

Making Time out of Space: An Introduction to Planetary Periods by Bruce Scofield

I want to warn readers that some of the material in this article, particularly that in the first few paragraphs, may be a little dense for those with low Saturn tolerance. Some may want to skip to the second section. Please don't be scared away. There's lots of interesting stuff further down. It's just that what I'm about to attempt is a summary of Western astrological predictive methodologies of the last 200 years in 600 words or less.

Introduction

The history of astrological predictive techniques has long been a major interest of mine. One of my first books on astrology was *The Progressed Horoscope* by Alan Leo, and it was the book that convinced me of the validity of the subject. I followed his directions for progressing the horoscope, made some predictions based on his delineations, and -- what do you know -- they worked! The main idea behind secondary progressions, commonly called just "progressions," is that each day after birth corresponds to a year of the life. I found this idea to be completely mind-blowing. How could one unit of time be equated to another unit with, what I thought, were, undeniable results? I next acquired a copy of C.C. Zain's *The Hermetic System of Progressions* and tried out his minor progressions, in which each lunar return after birth equals a year of life.¹ Over the next few years I proceeded to calculate, with log tables and a slide rule, every conceivable type of progression, both forward and converse. Like a true social scientist I checked out what happened under each alignment for myself and for my friends. It was 1967, a great time for discovery, and my mind was hooked on this astrological idea of time-shifting.

Over the following years I broadened my knowledge of predictive techniques by experimenting with solar arc directions, transits, and solar and lunar returns. I tackled the formidable primary directions and calculated all the semi-arcs and oblique ascensions with trigonometry. I even calculated a full planetary speculum a few times. It was still B.C., Before Computers.

Most of the writers on predictive techniques that I was reading back then (Leo, Davison, DeLuce, Carter) viewed them as a hierarchy. At the top were the primary directions, which are based on the rotation of the earth after birth. In this system one rotation of the earth on its axis is equal to 360 years, or 1 degree of rotation of the earth equals 1 year. Obviously the full rotation is never needed in a normal lifetime. Here's an example. Suppose Mars is somewhere in the 10th house and it will culminate shortly after birth. The astrologer must determine the number of degrees that the Midheaven, measured in Right Ascension, must move to reach Mars. If the figure is 8 degrees, then at age 8 a Mars/Midheaven trend should be evident. Because primaries are based on the rotation of the earth, which means that the poles and the equator are the active reference points, simple planetary positions in longitude aren't enough. The actual bodily rise or set of a planet requires directing by oblique ascension. And it gets even more complicated. Doing primaries, especially by hand, can be time-consuming, and it takes a lot of work to make this system sing. It's no wonder that most people use just secondary progressions and transits.

Primary directions equate one rotation of the earth to 360 years, or roughly 4 minutes of time (1/360th of a day) to one year. Notice here that the day, 1 rotation, is divided into a number of years that is the same number of days as in an ideal year (360 is perfect, but 365.2422 is not). This is like fractals. The day becomes a fractal, a micro-model, of a hypothetical great year of some sort (see footnote 9). Secondary progressions are much simpler: they equate a full day to a year. Tertiary progressions equate a full day to a month. Minor progressions equate a full lunar

cycle to a year. Diurnals (charts cast every day at the time of birth) and transits equate a day to a day. Solar and lunar returns are a specialized way of doing transits. All of this is pretty much an exercise in time equivalents, an exercise in astrological fractology. The primary motions that define time -- the day, the month, and the year -- become interchangeable in some way, and reveal a kind of unfolding of the chart in the days following birth. As bizarre as it may sound to the astrologically uninitiated, these techniques make perfect sense to those who think by analogies. We are merely exchanging one time unit for another while respecting proportions.

Something Completely Different

In the late 1970s I tackled the ancient writers on astrology, at least those whose works had been translated or written about by that time (Firmicus, Ptolemy, and Manilius). In these writings I came across some very different approaches to astrological forecasting, ones that took signs or planets in the natal chart and assigned time periods to them. I found this mildly upsetting at first. How can a planet automatically be assigned a value of 10 years and 9 months? How can a sign by itself be counted as a year -- or a month? Was this changing a position, i.e. a space, into time? Are blocks of space and time interchangeable?

In the *Mathesis* of Firmicus Maternus (Book 6, section 33 ff.) is a forecasting system in which each planet in the natal chart is accorded 10 years and 9 months of rulership. Each of these periods is then divided into 7 parts according to a specific scheme. I dabbled with this method, now referred to as the Decennia, and read about Ken Gillman's experiments with this kind of approach in the astrological journal *Considerations*. The results I got using the system didn't bowl me over, but the basic idea here of planetary periods, that each planet carries with it a specific chunk of time, did. Next I found out about the Hindu Dasas.

In the Vimshottari Dasa system of forecasting, the most popular dasa system in Hindu astrology, space is blatantly converted into time. The spatial position of the Moon becomes a portion of a time block that is followed by a series of specific time blocks each ruled by a planet.

Also around this same time I began researching Mesoamerican astrology. I soon realized that in this tradition, blocks of time were integral units themselves, not unlike zodiac signs. Time itself was a sign. This was too much. I was now more in love with astrology than ever. What a subject! It's just as bizarre as particle physics -- and it has personal applications. And it's affordable. Now, with my personal astrological journey serving as an introduction, I'd like to elaborate on two themes: space and time interchangeability, and the use of planetary-period systems of forecasting.

Converting Space into Time

Let's start with time. It appears to me, and to some old Greeks, that time is something established by the movement of the heavens. Because everything in the sky is running in some kind of cycle, this fundamental view of time is circular. What goes around comes around. In our modern age we see time as an arrow moving from past to future. The difference for forecasting purposes is clear. In a cyclic version of time, patterns repeat themselves. In straight arrow time, there are only points along the way, making this modern approach fairly useless for making sense out of anything. But both ways of viewing time are correct in the sense that they rationalize a viewpoint or belief system. In the olden days life was circular. Life imitated the cycle of the seasons. Real changes were slow, barely noticeable. Since the discovery of Uranus, time has indeed been like an arrow (at least in the leading Western nations). The belief in progress, which has moved the outhouse from the backyard into its own room in the house, is one that by necessity has to shoot

out of the loop of circular time. But arrows must eventually fall to the ground. It seems to me that arrow time is an anomaly, a perspective that is as divorced from the history of humanity as Yahweh/God/Allah, the portable god of nomads, is divorced from the earth. But what else would one expect to come along with the discovery of Uranus?

If time is normally cyclic, then repeating segments can be named. The counting of moons or years is a naming of cyclic time. Calendars are structures that harness the natural movements of the sky and, in turn, structure the social life of humans. When it's noticed that the spatial position of the Sun against the horizon changes during the seasons, a time construct is converted to a spatial framework. Astrology developed when it became obvious that there were correlations between positions in the calendar (in terms of both time and space) and events on earth.

Now the important thing about cyclic time is that is complex. Many cycles coexist at the same time. It is a multi-layered time.² Let's begin with the most basic and fundamental unit of time on this planet, the rotation of the earth (or the apparent daily cycle of the Sun). It's a powerful framework, one that evolving life has wrapped itself around. The alternation of day and night is the computer code that drives organisms through what are called circadian cycles. The ancient Maya understood this. Their word for Sun, the day, and time itself was the same word -- "kin." Then there's the year, created by the cycle of the earth around the Sun. Next are the cyclic times of the Moon and the planets, and even the precession of the equinoxes. Sometimes these overlap. Every 8 Sun years turns out to be the same as 5 Venus years. Every 19 Sun years the Moon and Sun meet at the same place. This is called the Metonic Cycle. Every 12 years Jupiter passes through the entire ecliptic and returns to the same place. Saturn does this in about 30 years. These astronomical facts were not lost on ancient calendar and ephemeris makers. In fact, in ancient Western astrology each of the planets has a set of specific years, a list that appears in many ancient texts. Here's the list:

The Least or Minor Years of the Planets³

Sun	19	Metonic Cycle
Moon	25	309 lunation cycles in 25 Egyptian years of 365 days
Mercury	20	63 synodic cycles in 20 Egyptian years
Venus	8	5 synodic cycles of Venus equals 8 solar years
Mars	15	7 synodic cycles in 15 Egyptian
Jupiter	12	11 synodic cycles in 12 Egyptian years
Saturn	30	29 synodic cycles in 30 Egyptian years

The function of this list has not been completely clear. Certainly these figures were useful in computing future position of planets. Although the list appears in most ancient and medieval books on astrology, it was dropped sometime during the Renaissance. Thanks to Project Hindsight, we now have access to a large number of ancient texts including Vettius Valens's book *The Anthology*, probably the most important astrological book of the Roman period. Valens, a real hard-working astrologer, offered several ways that this list could be used to designate time periods in a person's life. We call these planets, when their periods are in effect, chronocrators or "time-lords."⁴

Although I've omitted some interesting details in my path to this point, it should be clear that we're now looking at something that's very different from the predictive astrological techniques that I, and everyone else, learned from modern writers. We're looking at planetary time values based on recurrence cycles to spatial positions that are then triggered by signs, i.e. sections of space. You'll see what I mean as we get into some examples.

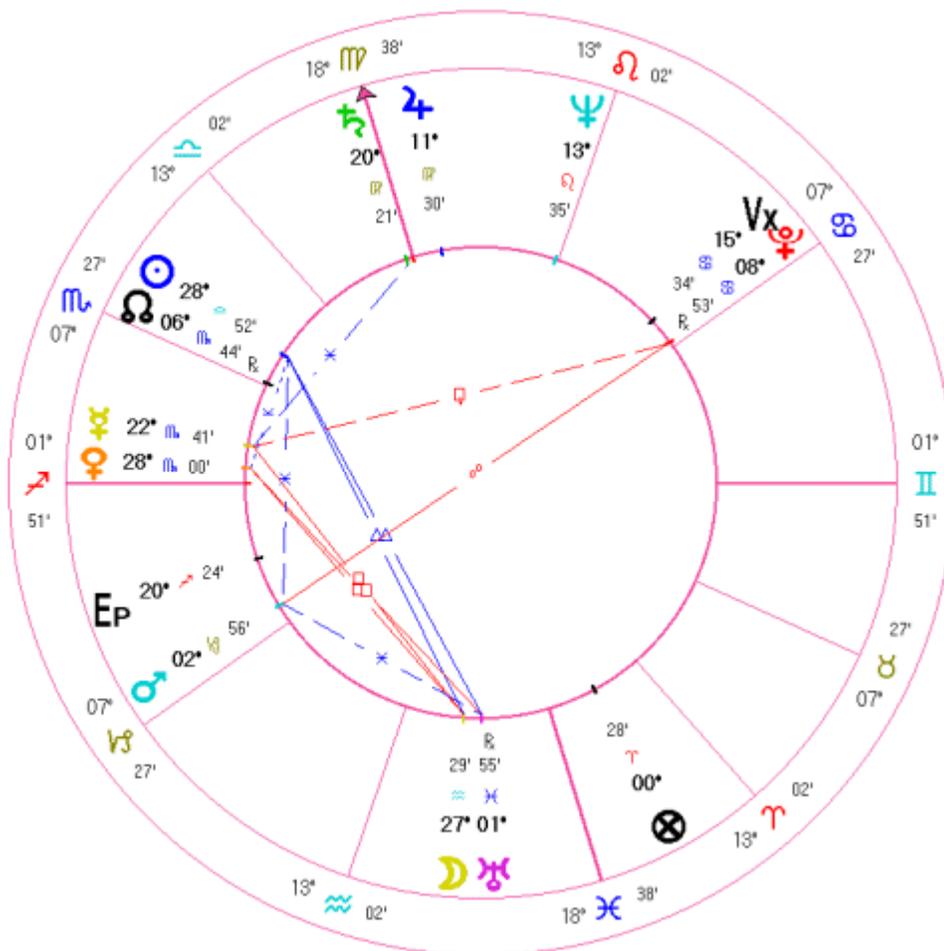
The Greek Time-Lords

Two thousand years ago, Vettius Valens and other ancient astrologers were using the minor years of the planets as a kind of master key for forecasting destiny. They used it in several different ways, but always from a specific starting point.

Often, the Part of Fortune was used, but the Sun, Moon, or Ascendant were other possibilities as beginning points. But which one should we use? My take on this confusing situation is that each chart needs to be taken as an independent case. Let's look at an example.

Timothy Leary

Natal Chart (8)
 Oct 22 1920
 10:05:46 AM EDT +4:00
 Springfield
 42N06 05 072W35 25
*Geocentric
 Tropical
 Porphyry
 Mean Node*



Timothy Leary: 10/22/1920, 10:05:46 AM EST, Springfield, MA

(Rectification by me; the Historical Data Collection compiled by A.H. Blackwell gives a time of 10:45 am, citing birth record on file in Springfield, MA as source.)

Here's the birth chart of Dr. Timothy Leary, the greatest psychologist of the 20th century and the person who Richard Nixon once called "the most dangerous man in the world." (It takes one to know one.) In Leary's chart the Part of Fortune is in Aries and placed in the 4th house. Aries being the first sign, and the 4th house being an angular house, supports the use of the part of

fortune as a "jumping off" point, so to speak. Since Mars rules Aries, it becomes the time-lord for the first 15 years of life (see table above). Taurus is the next sign after Aries, so its ruler, Venus, rules the next 8 years. Gemini, ruled by Mercury, comes next, ruling 20 years. Here's the time-lord list for the chart:

Age	Time-Lord
0-15	Mars
15-23	Venus
23-43	Mercury
43-68	Moon
68-97	Sun

Now, according to ancient Greek tradition, each of these periods is subdivided into sections ruled by the time-lords using months, instead of years. For example, the first period ruled by Mars would begin with a 15-month period ruled by Mars. Following this would be an 8-month period ruled by Venus, and so on through the successive signs until one cycle of signs has occurred. After that, the order skips to the opposite side of the zodiac. Let's look at these sub-periods, effective from when the Moon became time-lord at age 43 to when Dr. Leary died during his Sun period.⁵

Moon becomes time-lord at age 43 on 10/23/1963

The following are the ending dates of the sub-periods of the Moon:

11/21/1965	Moon (Cancer)
6/23/1967	Sun (Leo)
2/21/1969	Mercury (Virgo)
10/22/1969	Venus (Libra)
1/22/1971	Mars (Scorpio)
1/22/1972	Jupiter (Sagittarius)
4/23/1974	Saturn (Capricorn)
10/22/1976	Saturn (Aquarius)
10/22/1977	Jupiter (Pisces)
1/21/1979	Mars (Aries)
9/22/1979	Venus (Taurus)
5/23/1981	Mercury (Gemini) ⁶
8/23/1983	Saturn (Capricorn)
2/21/1986	Saturn (Aquarius)
2/21/1987	Jupiter (Pisces)
5/22/1988	Mars (Aries)
10/22/1988	Venus (Taurus)

Sun becomes time-lord at age 68 on 10/22/1988

The following are the ending dates of the sub-periods of the Sun:

5/23/1990	Sun (Leo)
-----------	-----------

1/22/1992	Mercury (Virgo)
9/21/1992	Venus (Libra)
12/22/1993	Mars (Scorpio)
12/22/1994	Jupiter (Sagittarius)
3/23/1997	Saturn (Capricorn)

The key to using the time-lord system lies in understanding that during a period or sub-period, the ruling planet acts out according to its sign and house placements, and that events ruled by the time-lord, or sub-lord, often occur at the end of the period it rules. Events in Dr. Leary's life correlate well with this scheme. First of all, he was kicked out of Harvard at age 42.6, just as Mercury was finishing its 20-year period as time-lord. Mercury rules teaching, which was, at least officially, over at that point. In September of 1966 Leary made his famous "turn on, tune in, and drop out" speech to a national audience. This was a powerful introduction to his 25-year period with the Moon as time-lord and the Sun as sub-lord. His natal Moon is in the 3rd house, in Aquarius and conjunct Uranus. He was jailed in March of 1970 during the period that Mars was sub-lord, and he died during his Sun as time-lord period, when the sub-lord was Saturn. Using ancient delineation techniques, notice that Leary's natal Saturn is in Virgo, ruled by Mercury. Mercury disposes Saturn and is in Scorpio, sign of death, and in the 12th house, house of endings.

The Decennia

Now let's move on to another variation of this fantastic time-lord schema. If the least years of the planets are added together, 129 years is the result. One twelfth of 129 years is 10 years 9 months. In the system called the Decennials, which I first came across in Firmicus Maternus' book *The Mathesis*, each time-lord rules a period of 10 years and 9 months. With 7 time-lords of 10 years and 9 months each you've got a period of 129 months. (This is starting to look like Mesoamerican astrology, which does wondrous things with planetary periods.) Here are the 7 primary periods:

	Age		
1	0y 0m	to	10y 9m
2	10y 9m	to	21y 6m
3	21y 6m	to	32y 3m
4	32y 3m	to	43y
5	43y	to	53y 9m
6	53y 9m	to	64y 6m
7	64y 6m	to	75y 3m

The way the system works is to begin with the Sun, if it is a day birth, or the Moon if a night birth, and let that luminary rule the first period. The next planet in zodiacal order rules the next period, and so on. Valens says if the Sun or Moon are not well-placed in the chart, start with the first planet after the Ascendant in zodiacal order. Using our example chart, let's see how this works.

Dr. Leary was born during the day, so the Sun rules his first 10-year, 9-month period. Mercury follows the Sun in zodiacal order, so it rules the second period. Then come Venus, Mars, Moon, Jupiter, and Saturn. Now each 10-year, 9-month period of 129 months is subdivided into 7 parts ruled by sub-lords. Each sub-lord rules the same number of months as it does years in the basic scheme. During the period when the Moon was time-lord, period #5 above, the first 25 months are ruled by the Moon. The next 12 months are ruled by Jupiter, the next 30 by Saturn, the next

19 by the Sun, the next 20 by Mercury, the next 8 by Venus, and finally, the last 15 by Mars. Here's Leary's list beginning with his fourth period, ruled by Mars:

Mars as time-lord: begins 1/21/1953
 Moon as time-lord: begins 10/23/1963
 Ending dates of the Sub-Lords

11/21/1965	Moon
11/22/1966	Jupiter
5/23/1969	Saturn
12/22/1970	Sun
8/22/1972	Mercury
4/22/1973	Venus
7/23/1974	Mars

Jupiter as Time-Lord: begins 7/23/1974
 Saturn as time-lord: begins 4/22/1985
 Sun as time-lord: begins 1/22/1996

Leary was kicked out of Harvard towards the very end of his fourth major period ruled by Mars, the planet of kicking. He was in trouble during most of his Moon period. Consider that his natal Moon is in Aquarius and conjunct Uranus. He was pretty much out of trouble by 1976, the early part of his Jupiter period. He died shortly after the start of his Sun period.

The Hindu Dasas

The ancient literature, especially Valens, abounds with various predictive methodologies based on the time-lords. What I just outlined was only two of the more important ones. Practitioners of Hindu astrology will notice that these methods are very similar to the dasa systems. Let's take a look at how this bending of space and time works in that tradition.

In the Vimshottari Dasa system, one of many known in Hindu astrology, there are nine time-lords. Seven of these are the visible planets, and the other two are the Moon's north node (Rahu) and south node (Ketu). Their periods, called dasas are as follows:

Sun	6 years
Moon	10 years
Mars	7 years
Rahu	18 years
Jupiter	16 years
Saturn	19 years
Mercury	17 years
Ketu	7 years
Venus	20 years

If there is an astronomical rationale behind these periods, as is the case with the minor years of the planets in Greek astrology, it has remained hidden. The Moon is most important in this system, as its spatial position in one of 27 lunar signs, called nakshatras, is the key to everything else. The nakshatras are 13 1/3-degree sections of the ecliptic, a kind of lunar zodiac. There are 3

There is about 0.76 years left in the Mars dasa. At about 9 months after birth, Dr. Leary entered his 18-year Rahu dasa. Here's a list of his dasas up to his death. (Since the sum of the dasas equals 120 years, this list could be extended.)

0y	to	0y 9m	Mars
0y 9m	to	18y 9m	Rahu
18y 9m	to	34y 9m	Jupiter
34y 9m	to	53y 9m	Saturn
53y 9m	to	70y 9m	Mercury
70y 9m	to	77y 9m	Ketu

As with the Greek systems, these larger periods can be subdivided. The 9 sub-periods are called bhuktis and the same proportions of the main periods are retained. When Dr. Leary was kicked out of Harvard at age 42.6 he was in his Saturn dasa, but in its Venus bhukti. His natal Venus is in the 12th house and square to Jupiter in the 9th house of "deeds of virtue." When he was jailed at age 49.35 he was in his Saturn dasa, at the end of the Mars bhukti. At his death at age 75.6 he was near the end of his Ketu dasa, at beginning of his Saturn bhukti. Like the Greek planetary periods, the dasas and bhuktis often deliver near their transition points.

The Greek/Persian Firdaria

A while back medievalist Bob Zoller introduced me to the years of the Firdaria, which he teaches in his correspondence course on medieval astrology.⁷ The origin of the Firdaria is unclear, but the list is found in some medieval works that probably drew from earlier Greek works. It's a planetary period system in the same category as the time-lords and dasas, and it's the easiest to use of all the systems outlined so far. There are two major divisions, one for diurnal births, one for nocturnal births. Both divisions are divided into major periods ruled by the 7 planets in the same order. Each major period is subdivided into 7 sub-periods, beginning with the ruler of the major period. Since the structure of this system is constant, the list presented here can be used on anyone's chart. Here's the framework.

Major periods in diurnal charts:

Sun	10 years
Venus	8 years
Mercury	13 years
Moon	9 years
Saturn	11 years
Jupiter	12 years
Mars	7 years
North Node	3 years
South Node	2 years

Major periods in nocturnal charts

Moon	9 years
Saturn	11 years
Jupiter	12 years
Mars	7 years
Sun	10 years
Venus	8 years
Mercury	13 years
North Node	3 years
South Node	2 years

The Firdaria with beginnings of sub-periods in age:

Diurnal

Sun	Ven	Merc	Moon	Sat	Jup	Mars
0	1.42	2.86	4.28	5.71	7.14	8.57
Ven	Merc	Moon	Sat	Jup	Mars	Sun
10	11.14	12.28	13.43	14.57	15.71	16.85
Merc	Moon	Sat	Jup	Mars	Sun	Ven
18	19.86	21.71	23.57	25.42	27.28	29.14
Moon	Sat	Jup	Mars	Sun	Ven	Merc
31	32.28	33.57	34.86	36.14	37.43	38.71
Sat	Jup	Mars	Sun	Ven	Merc	Moon
40	41.57	43.14	44.71	46.29	47.86	49.42
Jup	Mars	Sun	Ven	Merc	Moon	Sat
51	52.71	54.43	56.14	57.86	59.57	61.28
Mars	Sun	Ven	Merc	Moon	Sat	Jup
63	64	65	66	67	68	69
North Node	South Node					
70-73 (no sub-div.)	73-75 (no sub-div.)					

Nocturnal

Moon	Sat	Jup	Mars	Sun	Ven	Merc
0	1.28	2.57	3.86	5.14	6.43	7.71
Sat	Jup	Mars	Sun	Ven	Merc	Moon
9	10.57	12.14	13.71	15.29	16.86	18.43
Jup	Mars	Sun	Ven	Merc	Moon	Sat
20	21.71	23.43	25.14	28.86	28.57	30.28
Mars	Sun	Ven	Merc	Moon	Sat	Jup
32	33	34	35	36	37	38
Sun	Ven	Merc	Moon	Sat	Jup	Mars
39	40.43	41.86	43.28	44.71	46.14	47.57
Ven	Merc	Moon	Sat	Jup	Mars	Sun
49	50.14	51.28	52.43	53.57	54.71	55.86
Merc	Moon	Sat	Jup	Mars	Sun	Ven
57	58.86	60.71	62.57	64.43	66.28	68.14
North Node	South Node					
70-73 (no sub-div.)	73-75 (no sub-div.)					

Note: In some sources, the five-year division of Node rulership is inserted after the Mars period for nocturnal births. This is in continuity with the scheme of the diurnal period.

There are some interesting parallels here between the Greek time-lords and the Hindu dasas that suggest that the Firdaria system is a mid-point of sorts between Greek and Hindu planetary period systems. Mars's period is the same here as in the dasas, while those of Jupiter and Venus are the same as in the time-lords. The sum of the Sun and Moon period equals 19, the Metonic cycle. The sum of all the periods of the Firdaria is 75, whereas the sum of the Decennia is just over 75. What are we to make of all this?

Let's see how the Firdaria system handles the events in Dr. Leary's life. Leary was born during the day, so the diurnal scheme applies. At age 42.6, when his stay at Harvard ended, he was in his Saturn period, midway through the Jupiter sub-period. His natal Saturn and Jupiter are in conjunction, in the 9th house of college and square to his Ascendant. I would read this as an event of mixed qualities -- bad in that he was fired, good in that it led to his successful public life. At about age 47 he got married, during the Venus sub-period. At 49.5 he was imprisoned at the start of the Moon sub-period. He died at 75.6, just when the entire scheme started over again.

Profections

We've just been through four astrological systems in which planetary positions in signs are transformed into blocks of time. Another method of turning space into time are the profections, a system where one sign becomes one year. I first read about this system in Manilius (*Astronomica*, Book 3, 537) in which he says that hours, days, weeks, months, and years can be counted from the Ascendant. This method was apparently very common in ancient times and was used by medieval astrologers also. It fell out of favor after the Renaissance. I think that the system works quite well and I recommend it highly. Here's how it works.

Start with the Ascending degree representing age 0. One sign ahead, a full 30 degrees, marks the first birthday. Another 30 degrees and you've got the second birthday. The twelfth birthday, and also the 24th, 36th, 48th, etc., is always the Ascendant again. Let's take Dr. Leary's annual profection for age 42.6, when he got kicked out of Harvard. Age 36 begins with his Ascendant at 13 degrees of Sagittarius, so we count ahead in the signs at the rate of one per year reaching 13 Gemini at his 42nd birthday. Now what I do with profections is to move the "profection point" ahead from 13 Gemini at the rate of 2.5 degrees per month. Doing this brings us to the end of the sign Gemini at about 42.6, and a month later, to the opposition of natal Mars. This suggests to me a "firing" of sorts. At age 50, when he escaped from jail, Leary's annual profection had reached Aquarius and was opposite to his natal Neptune. At his death at age 75.6, the annual profection had just passed the opposition with his Sun and was changing signs.

Notice that I've been using the term "annual profection." As Manilius said, you can do this with other units of time. Take months, for instance. When Leary was 42, the annual profection was in Gemini. We start the monthly profection here also, but it changes into Cancer after 28 days. At age 42.6 it's 7 signs ahead in Capricorn and near his Mars and opposite his Pluto. The monthly profection moves a full sign every 28 days, so it covers the entire zodiac plus one sign in a year -- which brings it back up to the next annual profection. In her book *Classical Astrology for Modern Living*, J. Lee Lehman advocates using the current annual profection as a new 1st house of the chart and then reading the natal planets accordingly.⁸ There are lots of things you can do with the basic idea behind profections. You can start with the Sun, the Moon, the Part of Fortune, or maybe the Midheaven. You can move through the signs as if they were weeks, days or even hours. I've gotten good results giving each sign from the Ascendant a value of 7 years. This gives a life cycle of 7 x 12 or 84 years, with age 42, the midlife crisis, coming as the Descendant is reached. Manilius wrote about how all the different profections were just whirling along at different rates creating patterns in time that were never exactly the same. It's true: the horoscope itself is a spatial snapshot of cyclic time.

Wrap-up

The five systems lightly outlined above are in a different class than our more familiar progressions and transits. They've reached us from the ancient past, from people who perceived blocks of time as integral units that could resonate with the appropriate planet. I've spared readers descriptions of similar systems from Chinese astrology and Mesoamerican astrology, both of which used specific blocks of time in ways similar to the Greeks and the Hindus. In particular, Mesoamerican astrology is almost totally time-based. I even named one of my books on Mesoamerican astrology *Signs of Time*.

Footnotes

1. C.C. Zain, *The Hermetic System of Progressions*. Church of Light, 1934
2. Straight arrow time has been expanded by science fiction writers in stories about parallel universes.
3. Its full form also includes the mean years, the great years, and the greatest years. Although the least or lesser years clearly have an astronomical basis, the rationale behind the great and greatest years is not so clear.
4. This is a great name for a comic book series.
5. Note: All listed were derived from a test version of Astrolabe's Chartwheels III, which later turned into Nova Chartwheels for Windows.
6. There are variations on this method of subdivision. One is to begin this next phase of the sub-cycle begin from the trine to the last sign. I've gotten good results running the sub-cycle continuously through the zodiac with no skipping to the other side.
7. You can reach Bob Zoller at 532 Washington Street, Cumberland MD 21502.
8. J. Lee Lehman, *Classical Astrology for Modern Living: From Ptolemy to Psychology and Back Again*. Whitford Press, 1996.
9. In his introduction to Book IV of Vettius Valens, Rob Hand suggests that these systems were the roots of later systems, including primary directions. He sees the development of predictive systems in astrology in the following sequence:
 - a) Integral time-units by themselves only indirectly based on spatial units. (Planetary Periods and Dasas)
 - b) Integral time-units directly related to space-units. (Directions)
 - c) Integral time units related to other time units. (Progressions).

Rob's view of primary directions is that they represent a transitional point in this development. Apparently, they were originally used was to define a unique set of planetary periods for each chart that was based on the rotation of the earth. For example, if the Midheaven were directed to Mars, it would begin a planetary period ruled by Mars that would last until the next direction became effective. In this article, I've taken the position, more for purposes of organization than as a result of intense archaeoastrological research, that primaries relate one time unit (the day) to 360 years, and that they are the first of the series of predictive systems falling under c) above.

This article originally appeared in the Feb/Mar 1998 issue of *The Mountain Astrologer*.