

Plants and Planets

Astral Timing Mechanisms

- The use of proper timing is a highly important aspect of various esoteric, magical, and mystery traditions from all over the world. It is about understanding the subtle energetic influences occurring in space at that particular moment in time.
 - These mechanisms are fractals, they can be divided in multiple way into infinity. You can be *very* precise and exact with these- which is especially useful in your exaltation work- IE purifying oils, alcohols, salts etc, as well as harvesting.
 - Like our work with people, you can look at general patterns existing in time and space at a particular time, based primarily on the day and time of the work. But you can also cast specific charts for that day/time to get SUPER specific as to what is happening in the sky around your works. This can be interesting to study.
 - Essentially, it's a way of "turning your sails" so that the universal winds are blowing in the right direction of where you want to steer your medicine.
 - This is one of the beauties of alchemy and the aspect of it being an art. We can choose to express and bring out within our medicines very specific dynamics of a certain plant or formula, and target it to the sympathetic aspect within the human architecture. This makes our medicine very precise in its actions on all levels of being. We are actually guiding the creation and birth of a new being- essentially holding the keys to creating their constitution.
 - The thing about timing mechanisms and it's relationship to spagyrics is that you are giving birth to a new form of medicine. So each medicine has birth chart in a sense, and we want to time it's birth properly so that it's own inherent nature is strengthened- through sympathy.
 - I did not invent these patterns, they are ancient. I was initially taught them by an alchemist/ astrologer in Italy, and then further instructed by Robert Bartlett.
 - So in general, there are four aspects of astrological timing to look at:
 1. The Lunar Pattern
 2. The Planetary Day
 3. The Planetary Hour (of which there are multiple methods)
 4. Casting the Chart (getting more specific)
1. The Lunar Pattern: The Moon is one of the most important Planets to look at when it comes to working with a plant because it has such a strong impact on life of Earth- it's the closest planet to us!! There are some general aspects of using the Moon and more specific ways.
- **The Waxing** phase of the Moon (moving from new to full), is considered the most beneficial phase for doing spagyric works, especially: starting operations, imbibing salts for stones, distillation of volatile Sulfur. It is a good time of enriching an essential Element, especially through distillation and circulation. This is because the full moon is like a magnet helping to draw things up and out. It is about volatilization and exaltation. In general might be the best times to pick flowers, leaves and berries.
 - **The Waning** phase of the Moon (moving from full to new), is not considered the most ideal timing for preparing medicines, unless it is a purification process, such as calcination, dissolution, or distilling alcohol. It could also be seen as a good time of

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separating the pure from the impure. In *general* may be good for harvesting roots, and barks.

- Then look at the sign the Moon is in. This does not require casting a chart!! The most ideal position would be with the Moon waxing and resting in a sign that the planet you are working with rules. IE: working with Rose, ruled by Venus, would be best done with the Moon waxing and resting in either Taurus or Libra (both of whom are ruled by Venus). Of it could be in a sign where Venus is considered “strong.”
 - You can also see what Sign the Moon is in and what the associated alchemical process is in order to align your works with the Moon. (See Signs and Alchemical Processes chart).
- You can also cast a chart and see what kind of relationship the Moon currently has with the Planet (plant) you are working with. Generally, hard aspects would be preferable to avoid and beneficial aspects are obviously good.

“It is the light of the Moon which is the stimulative factor in these etheric activities, and as Earth and Moon share one etheric double, all etheric activities are at their most active when the Moon is at its full. Likewise, during the dark of the Moon, etheric energy is at its lowest, and unorganized forces have a tendency to rise up and give trouble.”

-Dion Fortune

2. Planetary Day: Look at the planet that rules the plant you are working with and work with that plant on that day.
 - Each of the seven inner Planets rules one of the days of the week:
 - Sunday= Sun
 - Monday= Moon
 - Tuesday= Mars
 - Wednesday= Mercury
 - Thursday= Jupiter
 - Friday= Venus
 - Saturday= Saturn
 3. Planetary Hour: You want to time your operations to be in alignment not only with the day, but also the time of the planet that rules the plant you are working with. If you cannot time it properly like this, try to correspond the time with the secondary ruler of the plant.
 - An important note on planetary timing mechanisms, is that the progression of the planets follows the Lightning path of the Tree of Life, that being: Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Sun, Venus, Mercury, Moon.
 - The Planet that rules that day is always the first planetary hour of that day. The pattern moves forward according to the pathway mentioned above.
- The Fixed System: There are a few different ways of looking at fixed systems of timing. I first would like to mention that I am not particularly fond of utilizing fixed systems of planetary hours because nature is not fixed!!
 - The first is to divide the day into 7 planetary “hours,” which are about 3 hours and 26 minutes each. The first planetary “hour” is midnight-3:26 am. The second

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hour is 3:26 am to 6:52 am. It is this second planetary hour of the day that comes under rulership of that day. So on Wednesday the 2nd hour is Mercury, on Friday Venus and so on.

- This is the primary fixed system utilized by most practitioners. The other one divides the day into 24 hours, with the planetary ruler of the day ruling the hour at 6:00 am.
- I'm going to say that I don't really like this fixed system. I would much prefer calculate the hours from sunrise to sunrise, and divide the number of minutes by 7 to make 7 equally timed planetary hours (this will ideally be about 24 hours and hours being about 3 hours and 26 minutes in length). But here we want to place the ruler of the day at the actual hour of sunrise, rather than from 3:25-6:52 am. (Because here in the NW in the winter the sun isn't up until 8 or so!!)
- The Flexible Systems: this is the system that I prefer, for it takes the actual time of the rising and setting sun into consideration. Giving each day a masculine cycle and feminine cycle of all of the planets. It lines up quite nicely as well, notice the end of one day is exactly 1 planet before the ruler of the next day.

"The Egyptians gave us the 24 hours of the day, 12 during daylight and 12 at night. These hours were unequal and seasonal. An hour of daylight was longer in the summer months, shorter in the winter months, and exactly equal with the hours of night on equinoctial days."

-Graeme Tobyn

1. Take the period from sunrise to sunset and calculate the number of minutes involved.
 2. Divide this number by 12. This will give you the length in actual minutes of each planetary hour for the daytime period.
 3. Subtract the daytime number of minutes from 1440 (the number of minutes in 24 hours) to derive the length of the evening period.
 4. Divide this number by 12. This will give you the length in actual minutes of the planetary hours for the night.
 5. You can then graph the hours and times they occur for the day and the night.
- Example:
 1. So today the sun rose at about 7:10 am and set at about 4:45 pm. This is approximately 9 hours and 35 minutes. $9 \text{ hours} \times 60 \text{ minutes in an hour} = 540$. Plus 35 minutes = 575 minutes total daylight hours.
 2. $575 \text{ divided by } 12 = 47 \text{ minutes per planetary "hour" for daytime.}$
 3. $1440 - 575 = 865 \text{ minutes total night time hours.}$
 4. $865 \text{ divided by } 12 = 72 \text{ minutes per planetary "hour" for night time}$
 5. So if today is Saturday, the first hour would start at 7:10 am, and go until 7:57 am, to be followed by Jupiter from 7:57 am to 9:12 am and so on until there have been 12 "hours."
 - At approximately 4:45 pm we would switch to night time hours. Thus Mercury would rule from 4:45 pm to 5:57 pm (remember the night time hours are 72 minutes

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long, whereas the daytime hours were 45 minutes). The Moon would rule from 5:57 pm to 7:09 pm. and so on.

- This system is nice because it is very precise and exact and is in harmony with nature as it is at that time, as opposed to being fixed and rigid. It also gives you more time to do the works with the plants as there is a nighttime ruler as well.

- **Note: rather than calculating it all out yourself, you can go to Lunarium.com**

- Another layer of information within the planetary timing mechanisms is that associated with the Elements. The daytime is ruled by the masculine/dynamic Elements, being Fire and Air, the night being ruled by feminine Earth and Water.
 - As there are four Elements, each one rules 6 planetary hours of the day. You can divide the daytime hours in half, the first being Fire, the second half being Air. Same with the night, the 1st half being Water, the 2nd half being Earth. (Notice they move from the most subtle to the most fixed).
 - We can penetrate deeper into this, and divide each hour of the day into 4 or 5 equal segments, each representing an Element (the way I was taught included the 5th Element or Quintessence).
 - In this way, within one particular planetary hour, we can see whether we are in the Earth, Water, Air, Fire or Quintessential nature of that particular planet. This can make our timings of preparation very exact and targeted to a particular area of ones energetic architecture.
 - It is interesting to watch the planetary hours of the day and see the different energies enter and how it changes in your body, mind/heart, and whether you like it or not!! This is one of the BEST WAYS to learn astrology, just keep a little chart in your pocket, (or set reminders on your smart phone!!) in order to track where planets are. Watch it shift.... you will understand the shifts in your day in a deep way and eventually be able to just see the different energy come into being.
4. Casting the Chart: With your day and time calculated, you can cast a chart for this particular time and see what specific influences will be happening at that time. Make sure it is for the correct location (where you are!!).
1. Look at the planet that rules the plant you are working with.
 2. Look at the sign that planet is in- what is its ruling Planet? Does this Planet like this home (fall or detriment, ruling or exaltation)?
 3. Look at the relationship (aspects- if any) between the planet of your plant, and the planet that rules the sign plant's planet is it. This will be one of the stronger influences.
 4. Here you want to just look at the aspects your plant/planet is making to the rest of the universe- this is essentially the energetic climate the plant is in. The goal is to have the least amount of challenge or resistance (inhibition or suppression) to the energetic quality of the planet.
 - For this we look to Saturn (which will inhibit anything), or the opposite planet of the one you are working with, IE: Venus-Mars, Sun-Moon, Saturn-Jupiter. Mercury has no opposite as it bridges all opposites.
 5. Look at the relationship of the Moon to the ruling Planet, as well as what Sign the Moon is in, and whether that Planet likes that sign or not.

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