Will that Saturn Transit Make You Sick?

©2013 J. Lee Lehman, PhD

Airs, Waters, Vapors

- Hippocrates recognized that conditions existed on a larger scale than individual exposure or lifestyle.
- Epidemics were known in the ancient world, and it was recognized otherwise healthy people could fall prey to these without any pre-existing health problem.
- We can recognize in these ideas a nascent awareness of environmental factors as contributing to the development of disease.

What Creates Disease?

- Pathogens
- Airs, Waters, Vapors
- Natal Tendencies
- Psyche and Spirit
- Pollution, Toxicity, and other Chemical Processes
- Astrological Dynamics

Natal Tendencies

- The history of attempting to find correlations between the natal charts and particular disease conditions is actually quite new.
- One may speculate that interest in this matter developed after the medical profession began to present diets or drugs to address medical problems before they occur.

Pathogens

- Disease is not a construct unique to the human species.
- Whether we are talking about protozoans, bacteria, fungi, or viruses, there are organisms that infest nearly all living creatures and cause disease.

Psyche and Spirit

- Traditional systems of astrological discussion of disease allow for disease being caused by metal or spiritual factors as well as somatic ones.
Pollution, Toxicity, and other Chemical Processes

- It's worth remembering that none of these problems are new.
- It was Paracelcus (1493-1541) who invented industrial medicine, as a result of studying the diseases of miners.
- However, when 9,000 dead pigs are dumped into a river near Shanghai, you don't need astrology to tell you that people can get sick drinking the water!

Hippocrates' Theory of Disease

- “Those diseases are most dangerous which arise in the strongest part of the body.”
- He further adds that it is good if a disease moves from a weaker part to a stronger part, because then it is more easily thrown off.
- A weak area produces a weak or trivial disease, and a strong area produces a strong or dangerous disease.

Demographics

“In 2011, 61% of adults aged 18 and over had excellent or very good health. Eleven percent of adults had been told by a doctor or other health professional that they had heart disease, 24% had been told on two or more visits that they had hypertension, 9% had been told that they had diabetes, and 22% had been told that they had some form of arthritis, rheumatoid arthritis, gout, lupus, or fibromyalgia. Nineteen percent of adults were current smokers, and 21% were former smokers. Based on estimates of body mass index, 34% of adults were overweight and 28% were obese.”


Strong and Weak Parts of the Body

- Translating this statement into astrological parlance, what is a strong part of the body?
  - As a first assessment, consider the Ascendant, its ruler and Almen, and planets in the 1st House.
  - Find any of these placements that are dignified.
  - The dignified planet referred to then gives the rulership of the part of the body which is strong.

Hippocrates' Theory of Disease

- It is extremely important to know where a disease settles, because that gives clues about how to treat it.
- Hippocrates gave two methods of ascertaining the location beyond the observation of pain in a particular place:
  - sweat occurring on an isolated place
  - a particular portion of the body being excessively hot or cold.

Strong and Weak Parts of the Body

- Suppose you have the Sun in Leo in the 1st house.
- The Sun in Leo is strong, so you have a “strong” heart.
- What this statement says is that heart disease is dangerous to you.
Strong and Weak in Application

• So: what do you do about this?
  – The generally accepted lifestyle solution is to exercise aerobically and cut down on fats, since both these measures will allegedly strengthen the heart.
  – In other words, you have identified the strong organ, and then devised a means to strengthen it further.

• The answer is that strength as it was meant in a classical context did not mean brute force!
  • It meant “locus or nexus” of energy or dynamism.
  • If you examine the expression, “so-and-so has a lot of heart,” the reference to heart isn’t to blood flow, or valve action, but to strength of character.

• What we are proposing here is that the person with the Sun in Leo comes hard-wired for a certain fortitude of character.
  • But life doesn’t always permit the expression of this character.
  • We are therefore changing the life flow by artificially “strengthening” the organ on a physical level.

• We are in effect saying that you’ve allowed your fortitude to become flabby, so we’ll work on the fortitude by working on the heart muscle.
  • Our identification of “strong organ,” we will henceforth call fortitude to denote strength of character.
  • And we are saying that it is not always possible to exercise fortitude in life: too often, it gets blocked by circumstance.

Strong and Weak in Application

– This is reinforcement, which is essentially homeopathic in philosophy, because you are strengthening the already strong, rather than weakening it, which would be antagonistic, and hence Contraries.
– We have taken a “strong” component and strengthened it further, thereby reducing the chance that disease can get a foothold.

– But wait! If you or anyone you know has gone through this process, you would probably argue that, before the exercise regime kicked in, your heart (and circulatory system) was weak, not strong!
– So what’s going on here?

• But wait! If you or anyone you know has gone through this process, you would probably argue that, before the exercise regime kicked in, your heart (and circulatory system) was weak, not strong!
  • So what’s going on here?
Strong and Weak in Application

- But there is still an intrinsic fortitude that must be addressed if disease is not to grab hold.
- On the gross physical plane we strengthen the appropriate muscles, thereby strengthening the organ that may have been physically weak.
- Here, we appear to be acting in a more Contraries mode, because we are strengthening an organ that may be physically weak.

Culpeper on Saturn as the Cause of Disease

“The great wisdom of a physician is to know whether Saturn cause the disease by ... Sympathy or Antipathy, and then take notice, that as the cause is, so is the cure., Sympathetical, or antipathetical: and withal do not forget, that sympathetical cures strengthen nature; Antipathetical cures, in one degree of another weaken it; ... Antipathetical Medicines are not be used, unless to such Patients whom Doctor Ignorance or Doctor Carelessness hath had so long in hand, that Sympathetical will not serve the turn.... If Saturn cause the disease by Sympathy, cure it by the Sympathetical herbs of Saturn. If he cause the disease by Antipathy, note whether it be by Antipathy to Sun or Moon.... Make use of the Sympathetical herbs of these Planets ... for cure.”

Strong and Weak in Application

- But here’s the point. Physical fitness is not health.
- We may be working the “heart,” but we’re only indirectly working the “Heart.”
- If our physical strengthening does not result in a strengthening of character, then all the running, walking, treadmill, or swimming is in vain.

Contraries further considered

- If we apply the more modern parlance of “antagonistic” to the quainter term “antipathetic,” the situation becomes even clearer.
- Much of modern medicine is based on the principle of antagonism: if the patient has high blood pressure, give them something to bring it down; if the patient has low thyroxin, then give them thyroxin (or a chemical relative) to increase the amount in the system.

Culpeper's Version of Hippocrates on Disease

- Let's jump ahead a number of centuries and consider Nicholas Culpeper's interpretation of Hippocrates, which was somewhat inaccurate, since Culpeper specifically attributed an astrological medicine to him.
- However, the concept that concerns us here is Culpeper’s concept of how planets cause disease.

Can we verify Culpeper's theory?

- Pick a planet.
- I pick Jupiter, for the simple historical reason that Jupiter got me going on data sources way back before Essential Dignities was born.
- I am going to present some database wizardry from my work in progress, The Astrologer’s Herbal.
- We know that there is an astrological association between Jupiter and the liver.
Can we verify Culpeper's theory?

- If we select out all the plants that were used to treat various liver-related symptoms and then examine how they have been historically classified by planet rulership, then we can isolate:
  - How much treatment is done sympathetically (in which case, the rulership of the plant would be Jupiter) vs.
  - how much is antagonistic (in which case, the rulership is anything else), and

Conclusions from Table

- The bulk of the treatment appears to be antagonistic, or at least not homeopathic.
  - Jupiter, while representing the largest total for planet attributions, is nonetheless the minority winner compared to the total.
  - The ratio is about 6:4 antagonistic:sympathetic, or as we may say homeopathic: Contraries.

Can we verify Culpeper's theory?

- We can also examine whether Culpeper's idea of antagonism by Detriment is dominant (in which case Mercury should be the dominant ruler, since Mercury's signs are opposite Jupiter's), or whether the traditional assignments of the friends and enemies of the planets is more dominant

Conclusions from Table

- Mercury does not appear to be the major player among the antagonistic approaches, suggesting that Culpeper’s thesis on antagonism through Detriment does not in fact hold.
- Given the results above, we can draw one more conclusion. Clearly, there are cases in which each type applies. But can we say more, and even better, how do we predict which use is the appropriate one, Contraries or homeopathic. Yes we can!

Results of Jupiter Rulership Survey

| (NONE) | 2 items |
| AR    | 2 items |
| CN    | 4 items |
| JU    | 70 items |
| LE    | 2 items |
| LI    | 1 item |
| MA    | 27 items |
| ME    | 16 items |
| MO    | 6 items |
| SA    | 24 items |
| SU    | 16 items |
| SU IN LE | 1 item |
| VE    | 15 items |

These figures are the break-out of rulership of plants which were used to treat liver conditions; the rulerships as given by various authors.

Conclusions from Table

- Of the plants that have been assigned qualities, none of the Jupiter rulerships have qualities exceeding hot and dry in the 2nd degree, whereas the others include plants that are classified as hot and dry in the 3rd degree.
- Thus, where plants are used Contrariesally those plants may have extreme qualities, whereas when plants used homeopathically are not classified as having extreme qualities. This is exactly what our model would predict.
The Body and Its Diseases

- Traditional medicine did not presume to predict the means by which someone developed chronic or life-threatening disease.
- The focus was on curative or palliative measures once disease developed.
- From an astrological standpoint, the focus was on identifying when, not how one was likely to become ill.

In the wake of modern medicine, and the belief that particular life style choices can slow or prevent the development of specific diseases, there is greater interest in predicting future disease patterns.

We are essentially quantifying the relative conditions of the 1st, 6th and 8th houses as a means of determining the health and disease patterns of the individual.

As a means of doing horary or other interrogatory astrology, this is perfectly fine.

But virtually all of us end up in this field after extensive study of natal, and few of us lose our taste for that particular style!

Thus, we constantly take material from interrogatory studies and attempt to apply it to our natal work.

Our question is: does the nativity show these propensities, and if so, how?

I think the major matter to consider is how much we are talking about health, and how much about disease.

For some time, there have been philosophies and religions - Christian Science being one of the more obvious - that have taught that disease is essentially an illusion, in great part because the body itself is an illusion.

Recently, there have even been studies which have begun to support the position that different temperament types - leaving aside the tricky definition of the word temperament to a non-astrologer - seem to show different disease complexes.

This is an area being explored by medical intuitives as well as psychologists.
Finding Disease Types

• Let's examine these ideas a bit further within an astrological context.
• For purposes of this study, I extracted three populations from the AstroDataBank: those listed for cancer, heart conditions, and drug abuse.

House Rulerships by Planet

• Let's characterize the house rulerships by planet, beginning with the 1st house.
• Distributions of the Ruler of the 1st house (or other house cusps) suffer from two demographic difficulties.

Demographic Problems with House Rulership

• Signs of long and short ascension will affect the results because there is a seasonal distribution to births (more Geminis are born in the USA than any other sign; this is a typical Northern Hemisphere result, but it does vary somewhat by country), and there is also a diurnal distribution to births (natural births cluster just before dawn, while induced births cluster during normal business hours).
• The Sun and Moon ruler one sign; the regular planets each rule two signs.

Rulership of the 1st House

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rulership of 1st House</th>
<th>Heart (178)</th>
<th>Cancer (355)</th>
<th>Drugs (202)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Saturn</td>
<td>14.7%</td>
<td>16.1%</td>
<td>12.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jupiter</td>
<td>11.9%</td>
<td>10.7%</td>
<td>17.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mars</td>
<td>14.7%</td>
<td>18.3%</td>
<td>16.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sun</td>
<td>7.9%</td>
<td>9.6%</td>
<td>9.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venus</td>
<td>19.8%</td>
<td>17.2%</td>
<td>12.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mercury</td>
<td>20.9%</td>
<td>16.6%</td>
<td>21.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moon</td>
<td>10.7%</td>
<td>11.5%</td>
<td>9.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4-2. Rulership of the 1st house distribution within three disease types.

From: TMA, p 151

1st house Discussion

• You can eyeball the results by noticing that the cancer population is roughly double the other two.
• Notice that Jupiter is way under-represented as the Ascendant Ruler for people who have heart attacks and cancer, the Moon is over-represented for cancer, and Mercury is over-represented for drugs.

Rulership of the 6th House

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>6th House Ruler</th>
<th>Heart (178)</th>
<th>Cancer (355)</th>
<th>Drugs (202)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Saturn</td>
<td>15.6%</td>
<td>17.2%</td>
<td>19.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jupiter</td>
<td>19.6%</td>
<td>20.6%</td>
<td>15.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mars</td>
<td>18.4%</td>
<td>16.9%</td>
<td>13.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sun</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
<td>5.1%</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venus</td>
<td>13.4%</td>
<td>14.7%</td>
<td>18.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mercury</td>
<td>16.2%</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td>14.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moon</td>
<td>11.2%</td>
<td>8.8%</td>
<td>10.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4-3. 6th house rulership for three disease conditions.

From: TMA, p 151
Ok, What about Timing?

- Once the general natal trends are established, timing can be given by many methods, including
  - Solar returns
  - Transits
  - Profections
  - Directions

So What about Saturn and Illness?

- Examining historical concepts as well as modern charts, it appears that the primary model of disease onset includes afflictions by malefics of either the 6th or the 1st houses
- Afflictions involve the Usual Suspects model
  - Afflictions to the cusp
  - Afflictions to the ruler of a cusp
  - Afflictions from planets in a house
  - Afflictions between rulers of two houses

Still??

When did the problem start?

When will the problem end?