

# The Challenge of Exo-Astrology - Or, How Would We Construct Horoscopes on Other Planets?

by Ray Grasse



Since I first became involved with astrology during the 1970s, I've often pondered the question of how astrology might operate on planetary bodies other than the Earth. Part of that was simply for the fun of it, since it stretched my imagination in interesting ways. But on another level, it also provided a way to think about what really underlies our own Earthbound forms of astrology.

In other words, how much of what we use and assume in erecting horoscopes is truly universal, applicable anywhere in the universe, and how much is strictly cultural and local, not exportable anywhere beyond the

confines of our own little corner of space and time? Was there an archetypal basis to astrology that could be applied anywhere, and if so, what did it consist of? And if not, what might those exotic forms of astrology in other locales look like?

So when my colleague Thomas Gazis approached me recently with the idea of partaking in an online roundtable discussion about “exo-astrology”—the practice of astrology on celestial bodies other than the Earth—it prompted me to go back over a few decades’ worth of notes and assemble my thoughts on the subject, which I’ve distilled and am sharing here. As you’ll see, I have many more questions than answers to offer, but hopefully these might serve to stimulate some further thoughts and discussions around this intriguing topic.

## Different Skies, Different Astrologies

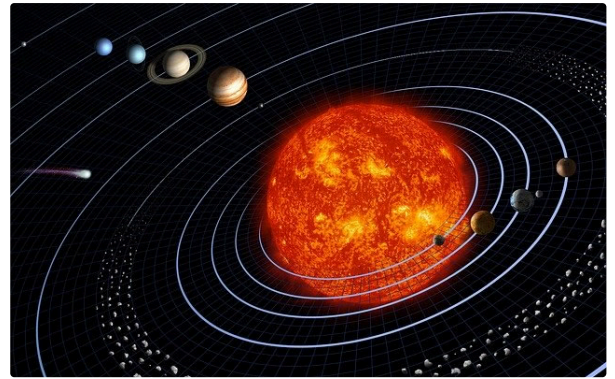
Probably the most fundamental challenge facing anyone trying to erect a horoscope for someone born on another planet or body would involve how to make sense of the different celestial patterns in play there. Those might encompass such factors as the presence of very different day/night/year cycles, such as we see on Venus, where the days are actually longer than the years (due to its reverse axial rotation); the lack of a tropical zodiac, due to the absence of a tilt in a planet’s axis (which would also negate the possibility of any “Great Ages” historical model like our own, based as it is on the seasons and the vernal point); the presence of more than one moon, as on Mars, or no moons at all, as on Venus—and other such differences.

That challenge is naturally amplified when we start talking about horoscopes in completely different solar systems beyond our own. Here on Earth, we have a pretty good idea of what the various planets in our horoscopes mean, as in the case of Mars, Venus, Jupiter, Uranus, etc. But let’s say we land on a planet in a faraway solar system; how would we go about determining what the bodies in *that* system mean or symbolize? Trial and error over decades or centuries of examining charts? Pure intuition? Divinatory techniques? Remote viewing? Kinesiology, or muscle-testing?

I also wondered whether the planets there have similar meanings to those in our system. That is, do other solar systems have their own versions of “Saturn” (representing a principle of limitation), their own versions of “Jupiter” (representing expansion), their own “Mercury” (representing mind and communication), and so on? Do planets in different systems naturally fall into a universal order like notes in the musical scale or colors in the visual spectrum? Or would there be a dramatically different set of archetypal principles at work? In addition, the constellations in a faraway solar system would naturally be very different from our own; so what would that mean for any horoscopes drawn up there? And would the seemingly archetypal 12-fold division we use to divvy up our own sky apply there as well?

# Uniquely Different Suns

What about the meaning of different suns in different solar systems? We tend to think of our own sun as being somehow neutral, a principle of pure awareness almost like a colorless light. But there are trillions of suns in the cosmos, many of them dramatically different from our own in size, chemical composition, or internal structure, and every one undoubtedly has its own distinct “character”—just like everything and everyone else in the cosmos does. So how do we determine the meaning of a sun in the chart of a completely different solar system? Would we go by the symbolism of its color, such as a blue sun versus a yellow or red sun? Its age? Chemical composition? Its size? (Our own Sun is truly miniscule compared to some others.) Those might give us clues, but how would we really determine its core meaning?



Incidentally, the notion that different suns might hold different meanings may seem like a novel idea to some, but it actually isn't. I'm referring here to the considerable body of teachings devoted to the *fixed stars*, which holds that each star has its own unique symbolism or “flavor.” In that way, Alderbaran is believed to possess a more violent or conflicted vibration, whereas Spica is felt to convey a more benefic flavor, while Regulus is associated with energies of great power but also sudden downfalls, similar to a blend of Jupiter and Mars, and so on. It naturally raises the question: How might astrologers on a planet in another solar system characterize the qualities of *our* sun when placed in *their* horoscopes? (Think for a moment how you would react if you learned that our sun was considered to possess a more violent nature—or, conversely, a highly spiritual and peace-loving one?)

And what would it mean if there were *two* suns in a horoscope (like that depicted on Luke Skywalker's home planet Tatooine, in the movie *Star Wars*), so that someone could be born with one sun in a given house or sign, and another sun in another part of the chart? For that matter, what would the presence of more than one sun say about the consciousness or ego of someone born in that system? Would it signal a dual identity of sorts somehow, or something else?

## The Qualities of Different Solar Systems

Along similar lines, it's astro-logical to assume that *each solar system as a whole* must possess its own character and matrix of meanings. Just as a person's horoscope on Earth involves more than just the Sun, a solar system is actually a complex of energies involving *all* the planets, moons, and tertiary bodies in that system, operating as a whole. As a result, a solar system in the Alpha Centauri region would likely be different in meaning from one in the Sirius system, the Orion region, or the Pleiades—exactly as any two individual personalities or psychologies would be different from one another.

In turn, any of these would be different from solar systems close to the center of our galaxy, as opposed to those nestled at its outermost fringes. Those positions would surely hold some difference in meaning, just as the effect of having millions of stars visible in one's night sky would surely be different from a mere three or four thousand, like we have. Beings born in each or any of these distant systems would almost certainly differ in some way from one another—and these are all subtleties and shadings that wouldn't be learned simply by drawing up a horoscope for a child on a specific planet in one particular system. So just how would we go about determining the meaning of any given *system*?

Likewise, what would it mean to be born in a solar system with just three planets orbiting the sun, versus one with twenty planets? Would the number of planets tell us something about the complexity or simplicity of the psychologies of those born there? And what would it mean if a solar system consisted solely of solid bodies (like Mercury, Venus, Earth, or Pluto), versus one strictly comprised of gas giants (like Jupiter and Saturn), or one consisting solely of “ice giants” (like Uranus and Neptune)? Would variations like these make any difference in the meanings of that system as a whole, or the horoscopes erected there? (Our system has all three of those, needless to say.)

# What Does the Earth “Mean”?



There's another aspect to this discussion which strikes me as important, though it's subtle and not easily explained, but I'll do my best. When we erect a chart here on Earth, we talk about the meaning of the various planets in the chart, but we never think about the meaning of possibly the most important body in the chart, since it's the very ground upon which we stand—namely, *the Earth*.

We are, first and foremost, Earthlings. While we take that for granted, this is by far and away the dominant influence on the consciousness of every being born on this planet, and it determines the context for all of our celestial interpretations here, whether we realize it or not. Yet strangely enough, we don't really know what “the Earth” *means*, undoubtedly because we're so close to it, similar to the way we can't really know what our voice sounds like to others, or how our personality really strikes others. But surely, aliens visiting our planet over an extended period of time would see that all Earthlings exhibited certain fundamental traits and qualities unique to this particular body, similar to how we now see Italians as being different from Norwegians, Brazilians, or the Chinese. Said another way, an Earthling is fundamentally different from a Martian, a Martian is fundamentally different from a Venusian, and so on.

My point is simply that if a child was born on Mars, it wouldn't really be enough to just look at the *celestial patterns in the sky around them* when they were born; we'd need to figure out what it means *that they are a “Martian.”* Now, that might not be so difficult in the case of someone born on Mars or Venus, since we already have a fairly good sense of what those bodies mean, astrologically. But what if a child was born on a distant planet in another solar system? It would be critical to understand the archetypal meaning of that specific body they were born on.

As I mentioned, this even poses a challenge when it comes to our own planet, Earth, because of how close we are to it. What does it really mean that we are “Earthlings”? The irony here is, it may wind up to be that only by moving off-planet we'll finally learn exactly what the “Earth” means, as an astrological principle. How? Suppose we were doing horoscopes on Mars, and carefully watched as the Earth transited over someone's midheaven; or watched every time Saturn squared the natal Earth in their chart; or every time Jupiter conjuncted that same degree. Over time, we'd surely start to get a feel for what the “Earth” means as a working, astrological principle. (Personally, I suspect we'll discover that it's closely resonant in nature with the zodiacal sign Taurus. Thinking about this in terms of zodiacal rulerships, the ultra-hot planet Venus seems more resonant to me with the “hot/dry” sign Libra, whereas the largely watery planet Earth seems more fitting to the “moist” sign Taurus. But others will have to make up their own minds.)

## The Astrological Dimensions of Space Travel

I also need to mention a very different angle on this subject, and that involves the experiences of space travelers to other bodies. In other words, exo-astrology isn't just about constructing birth charts for beings born on or planets or bodies; it's also about constructing and studying the horoscopes of *individuals traveling to other celestial bodies*.

For example, what does it mean when an astronaut goes to another planet and sets foot on it, in terms of how that action either activates or reflects their own Earth-based horoscope? If I travel to Mars, would my consciousness somehow become more “Martianized” in the process? And would doing that somehow activate the Mars in my birth horoscope? In turn, would that hinge on the condition of my natal Mars? If I have a natal t-square to my Mars, say, would my experience going to that planet be different than if I were born with a Grand Trine to my Mars? Transit-wise, if I traveled to Mars when transiting Jupiter was conjuncting my natal Mars, would that turn out different if Uranus had been squaring my Mars at the time instead? (It could make for an interesting study to examine the charts of the NASA astronauts who actually set foot





on the Moon to see if their experiences varied in relation to their own natal Moons, and to see what transits or progressions were active in their charts at the time.) Or let's say an astronaut sometime in our future were drawn towards the Orion region in particular. Would that somehow relate back to those corresponding degrees in his or her horoscope?

## Children Born on Spaceships or Satellite Colonies

What about the horoscopes of an infant born on a spaceship out in space, either between the planets or even between solar systems, rather than on any celestial body? Needless to say, there would be no tropical zodiac, since that's a geocentric framework based solely on planetary seasons and a planet's tilt; and there likely would be no house system to use, since that's based on a horizon line across the surface of a planet (although it's been argued by astrologer Ed Kahout that the trajectory of the spaceship might give some frame of reference in that regard). So what factors would be used to construct a horoscope in such a situation?

## The Art of Reading Life-Symbols

Last but not least—and this comes from a decidedly more philosophical and esoteric perspective—I recall a conversation I had in the late 70s with the reclusive mystic and yogi Shelly Trimmer, who had been a student of Yogananda's back in the early 40s. We conversed at one point about the challenges of erecting horoscopes on different planets, even on the Sun (which he naturally suggested would require a heliocentric orientation). (Yes, I know people can't be born on the Sun, but hey, it's a thought experiment.) But then he added a very interesting occult observation.

He often spoke about the importance of reading the symbols and signs in life—which I've come to believe is truly the basis of astrology, more than any matter of tangible "causes" or material energies somehow streaming down to people. (I elaborate on this point more in my book *The Waking Dream*). He related all of this to something he called "the laws of Self-conscious awareness," which I'd simply explain as having to do with our world being based on the essential patterns of consciousness. It's through knowing this symbolic language that one can discover "where one is at" in the cosmic scheme of things, within the framework of all that is, was, or yet shall be.



I'll have to paraphrase at this point, since this part of our conversation wasn't recorded (plus this was a very long time ago!), but he said, in essence: "If someone knows how to read symbols, you could put them down anywhere in the cosmos, on any planet in any solar system, or for that matter on any plane of existence, and they'd be able to figure out 'where they are.' Because the outer reflects the inner, by understanding the symbolic language of the world you can also determine where you're at in terms of your own inner states and levels of consciousness." This wasn't just a matter of looking to planets, moons and

stars, by the way, but rather of looking to *all* the phenomena of one's experience—colors, shapes, landscapes, sentient beings, sounds, thoughts, feeling states, etc.—for clues. Like a mariner on the ocean knowing how to read not only the stars but the patterns of the wind, the waves, the behaviors of birds and fishes, and even temperature changes in the air, a skilled occultist can navigate through the straits of existence through their knowledge of symbolism. That ability would naturally enable someone to also construct a form of astrology pretty much anywhere in the universe, if they wanted, whether that be on some distant planet, moon, or even spaceship.

## Conclusion

All in all, it seems likely we'll be able to construct horoscopes for those born on other celestial bodies, although it might require some dramatic rethinking about astrology as normally practiced here on Earth. But there are other implications besides that. The existence of different planetary and solar systems beyond Earth also seems to suggest the existence of different forms of consciousness and psychology than we're familiar with here. Which of course opens the door to some other interesting, far-reaching questions.

For instance, if we eventually make open contact with beings from other solar systems, just how different would their psychologies be from ours? And what might we learn about those psychologies from studying the structures of their skies? For that matter, would those distant societies have their own versions of astrology, similar to or different from our own? And what about the possibility of beings even from other *dimensions*, rather than just from other regions of space? How would astrology apply in cases like those, if at all?

Hopefully someday we'll actually have the answers to questions like those.