

*DOROTHEUS OF
SIDON: CARMEN
ASTROLOGICUM
RE-WORKED*

FROM DAVID PINGREE'S TRANSLATION

PREFACE

This is a re-working of David Pingree's translation of Dorotheus of Sidon's *Carmen Astrologicum* primarily to make it easier to reference and study. If you are looking for the original text of the translation, there are a number of them online, notably the original text on [Archive.org](https://www.archive.org).

The public domain [StarFont Sans](#) astrological fonts used in this document were created by Anthony I.P. Owen and made available as a Latex package by Matthew Skala.

This document was built from Latex files created with the [TexWorks](#) editor.

Other works consulted

CAA *Carmen Astrologicum: Dorotheus of Sidon* trans. David Pingree, Astrology Classics, 2005

CAD *Carmen Astrologicum: Dorotheus of Sidon: The 'Umar Al-Tabari Translation* trans. Benjamin N. Dykes. 2019.

CAP *Carmen Astrologicum: Dorotheus of Sidon* trans. David Pingree, Ascella, 1993.

DH *Notes on Dorotheus III: the haylāj, kadhkhudāh, and terms of life* by Deborah Houlding, [URL](#), as at August 03, 2020

Useful Resources

[PlanetDance Astrology Software](#)

A free astrology software application created by J.C. Remers. Includes a number Hellenistic Greek techniques under Horoscope->Classical.

Table of Hellenistic Ascensional Times

Ascensional Rising Times & Oblique Ascension Tables

One of the many astrology tools on the *AstroSeek* web site.

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BOOK I ON UPBRINGING AND THE LIFE'S CONDITION

In the name of God, the merciful and compassionate. May the lord be rich in compassion towards you.

This is the first book of Dorotheus the Egyptian, on the judgments concerning nativities. He chose it and selected it and picked it from the books which were before him, and he wrote it for his son Hermes.

He said to his son at the tie of his testament: I shall relate to you, oh my son, and I shall explain to you so that you may depend on and be confident in your heart about what I shall show you of my work and words according to the stars which indicate for men what will pertain to them from the time of a [person's] birth till his leaving the world, if God wills. I have traveled, o my son, in many cities, and I have seen the wondrous things which are in Egypt and in Babylon, which is in the direction of the Euphrates. I collected the best of their sayings from the first [authorities] who were before me like the bees which gather [honey] from the trees and all kinds of plants; for from it there is the honey of medicine.

1.1 Triplicity and Sign Rulers

Know the longitude and latitudes of the seven planets (☉, ☿, ♀, ♂, ♄, ♀, ♁), the degrees of the Ascendant and MC, which signs are straight and crooked² in rising, and that

²The *straight* signs are those that appear to rise straight up from the horizon taking slightly more than two hours each: ♉ thru

the signs, their triplicities and rulers are:

Sign	Ruler	Sign	Ruler
♈	♂	♊	♀
♉	♀	♋	♂
♊	♀	♌	♂
♋	♂	♍	♂
♌	♂	♎	♂
♍	♀	♏	♂

Table 1.1: Signs and their Domicile Rulers

The shaded cells represent the sign the planet ruler *rejoices* or is *happiest* in.

Triplexity	Rulers		
	Diurnal	Nocturnal	Participating
♈-♌-♊	☉	♂	♂
♉-♍-♎	♀	♂	♂
♊-♋-♏	♂	♀	♂
♋-♌-♍	♀	♂	♂

Table 1.2: Signs, their Triplexities and Rulers

The rulers of the triplexities give indications for, and decide, everything.

The masculine, diurnal signs are the ♈-♌-♊ and ♊-♋-♏ triplexities and the diurnal planets are ☉, ♂, and ♂.

The feminine, nocturnal signs are the ♉-♍-♎ and ♋-♌-♍ triplexities and the nocturnal planets are the ♀, ♀, and ♂.

Dorotheus doesn't spell this out here but in latter sections the reader is assumed to understand these categories.

♊, the remaining signs are called *crooked* as they rise at an oblique angle to the horizon and each take slightly less than two hours.

In mundane astrology, the “afflictions and distress” that effect the world are timed and indicated by the triplicity rulers of a solar or lunar eclipse. Every hour that the ☉ is eclipsed is equal to one year while every hour that the ☾ is eclipsed is equal to one month. T

The sign of the solar eclipse gives indications as to who will suffer the afflictions and distress: ♈, sheep; ♊, work-horses and horses, ♌, lions, etc.

1.2 Exaltation of the Planets

Each planet has a sign and degree of *ascent* known as its *exaltation*, and another sign and degree, lying opposite, known as its *descent*¹.

Planet	°	Ascent	Descent
☉	19	♈	♏
☾	3	♊	♎
♂	15	♉	♍
♀	27	♋	♏
♂♂	28	♌	♏
♂	15	♍	♌
♏	21	♏	♈

Table 1.3: Planet Exaltations

1.3 Ease or Difficulty of the Birth

If the ☉, ☾, and Ascendant are in masculine signs (for males) or feminine signs (for females) then the birth was an easy one for the mother. If you find the reverse then there is “misery and death.”

In particular, ♏ angular in a feminine sign has an intense power to make the birth slow, difficult, and unfortunate.

¹The place of *descent* may also be referred to as a planet’s place of *depression* or *fall*.

If ♂ is angular, especially if he is in a feminine sign, the birth will come upon the mother unexpectedly but generally it is easier because ♂ cuts.

The mother will have a difficult time if:

- the ♃ is in a crooked sign (♈,♉,♊,♋,♌,♍) and aspected by ♄ or ♂
- the ♃ is in an angle and aspected by both ♄ and ♂, who are both in crooked signs
- both ♄ and ♂ are in angles and neither the ☉ nor the ♃ aspects the Ascendant

1.4 Upbringing

Don't worry for the person's life because you see a malefic in an angle, there are conditions involving the triplicity rulers of the Ascendant that can increase and strengthen the life.

Mitigating conditions include:

- a triplicity ruler in its own term and angular or in another place where it is strong¹
- all three triplicity rulers in strong places
- two triplicity rulers in strong places, preferably with the first triplicity ruler in a good place²
- all three triplicity rulers in strong places and square or trine each other, and its even better if they aspect the ☉ or ♃, or both

¹It is not clear what he means by "strong" placement; could be by sign, degrees, or good places which he calls *powerful* in §1.5.

²The *good places* are given in §1.5.

- if ♄, ♀, or both are actually in the Ascendant look to see if all three of the Ascendant's triplicity rulers are in strong places and "coming out in their light"¹

If the triplicity lords of the Ascendant are in a "sign of misfortune"² check the first³ triplicity lord of the Lot of Fortune. If it aspects the lot or is in a good place and aspecting the ☉ for day births, the ☾ for night births, then the person will be brought up.

Other conditions that indicate the person will be brought up are:

- ♄ in the Ascendant or in a sign that is of the same triplicity as the sign of the Ascendant
- ♄ in the 2nd place from the Ascendant
- ♄ in the 4th place with the ☾ and ♀ both in the Ascendant
- in a day chart, ♄, ♄, and ♀ in angles
- in a day chart, ♄ angular and in his own triplicity

(also see §1.7 *More On Upbringing* and §1.9 *Upbringing Again*)

1.5 The Superior Places

The order of the places⁴, according to their *superiority* or *power* for good events occurring in the person's life⁵, relative to each other is:

¹This usually means the ☉ must be moving away from a conjunction with the planet such that there is 15 to 120° between them.

²The places of *misfortune* are the 2nd, 3rd, 6th, 8th or 12th places from the Ascendant, they are described in §1.5.

³This is an assumption on my part as the first triplicity lord rules the first part of the life, which is when *upbringing* occurs.

⁴Where Dorotheus does not provide a descriptive name for a place the commonly given Greek place name is listed.

⁵That the power of the place is related to the *good of the life* is implied by the text. The activities of the *good* places are generally

- 1st Ascendant
- 10th Midheaven
- 11th [*Good Daimon*]
- 5th Children
- 7th Marriage
- 4th Angle of the Earth
- 9th [*God*]

-
- 3rd Joy of the ☽
 - 2nd [*Gates of Hades*]
 - 8th Death
 - 6th [*Evil Fortune*]
 - 12th [*Evil Daimon*]

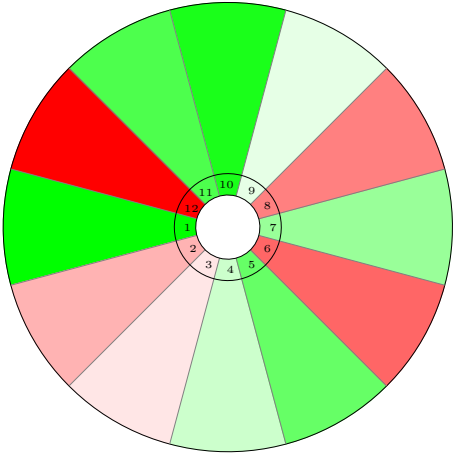


Figure 1.1: The Superior Places

those people consider to involve good events while those of the remaining houses are generally considered to involve difficult events.

In the figure the seven *good* places are in shades of green; the bad in shades of red.

1.6 Power of the Seven Planets

Every planet in its own sign, exaltation, or triplicity is benefic as “what it indicates of good is strong, increasing.” This is true even of malefics as their “evil becomes lighter and decreases” when they are in their own places.

♄ in a masculine sign¹ in a day chart (even though he is a diurnal planet) can cause harm but it will be less harmful if he is also in one of his own dignities.. The same is true for ♂, a nocturnal planet, in a feminine sign in a nocturnal chart.

A planet’s power *disappears* if it is within 15° of ☉ while the ☉ is moving towards a conjunction with the planet.

A retrograde planet indicates “there is difficulty [and] misfortune” for the person and others.

1.7 More on Upbringing

Good Upbringing

The person will be brought up if diurnal planets in a diurnal chart or nocturnal planets in a nocturnal chart are found in:

- one or more of the seven strong places; it is beneficial if one of them is a benefic

¹In §1.4 we are told ♄ (a diurnal planet) is at his worst when in a feminine sign. Here we are told he can still do harm when in a masculine sign but not as much and even less if he is in one of his own dignities. In the same section, ♂ (a nocturnal planet) in a feminine sign is described as less harmful than a feminized ♄.

- the 2nd place from the ascending sign if the planet is within 15° of the Ascendant as then “reckon its power as if it were in the ascendent”

No Upbringing

The person may not be brought up or have a harsh upbringing if:

- the first triplicity ruler is within 15° of the ☉ or in a bad place; especially if the second triplicity ruler is with him
- both malefics aspect the ♃, especially if she is in an angle and one of the malefics is in opposition while also making an exact aspect to the Ascendant¹ as “this is an indications of ruin”
- the ♃ in the 7th place with no connection to a benefic and while a malefic is in an angle for “then the women give birth to what has no escape from ruin”
- the ♃, not in her own places, in the 4th with ♄ and ♂ or in their opposition
- one of the malefics in the Ascendant opposite the other malefic and the ♃ in the 10th or 7th

Rejection or Exposure

The person may be cast out by his parents if:

- the ♃ in the 4th place with ♄ and ♂ or in their opposition unless the ♃ is in her own triplicity and the benefics are trine the malefics in which case, rather than ruin, the person is brought up by strangers and sometimes they “will be a slav and will be employed and then will be miserable”

¹Dykes indicates it could be an aspect to the Ascendant’s terms rather an exact aspect to the Ascendant’s degree (CAD p.69).

- the ☽ “between the two malefics and one them casts its rays upon it” then the person’s livelihood will be little and if the ☽ is also waning “it indicates fate and shortness of life” which he may escape if a benefic is also part of the configuration
- the ☽ is with a malefic in an angular or succedent place and is configured with a benefic and if the ☼ aspects the malefics, the father favours casting him out and thinks badly of him; if the ☽ is injured¹, the mother wants to cast the person out; if both lights are injured, both parents want rid of the person
- in a diurnal chart, ☿ angular and opposing the ☽ or the ☼ while they are not in their own places; in a nocturnal chart, ♄ under the same conditions

Calamity

If the ☽ is in the term of a malefic without the aspect of a benefic while a malefic is in an angle there is “calamity” for the person unless first ruler of the sect light’s triplicity aspects the ☽.

Injury to the person and his mother

If there is no benefic in (a) an angle, (b) in the same sign as the Lot of Fortune, or (c) in a sign of the same triplicity as the Ascendant while malefics aspect the ☼, ☽, and SAN² the indications are evil.

If a benefic does not aspect the Ascendant (representing the person) or the ☽, an unfortunate condition is indicated for the person and their mother if the ☽, or worse

¹This is odd as we’ve already been told the ☽ must be with a malefic, which would be an injury; possibly it must also be harmed by the other malefic?

²The most recent new or full moon that occurred prior to the birth.

yet, the ☽ and ♀ (as both indicate the mother) are injured.

(also see §1.4 Upbringing and §1.9 Upbringing Again)

1.8 Masculine and Feminine Hours

The person represented by the chart will be a male if:

- the ☽ is in a masculine dodecatemoron

To determine the dodecatemoria divide the sign into 2.5° sections¹ with, in a masculine sign, the sections running male, female, male, female, etc. In a feminine sign, the sections running female, male, female, etc²

- the ☉, ☽, and Ascendant are all in masculine signs
- the ☉ in the ascendant in a masculine sign, even if the hour of the birth is “double” (even)
- a masculine planet in the ascendant in a “two-bodied” masculine sign (♈, ♊), even if the hour of the birth is “double” (even)
- a masculine planet in the 1st and in the 7th, even if the hour of the birth is “double” (even)
- the ☉ and ☽, both in masculine signs, and ♄ ruling the Ascendant regardless of gender of the sign on the Ascendant

¹Dorotheus says “two and a half days”, we are basically dividing the 30° of each sign by 12 so it has an analogy with each month of 30 days being equivalent to a sign and the 12 signs being equivalent to a year.

²For more information on the *dodecatemoria* see the Appendix §A *Dodecatemoria* to see how they are calculated.

1.9 Upbringing Again

Also look to see if the ☽ is with or aspecting either the Lot of Fortune or the Lot of the Demon as this is an indication the person is well brought up and has a beautiful face, fine limbs, and any easy time teething. If the ☽ has no connection with either lot then say the reverse.

(also see §1.4 Upbringing and §1.7 More on Upbringing)

1.10 Is the Person and their Mother Free or a Slave

First, examine the ☽'s condition.

If the ☽ is in the 12th or 6th place and:

- the first triplicity lord of the place is in a bad place, the native is a slave, unless
 - it is a night chart and the ☽'s second and participating triplicity lords are in good places, or
 - it is a day chart and the first and second lords of the ☼'s triplicity are in good places

In which case the person is born free but his parents are poor.

If the ☽ is in the last degrees of a sign, the mother is of bad descent unless:

- ♃'s aspect removes the misery, which happens even if ♃ is badly placed¹, or
- the ☽ is with ♀ in one of ♀'s domiciles in which case “the evil” disappears.

¹The wording in the original is confusing; this appears to be the author's intent.

If a malefic is in one of the ♃'s angles¹ and ♂ (in a day chart) or ♁ (in a night chart) aspect the ☉ or ♃ without ♀ also being in aspect, the person will be a servant. And his condition may be worse if the ♃ is in a feminine sign and worse yet if ♀ is also injured.

If the ☉ and ♁ are in the 6th, 12th, 8th, or 4th then the father's condition is unfortunate.

If the ☉ and ♃ are in the terms of benefics and aspect the ruler of the place they occupy then the parents condition is good as will be the person's survival and up-bringing. The conditions will be even better if the ☉ or ♃ is angular or it one rules the Lot of Fortune.

If the ♃ is angular or succedent and being overcome² by a malefic, the person will be struck down even if he is free. There is destruction if the ♃ is with one malefic while ther other overcomes them.

In a nocturnal chart, if the ♃ is in the 7th or 4th and in the aspect of a malefic, destitution, slavery and difficulty is indicated for the persons livelihood.

The Lot of Fortune or its ruler in another's terms is in the 6th or 12th indicates service.

If the ♃ in a nocturnal chart is in a masculine sign while the Ascendant is in a feminine sign or, if in a diurnal chart, the ☉ is in a feminine sign while the Ascendant is in a masculine sign, the person will be like a slave.

Check the ♃'s, ☉'s and Ascendant's term rulers to see if they are feminine (♁, ♀ ♃) or masculine (☉ ♀, ♂)³.

¹If either malefic found in the 4th, 7th, or 10th place from the ♃.

²The text has "supervised", Dykes translation has "looked down on" which he equates with *overcoming*.

³This is strange for a number of reasons (1) Dorotheus does not connect the state to the condition of being free or a slave, (2)

The ☽ with the malefics without the aspect of a benefic indicates slavery.

A malefic in an angle or ☿ aspecting the ☽ while the ☽ is moving to conjunct ♄ indicates slavery. The same if ♄ is aspecting the ☽ while is moving to conjunct ☿.

If the ☽ is in the end of a sign and aspected by ♄ or ☿ the person may be aborted or his birth made hard; unless ♃ or ♀ also aspect the ☽, in which case the person is born but raised by strangers.

If the first lord of the Ascendant's triplicity is cadent and opposed by the ☽ while the ☼ is in a bad place, the person's parents are slaves.

Indications from the SAN

Note the degree of the SAN¹ and the 1st and 2nd triplicity lords of its sign.

If the 1st lord is in a bad place and the 2nd in a good place, the person will be born into slavery but freed in later life.

If the 1st lord is in a good place and the 2nd in a bad place, the person is born free but will be reduced to poverty, contempt and service in his later years.

If both triplicity lords are bad places, the person will begin and end life as a slave or servant.

If both triplicity lords are in good places, the person will begin life free and end it free.

the ☽ and the ☼ do not rule any of the the most commonly used Egyptian terms, (3) ♄ is usually considered a diurnal and therefore masculine planet although Dykes says there are other instances of ♄ being deemed feminine found in Sahl and Theophilus.

¹SAN is an acronym for *Syzygium Ante Nativatem* which refers to the syzygy, the whole-moon (conjunctional) or full-moon (prevntional) immediately before birth which may also be called the *lunation* before birth.

If a malefic is with the SAN and the other malefic is in aspect, the person “will experience his fate and evil will overcome him.”

If the SAN’s term lord is in a bad place or the 7th or the 4th the life will be lived in slavery and poverty.

If the SAN is in a bad place and aspected by malefics but it is also aspected by a benefic and its term lord is in a good place then the person’s father if of noble birth and his mother is of poor lineage.

Escape from Slavery, Service, or Poverty

Indications that a person will be freed from any indicated slavery, service, or poverty are:

- ♄ in any angle, in any sign except ♋, regardless of being with malefics or benefics. And if ♄ aspects the ♃, “the pains of slavery are completely loosened for him.”
- ♀ in an angle, free of the malefics
- ♀ in the 7th with the ♃
- the ☉, ♃, and ♀ in angles
- the ☉ and ♃ in the same triplicity
- the ♃ angular in ♈ or ♎ free of the malefics or aspected by both malefics and benefics

Effect of Jupiter

If ♃ is with or square the Lot of Fortune the person escapes slavery but if ♃ aspects the Lot of Fortune while both are in bad places the person will be freed from slavery but will not escape servitude.

If ♃ is in the 2nd or 8th the person will experience what is like slavery and worse if ♃ is in the 6th or 12th.

1.11 How many will own the person

In a day chart, if slavery is indicated, to know how many will own the person count the planets between the ☉ and the lord of the triplicity of the Lot of Fortune. In a nocturnal chart count from the ☿ instead of the ☉.

If the ☿ is above the earth count the planets between the 6th place (the sign of slaves) to the 12th place and if the ☿ is under the earth, count the planets between the 12th and the 6th.

And if any planet is in a double-bodied sign (♊, ♊, ♋) count it as two planets instead of one.

To know how many would own the father, count from the ☉ to the lord of the ☉'s triplicity, and for the mother, count from the ☿ to the lord of the ☿'s triplicity.

Dodecatemoria literally means “the twelfth part”. There are two approaches to finding the dodecatemoria, they both produce the same result by different means².

Firmicus advises us to multiply the degrees and minutes of the planet by 12 and then add the full degrees of the position. For example, to find the dodecatemoria of 27 \approx 24 we take:

$$(27 + 24/60) \times 12 = 27.4 \times 12 = 328.8$$

$$\approx 27^{\circ}24' = 327.4 + 328.8 = 656.2$$

$$656.2 - 360 = 296.2$$

$$296.2 = 296^{\circ} 12' - 270 = 26 \text{ } \text{v} \text{ } 12$$

To find the 12th part of a planet according to Paulus of Alexandria, we are to multiply the degrees by 13 and add the degrees of the sign the planet occupies:

$$(27 + 24/60) \times 13 = 27.4 \times 13 = 356.2$$

$$\approx \text{begins at } 300^{\circ}$$

$$356.2 + 300 = 656.2 - 360 = 296.2$$

$$296.2 = 296^{\circ} 12' = 26 \text{ } \text{v} \text{ } 12$$

²For reference see the [Skyscript glossary entry for dodecatemoria](#), Firmicus’ *Mathesis* Book II.17, James Holden translation or Book II.13 in the Jean Rhys Bram translation; *Paulus of Alexandria Introduction to Astrology* §22, James Holden translation or the same section in *Late Classical Astrology: Paulus Alexandrinus and Olympidorus* translated by Dorian Gieseler Greenbaum, MA.

To solely find the 12th parts of each sign (commonly called *duodecimas*), assign 2.5° to the sign itself, 2.5° to the next sign, etc. until you reach the end of the sign. For example, the 12th parts of ♌ run 0°♌ , $2^\circ 30' \text{♍}$, $5^\circ 00' \text{♎}$, $7^\circ 30' \text{♏}$, etc.

A.1 Examples of using the 12ths

Firmicus

Look also [to see] whether the ♌ , full [of light] by day, throws her dodecatemory into the terms of ♈ , or whether of little light, i.e. waning, throws it into [the terms] of ♎ , or whether ♈ in the DSC...or ♏ into [those] of ♈ , and ♈ [into those of ♏ ... and they take their power from the terms and decans and the sects that may help or that may harm.

The beneficence of ♌ lapses when his beneficence is afflicted by the weakness of the sign, or the degrees, or the decan, or the exchanging of sect. But also the malevolence of ♎ increases more strongly when, provoked by the quality of the house, or by the terms, or by the decan, or by the sign, or by the [exchanging of] sect, he receives the power to do harm. In a similar fashion [you may judge] the other stars (MH II.17.4-5)

Paulus

The *dōdekatēmorion* of the benefics contributes much whenever it falls in the *zōdion* where the ♌ , ♎ , or star of ♏ is, or on one of the four pivots, the Lot of Fortune or Spirit or

even Necessity¹, or on the prenatal *Conjunction* or *Whole Moon*. For through this theory it will be necessary to distinguish the fortunate, long-lived and blessed. Just as when the *dōdekatēmorion* of the malefic stars falls in the *zōdion* where the ☉, ☿, or star of ♃ is, or one one of four pivots, or on the Lot of Fortune, Spirit, or Necessity, or on the prenatal *Conjunction* or *Whole Moon*, it points out laborers, those unable to acquire property and cursed, since it sets down short lives, violent deaths, sufferings or feebleness (PAG §22).

Olympidorus

Olympiodorus says “That if the *dōdekatēmoria* of the benefic stars are found either on the pivots or on the lots of Fortune, Spirit or Necessity or in the place of the preceding *Conjunction* or *Whole Moon* for the nativity, or where the ☉, ☿, or ♃ is, in these circumstances the nativity is fortunate and glorious and producing many years for itself.”

He goes on to say the opposite is true if the dodecatemoirion of malefic planets fall in these places “For it brings about laborers, and those who are ill-spirited and not successful in acquiring property and short-lived, and sometimes violent deaths.”

¹The Lot of ♃.