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[Steven Birchfield](#) is a thoughtful and articulate astrologer, who has investigated the ancient sources of the cosmic science. He has developed a comprehensive understanding of the traditional bases of astrology and has put his knowledge into a series of articles that we will be presenting on Astrology on the Web over coming months.

An astrologer with over 30 years experience in astrological practice and social services, Steven is now studying for his PhD and a diploma in Mediaeval Astrology. He tells us he has resided in Africa, Asia, East and Western Europe.

Contact Steven at [stebi@online.no](mailto:stebi@online.no)  
You might also like to check out his website: [Divine Astrology](#).

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## An Introduction to Hellenistic Astrology [part three] additional notes

Here are some additional notes that expand Stephen Birchfield's comments in his *Introduction to Hellenistic Astrology, part of a series on Astrology on the Web*



[1] Vettius Valens, *The Anthology Book IV* Chapter XI, Translation by Robert Schmidt and published by The Golden Hind Press 1996

[2] I personally feel any serious student of astrology should take the time to examine closely the historical record. One can study individually but my experience has taught me that it is advantageous to receive instruction. Kepler College now has expanded their curriculum to include a course in the History of Astrology, which I highly recommend. – Steven Birchfield

[3] The Ascendant is the sign that was coming up over the eastern horizon at the instant of your birth. The Greek word for ascendant is horoskopos: meaning "hour marker". The Greek term is more flexible and can mean any house that can serve as a 1st house for counting purposes.

[4] Daniel 1:1 – 2, 19 – 20 & 2: 48 – 49 – KJV Bible

[5] The Persians conquered Babylonia in ca. 539 B.C.E. see also Daniel chapter 10 in the Bible

[6] *The History of Astrology – Another View* – by Robert Hand

[7] *The History of Astrology – Another View* – by Robert Hand

[8] Homer is the archaic Greek author of *Iliad*, and *Odyssey*.

[9] Hesiod whose works include *Theogony* and *Works and Days* is placed in history about 750 BCE. There are many resemblances between his mythological characters and the pantheon gods of Babylon.

[10] Thales (ca. 624–546 B.C.E.) was more or less the father of "Natural Philosophy" and scientific investigation. There are no written records from Thales although many of his students wrote of him: "... for there must be some natural substance, either one or more than one, from which the other things come-into-being, while it is preserved. Over the number, however, and the form of this kind of principle they do not all agree; but Thales, the founder of this type of philosophy, says that it is water..." – Aristotle *Metaphysics*. A3,983b6

Thales was the first person to investigate the basic principles, the question of the originating substances of matter and was interested in almost everything, investigating almost all areas of knowledge, philosophy, history, science, mathematics, engineering, geography, and politics.

[11] Anaximander – was thought to have been popular in the mid 6th century BCE and believed that all things came from an unspecified boundless stuff. ( ca. 611–545 B.C.E.)

[12] Anaximenes – He is best known for his doctrine that air is the source of all things. This claim contrasts with the view of Thales that water was the source, and with the view of Anaximander that all things came from an unspecified boundless stuff. He also introduced the philosophical thought of the cosmological macrocosm and the worldly microcosm (ca. early 600–528 B.C.E.).

[13] Heraclitus of Ephesus and Greek philosopher remembered for his cosmology, in which fire forms the basic material principle of an orderly universe. Little is known about his life, and the one book he apparently wrote is lost. His views survive in the short fragments quoted and attributed to him by later authors. (ca. 540–480 B.C.E.)

[14] Socrates was a philosopher of Athens and left no known writings. Most of our knowledge of him and his teachings comes from the dialogues of his most famous pupil, Plato, and from the memoirs of Xenophon. (ca. 469–399 B.C.E.)

[15] Plato was a student of Socrates, and wrote numerous philosophical works. The Apology, The Phaedo, The Crito, The Meno, The Symposium, The Republic, Gorgias, Phaedrus, Philebus, Theaetetus, Protagoras, The Sophist and Timaeus. After the execution of Socrates, he took refuge in Megara. He travelled extensively in Greece, Egypt, and Italy. In 387 B.C.E., he founded The Academy in Athens. (ca. 428–347 B.C.E.)



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[16] Pythagoras of Samos is often described as the first pure mathematician. He is an extremely important figure in the development of mathematics yet we know relatively little about his mathematical achievements. Unlike many later Greek mathematicians, where at least we have some of the books which they wrote, we have nothing of Pythagoras's writings. (ca. 569–475 B.C.E.)

[17] Hippocrates a contemporary of Plato is referred to as a famous physician who had a philosophical approach to medicine. He regarded the body as "a whole" – that is, as an organism. Trustworthy information about his life is scanty. (ca. 460–377 B.C.E.)

[18] Aristotle more than any other thinker, determined the orientation and the content of Western intellectual history. After being a student at Plato's Academy in Athens he became a teacher there. One of the topics to which Aristotle made major contributions was the natural philosophy of matter, change, movement, space, position, and time. He was the author of a philosophical and scientific system that through the centuries became the support and vehicle for both medieval Christian and Islamic scholastic thought: until the end of the 17th century, Western culture was Aristotelian. Even after the intellectual revolutions of centuries to follow, Aristotelian concepts and ideas remained embedded in Western thinking. (ca. 384–322 B.C.E.)

[19] Berossus was a priest of Bel at Babylon, who translated into Greek the standard Babylonian work on astrology and astronomy, and compiled (in three books) the history of his country from native documents, which he published in Greek in the reign of Antiochus II. (250 B.C.)

[20] Vettius Valens, *The Anthology Book II* Chpt. 29 translated by Robert Schmidt and published by Golden Hind Press 1994

[21] Vettius Valens, *The Anthology Book II* Chpt. 11, translated by Robert Schmidt and published by Golden Hind Press 1994

[22] Nechepso, the Egyptian Pharaoh who is supposed to have written an important astrological textbook in the second century BCE (?) [According to [Deborah Houlding](#), The decans or decanates (meaning "tens") are known to have been important in late Egyptian astrology and we are told by the 4th century Roman astrologer Firmicus that the astrologer King Nechepso "... by means of the decans predicted all illnesses and afflictions". Nechepso reigned during the 7th century BC although Firmicus probably got his information from the astrological textbook of Nechepso and Petosiris, written around 150 BC. – ed.]

[23] Petosiris was supposed to have written with Nechepso.

[24] Vettius Valens, *The Anthology Book II* Chpt. 3, translated by Robert Schmidt and published by Golden Hind Press 1994

[25] The Egyptian teacher of the magical system known as Hermetism of which are found both practical (*Liber Hermetis*) and philosophical writings (*Corpus Hermeticum*). The name Trismegistus means thrice greatest Hermes, and is the title given by the Greeks. (ca 200 B.C.E.) The Hellenistic writers attributed the use of houses, or signs used as houses to Hermes. It is probable that aspects are also Egyptian. The lots are almost certainly Egyptian as well as most of the systems of rulership.

[26] *The Problem with Astrology* by Robert Schmidt

NOTE: to learn more about Hellenistic Astrology, visit [Project Hindsight](#).

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