

## House Systems

It is my opinion that the multiplicity of house systems<sup>1</sup> available to modern Astrology, all seemingly serviced by the same system of description, collectively denies the truth behind this ancient art. This house-system anomaly needs to be addressed if Astrology is ever to be taken seriously in this scientific, evidenced-based age. In order to establish the validity of Astrology, we must first correct the anomalies in how Astrology is modelled; that is, provide a model that is internally consistent—i.e. no *arbitrary* decisions as to the form of an astrological chart. So, in this section I will:

- outline what a house system is;
- develop a model explaining the Equal House System(E.H.S.);
- explain why E.H.S. is a candidate for ‘THE’ house system.

### The Houses

Every twelvefold structural feature in Astrology (Sidereal Zodiac, Tropical Zodiac and House System) is an instance of the General Dynamic of the Logic of Life—which means: a practical application of a three-level model of organisation, where each level requires a fourfold system of description, and so has twelve unique parts in total. The Human Race is an internally complex entity, comprising Human individuals who, through their actions and interactions, maintain the existence of the Human Race—a dynamic unity. The Tropical Zodiac represents this global space of *all individuals*, the Human organism, where the term ‘individual’ primarily applies to one particular Human being<sup>2</sup>. Likewise, the Human individual is an internally complex system, requiring the action and interaction of many bodily parts and functions to maintain existence. And so we arrive at the proposed **definition**: the house system represents the internal organisation of an individual. Most people are familiar with the twelve signs of the Tropical Zodiac—Aries(1st) to Pisces(12th). The house system is logically ‘internal’ to the Tropical Zodiac. In practical terms, the zodiac acts as the reference frame within which we orient the houses. Its a bit like having a clock face edged with two bands of numbers—an outer ring for hours and an inner ring for minutes. For each twelvefold structure there is an *implied* fourth level, or containing space. For the House System, the Tropical Zodiac is the containing space. Its twelve components, the Signs, are needed to describe how individuals are influenced:

1. as individual agents(Aries to Cancer);
2. in one-to-one situations(Leo to Scorpio);
3. collectively within groups of people(Sagittarius to Pisces).

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1 While ‘surfing the net’ one day in 2017, I came across a comment attributed to that well-known writer on Astrology, **Robert Hand**. It was dated some time in 2014. Paraphrasing, it detailed Robert Hand’s confusion as to what ‘The Houses’ actually represent. Perhaps he will find some insight here?

2 Mundane Astrology looks at events/influences on individual entities such as nation states.

## The Road to Reality

‘The Houses’ represent the inner structure and dynamics of each individual<sup>3</sup>. Logically, we need the same twelfold description, but ‘the space’ being described is entirely internal to the individual. The two spaces are continuously interacting—external events and situations elicit internal responses; internal processes lead to actions in the outer world. Broadly speaking, the one reflects into the other. There are twelve houses, which collectively describe our inner world:

- Houses **1 to 4**(Level 1): the physical ‘Self’, with all its immediate needs, drives and responses related to physical(animal) existence—the foundation of the personal ‘here and now’;
- Houses **5 to 8**(Level 2): the centre of ‘Self’, ultimately uniting all three levels in what we call *consciousness*, to inform our considered ‘next step’, our interactions and self-projection.
- Houses **9 to 12**(Level 3): the conceptual ‘Self’, where the information structures we call knowledge help to form our ‘world view’—the Human world and our place in it. This level is the most malleable of all.

### Chart Structure

In Western Astrology, the structure of an astrological chart, for any point in time, is a composite of two related spaces: the *global now*, as the tropical zodiac and the *personal now* as the house system. Identifying the tropical zodiac as a separate, but internally complete, sub-system is crucial here. Traditionally, the periods of time we call ‘The Ages’(roughly 2000 years per ‘Age’) shape the continuing evolution of *global now* which, like the cycle of ‘The Ages’ itself, is an internally complete level of organisation. These astrological effects are non-local in nature—they affect all individuals at any point in time—only at the house-system level are individuals being differentiated. This has implications for house-system structure in that at every point on the Earth there is already information<sup>4</sup> related to current planetary positions within the tropical zodiac. In the algorithmic terms of chart construction, at every point on the surface of the Earth, *in effect*, there already exists a copy of the ecliptic plane. In short, there’s no need for the so-called Placidus midheaven(MC) projection(explained below). Nor do we need to consider arguments of the ‘geocentric versus topocentric’ kind. Below, I explain these statements with the help of diagrams.

In modelling generally, we aim to use the simplest<sup>5</sup> model that incorporates all of the essential features of the system under study. In Astrology, the ecliptic coordinate system is a 3-dimensional geocentric<sup>6</sup> system based on the Earth’s orbital plane. The ecliptic plane is the Earth’s orbital plane<sup>7</sup>, extended to cover the whole of the solar system. The Earth’s rotational axis is tilted with respect to this ecliptic-orbital plane. The diagram (below), entitled The Ecliptic Sphere, can be thought of as representing a spherical screen encasing planet Earth, onto which we can project information from two opposing directions—from within the sphere(planet Earth) and from outside the sphere—the rest of the cosmos. There are several fixed features on this sphere:

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3 More correctly, the House System in a natal chart details how *astrological influences* impact on an individual mind, giving rise to a particular mode of ‘being in the world’, or *personality*, not all of which is described by Astrology.

4 How this works is currently unknown to science, but in the ‘Introduction’ section I outline my experience in dealing with the deeper levels of Human connection, where information is made available over time and space.

5 This simplifying process is often referred to as “using Occam’s razor”, after 13<sup>th</sup> century friar, William of Ockham’s *rule of parsimony*.

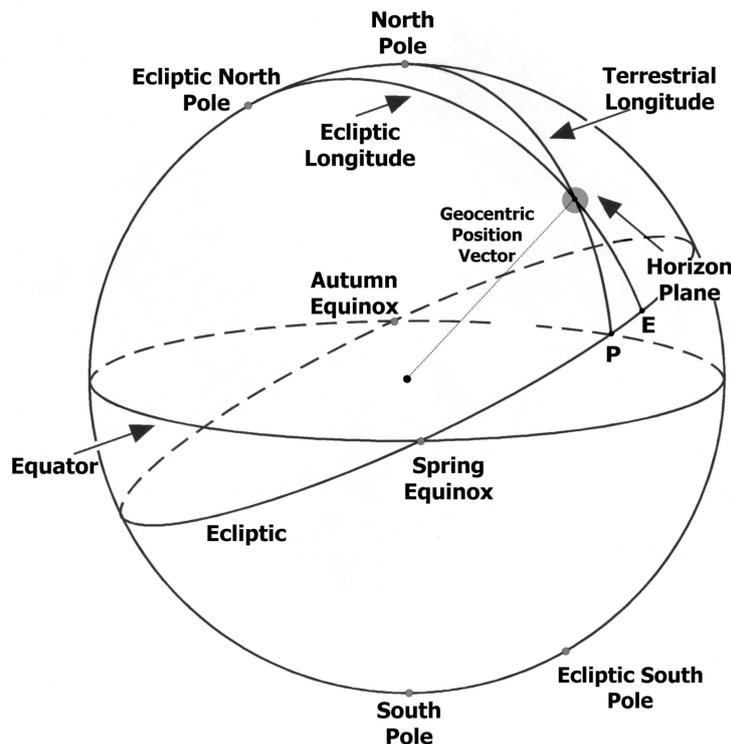
6 A geocentric system maps the *topology* of the Earth’s environment, as opposed to the mathematically simpler *geometry* of a heliocentric model.

7 A plane traced out by the notional line-of-centres connecting the Sun and the Earth, as the Earth moves around the Sun.

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1. the polar points, both ecliptic and terrestrial;
2. the equatorial and ecliptic planes: *great circles*(centred on the Earth's geometric centre) whose intersection defines the directions to the Sun at the spring(0°Aries) and autumn(0°Libra) equinoxes, fixing the Tropical Zodiac in space;
3. the great circles of ecliptic longitude.

In this model the Earth is rotating inside the notional ecliptic sphere. For any momentary position on the Earth there is a corresponding position on the ecliptic sphere. One defining rule for this E.H.S. model can be stated as, 'treat all objects of interest in the same way': all the planets, along with all individuals, are initially identified by geocentric position vectors in 3-D ecliptic space. Intersecting the ecliptic sphere, these 3-D position vectors appear as points identified by a latitude and longitude.



**Figure 1—The Ecliptic Sphere**

As an example, one such position on the surface of the Earth, along with its local *horizon plane*, is shown (arrowed) in **Fig.1**. The two points labelled **P**(Placidus) and **E**(Equal House), projections of the same position vector, illustrate one consequence of two different modelling schemes. In the E.H.S., both the local ecliptic longitude and latitude are preserved. There is no necessity for projection onto the ecliptic plane, but if it were, point **E** would be the result. The Placidus scheme involves the intersection of the local terrestrial longitude with the ecliptic plane rather than the simpler 'straight to ecliptic' scheme outlined above. In the Placidus system, the so-called midheaven projection, **P**, can be wildly different from the ecliptic longitude, despite the fact that the direction of the local ecliptic latitude *is* preserved as the Ascendant-Descendant axis!

This axis is identical in both schemes, for the models share one basic transformation—they equate the centre of the Earth with the local place of birth in the natal chart—natal charts and horoscopes are geocentric. In **Fig.1**, imagine the Horizon Plane sliding down the dotted line marked *geocentric position vector*, until the centre of the plane coincides with the centre of the Earth. The transformed local line of ecliptic latitude now appears as two geocentric ecliptic directions, the Ascendant-Descendant axis. The rationale for this is, as stated earlier: information as to current astrological influences, as implied by astrological tradition, is already available within the living surface of the Earth. Because of this, the centre of the Earth(geocentric) and any point on the surface(topocentric) of the Earth are equivalent in information terms.

In moving from 3-D space to what could be termed *astrological space*, many properties lose their significance. The basic metrical properties, such as the mass, length and time required to map the material planets in their spacetime environment, are not used in astrological analysis<sup>8</sup>—the size of a planet does not reflect the logical value of its associated *planetary principle*. Instead of physical planets which have the ability, through their mass, to shape spacetime, we have the planetary principles with their ability to shape the deeply-connected living space. More correctly perhaps, there are organising processes at work, deep within the Human organism, which are co-ordinated to the cyclical regularities of our physical environment. Topologically speaking, each individual is at the centre of his, or her, Human world. To wherever we are, the rest of the world is coming—in informational terms, at least. That we are all connected at a deep level is, for myself and others like me, simply a fact of experience, as I've detailed in the "Introduction" section. What we call 'astrological influence' arises from within this deeply connected (some might call it *spiritual*) level of life. Taken on its own, Astrology is entirely mechanistic: a basic framework, an organisational sub-structure, within which life promotes evolution through the reconciling of difference. That difference is a *logical bias*, part permanent(natal chart) and part momentary(current influences), in the way we think/self-organise. This is, in my opinion, in addition to any genetic influence, as another layer of differentiation. The birth(natal) chart shows how we are connected to this great machine called 'Life'. The fact that a natal chart continues to be the reference for ongoing astrological influences<sup>9</sup> implies that at least some aspect of time is locatable, or fixed. This is consistent with my experience of the "spiritual" world—the whole of life is mapped out from birth, and so must (at some level) exist as a continuum, where past, present and future co-exist<sup>10</sup>.

**Figure 2**(below) depicts the person-centred world. Spatially, we have one Human being occupying space on the surface of the Earth. The horizontal arrows represent the so-called 'Plane of the Horizon', the area around the individual, encompassing all other individuals available for immediate interaction. The vertical axis, the primary identifier in ecliptic space, points to the Earth beneath our feet and its relationship with the rest of the cosmos above—a unique snapshot in time. In total, we have the 'me, here and now' of the astrological chart, based on a point in spacetime, but coloured by the deeper reality to which we are all connected. Those who treat 'house-system' construction as merely an exercise in spherical geometry miss the point entirely: the *reality* of Astrology is dependant on the existence of a deep unity, a hidden network of connection that pervades the Earth and, just perhaps, the whole cosmos.

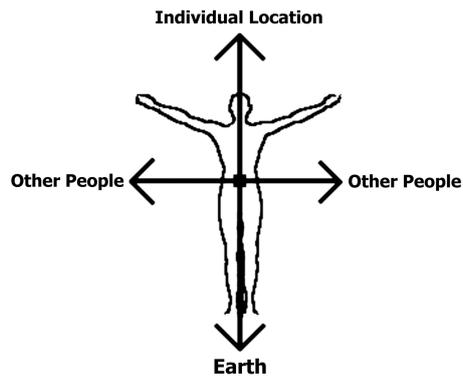
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8 Put simply, the metrical properties of the physical world give way to the topological(basic connectivity) properties of a deeper reality.

9 As in the influence of planetary transits, where the moving planets enter certain kinds of angular correspondence with the natal chart's planetary positions.

10 This *fact of experience* appears as an additional dimension("imaginary" co-ordinate) in the proposed modelling of astrological charts, as explained in the main text of '*The Road to Reality*'.

*The Road to Reality*



**Figure 2—The Person-Centred Chart**