places.

by the Hour-maker ( *Horoskopos* or Ascendant/Rising sign-degree that designates the 1st whole sign Place). If the 1st house is, say, Aries (to

The Places (houses) are determined use the natural chart for simplicity sake), then the second whole sign house is Taurus, the 6th whole sign house is Virgo; the 8th whole sign house is Scorpio; and the 12th whole sign house is Pisces. The rationale of H.A. is that the 2-6-8-12 Places are not configured to the 1st house (only house or place associated with the native, tied to health & vitality) and hence unsupportive to the life of the native. These places are in "aversion" to the native. A sextile (60 degrees) to the 1st place (such as the 3rd and the 11th, or Gemini & Aquarius in our example of Aries rising) is considered a positive signification. The traditional square aspect of 90 degrees is still "seen" or configured to the 1st house, so still a "good" placement (such as the 4th and the 10th houses or Cancer & Capricorn in our example). The trine aspect of 120 degrees is considered good (such as the 5th and the 9th from the 1st house, or Leo & Sagittarius in our example). The opposition is "good" or at least configured and seen (such as the 7th house or Libra in our example). The modern so-called quincunx relationship (150 aspect) was not recognized by the ancients (such as the 6th and the 8th places from the 1st house), hence they are in aversion. Similarly the semi-sextile of 30 degrees (such as the 2nd & 12th houses or Taurus & Pisces in our example) were not considered (hence in aversion to the native).

Let's make an analogy of the placements just discussed in terms of proximity. Let's say that the nose on my face (organ of smelling) is the 1st house or Place. Immediately adjacent on both sides (let's say 30 degree semi-sextile positionings) are my left and right eyes. And let's consider that the ears are the next further out organs (of hearing) positioned in the next recognized aspect of the sextile. According to the Hellenistic viewpoint, the eyes are aversive to the nose, and not configured to the nose, but the ears *would* indeed be recognized and configured! Silly, isn't it? Let's pursue this even further by saying that what is configured is according to what is directly seen with one's own eyes. As a different but complementary analogy, the eyes of the head are now the head or 1st house. Looking down at one's feet is a directly observed view of the feet opposite the head (the opposition aspect). But the eyes cannot see one's own back (a quincunx or aversion aspect). So does this mean there is no connection of my back to my body just because my eyes cannot see it? Or, when pursuing this point, is my back now a "bad" place--even "evil"--because it is in aversion to my line of

vision? Once again, silly, isn't it? If you believe that 2-6-8-12 are not tied or somehow connected to your own nature as symbolized by a horoscope, then you are wearing blinders. And to then call them "bad" or "evil" only compounds the error. This is a primary distortion of H.A. handed down from the centuries. Would you curse a twelve-petal flower with four crooked or broken petals? Would you in the old days of prolific child-bearing curse a family of twelve because four of the kids happened to be girls? Caveat emptor: "Let the reader of H.A.'s ideas of evil houses beware!"

Yet these ancient "sages" of Hellenistic Astrology pursued these concepts thru the centuries, handing down the false beliefs to each successive generation of astrologers and clients. It became an entrenched bad habit. Moreover, notice that 2-6-8-12 (even numbers/houses) are the "feminine" houses--obviously "bad"! : ) None of the male numbers/houses are considered unfortunate by nature or placement. Being female back in the Hellenistic era was overall considered an overall bad lot of casting of the dice in terms of pregnancy. Those in power were all male, and often warlike! Even now different cultures look down on the feminine. Communist China and parts of India showed female infanticide because the culture looked unfavorably at girl babies. Boys are far more preferred. The masculine odd-numbered Places are considered "good" in Hellenistic Astrology. In a sense, H.A. espoused the core belief of a "sinful" horoscope by the mere admission that four of the twelve houses are bad placements, let alone that two planets of the seven were bad to some degree (malefics). At least these astrologers had potential dramatic writing tendencies because a good writer penning an interesting story would want a villain or two in the story!

Ancient Hellenistic teachings did not give credence to the quincunx (150 degree separation aspect)/yod (double quincunx) aspects. If you think about it, the so-called "bad" places or houses in such teachings are what's called in "aversion" to the Rising sign or "Hour-Marker"—and two of them (6<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup>) are in effect the quincunx positions. The other two aversion points are, as give above, the 2<sup>nd</sup> house and especially the "Bad Spirit" 12<sup>th</sup> house or Place. The ancients did not consider them to be in aspect, so that was considered bad in most cases—except if in the cases of the malefics, if they are in aversion to the rising sign, then that is considered a relatively good thing (the relief of "Whew! I missed the bullet!"). They did not want the malefics aspecting important points like the Ascendant and the Lot of Fortune. This neglect by the ancient astrologers of the whole chart dynamics is a glaring flaw in their conceptualization.

So Hellenistic Astrology propagated certain false, limiting, negative core beliefs. One is: "There is something wrong & unfortunate with the 6th and 12th Places especially." This is not rock bed reality, but they believe it. It makes sense to them based on their conceptual models. Another false belief is "Modern astrology is inferior to Hellenistic Astrology." Another false belief tied to the concept of "bad" houses or planets is the belief, "You are fated to your situation as shown by the horoscope." When focused on an even more personal level on a specific chart, the astrologer may actually believe what he is reading (based on his false beliefs) that (as an example, either to himself or to a client): "The Time Lords zodiacal releasing states that you will be sickly when you reach this date at age 35 or soon after" or "You will be seriously ill by age 40" so be prepared!" Or the astrologer may state, "Saturn is out of sect in your night chart (hence "bad") and you are entering 57 years of challenge with the Time Lord entering Capricorn and then Aquarius that Saturn both rules." Or the deterministic astrologer may state, "I'm sorry but the best part of your life is already over according to the Time Lords." To suggest to yourself or especially to another person that the best potential for your life advancement is over is a highly negative and destructive suggestion, and a false one. And yet you give it power. I will focus on this point in depth later but remember the ageless dictum of service to "Do No Harm." Don't treat the client with a heavy hand. Don't say, in effect, "I'm sorry if you don't feel hope but I'm just giving you information."

So the tendency for such ancient teachings is to be quite fatalistic, especially those who held the belief of complete determinism of astrology (no modifying partial determinism), providing many negative details but not providing any psychological principle or understanding of why those details have to be there. You're stuck with it. That model is not particularly useful or helpful for the client who is trying to better his or her life. These shortsighted teachings from over 2,000 years ago fail to put the power in the present for constructive change & progression in life. There seems to be (for them) little or no room for the improvement of one's character. These teachings fail to realize that almost any situation can be changed for the better. It is better to create out of power & joy in the "now" than out of powerlessness & fear because your chart is "bad."

Evil or "bad" houses is a belief, an unfortunate false belief. There is no power in the concept except what you give it by consent. You accept it as

true, as reality. If a revivalist Hellenistic astrologer tells you in lecture or consultation, "This is bad" or "This is evil," you counter with (as suggested by even the Bible) the question, "Who told you?" Who made you an authority on this? Did a dead ancient astrologer from two millennia ago tell you this? The temptation for a true believer is to accept hook-line-& sinker almost everything Vettius Valens, say, writes because he was a teacher's teacher perhaps, or the all wise Wizard of Oz in astrology! So there are no evil or bad places, just the astrologer's lack of perception. Those beliefs may have served their purpose then due to their constructs in the culture lived, but such limiting beliefs are not needed now for the enlightened astrologer. Blood-letting seemed like a good medical practice several centuries ago, but it is certainly not recommended now! : ) The point of power is not in the past when H.A. was dominant, but *now*, seeing the material thru fresh eyes. The H.A. conception of the evil-bad houses (and planets) is, in a sense, their version of the original sin. So I advise revivalists of H/A. not to revive the same old concepts in the same old clothes! Don't try to wear the robes of Vettius Valens as you counsel clients and students. Let your revelations and discoveries and re-workings come in the now, not clothed in the outdated concepts written from now dead fingers 2000 years ago that no longer serve well.

The ancients exclaimed in their teachings, "Look! This is the system we have created!" And if you, as a revivalist H.A., like the same painting and frame from 2,000 years ago, then keep it. But if you don't like the frame--wanting to accommodate it now in the 21st century framework--then change it. If there is something in the picture itself you don't like, change it. Enjoy and learn from it what you can as a basis or foundation, and go on to build something better that will serve you and your client well. You learn and hopefully you evolve. A blanket and retro-ancient cut & paste job from 2,000 years ago to the present is not evolution.

Run as fast as you can from astrological models that preach "what-is-bad" or "what-is-evil." That is not a healing approach. The astrologer ethically should be a constructive source of information, give what is helpful, instill hope & power in the clients actions in the now. So, we can make Saturn and Mars an automatic problem (if you accept as true what the old books preach) but it doesn't have to be if the person is handling his life constructively and with conscious awareness. Nothing is automatically by its own nature "good" or "bad" (no automatic malefic like Saturn; no automatic benefic like Jupiter). Everything is an expression of God or All That Is.

Unfortunately, these ancient beliefs were perpetuated and accepted over the long centuries, and these astrologers simply got into a bad habit—many of them perhaps not even consciously but unconsciously. The key is to apply logic & common sense to each item of instruction; discard what doesn't work or fit these days, keep what does. So now, in this modern age, a thinking astrologer or reader of astrology (who happens to be reading or listening to a course of Hellenistic astrology) can softly rebuke these ancient teachers, and say, "You can limit YOUR reality & understanding if you wish, but that doesn't mean I'm going to limit MY reality & understanding." As given in St. Paul: "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good." Thess. 5:21.

Now: Another central point of traditional astrology that is also tied to this same discussion of "good" and "bad" placements is the concept of "malefics" and "benefics." This is perhaps one of the most major considerations in traditional astrology since many other considerations (such as so-called "bonifications" and "maltreatments") are dependent on this philosophical foundation. The benefics in traditional astrology are Jupiter (greater benefic) and Venus (lesser benefic), while the malefics are Saturn (greater malefic) and Mars (lesser benefic). Since the concept of *sect* is also a major consideration in H.A. (diurnal or day chart vs. nocturnal or night charts), there is an additional qualification. In a day chart, Saturn is not quite the "big bad wolf" in astrology because it is presumably "in sect" diurnally. In effect Mars becomes the greater malefic in a day chart with a greater potential to do bad for the native. In a night chart, Mars is "in sect" so it is a lesser malefic nocturnally, while Saturn here becomes the much greater malefic. They are both still "bad-doers" but apparently one seemingly puts on a sort of "happy face" depending on the sect (bad but less bad! : ). Curiously odd how in effect Mars is delegated the role of the night or feminine gender--and Mars is traditionally the male-warrior-anger archetype!

The same applies to the "good-doers" (benefics). In a day chart, Jupiter is "in sect" and is the greater benefic, while in a night chart, Venus becomes the greater benefic. Both are still "good-doers" but apparently one puts on an even happier face depending on the sect! Sect to the ancients meant that the day was led by the Sun luminary, while the night was led by the Moon luminary. The diurnal planets were designated to Sun, Jupiter and Saturn. The nocturnal planets were designated as Moon, Venus and Mars. Mercury could go "both ways" (not being kinky here! : ). It would be

designated either as a day or night planet in a specific chart dependent if it was a "morning star" (if Mercury rises before the Sun on the Ascendant) or an "evening star" (if Mercury sets after the Sun on the Descendant). At any rate, if you are a day birth, Jupiter is considered by the Hellenistic astrologers to be your "best" planet in the chart. The danger of such a quick & easy delineation such as this is that it neglects other dynamics in the chart. You can have that nice Jupiter in a day chart in the 5th configured in a grand trine with Venus in the 1st and Sun in the 9th. This looks on the surface to the traditional astrologer to be a blessed chart, especially if the malefics are in aversion and in their places of "joy." Yet you can find grand problems with that grand trine such as excesses, overdoing appetites or expecting life to be easy and good things handed to them on a silver platter, figuratively speaking. Instead of a blessed chart, you find the life ending up not in gain but a loss in soul growth.

Moreover, another H.A. consideration is that benefics become even more positive in the Places of Good Spirit (11th house) and Good Fortune (5th house) while malefics there seem to automatically become less malefic. The rationale behind that appears in part to be the fact that there is a nice trine from the 5th and a good sextile from the 11th with the 1st house being the pivot point. The benefics get less positive (less happier!) in the Places of Bad Spirit (12th house) and "Bad Fortune" (6th house) while the malefics become even more malefic. The rationale for this, once again, is because those Places are in aversion to the 1st house. And there are even more subdivisions of location preferences touted by H.A. such as the "joys" when even a malefic can feel better in a certain placement!

I suppose if you want to be philosophical about the whole concept, why not expand it to the whole physical universe? Many of the stoics believed that just being incarnated in a physical level world is a grand malefic, a sort of bottom-of-the-ladder degradation or innate muddy world of woe that you have to laboriously muck through with your boots. Earth is seen as the unhappy pilgrimage into the deepest manifested worlds, a sort of "Fall" of Man or "descent" of Man from the spirit realms" (true Home) into the "far country" (earth and dense bodies). Whereas the grand benefic is being disincarnate, returning to the native spirit realm! I believe Blavatsky once quipped that one shouldn't worry about going to Hell after death because this very Earth *is* hell! : ) Of course I discuss all this in my long Introduction of my online book I linked above. Indeed, as I discussed there, the concept of Saturn being a malefic is basically a hand-me-down

distortion over the centuries. There are deeper meanings that morphed over time into a malevolent force or figure, and it stuck. I would even assume that the true spiritual teachers back then or even before the onset of H.A. delved into the non-malefic deeper meaning of Saturn, but probably it was meant for the new Initiates, never written down.

So there you are. That's the terrific major consideration of sect that the ancient sages of astrology wanted us to believe. And that's the wonderful major consideration of evil and blessed planets that they wanted us to believe as presented in such simplified terms. My sense of it is that nothing is that simple. I usually walk the nearby hill early in the dawn hour or later. Many times I see the full Moon to waning Moon quite obvious in the morning daylight sky--granted, not nearly as bright as during the day--but still easily observable. Apparently the ancients were keen on such eyeball observations that included cycles of planets, the fixed stars, and so on, but they seemed to ignore mentioning full to waning moon daytime observations tied to their sect theories. Whether mentioned or not, there are obvious overlapping considerations. It is not an Either/Or consideration.

The horoscope is not either/or diurnal or nocturnal, just as the psyche is not male or female. Astrologers back then masculinized the Sun (belonging to the day) whereas the Moon belongs to the night, a feminine designation. Fair enough in general, but as just given, even in the observable sky you can find the waning Moon quite visible during the day--just not dominant compared to the Sun. Similarly, the predawn Sun in the night sect sky is quite evident in its effect before even the first visible ray of Sun peaking over the horizon. Thinking in global terms, while it is day in one roughly one half of the planet, the other side is night. They coexist. So, as an analogy, the arms and legs have different but complementary functions. When you take a long stroll thru the woods or hillside, the legs are dominant. When you are sitting at the computer typing a long Word document and surfing the web, your arms and fingers are now dominant. You do not say, "This is a leg chart" or "This is an arm horoscope." Similarly, the horoscope is day and night, although one may be dominant at a given period. As another analogy, there are many workers who work the customary day shift, but there are many who work the over-night shift. The latter's customary active period (normally associated with the day) is now the night (when people in the ancient era normally slept).

In Hellenistic practice, Saturn is considered the most negative planet in a night chart, while Mars is automatically considered the most negative planet in a day chart. Yet, in someone's actual chart, you can find these same malefics together in either sect in a nice grand trine with the degree-based Ascendant in, say, water signs or Capricorn rising (or whatever) showing a great deal of security, stability, productivity, and handling life quite well because of the integrativeness. These are not merely "quantitative" or mitigating factors as these astrologers might counter. They are important because they show the chart itself as a whole in overall good aspect. Conversely, you can find a so-called "conflicted" chart that has definite learning curves set up in the life, but the native ultimately handle the challenges quite successfully. A native may be born in poverty but learned to use his will and ingenuity to overcome poverty and indeed gained great prosperity and prestige. The assumed qualitative negative signification of a "malefic" out of sect in a chart did not make this native's life "bad" or the outcome doomed. Besides, I believe that each reincarnating Soul comes in for a purpose, albeit usually hidden consciously from the personality's perspective. Some may *want* that challenge seen by traditional astrologers as a heavily conflicted or "disadvantageous" chart. The native may unconsciously *want* that "hard" chart that symbolizes character-building for him. The conflicted chart was chosen on inner levels as a learning situation, hence not "fated" willy-nilly as a throw of the lots.

An infamous chart often used by astrologers is Jim Jones, the "Kool Aid" mass murderer who convinced his followers to commit suicide via drinking Kool Aid with poison in it. He had Capricorn rising in a night chart, so according to traditional astrology Saturn was the worst planet in his chart--and it happened to be ruling his Ascendant-1st house and that Saturn was placed in the 1st house! Hellenistic astrologers would give the gloom & doom call on this kind of "perfect storm" chart! The native himself would in effect be the malefic! He would be the agent of doom not only for himself but probably also be the agent of doom for people in his life. I pity the poor soul who happens to have this kind of chart who goes to a traditional-minded Hellenistic astrologer for a reading! This is because ancient H.A. automatically implied doom for a chart such as this that involved the domicile lord of the hour-marker being the malefic out of sect. Let's say they would be hard put to say something nice or constructive about it. I have also read, however, how H.A. has also stated in text that the ruler of the Hour-Marker in the 1st Place as its own domicile is good because it takes the helm of life directly, that the native will be fortunate because it will control

activities with its own hands (not under the host of another sign/house). A planet in its own sign and domicile/1st house can best express itself. But I suppose this changes if the domicile ruler is also a heavy malefic (out of its own sect)! Because it is the greater malefic in terms of being out of sect, then the Hellenistic astrologers automatically assumed that it worked against the native. If it were the malefic in sect then it would be a struggle early in the life but later a source of strength. Otherwise the malefic out of sect in the house of the Hour-Marker will take on the role of the malefic in his own hands, his own worst enemy, and work against his own evolution and best interests (such is the final proclamation of the ancient Hellenistics!). If you are a revivalist Hellenistic practitioner, then will you tell that to a client who has that configuration? What is Ted Kennedy had that aspect (I believe he had the same configuration)? Will you give him that doom & gloom "information"? Otherwise, how will you side-step it? You might not be honest (according to your entrenched Hellenistic belief system) but at least you would try to be ethical in your approach to your impressionable client.

In modern and *humanistic* terms (quite an alien position for the Hellenistics!), however, Saturn represents Law & Limits. It shows where we learn the rules, know what we can do, can't do, and have to do in this world, and once we voluntarily & consciously do not break the Law (cultural, natural, whatever), then there is no pain and problem with Saturn. It is no great malefic or misfortune at all! It's a lesson to be learned, especially if prominent in a chart (such as on a cardinal angle), but it is not automatically bad or "evil." If you don't learn, then you meet the consequences of your actions. Usually pain is the normal consequence or feedback warning signal that you are on the wrong track and violating law (such as feeling the pain of burning while putting your finger into fire). There will always be pain or difficulties in the material world, but we can grow & learn without undue pain and unfortunate circumstances. If you, as a Hellenistic astrologer, had an opportunity to tell, say, Ted Kennedy, to "behave" and follow the rules of the game (political, social, natural, cultural) and avoid any Chappaquadick event, then perhaps he would have listened. Of course, as the old adage states, you can lead a horse to water, but you cannot make him drink! : )

Now: Let's focus on my third objection of the Hellenistic teachings regarding complete and even partial determinism. I have discussed this topic in my now online paper that I originally wrote late 1983-early 1984:

<http://www.filmscorerundowns.net/astrology/astrological-zodiac.pdf>

My book that's online was originally titled, "The Astro-Universal Mandala: Theosophia of Astrology." Then I changed it to "Mystical Astrology As A Wisdom Science" and then settled for "The Astrological Zodiac: Its Psychological, Occult and Mystical Meanings" for the online version. Basically I used the theosophical model as a mean to build a synthesis of the various astrological systems now including, I suppose, the revival of the Hellenistic Astrology model. In my book I discussed the Cycle of Manifestation both microcosmically and macrocosmically that can be depicted as an astrological mandala you can access here:

<http://imageshack.com/a/img661/7020/AvKeML.jpg>

This "Theosophia Mandala" is based on the THEMA MUNDI or mythic chart of the world that had its manifested origins way back then around the start of A.D. (or C.E.). One article back in 2007 discusses it:

<http://planetwavesweekly.com/dadatemp/1832374392.html>

The Thema Mundi was used as a teaching tool in H.A. but it is also something far, far more than an astrological tool or Rosetta stone of sorts for the placement of planets & signs. That chart has a Cancer rising (not Aries rising). There are important reasons for this that I discussed this in my big paper.

At the time when I did it as an online paper in 2009, I did not have the so-called Thema Mundi wheel on it--or my detailed version of it. I could not get it to load properly back then. It is an astrological mandala with hidden meanings (not just astrological on the surface). Blavatsky called it "Ezekiel's Wheel" in *Isis Unveiled*. John K. Robertson called it the "Aquarian Mandala." It was also depicted in Hargrove Jennings's book in 1870 on the Rosicrucians, and in Sampson Arnold Mackey's *The Mythological Astronomy of the Ancients Demonstrated* (1822). It is also symbolically depicted in the Gnostic text, *Pistis Sophia*, and in various works of art such as the sculpture of the zodiac in the Villa Albani in Rome.

Anyway, if you read my book, you will see that I believe in the crucial importance of free will. But free will on this microcosmic level (say, one's own three-dimensional Personality living on this planet Earth) does not

necessarily apply in the same way on the Macrocosmic level! Even on this three-dimensional level, of course, free will is not a major factor in many areas. Your heart will beat automatically, and you will breathe automatically during sleep—all without the use of personal level will. Will cannot impact on the planetary motions of the planets around the Sun, and so on. There will always be influences (and hence common sense partial determinism) outside our immediate control because we live in a far greater gestalt than our personal level lives.

The trance psychic, Edgar Cayce, discussed in many readings how indeed the planets have “influences” because the soul in pre-incarnational states actually had experiences on, say, Uranus (like Cayce himself) quite prominently and would factor a sort of "predisposition" in the personality as seen by the horoscope. That is a sort of partial determinism. It's part of your makeup seen in the chart, but, Cayce added many times, will is the all-important factor for personal evolution.

As a long side note here, regarding Edgar Cayce's revelations, astrology as we knew it all these centuries could be radically upended--the rug pulled out from under the horoscope makers!--in terms of how to correctly construct the chart of individuals. According to Cayce speaking in trance from the "Other Side", you cannot rely on the physical birth of the infant at first breath out of the womb to be the true chart of the native. Sometimes it is but *most* times there is an average period of four and a half hours before or after strict physical birth that would show the actual birth (spiritual birth, if you wish, soul birth, or entry in a flash into the three-dimensional material body). Sometimes it could be minutes or hours before during labor, or even up to nearly 24 after the baby has been taken out of the womb. It all depends on the entity involved. Some are quite sure of the particular fetus and family conditions and enters just before the physical birth, while others are "undecided," weighing options in terms of other bodies available. John Willner (RIP) wrote a few books on this matter starting with Astrological Revelations (1996). Later he wrote an in-depth book on the procedures, The Perfect Horoscope (2001), that is available online via Kindle or hardcopy book. There he discusses his INCARN rectification software that you can perhaps still access online an old trial demo version that I will link immediately below this paragraph. There is a bit of a mystery in how the programming was specifically factored. It appears that once he passed away, the software no longer became available

or updated. Most astrologers of course would consider Willner's INCARN method of calculating Cayce-style "spiritual" charts as half-baked (or even quarter-baked! : ). However, considering Cayce's stature and his accuracy in the medical readings (less so in other areas), it may be worth pursuing. Again it would revolutionize how astrology charts are calculated, and you would need at least two birth charts in most cases (physical & soul or spiritual entry births). I personally experimented with the INCARN software results of my chart. My physical birth chart has 22 Libra 7 rising. The variance in the Cayce method could go as early as 25 Leo 36 up to 26 Libra 42. At least 15 likely candidates are available and I would need to test each of them in terms of 1st house associations with appearance, and secondary progressions (Naibod arc suggested by Willner) to see which chart fits best in terms of important events such as marriage, key deaths, major health events, etc. I have not come to any conclusions yet on this ongoing process. I suspect most people are not going to bother with it since physical birth events are far more easily discernible.

<http://www.sbastro.com/software.htm>

Now (back to the Hellenistic discussion): Even on the pure psychological dynamics level, there is a partial determinism in the sense that habits can exert a tremendous influence. Zip discussed this quite a lot since she was a clinical psychologist. Most of our actions are not necessarily “conscious” but the result of habitual, automatic or subconscious (even unconscious) momentum. So events can be quite “predictable” or deterministic. Modern physicists talk about the important factor of probabilities. The ancient Hellenistic astrologers (especially the purely deterministic ones) never considered such an exotic idea—yet it appears to be a “reality” (at least in the subatomic level). Seth (Jane Roberts), if you read that material (as I do), brings this concept of probabilities into the very personal level of one’s own daily life. Theoretically a person can open the door to another probable reality, or he may not enter that Road Not Taken. Many factors are involved—one’s habits, one’s current root beliefs, etc. Yet the ancient deterministic, fundamentalist astrologer only factored in that the planets would cause a certain event (say, be killed at a certain Mars-Saturn conjunction or whatever). Or you would be “fated” to have cancer or a heart attack or get a deadly communicable disease like Ebola—although these days there are modern medical means to help reverse the symptoms of Ebola. They did not factor free will (when it can indeed be applied constructively); nor present medical advances; nor that when you change

character, you change destiny; nor the nature of probabilities. Of course certain inevitabilities or instances of complete determinism are completely unavoidable for everyone in this material, three-dimensional world—we will grow old (however older that is) and we will eventually die! So be stoic about that deterministic part of "Death & Taxes" on this plane at least! : )

What I really object to is the rather complete determinism that revivalist Hellenistic astrologers have expressed in their teachings. I read or heard some of them say that their fundamental premise or belief system is that an individual's life is predetermined right from the moment of birth, including predetermined actions that are "fated." So they advise to try to be stoic (as Valens was) and accept their fate as best they can because on a fundamental level they can't make choices of great consequence in their life.

Now it would be nicer and easier if core beliefs such as this fit reality. But even if it doesn't, it won't change reality one bit. The false belief propagated by such complete deterministic astrologers of the past is, "I do not form my personal reality. My reality is caused by Fate. It is all predetermined."

But if you realize that you create your reality through your own beliefs, desires and expectations, then you will help nullify so-called "bad" aspects & placements or debts from the "past" told to you by the ancients. Although it is true, as discussed briefly earlier, that the overall life conditions are "set" (actually "chosen" on inner levels), they are still quite plastic or malleable on our level of action. Here the events you attract are the ones drawn to you by your beliefs and expectations. The blueprint (scene) is set, not the destiny (lines). Certain overall focuses and intents and "karmic" associations are laid out by the Higher Self (Soul) with other Souls, but the particular course of how it will all manifest is the ongoing choice of the Personality along the way. So predictions of future events in terms of specifying details are fundamentally meaningless because of the plasticity of time in the context of probable actions since free will operates always.

Traditional astrologers claim that the benefics affirm or say "yes" to conditions, while malefics delay, deny or say "no" to conditions. This is a false and limiting belief in which you project your power out to a horoscope (especially the so-called malefics and benefics). Saturn and Mars does not have the veto power in your life. Free will has the veto power. So once the general conditions of a life are set (male or female, parents chosen, country

chosen, etc.), the personality operates in free will dependent on one's evolutionary character, conscious awareness (or not), and overall probabilities set into motion based on important decisions along the roads in life. Sometimes decisions are made on inner levels that may intervene at times if, say, the personality strays seriously off the evolutionary path, refusing to listen to "better sense." But usually the personality can make final and sometimes drastic actions, including suicide, which means an irreversible end. Such a death (or any death, for that matter) is not a solution to a challenge because now there cannot be any more choices in this life (present incarnation) once suicide is committed.

Hellenistic Astrology is overall a materialistic form of astrology because of its severe determinism and high focus on events. This is especially seen in its divination practices and its exaggerated reliance on trying to give specific details of how a current or upcoming pattern will manifest. There are any of many ways an aspect or Time Lord period can express, all depending on the specific person and his or her life situation and history. No astrologer and no chart can foresee all uncertainties and all probabilities! At best the astrologer can make an educated guess of a general range of probable ways a current pattern can unfold, but he cannot know what will *actually* occur. No specific event is destined to occur. Even a gifted psychic cannot accurately predict what event out of the many probabilities will happen. Even if all likely events are known in advance, what will be selected by that specific individual at the *time* of choice is unknown. This is because every action changes every other action along *that* line of probabilities, let alone the many other lines of probabilities that were possible. No god could predict the final say of the individual, yet apparently H.A. can safely predict events from such multitudinous factors! They try to predict fixed outcomes from supposed fixed causes ("fated" horoscope with its predetermined effects or events). In reality it's difficult enough to predict variables from fixed causes, let alone variables from variable causes (probabilities)!

I remember in the late Sixties thru the mid-Seventies roughly when I had certain potentially "unfavorable" patterns in my chart. There was a period when, if I was drafted into the Vietnam war, I may not have fared very well (perhaps maimed or killed). I did not know astrology then. If my draft lottery number was just a bit lower, I would have most likely, in terms of probabilities, been drafted into the war. Later with astrological armchair retrospections, I saw I had some major Mars factors going on then. An actual

potential death event was several years later (in similar patterns) when I was a surfer. I ventured out in semi-rough waters without a lease, and was caught by a very strong riptide. I was already quite spent after considerable time surfing when it happened. Nobody heard me cry out. I was alone in that stretch of waves. Fortunately I was young and my adrenalin was pumping! After considerable difficulty and a lot of swimming in the set of waves, I got out of the riptide and made it back finally to shore. I kissed the wet sand off the edge of the water! A probable drowning death was averted. So a person may have a pivotal turning point in the life and not even be consciously aware of it. The road he took became a new birth, in certain terms, the birth of the new or "present" native, or at least an offshoot probable self not forecasted by a traditional astrologer!

A Hellenistic astrologer would have had a down face looking at my "poorly placed" Mars and the current chart in that period! Several of the Time Lord divination systems then were in Aries (such as the Lot of Spirit time lord, Decennials period, Annual Profecions for the exact year period I became eligible for the draft, etc). The ruler of Aries is of course Mars. And Mars is the "worst" planet in my chart, according to H.A., because it is the malefic out of sect in my day chart. It is in my first whole sign house of self & body in Libra square Uranus and the Sun in Cancer in the whole sign 10th. One faint ray of "good fortune" perhaps is that Mars at least was not the domicile ruler of the 1st house (Venus is). Otherwise that Mars time lord would have been activated then irregardless. An ancient Hellenistic astrologer most likely would have proclaimed that I would be involved in Martian activities then (most likely one of many wars back then), maybe a warrior killed in battle! Valens associated Mars with war, violence, aggression, robbery, rape, abortions, exile, battle, and so on. Not any positive significations so far! : ) After all, according to his limited mindset, it is a "malefic" or bad-doer!

It is rather pathetically humorous what ancient astrologers such as Rhetorius wrote about significations, and how overwhelmingly negative they were. For instance, I have Pisces in the 6th Place with it's ruler, Jupiter, in the 6th opposite Saturn (a malefic). The ancients had written that if Jupiter rules the 6th and is afflicted and badly placed (such as the 6th or 12th) this would likely mean liver problems associated with wine (or similar drinks). In effect they predicted health problems due to alcoholism. Well, I do not have liver ailments, and for a long period of my life I was a teetotaler. And when I do drink, it is quite moderate. I've been "drunk" only twice in my

life--once at a bachelor's party for a friend back in my mid-Twenties (vomited due to bad combinations of drinks) and another time at a craft beer fest that had higher alcohol content that I realized at the time. Between those times I once had a few beers or wines with my wife at dinner, walked home, and discovered along the way I had lost money. I got pissed off because of that and swore off alcohol for at least the next several years. So even assuming a single line of development (no such thing, by the way!) there will always be unpredictable actions and new significances.

Rhetorius wrote that the ruler of the 12th in the 5th or the ruler of the 5th in the 12th (I have the latter with Saturn ruling my Aquarius 5th Place in the 12th) will be a step-father or foster father, or maybe have a child out of wedlock. Nope. Not even remotely in my case. In fact, I never wanted to have children right from the get-go. To be perfectly safe and to have absolute peace of mind in the matter, I got a vasectomy. I eventually married my wife now of almost 32 years who also clearly did not want to have children either. There were and are many couples just like ours, such as Jane Roberts (of "Seth" fame) and her husband, Rob.

Rhetorius wrote that the ruler of the 3rd Place in the 6th Place can indicate assaults by bandits on the road (travel). I have Jupiter ruling my Sagittarius whole sign 3rd house in the 6th (and even opposite Saturn) but I never had mishaps with such people in my travels, foreign or domestic. Another detail Rhetorius offered in this placement is that the native would be mistreated by friends and/or brothers, or brothers are injured. No, never happened--yet, anyway! : )

He wrote that if the ruler of the 3<sup>rd</sup> place is in the 12<sup>th</sup>, then brothers and friends of the native become enemies. In fact, it doesn't even have to be siblings or friends or friends of the siblings, it could be a projection into the 12<sup>th</sup> house in the form of "secret enemies"—a laughable cop-out because you blame your problems on people you don't even know--almost like celebrity stalking except you are most probably not a celebrity! You don't consider that it might be something inside your own nature that is drawing to you what fits, constructive or destructive, consciously or unconsciously.

I can just keep on going with this laundry list of Hellenistic Astrology proclamations about placements but I think the reader gets the idea. The idea is that it is futile to try to guess the details of how a principle will manifest. Zip Dobyns pointed this out this fallacy many times. You are always on safe

and sure ground when you focus *more* on principles and *less* on details (how a principle may manifest in any of many ways). Regrettably the Hellenistics rarely focused on the principles, or indeed they were probably quite unaware of the *true* nature of astrology to begin with! When they expound core concepts such as "evil" houses, really bad planets, "bad fortune" placements, and complete determinism, then one can only conclude they were largely misguided.

Again this is understandable considering the times and culture back then (wars, empire conquests, slavery, low life span, etc.), but that is no excuse *now* for revivalists to continue with the same poor belief system. The ancients did not appear to have any consistent and comprehensive framework of understanding of the nature of reality that a true astrological model can be based on. They *did* have the Thema Mundi as a teaching tool for astrology, as I discussed previously. If the ancients did indeed have a unifying system of philosophy behind astrology (or that the Thema Mundi mandala symbolized), then it was not written down thoroughly, or did not survive. It is as though the higher or mystic teachings did not get written down, whereas the lower or *occult* teachings as represented by the astrological techniques were written. I don't know. I hoped to rectify that a bit with my book on the Theosophia mandala (I provided the online link earlier).

As I wrote in my book:

" The personal horoscope symbolizes the present incarnation of the Higher Self. The natal chart represents the temporary role (incarnation) of the Immortal Actor (Soul). It shows the theme of the Plan, but not its details: The scene is set but the lines are not written. In other words, no chart can give the specifics of the Divine Plan or *how* you will fulfill your destiny. That's *your* job, and the Higher Self relies on you to choose the details and make the decisions, to which the Higher Self provides its inexhaustible energy and resources to manifest. Astrology does not say what you will *do* with your character because how you freely express your character becomes your personal destiny. Destiny is basically how you use your energies directed by will (ideally), or unconsciously through emotions and physical impulse. Since the options of your free will are limited by your knowledge and conscious awareness, it behooves you to become self-aware and "know thyself," for "You shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free" (John 8:32). "

Yet the Hellenistic astrologers believed either in complete or semi-determinism, and they espoused the planets and signs as being *causes* of the events of human life. So it's like a double whammy or insult to a rational and humanistic-minded modern astrologer. If I have a flu, I don't want a doctor who just gives you an antibiotic (wrong medicine, by the way, but happens all the time!) and says, "I don't know how you got this, but maybe this will help your symptoms." I want a doctor who can treat the causes of the malady, not just the symptoms. And I certainly don't want a doctor telling me that I was "fated" to have it! Yet doctors show their own graphics and test results (although they may end up as false positives) that visually ingrains into the psyche that you have a "bad" thing.

Similarly, many of the ancient Hellenistic astrologers did a great disservice to clients by actually showing them a horoscope before their eyes (furthering reinforcing the negative suggestion) that what happened to them or *will* happen is predetermined, and there's nothing they can do about it. I am far more interested in self-realization, in getting insight of the dynamics of *why* I encountered such pain and "misfortune." Speak to me about the reasons why I have these problems, not some nonsense that it is my fate and I can't do anything about it. Never deprive a client of constructive solutions. Tell him or her that, to some extent at least, most situations can be changed for the better. The idea is to encourage a sense of control over their circumstances. You want to promote *healing*, not a sense of stoic helplessness. To negatively suggest to a client, for instance, that the "best" or most promising period of your unfolding life is already behind him is a serious and unethical matter. What happens in your life depends on your own choices, the application of your will, and taking advantage (or not) of your opportunities. There are many probabilities, so "Choose Thou." Make each day count. Build a better life.

In New Testament analogy, an insightful practitioner would give power to the creator of the effect, not to the effect itself. Consciousness has the power, not the manifestation or event. Christ would say in his healing, "What hinders you? Rise, take up your bed, and walk!" In other words, as suggested before, "Who told you? Who told you that you are doomed to some predetermined, fated, no-way-out situation?" In Old Testament terms, "Thou shalt have no god [power] before me." Traditionalist divination practitioners should not project power into their techniques. This is idolatry, placing power and faith into a technique or something outside yourself. To

elevate astrological techniques into a god is a severe displacement that many traditional astrologers unfortunately pay homage to, consciously or unconsciously—for example, seeking final answers in the guise of techniques to specify details in one's life.

The ideal is that the practitioner of astrology will affect you for the better. Strive to give clients only constructive suggestions. Negative suggestions only perpetuate the determinism hypnosis. It's rather true to say that if you can't say anything "nice" (that is, constructive) then don't say anything at all. A diehard traditionalist who believes in complete determinism and planetary causality might retort, "I'm just giving honest, rock bed information" or "You can't handle the truth!" Even if you, as a traditional astrologer, believed that, why reinforce the negative condition the client is undergoing? By concentrating on the negative, you deny yourself the constructive potential that could arise just as easily. It's just lousy counseling otherwise. Even in terms of simple psychological dynamics, a lot of illness (psychosomatic) is simply an over-concentration of the ego on bodily concerns. Hopefully you can reach such a client and help him understand that illness and accidents are very inadequate methods of solving challenges or issues. A condition or problem is not "negative" or "evil" per se. It is a challenge, an opportunity for growth and change. It is negative if you see it as such. Health is your natural state of being. Obviously you need to be a realist. You are not going to tell every client they are going to be healthy, wealthy and wise! Illness, like a stone in your shoe, is meant to get your attention, a feedback signal that something is wrong, out-of-balance, and you're not "happy." But if you state to your client that his chart is "maltreated" and the time lord period might last 27 years, you are reinforcing the client's own negative suggestions to himself. He may even agree with you, the traditionalist astrologer, and agree it is fate, that he is a victim of "karma" or whatever, and both of you can sink stoically in the quicksand! : )

I recall Valens stating about the 10th Place of proxis or action that if the ruler of this house is well situated, it will "make" for an effective native, and things will go well. But if it is poorly placed or situated, the native will or will likely be unsuccessful. Oh? Do you tell that directly to a client with a poorly configured ruler of the 10th, especially if it happens to be the malefic contrary to sect? What do you suggest to the client if you reveal the bad configuration? Do as the traditionalist vedic astrologers--prescribe a protective stone? And what does the client do with it after he leaves your

office or hangs up the phone? If the impressionable client gives such a traditional astrologer the power of god, then this can have a crushing effect on his psyche, feeling powerless. He might try to feel humorous about it (Note: Hellenistic astrology is quite humorless!) and quip that his horoscope is like the Borg and it is futile to resist! So this is not very helpful information. Maybe this client will also unfortunately have the ruler of his 8th Place in the 9th house of travel because Rhetorius declared that a native with this placement will die in a foreign country!

Remember the central dictum: "Do No Harm." If it is unintentional, then that is what the New Testament partially refers to when it stated, "Forgive them, Father, for they know not what they do."

Once again, as historical documents, Hellenistic teachings of Valens and Rhetorius and others are worthy of study, if only for curiosity about how people in an ancient culture approached life, what they believed was the nature of reality, and how they interacted with others. But remember that culture and beliefs were vastly different in the Arian Age into the cusp of the early Piscean Age than now in the Age of Aquarius. Standards then (such as widespread slavery) are obviously not condoned now. Women have been given their rightful equal rights, unlike 2,000 years ago and until even the early part of the 20th Century when women in the United States were finally granted voting rights (19th Amendment). We have progressed since the Hellenistic era—perhaps slowly!—but we are moving forward nonetheless. These are the times we live in now. This should apply also to the astrological teachings way back then and be careful not to make such a model a god in terms of literal or faithful application (including teaching now to others). Nothing is pure and uncontaminated. Information is always filtered thru our beliefs, worldview and cultural times (ancient times or modern times).

Moreover, information increases over the decades and centuries. Uranus, Neptune, Pluto, asteroids, etc., were not incorporated by ancient times astrologers. Why? Because they weren't discovered yet! However, these slower or "higher" bodies were still part of the solar system *then* during the Hellenistic era. It's just that the astrologers way back then were ignorant of their ever-present reality. The ancient astrologers based their system on what they knew then according to their own level of understanding and the empirical information available to them. With the discovery in "modern" times of these outer planets, we progressed into a wider understanding, a larger interpretation, becoming far more inclusive.

I am reminded by spontaneous association at this moment how sometimes in conversations with people, you hear someone say, “Well, he’s not right for me” or “She’s not right for me” or “It isn’t right for me.” Similarly, while I appreciate it and can learn from it, I can safely say that such astrology (Hellenistic/medieval/traditional/”old” style) is not right or best for me as it stands now. Maybe it is for some astrologers or students, but not me. I can still appreciate some practices back then such as, say, the simplicity of their Whole Sign house system and how it may work better or easier for many astrologers. But overall I am not "sold" by the ever-permeating "good" house-"bad" house and "good" planet (benefic) and "bad" planet (malefic) root beliefs. Over time the hope is that there will be a successful synthesis of the ancient and modern models so that it becomes better than what came before it.

Zip Dobyns’ approach to astrology is, however, “right” or best fitting for me, and I’m sure for many thoughtful-minded astrologers and students. It is not perfect of course (not a perfect fit as a model) because I think Zip took some liberties in his “Zip” system. I have some quibbles with her system here & there. But, as she was clear to state many times, no model is perfect; no model is the truth with a capital “T.” As long as it is useful and helpful as a conceptual system to understand life and one’s inner dynamics, then fine. One of the key failures of the old traditions is that they provide plenty of details about how a principle can manifest (often negative ones) but almost no presentation of principle itself! It focuses on (often “fated”) events, not character—not the psychological understanding of the psyche in question under the astrological framework. It tends to be fatalistic and materialistic--outer-directed, not humanistic or inner-directed. There are traditional astrologers who might look at their own chart, spot an upcoming Time Lord period they don’t like, and comment, “OMG, I’m worried about five years from now. I’ll probably get seriously ill!” Then they have to gird themselves for that, prepare for the eventuality. Hopefully they become stoic and learn to take it with some sort of acceptance, if not peace. “Those are the cards I’m dealt with. That’s my fate.”

My fear is that many revivalists of H.A. now in the 21st century will choose to get *stuck* on the same ancient level of materialistic astrology from 2,000 years ago. Current practitioners of H.A. tend to pooh-pooh the modern astrology approach, especially the so-called "12 Letter Alphabet" approach of Zip Dobyns. They feel that this integrative model of equivalences

(planets-houses-signs such as Mars-1st house-Aries) is a distortion that the ancients never taught (that you cannot exchange such significations). Yet, if you investigate this, you will see that the ancients did indeed (some directly, some indirectly by implication) make such equivalences. For example, the planets are crucially associated with signs in the Essential Dignities concept that is adopted by current H.A. revivalists. [Side note: Zip Dobyns disagrees with features of the Essential Dignities doctrine. You can read it in my other online paper, [Zip Dobyns' Astrological Insights](#), a very large paper that went online mid-October 2014 at the same time as this Hellenistic paper you are reading now] The ancients made the clear association (as the ancient Thema Mundi shows that the Hellenistic astrologers used as a teaching tool) that Moon rules Cancer, that Sun rules, Leo, and so on. So for current revivalists to object to the so-called false equivalences of the Zip Code system is much ado about nothing because the fundamentals are there similar. I grant that perhaps Zip took some liberties in some of the details (traditionalist bemoan the equivalency of Uranus to Aquarius) but overall Zip's system is an excellent foundation that has firm roots in the ancient system of equivalences.

I've heard some of H.A. revivalists over the years bemoaning how Zip's approach became a "bad habit" accepted over the decades in the humanistic-psychological astrological community. These H.A. revivalists dislike the modern conception that if you become self-aware and become conscious of the psychological dynamics of your chart that you can actualize yourself, transcend your chart, and be fortunate in your life. They apparently don't like that "spiritual evolution" concept of modern humanistic astrology. They tend to believe that if you have an "unfortunate" chart because, say, the malefic contrary to sect has the "upper hand" in your life, then you have to deal with it stoically. They consider this as one of the inequities of personal fortune. Character analysis is not an option for ancient H.A., hence the dismissal by H.A. revivalists of moderns like Zip Dobyns, Dane Rudhyar, Alan Leo and others. The revivalists sometimes talk about the idea of a new type of astrology that can emerge from a synthesis of the ancient traditions with the modern ones. But as long as they put down modern astrology practices as taught by Zip Dobyns based on a psychological-humanistic model, and continue to espouse complete determinism philosophically, and downplay meaningful free will, then it is just empty lip service! My feeling is that the H.A. revivalists can't see the forest from the trees of techniques, and that they need a firm and holistic philosophical-ethical foundation. Moreover, the traditionalists exclaim that

only the first house applies to the native and everything thing is outside of you! This is a rather extreme or short-sighted belief. While it is true that the 7th house, say, can mean the signification of marriage and partnerships (significant others), it also shows how you meet yourself through the mirror of those partners. We draw our own to us (birds of a feather flock together). H.A. needs to evolve there in that narrow conception.

If you are to have a real synthesis, then you need to take the core concepts and techniques of ancient H.A. and test them, and test them some more against many charts (celebrities and clients). Is one system better than the other in a certain area, say, divination techniques? Are secondary progression really better and more accurate in terms of precise timing than the ancient Time Lord artificial techniques? Can the ancient whole sign approach be sophisticated enough to clearly discern the differences between charts of twins?

On a side note, I feel that there was a burst or "reincarnational" activity from the late 19th century up to now, a new thrust of knowledge & revival (including the relatively recent revival of Hellenistic Astrology) . I think there is a reappearance of the Souls from that ancient era who were involved in, say, Hellenistic astrology and other theosophia. Perhaps, in certain terms, they "came back" to resurrect the old theosophia, perhaps make it better, get it "right," to bring about the most favorable version of Hellenistic Astrology, for instance, because the ancient "dated" version needs some change and evolution! I can imagine, playfully speaking, and as an analogy, if Jesus came back now: he would change the message somewhat to modern times! Make it more fun & joyful perhaps! Certainly more empowering because it (Hellenistic Astrology) tended to be quite causal and deterministic.

I should state here (to tell you where I'm coming from philosophically) that as far as us three-dimensional guys & gals are concerned, we do not reincarnate. It is, in my view, the reincarnational Whole Self (Higher Self, Soul) that incarnates in this life-death cycle. I like to say, in Shakespearean terms, that the natal chart shows the temporary role (incarnation) of the Immortal Actor (Soul). We evolve to the so-called "Path of Perfection" (as Theosophists call it) or Self-Realization (or however you wish to term it) achieved through a series of lives & various experiences (whether successive or in the "Now" simultaneously, in larger terms).

What I like about Zip is that she was a shining star in steering astrologers in the direction of the psychological & humanistic approach, away from the old materialistic, negative approach to astrology. Astrology is supposed to be a Stepping Stone (as practiced by Zip), not a Stumbling Block (as often practiced by H.A.). This revival of Hellenistic Astrology needs to progress from the current kindergarten class in terms of philosophical fundamentals, and grow up. I feel that the ancient Hellenistic astrologers' intent was a good one. Like intelligent but playful children playing with building blocks in their playpen, the old Hellenistics had a meaningful time playing around with their astrological building blocks. Some blocks they kept, some discarded, others were mixed and matched. With their blocks (concepts and techniques) they built a framework for future generations. Some have merit; some need to be called into question. The key is to make it an ongoing quest for excellence, and not get stuck in some sort of fundamentalist adherence to the whole ancient baggage or building blocks erected way back then. Test the concepts, polish up or discard some techniques, and try to create something better in the modern age. If some of the blocks and even the framework is not a good version for the present consciousness that evolved since 2,000 years ago, then kick them aside and make a new one! I already discussed the three major sections of the ancient framework that need to be kicked aside or at least modified. H.A. needs to get its act together. If you willingly offer people ideas about "evil" houses and deterministic beliefs, then make sure you give clear caveats to clients, and that it is a "work in progress."

One could reasonably compare Zip Dobyns' status (in the modern astrological world) likened to Valens (as he was for H.A.) in the sense of important astrological frameworks being created--except I think Zip did a better job of it! :) Her metaphysics and foundational philosophy was far more in keeping with Reality in terms of theosophia. I may have a few quibbles with her Zip Code but fundamentally it is sound and helpful and ethical as a model of astrology. Whereas I cannot give H.A. my full blessing as it stands now. It needs a drastic overhaul in certain key areas. It might catch fire like gangbusters in the next few decades, but if it is simply a strict revivalist or fundamentalist approach copied from 2,000 years ago, well, the only association I can come up with at this moment is a biblical one: What do you benefit if you win the world but lose your own soul? H.A. has not yet sufficiently found its excellence.

Fortunately there may be one or two elder statesmen of astrological practice who could help in the proper transition of H.A. in the modern age. I just read an interview with an astrologer of merit who is a bit older than I am (besides the year he may also have more mileage than I have! :) who actually said that there are no benefics and malefics per se. Finally! That was nice to read. He continues on with qualifications and certain contexting, but I was encouraged to see that modification from the strict ancient texts. Maybe in his sphere of influence he can exert by example a balanced perspective to the younger up & comers in the revivalist H.A. movement.

In conclusion, what I like about Zip very keenly in her teachings is that she accentuated empowerment. Astrology for her was a tool of awareness that should be helpful. The more you know yourself and become intelligently self-aware, the more you can consciously effect changes & create a constructive destiny. The goal is to transmute so-called "negative" or "bad" (painful/unconstructive) qualities and situations and engage in positive character development. And, as Zip often pointed out, "enjoy the journey!"

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[completed, edited, sent out Tuesday, October 14, 2014 at 12:28 pm, 0  
Capricorn 17 rising, Venus 18 Libra 39 on MC]