

Fate and the Limits of the Predictive Astrology

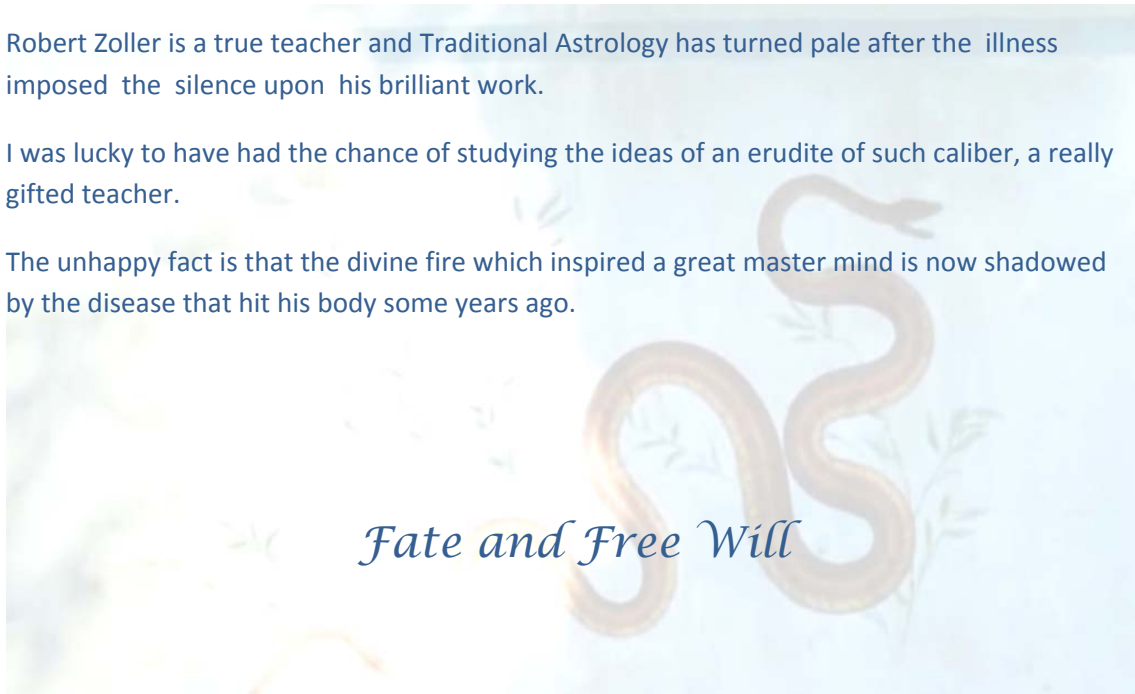
Clelia Romano copyright 2009

Many things in the present article are not new to Robert Zoller's students. His statements and words were the foundation upon which I developed my own ideas on this very captivating theme.

Robert Zoller is a true teacher and Traditional Astrology has turned pale after the illness imposed the silence upon his brilliant work.

I was lucky to have had the chance of studying the ideas of an erudite of such caliber, a really gifted teacher.

The unhappy fact is that the divine fire which inspired a great master mind is now shadowed by the disease that hit his body some years ago.



This is not an easy article to write.

It takes for granted a big taboo, i.e., that the human being is governed by fate and the free will is an illusory fact.

Now I have the same feelings I had more than 40 years ago, when I was a student and was standing for determinism against my peers and teachers believes during a class of Public Speaking. At that time, I based my ideas on Sigmund Freud's statements and I developed the one that privileged the determinism instead of the free will, since the human being was ignorant of the desires of his own unconscious.

The outcome of my speech was troublesome: I was scored with the lowest grade, lost the vacancy in the course and my theory was defeated on behalf of who defended the free will.

They hadn't better arguments, but they defended the dominant theory, which comforted the existential anguish of the human being, supplying some illusory hope to control the events of life.

Freud said that Humanity faced three big disappointments in the past centuries: the first had a cosmological nature, when Galileo demonstrated that the sun didn't revolve around the earth, but, it was the earth that revolved around the sun. The next one happened upon Darwin's discoveries revealing that the man came from an evolutionary chain and it was not directly created by God.

Finally the third was when Freud affirmed that the man was not able to control his own psychic life, since he was not able to know his own unconscious thoughts.

I'm an example of someone who traveled through the evolutionary chain, initiating my career as a psychologist until becoming a traditional astrologer, passing through psychoanalysis and modern astrology.. When I felt ready to embrace Medieval astrology, which is predictive and deterministic I figured that in spite of having made a long road I reached the beginning: I'm now practicing what I always believed.

The human being does not change intrinsically and his destiny and mind are determined according to his birth chart.



The position of Medieval Astrology

According to Robert Zoller', the Medieval astrology is the highest development of the astrological science after their origins in Hellenistic Egypt and before its decline in the 17th century.

It is the practical application of the Neoplatonic ideas and of the Hermetic philosophy. Such ideas are the true wisdom, the superior knowledge of the eternal principle existing behind things. The transmission of that knowledge is in itself an Initiation.

Firmicus Mathernus, author of the IV century DC, affirms that the study of the astrology edges the Religion and the respect for the Divine.

To know in depth the astrological principles that are eternal is necessary to approach the relationship with the divine, with the Logo manifested in the world.

It is possible that the ancients Initiation in the mysteries of the skies have come through the inspiration provided by the skies itself, under the form of mental images and insights that happened in favorable astrological moments. Those mental experiences were attributed to visible gods (planets and stars,) to Hermes (the gods' messenger) or even to God.

In Greek, the word *angelos* means messenger and the messages received by the first observers of the sky was an Initiation in itself.

Some of those observations are more than 4000 years old, as we can see in the Tablets discovered in Babylon, today in the British Museum.

We became aware that the cosmos, the ordained world we live in, is governed by laws that operate with mathematic precision. Such laws are part of a larger law, the God's Will or simply Law.

The esoteric astrology of the ancients says that, looking at the sky, we are initiating in the mystery of the existence, in the macrocosmic laws of creation and in the knowledge of our own SELF.

Such knowledge as much interior as macrocosmic is at the same time scientific and mystical.

Knowing the Creation Laws we learn both the scientific laws and those underlying all the events which happen in our life, since everything came from the same source.

According to Plato, in the Republic and in Epinomis, our mind can only reflect the inferior wisdom, because the ideal wisdom can't be apprehended by our senses. Also the planets are more than their physical bodies. But, he says, studying the skies, we can understand that the Law is beyond them, becoming aware of the Eternal Beginning.

Every person was born in a physical body and with a particular native configuration. This turns the native on one hand capable of express that special configuration as any other, but on the other hand he is unable to express more than that.

This is true from the simple conception of our body linking us to a gender, giving us strength or febleness, bigger or smaller size, good or weak intellectual capacities, etc. All that kind of things are described in our natal chart, the key of our potentialities and limits.

The fact of being contained in a physical body turns us predictable. Predictability is possible when related to everything that is contained and restricted, including the planets whose "being" is embodied into the matter: that is the reason why we are able to know where they will be in the next 20, 100 or 500 years.

Such embodiment acts making possible the predictive astrology, but on the other hand, it is an important restriction.

The Prediction in Human Matters

The life of our body is regulated by our natal chart and until death we are subject to physical laws. We need shelter and food besides fulfillment of countless desires.

We live under Necessity and are limited by the natural and human laws, such as the culture in that we were born, the gender to which we belong, the family, the religious faith in which we were reared, etc.

Depending on the social class, the race, the cultural level in which we were born, certain opportunities will be offered or denied.

The son of a nobleman, in medieval times, could aspire to be a king, while a servant's son, born in the next door in the same instant should expect nothing more than a peasant position.

Such circumstances are not merely astrological, but they are of great importance for the astrologer, that should not ignore them.

As for the social limits, astrology can foretell if a native will develop the status given from birth, or if the opposite will occur, i.e. if he will lose what he possessed in childhood. We see in Ptolemy some rules on the "rank" of fame of the native, teaching if he or she will rise above the adversity of their birth and obtain fortune, or if they will decline.

Liber Hermetis also has material on the same subject, that is, if the native will maintain his or her level or will lose their inheritance and die in poverty.

Now, both situations are seen in the birth chart, through the natal configuration. The moment of birth of a person or object gives it some special qualities and a destiny.

Then, we have our own destiny, the destiny of the society in which we were born (family, clan, city and religion) and last but not least, we have the destiny that bond us to the Humanity.

In the esoteric literature, especially in Pymander (vide [Corpus Hermeticus](#)) we learned that, while embodied, we are under the power of the stars and limited by the Fate.

Besides believing that the human being is limited by Fate, Medieval astrology does not believe that there is any change in a human being's nature from the cradle to the grave.

Those which advocates for the power of "the positive thinking", rarely studied the people's life long enough to know if happened a change of nature. The changes that may happen are predictable by the development of the birth chart.

As a matter of fact, the only possible change is through Illumination. Through it we turn ourselves less concerned with the concrete material facts and more conscious that we are something beyond the facts happening in our lives. In this way we will become wiser and free from Necessity and Ignorance.

Even the Illumination, however, can be foreseen in our native astrological configuration. Turning an illuminated person is not a free decision, in the same way that nobody becomes an engineer without a particular mental capacity and disposition.

No matter how much we choose the correct astrological moment to begin certain activity, the success depends on our native chart, which comes first and has priority over everything else.

To start a venture in the very favorable astrological time helps, but it is not worthy if you're not an entrepreneur.

The free will faces important facts, since if we have freedom why not choose better partners, different bodies, and a privileged financial life?

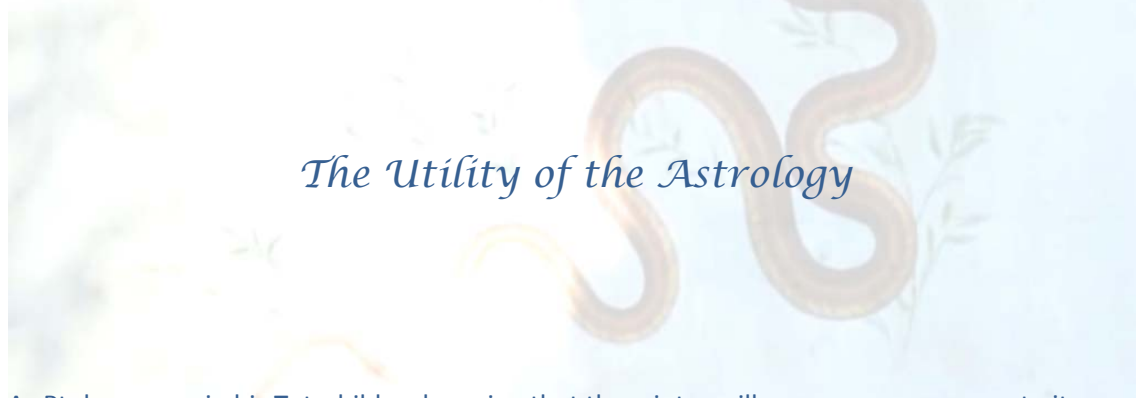
In fact, if we are free to change our destiny in agreement with our will, the inconstancy of our desires would make us so changeable that nobody would be able to recognize us anymore.

After all, we are known by things we use to say, by the way we behave, by our appearance. If we were not constant, we would be a stranger to all and everybody would be a stranger to us, as well.

We would not be reliable and, in the same way, we would not trust anybody. We wouldn't be loved, since we are loved for our unalterable character.

Such consistence is given by the native configuration of the natal chart. Our character doesn't change, nor our destiny.

The Self only attends the work of the cosmic machinery: nothing else.



As Ptolemy says in his Tetrabiblos, knowing that the winter will come can prepare us to it.

In the same way, knowing what the future has in store can give us the appropriate concern: no more, no less.

But, perhaps the best gift we can obtain through astrology is the perception that the challenges of life, the painful facts or the happy ones do not happen as a random fact.

The Illumination occurs when we glimpses that our existence is not chaotic, that it exists logic and harmony behind the apparent random events.

The astrology elevates the soul above the physic nature, elevates it up to the **Dignification** and wisdom.

It allows us to forgive our own mistakes and our brothers failures teaching us that to envy is pointless in the same way we can't boast of our own victory, because all these phenomena occurring in the world **are not us**. They are the result of the cosmic machine doing its job.

The conclusion, even if by deduction, is that the facts in the world, even the disastrous ones in the same way that the celestial bodies' movements, have to do with the Harmony of the whole can give us some peace. This kind of things upon which we don't have any power can lead us to the point of thinking that must have something bigger than us with the reins in hands, manipulating all the spheres with Intelligence, Power and Harmony.

In fact, looking at the skies we can see that all the mechanism is working perfectly with endless perfection.

As a matter of fact it is difficult to practice astrology without believing, at least by deduction, in a superior power, a mathematical and harmonic Logos.

All that kind of insights, feelings and deductions can give us peace, and peace is a valuable thing when we live in the noisy and stressful world of Necessity.



Why astrologers can fail in their predictions?

We have astrological rules built through hundreds of years and we are supposed to study and master them in order to be able to transmit in usual language the symbolism of the planets in the signs and their configurations. We should have in mind, when formulating an astrological sentence, that it must have a subject, a verb and a predicate. That is not a simple thing, but it can be learned.

To understand a chart and its meaning is like to face a puzzle. We must figure out, step by step, piece by piece, the whole picture, until the moment that we are able to have some speech to offer to our client.

Lot of times, however, in spite of all our study and care, we made mistakes in our prediction. And the weird thing is that when we come to know the real outcome we can easily discover that it was perfectly contained in the chart and supported by it! So, why we didn't saw it at the first time?

The answer is that sometimes our prediction was not exactly wrong, but it covered only one of the several possibilities contained in a chart. Life is multifaceted and any symbol contains a condensation of meanings, a condensation of innumerable facts and images.

In fact, we as human beings are not able to read the symbol, the infinity: we can only read signals.

Besides that, we as astrologers are limited to our body and mind in such a way that we are the most fragile link between the Cosmos law and the native.

After the above considerations I'll analyze some of the factors that contribute to the astrological failure in the prediction of facts:

1 – Our traditional theories and techniques were developed and tested until the 17th century. We don't know if all of them have the same effect in our days. For example, the "piece of resistance" of Medieval astrology, the forecast of the amount of years of life, has changed with the progress of the Medicine, allowing that much of the children can live even not having an Hyleg and an Alchocoden.

The Humanity also has a natal chart, the very moment when the man raised as a real human being. As all natal charts it developed (even if not necessarily for the best). Such evolution turned the estimated span of life imprecise. In the present days people live for much more time than in the past.

A factor of frequent mistake is that we don't know how many years we have to add to the estimated number of years given by the Alchocoden.

We need to be very cautious in such predictions, since it is necessary to recover almost 4 centuries of negligence of the traditional astrological rules.

The span of life was studied by traditional astrology in times when it was not possible to survive without the vitality of our own body.

Nowadays, in countless cases the native is maintained alive thanks to the progress of the medicine, sometimes in vegetative state. In such situations the real meaning of life ended: only the body is alive. So, when some desperate family member looks for my astrological counseling about how long such a person will be maintained alive with no hopes of recovery, frankly, I don't know what to say.

Other ones, with powerful vitality testimonies, when arriving to an old age finally present problems that would be unbeatable in the past. Nowadays, however, the medicine helps them and they live 10 or 15 years more than the years given by the Alchocodem.

There is a lack of studies molding the traditional rules to the current reality.

In few words, the present background is different and this can lead us to errors.

I gave the example of the life span but there are other different things that have to be adapted to our present environment.

2 – The traditional astrology was resurrected few years ago.

Although Robert Zoller was already interested in traditional astrology in the seventies, only in the nineties the translations of the works in Greek and Latin began. Lot of works were lost or rescued in fragmentary way. Much of the material which was transmitted mouth to mouth now is unrecoverable.

The western traditional astrologers are collecting dispersed objects from the ground after centuries of dust and spider webs landing over them. We are few and there are a lot of job waiting for us.

It is necessary to put in practice the wisdom of the ancients in order to separate the dandelion from the wheat. Probably certain techniques are not useful today and should be abandoned on behalf of others.

The conclusion is that many books that still remained were not compiled or translated. Besides that, we still have not arrived to a common understanding on controversial statements, such as the triplicities' lords and the Egyptian terms, to mention few of them. There are many controversial matters and we are not sure about the reasons why to follow a school instead of another one.

3 - Another factor leading the astrologer to miss the point is that he frequently don't know the client's background. The native doesn't lecture his life when he asks to have his chart read.

Just the opposite: the client avoid to say us important things, suspecting that, instead of reading the chart, we will use the information to give a plausible answer, earning some easy money at the expenses of his credulity.

At this point the bad fame of astrology arrived, as well as the distrust regarding the astrologer after 4 centuries of Cartesian philosophy!

It happens frequently that the astrologer begins and finishes an astrological study on important issues of the native's life knowing only his or her age and sex. I'm sure the native lose with this, because if the delineation follows always the same procedures, knowing the native's present scenario and his background will narrow the possibilities and enable a better and reliable prediction.

4 – Now I'll talk about a purely human limitation: the astrologer is not able to keep in mind all the possible hypotheses contained in a certain symbol or configuration.

Only for a discussion purpose, even if he would be able to enumerate all the possibilities, this would turn his reading in something vague and obscure. It would confuse more the natives rather than clarifies them.

Also, the astrologer would fear of looking like insecure and not prepared, when actually the astrological signs frequently can be translated by multiple and per times controversial words.

We narrow our mind in order of analyzing a chart. So we can work with only a few hypotheses: the analysis is the dissection which destroys the whole, shredding it, mummifying what is alive, spontaneous and full of surprises.

In this way is the human mind accustomed to think. To take into account multiples factors at the same time, or to act as the devil's lawyer against our own conclusive ideas would be tiresome, painful and perhaps endless.

Here we arrived to the mental and physical limitation as human beings. We finish giving a faster and plausible answer, our better and convincing choice to solve the difficult problem of picking one or two facts between the infinite choices contained in the configurations. This kind of infinite potentialities was named as Tycké and Providence in the Hellenistic philosophy, both working according to Hermamene, the harmony of the whole.

I remember vividly when I had my own chart analyzed when I was concerned with certain astrological configuration that will occur during a trip.

Nowadays we would ask a horary question, but in 1985 the horary astrology was not used, at least in Brazil, where I live. So, the astrologer used my natal chart, the transits and progressions.

Finally the astrologer appeared with more than ten possibilities. In the end the conclusion was: "All this can happen and maybe something more that I can't recall at this moment!"

I think the astrologer was very good and was honest enough to raise all the possibilities and to open my mind to another ones not listed.

I can say that, in a symbolic way, all of them happened and also some more!

Conclusion

The infinite crowd of variables produced by the cosmic mechanism in operation, by the Fortune, Tyché, and by the Providence are divine facts, not perceptible for the human mind.

Although the astrology is in itself an Illumination since it allows us to glimpse the operation of the Zodiac, the Archetype, the Larger Law, Hermamene, the mathematical harmony, we just apprehended that such mechanism exists, but their reasons and plans were not revealed to us.

We read the signs contained in an astrological chart, but we didn't know the future until the moment shows what it had in store.

We are like children in a dark night: we look thorough the grating and glimpse the lights of an illuminated and distant palace, but we don't know what happens inside. If we observe it for a long time we can be able to see signals of what is going on, if the signals are happy or unfortunate. But what is the real thing happening there we are not able to see.

Such palace is the Garden of the Eden of which, according to the Genesis, we were expelled because of our corporeal humanity. It is also God's Will and the real thing contained behind a chart as a combination of symbols.

We are the fallen angels, God's sons, the Christ crucified in the cross of the angles of the chart: we have our body in the Ascendant, our partner opposing to us, the family from which we came from and the acts we have to do in the world, our career, the culture commanding our life.

So we are predictable because the chains and bonds limit our behavior but they limit also our understanding and the divine comprehension of what is Life.

Clelia Romano, DMA

