Primary Directions Notation:
Towards a Uniform Presentation Standard

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Introduction

This article is adapted from the User's Guide to my second book: *American is Born: introducing the Regulus USA National Horoscope*. Since publication of that book, Janus software has introduced a complete overhaul of their primary directions module with version 4.0 and subsequent updates. This has helped straighten out some confusion in terminology and presentation for former students of Robert Zoller who used Janus 3.0 in their coursework.

Note: References to Chapter 5 are to *America is Born* which includes further background on the mechanics of primary directions.

Note: 'Bounds' are the five-fold sign division which are also referred to as 'terms.' As of 2009, Robert Schmidt of Project Hindsight has taken to calling them 'confines.' I am sticking with 'bounds' for now and use the Egyptian system.

Presentation

How we choose to label and speak about primary directions plays an important role in how well primary directions as a methodology is communicated. In *A Rectification Manual*, I chose to present primary directions results based on report output directly from Janus 3.0 software. As readers will soon learn, recovery of the centrality of bounds to primary directions theory has caused me to revisit the notation question. In making changes to the presentation format of primary directions for *American is Born*, I have considered the work of primary directions specialist Rumen Kolev as a starting point.[i]

Historically there has been confusion among authors on definition of the terms 'significator' and 'promittor.' Formally introduced in Chapter 5, the *significator* is the planet or point which is held fixed on the celestial sphere. The *promittor* is the planet, aspect, or point which moves with the celestial sphere as the sphere rotates on its axis. In presenting notation, the promittor always appears first; the significator, second. This is the convention adopted by Rumen Kolev and the one I have chosen to follow.

Definitions and Suggested Presentation Format for an Article or Book

PT	**D**	Mars/Sagittarius	**P**	dex. sextile Moon (l=0) d. → ASC	22-Jul-1777
PT	**D**	Mars/Sagittarius	**P**	dex. sextile Moon (l=MO) d. → ASC	1-Aug-1779

Promittor. This is the planet, aspect, or point which moves with the celestial sphere as the sphere rotates on its axis. For the first example, the promittor is the dexter sextile aspect of the Moon, labeled as 'dex. sextile Moon (l=0).'

Significator. This is the point held fixed on the celestial sphere. Originally, only the Ascendant, Midheaven, Sun, Moon, Part of Fortune, and Prenatal Lunation were allowable significators. Examples in the main portion of this text adhere to this convention using the Ascendant as significator. For this example "ASC" is the symbol for the Ascendant. Note the significator *always* appears to the *right* of the arrow. Later authors allowed planets to take on the role of the significator. Examples of this variation are found in Appendix C. But no matter what is listed as the promittor or significator, the same principal holds that any planet or point listed to the *right* of the arrow is held fixed on the celestial sphere.

Distributors and Participators. Abū Ma'shar introduces two new words to primary directions vocabulary. Formally presented in Chapter 5, the **Distributor** is the Egyptian bound placement for the promittor. Central to Abū Ma'shar's System of Distributors and Participators, the Distributor contributes roughly half of the effect of the actual direction by effectively setting the stage for actors to play out roles as Participators. The **Participator** is nothing more than a pair of promittors and significators. Compared to the way most traditional astrologers practice primary directions, what is new is Abū Ma'shar's introduction of the term **Distributor** for the Egyptian bound. More about this in Chapter 5. For now, recognize that 'D' stands for Distributor and 'P' stands for Participator. For the first example (top row):

D = Distributor = bound = 'Mars/Sagittarius'
P = Participator = 'dex. sextile Moon (l=0) d. → ASC'

Because bounds function differently across signs, bounds need to be identified beyond the planet itself. Stating 'the bound of Mars' tells us little because 'the bound of Mars in Sagittarius' behaves much differently than 'the bound of Mars in Capricorn.' *Bounds need identification by both planet and sign*.

Aspect. The type of aspect between the promittor and significator. Either conjunction, sextile, square, trine, or opposition. For this example 'sextile' denotes the relevant aspect.

Dexter/Sinister. For sextile, square, and trine aspects, there are two aspects to consider. To specify which aspect, the terms dexter (abbreviated 'dex.') and sinister (abbreviated 'sin.') are used. Dexter aspects are found by beginning at the planet and moving against the order of the signs; sinister aspects, vice versa. See Chapter 5, Example 2 for visual examples of both. For this example, 'dex.' is the abbreviation for the dexter aspect of the Moon. With the Moon's position at 27AQ51, the dexter sextile aspect of the Moon is 27SA51. With the bound of Mars defined to be the four degree range from 26SA00'00" to 29SA59'59", this dexter sextile aspect of the Moon falls within the bound of Mars/Sagittarius. This is why Mars/Sagittarius is designated the Distributor.

Latitude. Janus offers latitude assignments for the directed aspect. There are three latitude conditions: zero latitude, the planet's full latitude, or an interpolated latitude based on the method of Bianchini. Latitude is abbreviated as 'l.' For zero latitude directions, the number '0' is either listed or omitted for the Sun and Nodes where latitude is always zero. For full planet latitude directions, the planet's name is abbreviated. For directions which employ the latitude adjustment of Bianchini, 'B' is listed.

For the first row in this example, '(l=0)' denotes the direction is computed with a zero latitude assumption for the Moon. For the second row in this example, '(l=MO)' indicates the Moon's full latitude is used to compute the direction.

Direct or Converse. Whether the celestial sphere is moved by direct motion (abbreviated as 'd.') or by converse motion (abbreviated as 'c.') requires identification. For this example, 'd.' indicates direct motion.

The projected event date is listed last. Ptolemy's Key is used to convert the arc of direction to the projected date when the direction is due.
Ptolemy's Key: 1 degree = 1year = 365.2424 days.

Method - *Mundo* versus *In Zodiaco*. Medieval astrologers relied on zodiacal directions, based on the zodiacal projections of planets and their aspects. All directions presented in *America is Born* are computed *in zodiaco*. Mundo primary directions, sometimes referred to as 'mundane', use the earth as a point of reference and were developed later by Placidus. Kolev uses the abbreviations 'M' for mundane and 'ZOD' for zodiacal directions, a choice I support for those who choose to present results for both systems.

Method - Interplanetary directions. Most commonly used in the medieval era were methods by Ptolemy, Regiomontanus, or Placidus. Whatever computation method used for interplanetary directions requires disclosure. I recommend 'PT' for Ptolemy, 'REG' for Regiomontanus, and 'PL' for Placidus.

D	Changeover	bound Saturn/Aries d. → ASC	9-Jul-1863

Distributor Changeovers. When the directed significator changes from one bound to another, the above format is recommended. Added are the words 'Changeover' and 'bound'. Absent is listing of any participating direction designated by the bold letter **'P'**.

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[i] Rumen Kolev can be reached through his website at www.babylonianastrology.com.