

MARS GOING RETROGRADE December 20, 2011

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Retrograde planets in astrology always gets the buzz going. "Mercury is retrograde;" that explains it, and so on. Well, Mars is about to go retrograde and astrologers are talking about what this means. Back in the early 1970s I developed a very easy way to look at retrogrades called "Burn Rate" and I will try to present it here. This may be a little technical so perhaps this is more for my astrologer friends.

Retrograde is only an apparent phenomenon. Nothing ever retrogrades in the solar system. Planets only appear to retrograde from Earth's point of view deeply embedded within the solar system. Here is a very basic diagram of the current Mars situation in the solar system (tropical zodiac).

In this diagram we have the current Mars positions marked in both the heliocentric and geocentric. The helio Mars at 8° Leo is marked in red. This is the current position of Mars endlessly moving forward in the solar system. The current geo position of Mars is marked in dark blue at 14° Virgo. This is where we on Earth see Mars to be from our vantage point in our inner orbit of this solar system. And here is how to understand this diagram:

Right now the geo position of Mars at 14° Virgo is far ahead of the helio position at 8° Leo, almost as far as possible (maximum is 41°), which means Mars is very close to going retrograde.

The area of the zodiac that is ahead of the helio Mars is marked in rose. This is the area that the helio Mars will eventually be traveling but right now this part of the zodiac is still to come. This is the Mar's future.

The area of the zodiac that is behind the helio Mars is marked in rusty red. This is the area of the zodiac that the helio Mars has recently passed over and represents the past (it is over). An equal 41° swath of the zodiac is shown.

Helio positions of any planet refer to our inner life and to the actual real life of the Sun and our solar system. The geo position refers to how that helio Mars appears to us on Earth, therefore outer appearances, personal circumstances, etc., how we see the solar system from earth, our personal viewpoint.

As you can see, right now the geo Mars is as far into the future as it is going to get in this retrograde cycle, so we can say that when it comes to our drive, activity, and push (Mars) appearances are running way ahead of reality. We are pushing the envelope and are as liberal or forward-looking as we can get. We are speculating. Again: appearances run far ahead of reality.

In a few days, geo Mars will turn retrograde and begin backtracking back toward the present (helio) and eventually into the past. All things Martian will then begin take an increasingly more conservative bent as we give up more of our radical future-oriented ground, day by day. The difference between helio Mars and Geo Mars will grow smaller.

In time Mars will pass through the Present (conjunct/opposition the Sun) and begin to wander deeper and deeper into the past, into the area of the zodiac that helio Mars has already passed through. We will become even more conservative (and secure) in our effort and energy until Mars once again goes Stationary Direct deep in the past and begins to move forward (direct) again.

Get the idea? You can do your own interpreting with just a little study, but also be sure to look at your own natal chart to see the nature of the various planets in relation to you at birth. Using Mars as an example:

Is your natal Mars deep in the past, very conservative? If so, is it headed (retro) still deeper or is it on the way out of the past and back toward the present? Or, is your geo Mars far into the future, way ahead of reality (helio Mars) and pushing the envelope as it is in the sky currently or is it far into the future but becoming increasingly conservative (retro)? Or is it right in the middle, fully in the present itself?

Most astrology programs will give you both the standard geocentric planet positions AND the heliocentric positions. If you don't have a program, just go to:

<http://astrologyland.com/>

Use the free chart wheel in the upper-left hand part of the web page and put your birth data in twice, once for the Standard (geo) chart and again for the Helio chart. Compare the positions for any given planet between the two. Also here is another (but more technical) article on retrogrades for those who are not phases by details:

<http://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.10150222113337658.355633.587252657&type=3>

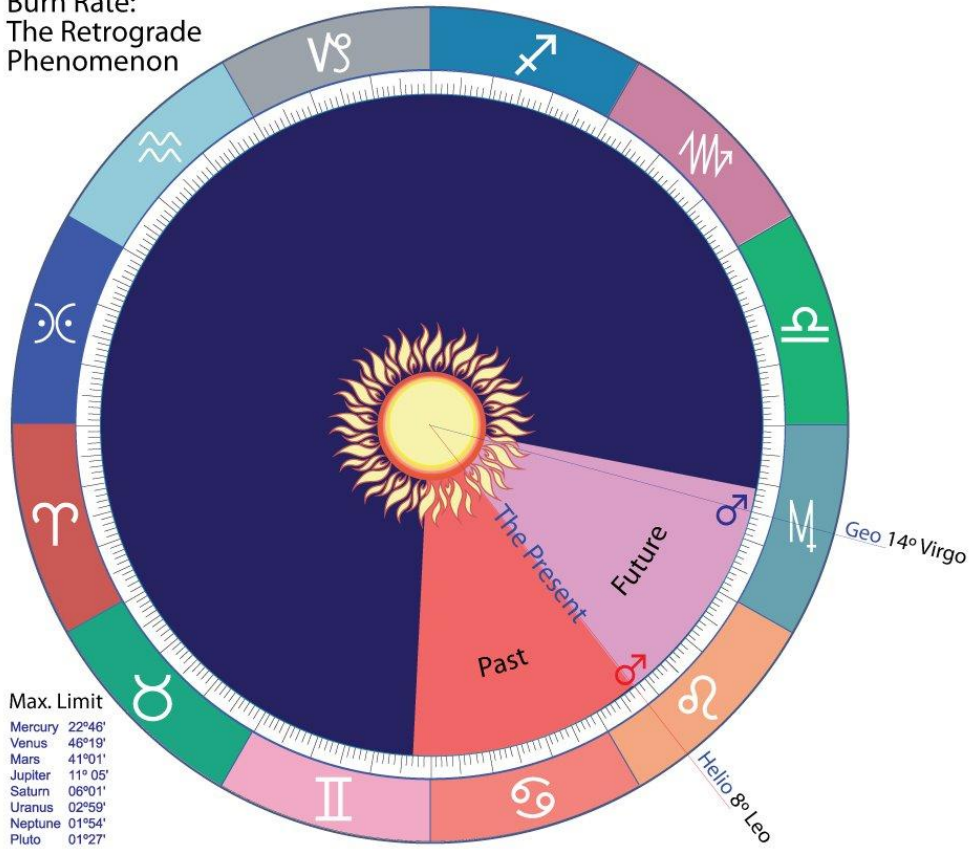
Or a free e-book on this topic called "Burn Rate: The Retrograde Phenomenon" can be found here:

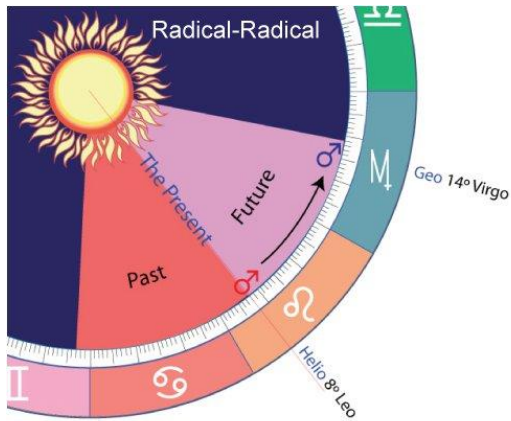
<http://astrologysoftware.com/books/index.asp?orig>

In summary, Burn Rate is very simple: either the current geo planet is ahead (future) in the zodiac from the helio position or it is behind (past). It is in the future or the past, or perhaps the two are the same (present). And it is either going direct (forward) or retrograde (backward).

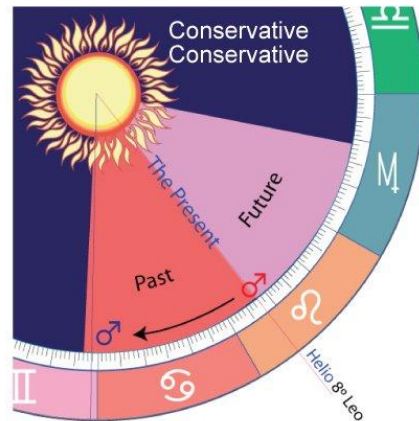
If the geo position is in the future then appearances are running ahead of reality, so take note. If the geo is in the past, then that planet is in a much more conservative mode. Using this technique (and your imagination) will give you a very useful interpretation of a retrograde planet and the same planet at any other time. I enclose a second diagram to make interpreting a little easier.

**Burn Rate:
The Retrograde
Phenomenon**

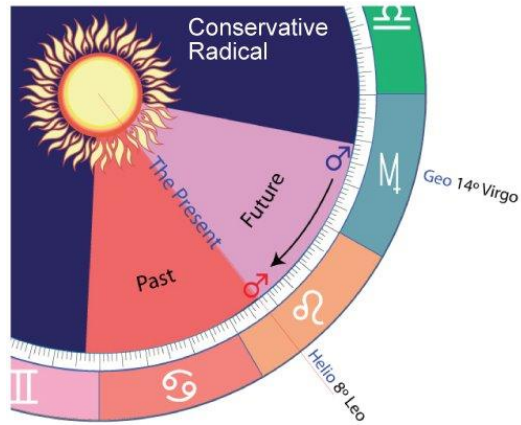




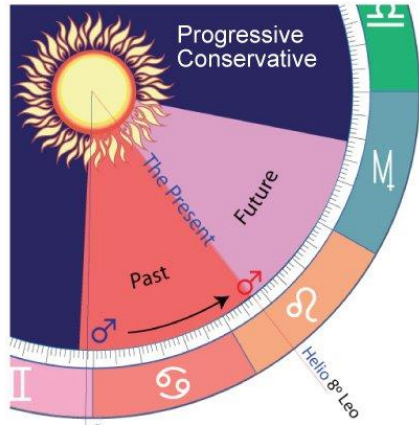
Geo Future and Direct – The geo planet direct and ahead of the helio indicates that appearances are running ahead of reality, so this suggests entrepreneurship, risk, speculation, liberality, estimating, etc. At best this is creating the future, at worst ignoring reality and building a house of cards.



Geo Past and Retro – The geo planet retro and behind of the helio indicates that the inner reality is more progressive than outer concern with the past, with conformity, deliberation, and conservation. Here we have a conservative conservative

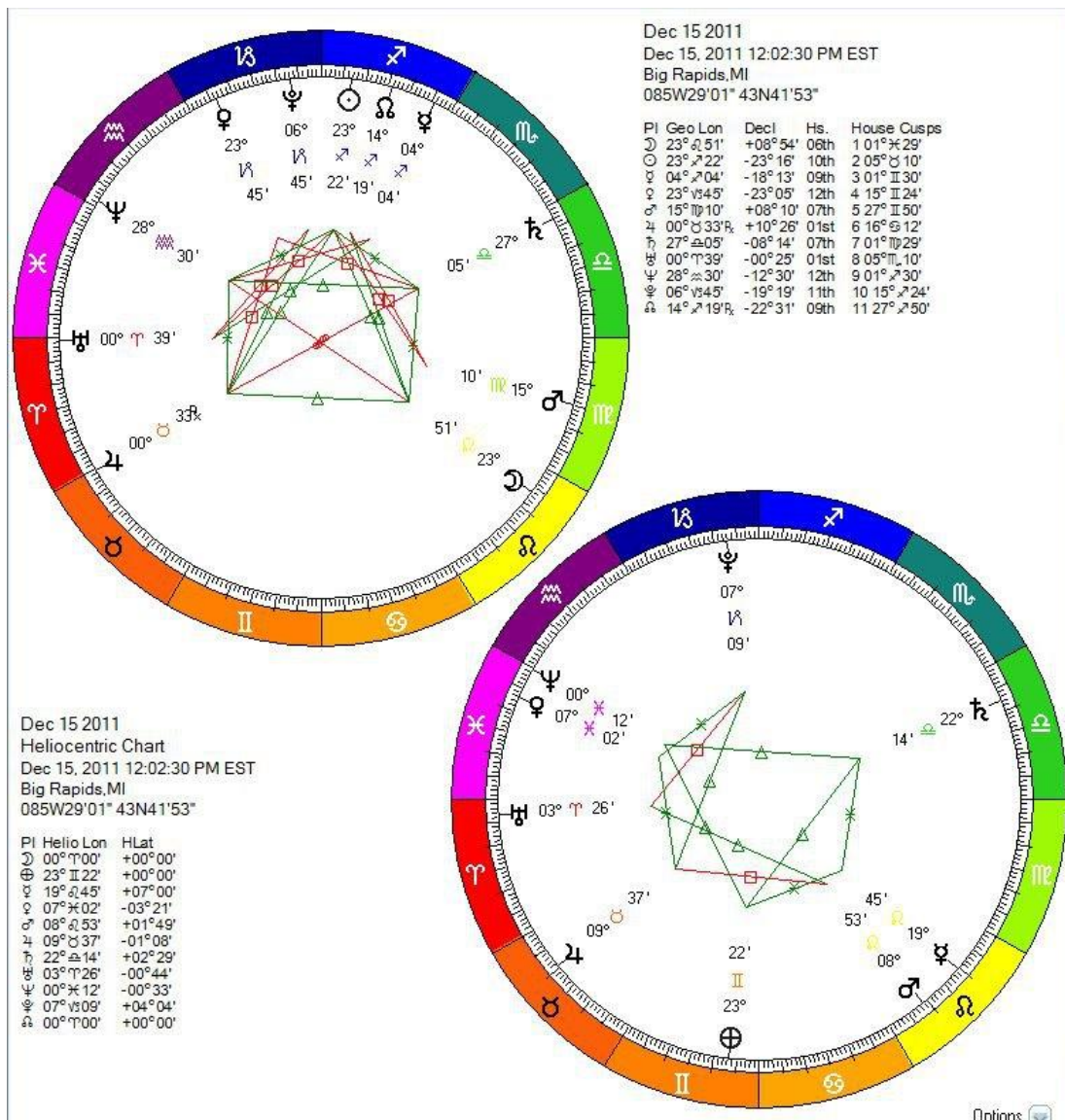


Geo Future and Retro – The geo planet retro and ahead of the helio indicates that while appearances are running ahead of reality that the trend is not open-ended, but rather reversing and increasing becoming more conservative. Thus: a conservative radical.



Geo Past and Direct – The geo planet direct and behind of the helio indicates that while the inner reality is more progressive than outer concern with the past and conformity, that here we have a progressive conservative.

The four main possibilities with hints as to how to interpret them.



Here are both the geocentric chart (top) and the heliocentric chart (bottom). You can see each of the planets and the relation between the helio and geo positions. To make this clear:

- Mars is Future Direct
- Jupiter is Past Retrograde
- Saturn is Future Direct
- Uranus is Past Direct
- Neptune is Past Direct
- Pluto is Past Direct
- Mercury is Past Direct
- Venus is Future Direct

With Mercury and Venus, since they are inner planets, we can only measure how far ahead (future) or behind (past) the Sun they are.