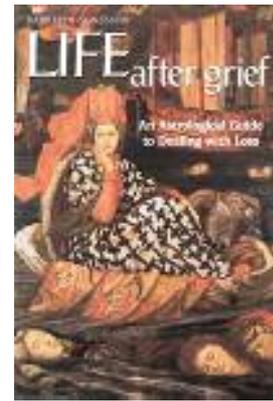


Extract from:

Gunzburg, Darrelyn. (2004)
Life After Grief: An Astrological Guide to Dealing With Loss,
 Bournemouth: The Wessex Astrologer.



Appendix 1

Firdaria - the Disposed Years

Planetary periods form a vital part of Ancient and Medieval astrology. The Firdaria or “the years of the alfirdar”, as ibn Ezra refers to them ¹, are a Persian concept and alludes to a system of planetary periods where the life is divided into irregular periods of years with each period being ruled by a planet, luminary or nodal axis. The quality of that period of time and the style of events was thus dictated by the condition of the planet in the chart.

Abu Ma’shar (787-886 CE) writes:

Know that the planets have certain numbers; some of these are called *fardarat*, others are called “years”. The *fardar* of the Sun is 10 years, the *fardar* of Venus is 8 years, the *fardar* of Mercury is 13 years, the *fardar* of the Moon is 9 years, the *fardar* of Saturn 11 years, the *fardar* of Jupiter 12 years, the *fardar* of Mars 7 years, the *fardar* of the Head 3 years, and the Tail, 2 years: that is 75 years. ²

Al-Biruni, writing in 1029 CE, states:

Ma firdarat al-kawakib. The years of a man’s life according to the Persian idea are divided into certain periods (firdar) governed by the lords of these known as Chronocrators. When one period is finished another begins. The first period always begins with the Sun in a diurnal nativity and with the Moon in a nocturnal one; the second with Venus in the one case, in other with Saturn; the remaining periods with the other planets in descending order. The years of each period are distributed equally between the seven planets, the first seventh belonging exclusively to the chronocrator of the period, the second to it in partnership with the planet next below it, and so on. ³

Bonatti, in his *Liber Astronomae*, written sometime after 1282 CE, states:

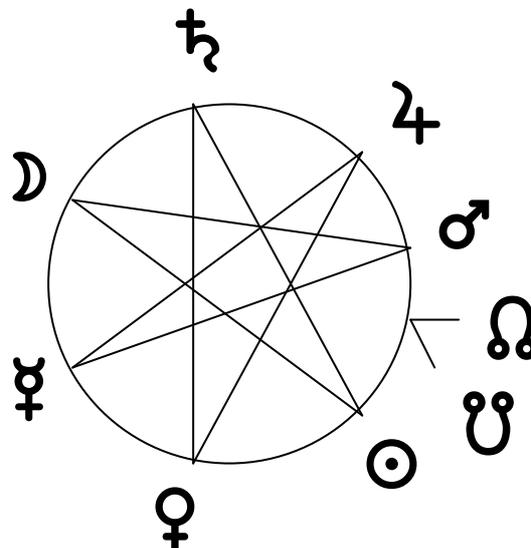
The Ancient wise men considered certain years in nativities which are not called major nor middle not even minor but they called them the years of the Firdaria, that is, disposed years. For each planet disposes its own part of the life of the native according to its part of the years of the Firdaria in this method. Whatever kind of nativity it is, the disposition of the years of the Firdaria begins from the luminary whose authority it is and that luminary disposes the life of the native according to the quantity of its years of the Firdaria, however not without the participation of the other planets. ⁴

So the orders of the planets and the number of years of each are as follows:

Diurnal	Nocturnal
Sun = 10 years	Moon = 9 years
Venus = 8 years	Saturn = 11 years
Mercury = 13 years	Jupiter = 12 years
Moon = 9 years	Mars = 7 years
Saturn = 11 years	Sun = 10 years
Jupiter = 12 years	Venus = 8 years
Mars = 7 years	Mercury = 30 years
North Node = 3 years	North Node = 3 years
South Node = 2 years	South Node = 2 years

The sum of one series of years of Firdaria is seventy-five and if one lives longer than seventy-five, then the disposition begins again.

This sequence follows the Chaldean order of the planets, based on how fast the planets move: Moon, Mercury, Venus, Sun, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn. From that fundamental rhythm we gain the order of the Firdaria. Linking the Chaldean order of the planets into the days of the week - Moon (Monday), Mars (Tuesday), Mercury (Wednesday), Jupiter (Thursday), Venus (Friday), Saturn (Saturday), Sun (Sunday) - produces a seven pointed star.



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The Nodes

All ancient written sources say that the Nodes should always be placed at the end of the sequence, whether the chart is diurnal or nocturnal and for all diurnal charts there is no debate that the Nodes fit into this arrangement. All ancient written sources also state that the Nodes come at the end of the sequence for a nocturnal birth and when the Firdaria are set up as a table, this seems logical. In spite of this, Robert Zoller posits that this is in error and goes on to emphasise that if the planets are placed in the circle, then the Nodes rightfully come between Mars and the Sun.

The deciding factor to this argument is whether one works with the circle (Zoller's method) and recognises the inherent measure and cadence of life or follows the more linear, table-based method of Al-Biruni. Acknowledging Zoller's work as an empirical medieval astrologer and recognising the nature of the circle as reflecting the days of the week and the inherent cadence and measure of the Moon, then one would be drawn towards Zoller's method. Indeed, in working with clients, I have had better results using Zoller's method than the other.

Once the order has been established, then each period is divided into seven subdivisions, each one-seventh of the number of years the ruler rules, with the nodes giving the number of years without any subdivision:

Diurnal	Nocturnal
Sun	Moon
Sun-Venus	Moon-Saturn
Sun-Mercury	Moon-Jupiter
Sun-Moon	Moon-Mars
Sun-Saturn	Moon-Sun
Sun-Jupiter	Moon-Venus
Sun-Mars	Moon-Mercury
Venus	Saturn
Venus-Mercury	Saturn-Jupiter
Venus-Moon	Saturn-Mars
Venus-Saturn	Saturn-Sun
Venus-Jupiter	Saturn-Venus
Venus-Mars	Saturn-Mercury
Venus-Sun	Saturn-Moon
Mercury	Jupiter
Mercury-Moon... and so on	Jupiter-Mars... and so on

The following Firdaria table has been generated for "Xena" (see Chapter 4) using Solar Fire v.5:

"Xena"
 Female Chart
 22 Nov 1957
 10:55 pm AEST -10:00
 Canberra ACT, Australia
 35°S17° 149°E08
 Geocentric
 Tropical
 Placidus
 Mean Node

FIRDARIA (Nodal Variation)								
☽	23 Nov 1957	0.0	☉ / ♃	1 Oct 2004	46.9	♃ / ☽	28 Apr 2051	93.4
☽ / ♃	7 Mar 1959	1.3	☉ / ☽	6 Mar 2006	48.3	♃	22 Nov 2052	95.0
☽ / ♃	19 Jun 1960	2.6	☉ / ♃	10 Aug 2007	49.7	♃ / ☉	10 Aug 2054	96.7
☽ / ☉	1 Oct 1961	3.9	☉ / ♃	13 Jan 2009	51.1	♃ / ☉	27 Apr 2056	98.4
☽ / ☉	14 Jan 1963	5.1	☉ / ☉	19 Jun 2010	52.6	♃ / ♀	13 Jan 2058	100.1
☽ / ♀	27 Apr 1964	6.4	♀	23 Nov 2011	54.0	♃ / ♃	1 Oct 2059	101.9
☽ / ♃	10 Aug 1965	7.7	♀ / ♃	13 Jan 2013	55.1	♃ / ☽	18 Jun 2061	103.6
♃	23 Nov 1966	9.0	♀ / ☽	6 Mar 2014	56.3	♃ / ♃	6 Mar 2063	105.3
♃ / ♃	19 Jun 1968	10.6	♀ / ♃	28 Apr 2015	57.4	♃	21 Nov 2064	107.0
♃ / ☉	14 Jan 1970	12.1	♀ / ♃	18 Jun 2016	58.6	♃ / ☉	22 Nov 2065	108.0
♃ / ☉	11 Aug 1971	13.7	♀ / ☉	10 Aug 2017	59.7	♃ / ♀	22 Nov 2066	109.0
♃ / ♀	7 Mar 1973	15.3	♀ / ☉	1 Oct 2018	60.9	♃ / ♃	22 Nov 2067	110.0
♃ / ♃	1 Oct 1974	16.9	♃	23 Nov 2019	62.0	♃ / ☽	21 Nov 2068	111.0
♃ / ☽	27 Apr 1976	18.4	♃ / ☽	1 Oct 2021	63.9	♃ / ♃	22 Nov 2069	112.0
♃	22 Nov 1977	20.0	♃ / ♃	10 Aug 2023	65.7	♃ / ♃	22 Nov 2070	113.0
♃ / ☉	10 Aug 1979	21.7	♃ / ♃	18 Jun 2025	67.6	♃	22 Nov 2071	114.0
♃ / ☉	28 Apr 1981	23.4	♃ / ☉	28 Apr 2027	69.4	♃	22 Nov 2074	117.0
♃ / ♀	14 Jan 1983	25.1	♃ / ☉	6 Mar 2029	71.3	♃	21 Nov 2076	119.0
♃ / ♃	1 Oct 1984	26.9	♃ / ♀	13 Jan 2031	73.1	☉ / ♀	27 Apr 2078	120.4
♃ / ☽	19 Jun 1986	28.6	☽	22 Nov 2032	75.0	☉ / ♃	1 Oct 2079	121.9
♃ / ♃	6 Mar 1988	30.3	☽ / ♃	6 Mar 2034	76.3	☉ / ☽	6 Mar 2081	123.3
♃	22 Nov 1989	32.0	☽ / ♃	19 Jun 2035	77.6	☉ / ♃	9 Aug 2082	124.7
♃ / ☉	23 Nov 1990	33.0	☽ / ☉	30 Sep 2036	78.9	☉ / ♃	13 Jan 2084	126.1
♃ / ♀	23 Nov 1991	34.0	☽ / ☉	13 Jan 2038	80.1	☉ / ☉	18 Jun 2085	127.6
♃ / ♃	22 Nov 1992	35.0	☽ / ♀	28 Apr 2039	81.4	♀	22 Nov 2086	129.0
♃ / ☽	22 Nov 1993	36.0	☽ / ♃	9 Aug 2040	82.7	♀ / ♃	13 Jan 2088	130.1
♃ / ♃	22 Nov 1994	37.0	♃	22 Nov 2041	84.0	♀ / ☽	6 Mar 2089	131.3
♃ / ♃	23 Nov 1995	38.0	♃ / ♃	19 Jun 2043	85.6	♀ / ♃	27 Apr 2090	132.4
♃	22 Nov 1996	39.0	♃ / ☉	13 Jan 2045	87.1	♀ / ♃	18 Jun 2091	133.6
♃	23 Nov 1999	42.0	♃ / ☉	10 Aug 2046	88.7	♀ / ☉	9 Aug 2092	134.7
☉	22 Nov 2001	44.0	♃ / ♀	6 Mar 2048	90.3			
☉ / ♀	28 Apr 2003	45.4	♃ / ♃	1 Oct 2049	91.9			

Meaning

The great joy of the Firdaria is, as Zoller says, “they represent a kind of astrological method of forecasting in which an underlying pattern common to all those with their diurnal or nocturnal natal figures is made individual through the condition and determination of the several planets in their natal figure.”⁵ So whilst all diurnal charts will begin with the Sun period, the condition of the Sun in the natal chart by house, sign, rulership and aspects will tell you how the individual will experience that period of their life. It will also govern the transits a person is having in that period of time. So for example, if a person has a major Jupiter transit and they are in their Saturn Firdaria and the Saturn is in detriment in a cadent house and ruling a cadent house, then Jupiter is not going to be as benefic as one would normally expect it to be. However, if they are having a major Saturn transit and they are not in their Saturn

Fidaria or any Saturn sub-period, then the Saturn will not necessarily be as forceful or as strong. The quality of the nodal period depends on the dispositor of the particular node and whether there are planets conjunct it or at the Bends.

A change of Firdaria makes as big an impact on the person's life as their progressed Sun changing signs. It represents a new world view for the individual and this theme governs and colours the years in which they are in that Fidaria. This does not apply to changes of the sub-periods within the Firdaria which act more as gear shifts within the major theme, expressing the motif through the planet or luminary. The long period ruler will always have dominion.

Robert Hand in his workshop on Planetary Periods at the Australis '97 Conference (Adelaide, Australia, January 1997) discussed Firdaria in terms of Form and Matter, that great foundation stone upon which ancient Greek philosophy is based. He suggested that the long period ruler is the Matter from which the short period ruler takes Form. As milk (the matter) can be made into butter, cheese or yoghurt (the form), so then the matter of Saturn in a Saturn-Jupiter sub-period will take on a Jupiterian form. The person may see benefit and growth (Jupiter, the form) through their labour and toil (Saturn, the matter), a job promotion with a great deal of responsibility or an overseas trip with a focus on business. In a Saturn-Mercury sub-period, the person may be exerting hard work and industry (Saturn, the matter) in writing a book (Mercury, the form). They may also as easily be fighting a court case, depending on the natal placement of the planets involved, the condition of the planets in the chart and the given history of the client.

I prefer to think of it the way Australian aboriginal teacher Bobby McLeod put it to Robert Lawlor in Sean Kane's "The Wisdom of the Mythtellers" ⁶. While walking through downtown Sydney, McLeod noted to Lawlor how white people's mentality believed that the tall buildings were the results of the dreams and plans of architects, engineers and builders. Some would say that the matter of the stones and brick had taken form as buildings. However, from the Aboriginal perspective, the stones and bricks themselves contain an inner potential, "a dreaming to become a structure". In a Saturn-Mercury sub-period then, for example, hard work and words have the dreaming to become a published work. Kane sums this up in the story of the Haida Raven epic which includes a description of the creation of a world for the gods. The Raven flies up to the boundary of the sky and pushing through it, finds himself amongst the world of the Sky People. He does this by dreaming into it:

And then he flew right up against it.
He pushed his mind through
And pulled his body after. ⁷

Knowing one's Fidaria means one can become conscious of what the dreaming anticipates.



Endnotes:

¹ ibn Ezra, Abraham. *The Beginning of Wisdom*, trans. Raphael Levy (1939), Baltimore.

² Abu Ma'shar. *The Abbreviation of the Introduction to Astrology*, ed. and trans. Charles Burnett. (1994) ARHAT, p.50.

³ Al-Biruni. *The Book of Instruction in the Elements of the Art of Astrology*, trans. R. Ramsay Wright. (1934) London: British Museum, p.239.

⁴ Zoller, Robert. (1981) *Tools and Techniques of the Medieval Astrologer*. Robert Zoller, p.73.

⁵ *ibid.* p. 76.

⁶ Kane, Sean. (1998) *The Wisdom of the Mythtellers*. Ontario: Broadview Press, p 252.

⁷ *ibid.* p.105.