

# IN THE HEART OF THE SUN

## The role of latitude in the definition of cazimi

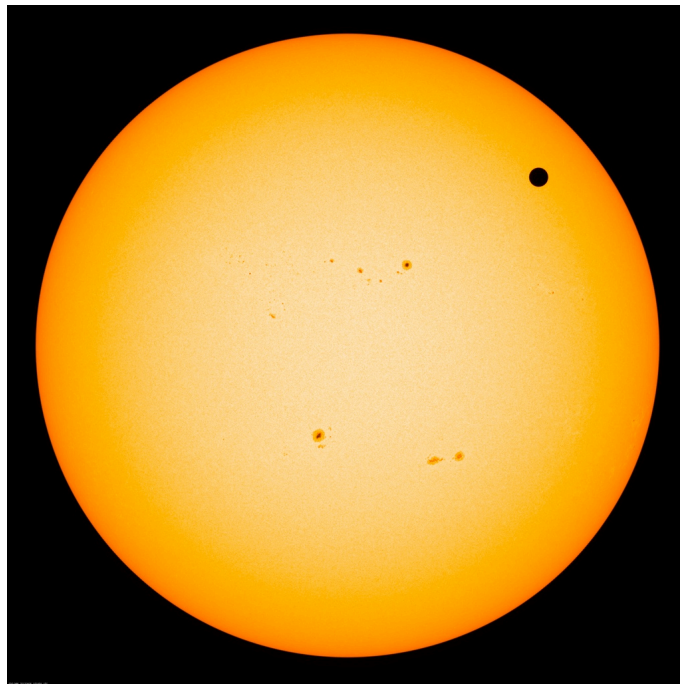
Presented at KIA Conference, Kolkata, February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018

**Patrizia Nava**  
Horary Craftsman

The image shows the astronomical transit of Venus across the Sun of June 6, 2012. A very rare occurrence, taking place only when the luminary and the planet are in their inferior conjunction and have the same longitude and latitude. The next visible passage will be December 11, 2117.

That transit was a spectacular example of what the Western tradition calls *cazimi*, attributing wondrous power and force to the planet in that condition.

The purpose of my talk is to examine some of the very different definitions of *cazimi* we find in Western literature and, in spite of common horary practice generally based on William Lilly's opinion, to show that his definition of *cazimi* should not be taken for granted.



The passage of Venus at 5.34 UT, June 6, 2012

### Combustion

Both Western and Indian astrology acknowledge the Sun as a giver of life, but its light and heat are so intense it burns those who dare to get too close. A planet in this situation is made invisible and loses strength and influence. Hence the idea that being under the Sun's rays is one of the worst accidental debilities.

A planet within  $8^\circ$  in longitude from the centre of the Sun is said to be *combust*, that is, burnt and totally invisible. That critical distance, suggested by Lilly and many other traditional authors, can vary according to the source; some say  $6^\circ$  or  $7^\circ$ , or a different value for each planet and if it is oriental or occidental to the Sun. According to some authors the planet is combust when, preceding

the Sun, it has been invisible for seven days, or, following the Sun, it will be invisible for other seven days.

Combustion will be worse if the conjunction is applying rather than separating, and the more exact it is, the more serious. Combustion is often totally destructive and in horary questions about death, finding the significator of the patient and the Sun applying to conjunction is certainly an unfortunate testimony.

It is obvious that the evaluation of a planet conjunct the Sun depends on many other factors, not necessarily negative, that we should take into account, especially when we read a nativity. And even in a horary chart that conjunction might have specific and less frightful meanings. In relationship horaries, with the Sun being a natural significator of the man, the conjunction of the planet representing the female partner with the Sun can symbolize the sentimental and sexual union of the parties involved, thus giving a favourable answer to the question propounded.

Moreover, combustion seems to be less harmful when it happens in the domicile of the combust planet. In this case, the Sun has power over the planet by combustion, but the planet, in turn, has power over the Sun as its dispositor, thus creating some sort of balance. Even the essential and accidental dignities can contribute to reduce (or to increase) the mischievous effects of the conjunction.

However, the basic concept is still valid and is universally accepted; a planet whose light is hidden by the glare of the Sun is feeble, deprived of influence and strength, for better or for worse. Benefic Jupiter, when combust, will lose its power to produce good, while malefic Saturn, in turn, will lose its ability to act, and its noxious potential will be lessened.

Abu Ma'shar (9<sup>th</sup> c. CE) claims that the Sun harms and burns moist Moon and Venus above all, while masculine and dry planets are less affected by combustion.<sup>1</sup> This distinction, which might sound theoretically correct, does not stand up in horary charts. Some astrological schools have maintained this, stating that some planets are exempt from the effects of combustion. We sometimes read that fiery Mars could not be burnt by the Sun, thanks to its own hot and dry nature. Or even that Mercury, due to its proximity to the Sun and its frequent conjunctions with the day luminary, would be so accustomed to its heat that it suffers its pernicious effects with minimal or no damage at all. Maybe those conclusions could be applied in some way to natal charts, but it is certainly difficult to find evidence of that immunity in horary charts, which are generally simpler, less nuanced and more direct in their results.

There is no planet insensitive to the dangerous effects of a conjunction with the Sun and it is quite easy to verify this fact in horary questions. Whenever the main significator finds itself in application to combustion, the answer will be unfavourable. I suspect that the principle involved here is more the invisibility of the planet's light, rather than its hot or dry temperament. The light of a combust Mars is as invisible as the light of any other celestial body in the same situation and that is the crucial factor. As far as Mercury as a combust significator is concerned, its feebleness will determine, as a rule, an unfavourable outcome.

We have a debilitating zone from 8° to 17° in longitude on both sides of the Sun (though also in this instance variants abound<sup>2</sup>) which is less detrimental than combustion, called *sub radiis* or “under the rays”. Whether or not we distinguish a phase of combustion from being simply under the rays, the consequent invisibility of the planet involved testifies to its universally recognized debility. It is no exaggeration to say that the Sun, in conjunction, acts for all practical purposes as a powerful malefic.

---

<sup>1</sup> Albumasar, *Introd.* 7,4.

<sup>2</sup> These are the limits practised by William Lilly. According to Guido Bonatti, instead, the degrees are 12. The oldest authors seem to agree on 15° on both sides of the Sun.

## Finally, in the heart of the Sun

On the contrary, if proximity to the day luminary is harmful, sitting on his lap, protected in his arms, in perfect union, is a condition that identifies a free zone, a haven of peace, an Eden of exaltation, right in the centre of the space attributed to combustion.<sup>3</sup>

This is the case when a planet is *exactly* conjunct the daytime luminary – the natural symbol of the King, of success and power. A planet thus situated, in the heart of the Sun, is in a position of the greatest accidental strength imaginable, in sharp contrast with the severe debilitation implied by being simply close to the Sun (burnt or combust), but not sitting on his lap. It is dignified and protected by favour of the King, at the height of its influence. This exultant condition is called *egkardios* or *synodikos* by Greek writers, *samîm* by the Arabs, *in corde solis* in Latin, and is often referred to by medieval and modern writers as *cazimi*. Abraham Ibn-Ezra writes:

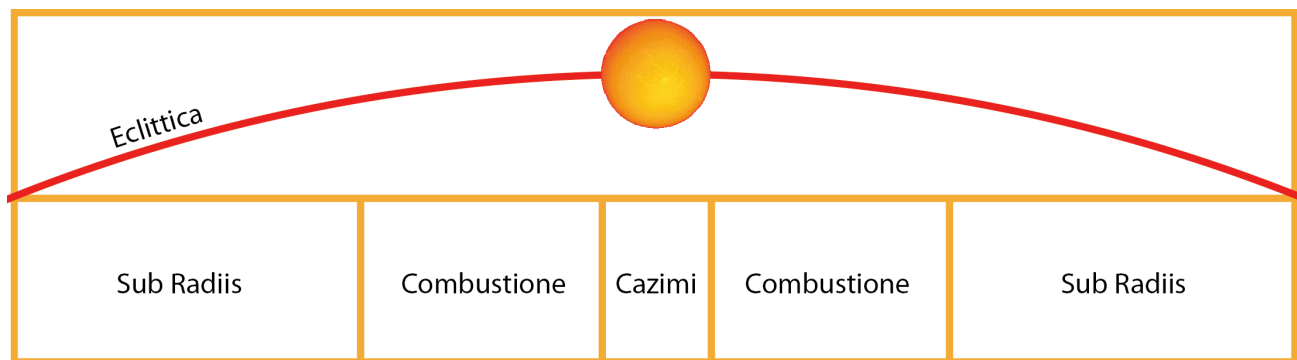
*A planet under the light of the Sun is like a person in prison.*

*A combust planet is like a dying person.*

But about a cazimi planet, he remarks:

*A planet joined with the Sun is like a person sitting with the king in one chair.<sup>4</sup>*

The synodic or cazimi planet does not enjoy the throne for its lofty virtues and qualities, as it would if it were endowed with great essential dignity, but only by virtue of benevolence and indulgence of those in power. It has the opportunity to temporarily share the throne with the legitimate ruler. As long as it enjoys this favour, it can take advantage of its fortunate condition, which, however, is anything but stable. Astronomically, the duration of these favourable external conditions is indicated by the permanence of the exact conjunction to the Sun. But both the Sun and the planet which has been conceded a seat next to the luminary move along the ecliptic at different speeds. When the planet moves out of the conjunction it will lose the power granted it, which was not its own. That is why this form of dignity, no matter how effective, is defined accidental.



Sectors of the ecliptic where a planet in conjunction with the Sun is Under the Rays, Combust, or Cazimi

## Cazimi in horary

Among the most historically influential authors in horary techniques, we find very different definitions of cazimi.

<sup>3</sup> The first author who mentioned something similar was Serapion of Alexandria, *De astrorum figurationum nominibus*, p. 230,19, speaking of synodic Mercury.

<sup>4</sup> Avraham Ibn Ezra, *The Beginning of Wisdom*, ed. by Meira Epstein and Robert Hand, ARHAT 1998, aphorisms 89, 90, 98, pp.136-137.

Sahl bin Bishr (a Jew of Persian origins – 9<sup>th</sup> c. CE), dealing with the eleven conditions of planetary strength, writes in his *Introductorium*:

*The tenth is if the planets are in the heart of the Sun, meaning when they are within one degree of it.*<sup>5</sup>

A whole degree for the synodic planet is a prescription from Hellenistic times, but the Arab astrologers tended to refine that limit, transforming it from a symbolic figure to a visually determined quantity, restricting its range. Since the apparent size of the solar disc as seen from Earth varies from 31'29" to 32'33", from this prospect being in the body of the sun is to be within about 16' from its centre.

Here is what Guido Bonatti, a 13<sup>th</sup> century Italian medieval astrologer and an admirer of the Arab heritage, writes in his comprehensive treatise, *Liber Astronomiae*:

*And when the planet is with the Sun in one degree, so that there are 16' or less between them, both by latitude and longitude (which rarely happens), it is said to be united, and then it is made strong, because it is said to be in the Sun's forge, that is, in his heart.*<sup>6</sup>

However, over the centuries this meticulous attention to the precision of the astronomical data seems to fade, at least among the authors of the early-modern period. The great horarist William Lilly (17<sup>th</sup> c.) was certainly not obsessed by the issue of latitude, and his definition of cazimi does not take it into account.

*A planet is in the heart of the Sun, or in Cazimi, when he is not removed from him 17 min. or is within 17 min. forward or backward, as Sun in 15°30' Taurus, Mercury in 15°25' Taurus: here Mercury is in Cazimi, and all Authors do hold a planet in Cazimi to be fortified thereby.*<sup>7</sup>

We can be assured that Lilly is not referring to latitude in this excerpt because when he deems it necessary to consider latitude as well as longitude, he usually mentions it explicitly, as he does while discussing of fixed stars. It is no coincidence that Bonatti had already complained, some centuries before, about the lack of attention to latitude with the majority of his contemporaries:

*Indeed I am in agreement with them, but not purely and simply. Because if a planet is distant from the Sun by less than 16' in longitude, and according to latitude it is distant by more than 16', nevertheless it is combust, because the distinction between combustion in latitude and combustion in longitude is practically imperceptible.*<sup>8</sup>

So, who is correct in his definition of cazimi? Sahl, who allows a whole degree for the partile conjunction with the Sun to be defined as cazimi, or Bonatti, who is much more exacting and prescribes 16' from the Sun, both in longitude and in latitude? Or even William Lilly, who requires 17' from the centre of the solar disc, but merely in longitude?

Even if Lilly's method is generally applied by the majority of horary astrologers today, there is no doubt that Bonatti's rule is astronomically more accurate. The astronomical transit of an inferior planet, like the passage of Venus across the surface of the Sun in 2012, can help us to understand why. In that occasion, the black dot of Venus was actually seen travelling from one end of the Sun's disc to the other. After a previous period of invisibility which corresponded to its being under the rays and then combust, Venus appeared again as a small dark round spot on the bright face of the Sun, perfectly visible with filtered optical instruments or even to the naked eye, at dawn. Its latitude was around 8' to the North of the ecliptic, that is, from the centre of the Sun, within the limits

---

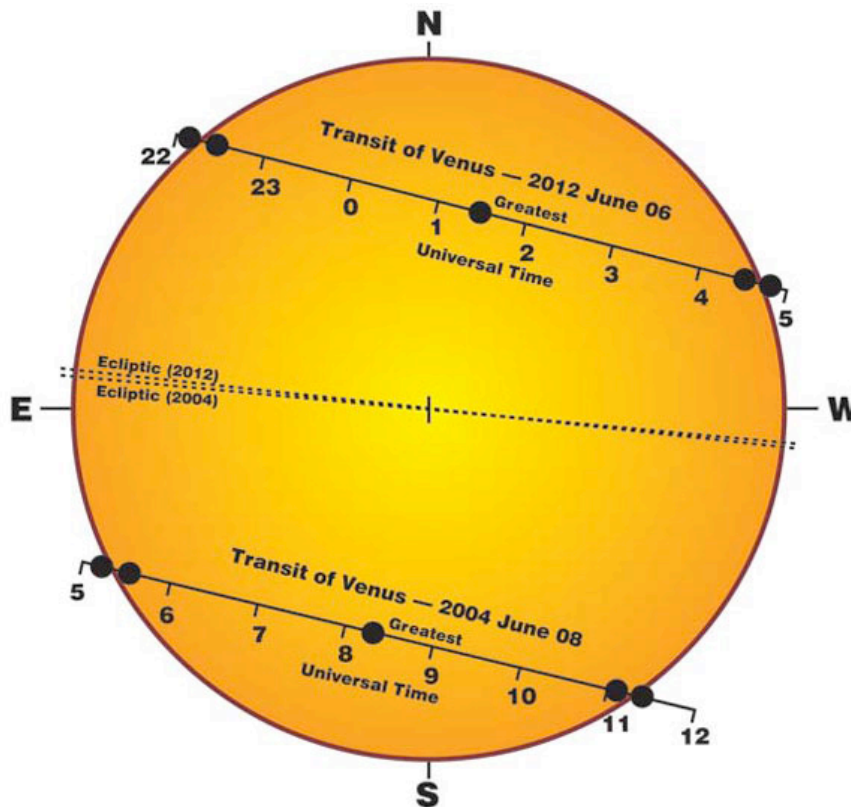
<sup>5</sup> Sahl bin Bishr, *Introductorium de principii iudiciorum Zahelis Ysmaelitae*, in *Works of Sahl and Masha'allah*, translated & ed. by Benjamin N. Dykes, Cazimi Press, Golden Valley 2008, p.41.

<sup>6</sup> Guido Bonatti, *Book of Astronomy*, translated by B. Dykes, Cazimi Press, Golden Valley, MN 2007, p. 211.

<sup>7</sup> William Lilly, *cit.*, p.113. On p.300, Lilly reduces this limit to 16' (only longitude), adding that such condition signals «an addition of fortune and the planet is wondrous strong».

<sup>8</sup> Guido Bonatti, *cit.*, p. 211.

dictated by the apparent size of the luminary. Had it been different, the planet would have passed above or below the body of the Sun, invisible, without crossing its disc.



But is the superior precision, or greater adherence to the visual nature of the celestial phenomenon, of Bonatti's view reflected in the actual outcome of horary questions?

### Shall I go to the Far East?

The Querent wishes to go to the Far East on a sort of cultural and spiritual pilgrimage, but there are some obstacles. Yet the opportunity seems to have come at last. Will she leave?

The ascendant of the chart is  $27^{\circ}16'$  Libra, so planet Venus, ruler of Libra, is the main significator of the Querent. The Moon is her co-significator, also showing the course of events with its aspects. Any kind of spiritual pilgrimage, like any kind of trip abroad, is a question pertaining the 9th house. The ninth place is called *deus* and signifies what pertains to the Gods, to dreams and to travel abroad, say Retorius and Paul of Alexandria.

Thus Mercury, ruler of the 9th, is the significator of the journey, but it is peregrine (without essential dignity), retrograde and combust. An unpromising start. The Moon is not making any aspect, and this usually means stagnation, lack of opportunities of movement, action and change. The condition of Venus, the querent, is on the contrary very interesting. Peregrine but in the strong tenth house, Venus ( $23^{\circ}11'$  Leo) is exactly conjunct the Sun ( $23^{\circ}13'$  Leo), Lord of the Midheaven. Venus, in applicative conjunction to the Sun and only two minutes in longitude from it, is cazimi according to Lilly and many others. This fortunate condition might therefore ensure the fulfilment of the dream!

But let's have a look at the latitude of Venus, before venturing a judgement. The planet is at  $1^{\circ}17'$  latitude North, beyond the threshold of  $16'$  prescribed by Bonatti. If latitude were indeed a key factor, then the answer to the question should be negative.

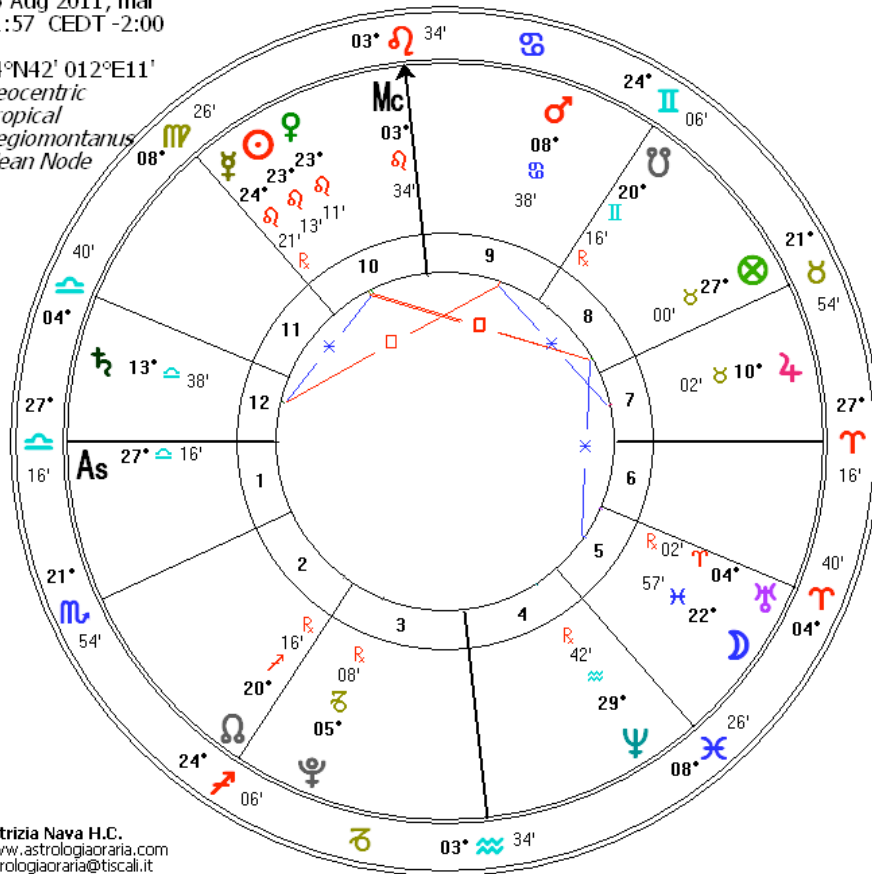
The plan was not successful and the querent never left. The combustion of both main signifiers prevents any positive outcome of the matter. It is obvious that Mercury is not immune from combustion. It is equally obvious that Venus, far from being protected and exalted in the heart of the Sun, is instead burnt by it. A “missed cazimi”, actually...

### Shall I go to the Far East?

#### Horary Chart

16 Aug 2011, mar  
11:57 CEDT -2:00

44°N42' 012°E11'  
Geocentric  
Tropical  
Regiomontanus  
Mean Node



Patrizia Nava H.C.  
www.astrologiaoraria.com  
astrologiaoraria@tiscali.it

### Will the Sicilian workshops be held?

The querent was asked to hold a series of seminars in Sicily by the director of a cultural centre, showing great enthusiasm for the project. Will the plan be carried out?

The ascendant at the time of the question is 10°22' Cancer, therefore the Moon is the main and only signifier of the querent. The seminars are represented by Saturn, ruler of the ninth house. The first testimonies are favourable; Saturn in Libra is exalted – the workshops might be interesting and successful, the plan is a good one. Jupiter, lord of the tenth house of success, is in the house it rules and in domicile in Pisces. Instead, we can disregard the seemingly fortunate presence of the Part of Fortune at the ascendant. Astronomically speaking, a Part of Fortune at the ascendant only tells us that Sun and Moon are conjunct, in the same way as an opposition between the luminaries produces a Part of Fortune at the descendant.

Let's focus our attention on the Moon and Saturn, the main signifiers.

The Moon at 13°23' Sagittarius, in her face, is going to complete a sextile to Saturn, in great essential dignity at 14°58' Libra. This aspect could be enough to decree the success of the enterprise. Before meeting Saturn, however, the Moon will perfect a conjunction with the Sun at 13°28'. A distance of only 5' in longitude might imply that the Moon is in the heart of the Sun. If

so, the outcome of the question would be favourable. If not, the conjunction with the Sun would be a serious and destructive form of prohibition of the lunar sextile to Saturn.

Even though the Moon approaching the Sun is often associated to a decrease in fortune due to the loss of her light, this is not necessarily so, especially in questions. Bonatti reminds us that, at the moment of their perfect conjunction:

*[...] in nativities or questions, whether the Sun and Moon are joined in one and the same minute according to longitude and according to latitude, and one of the benefics is in the Ascendant [...] it signifies that the native or querent will be fortunate [...]*<sup>9</sup>

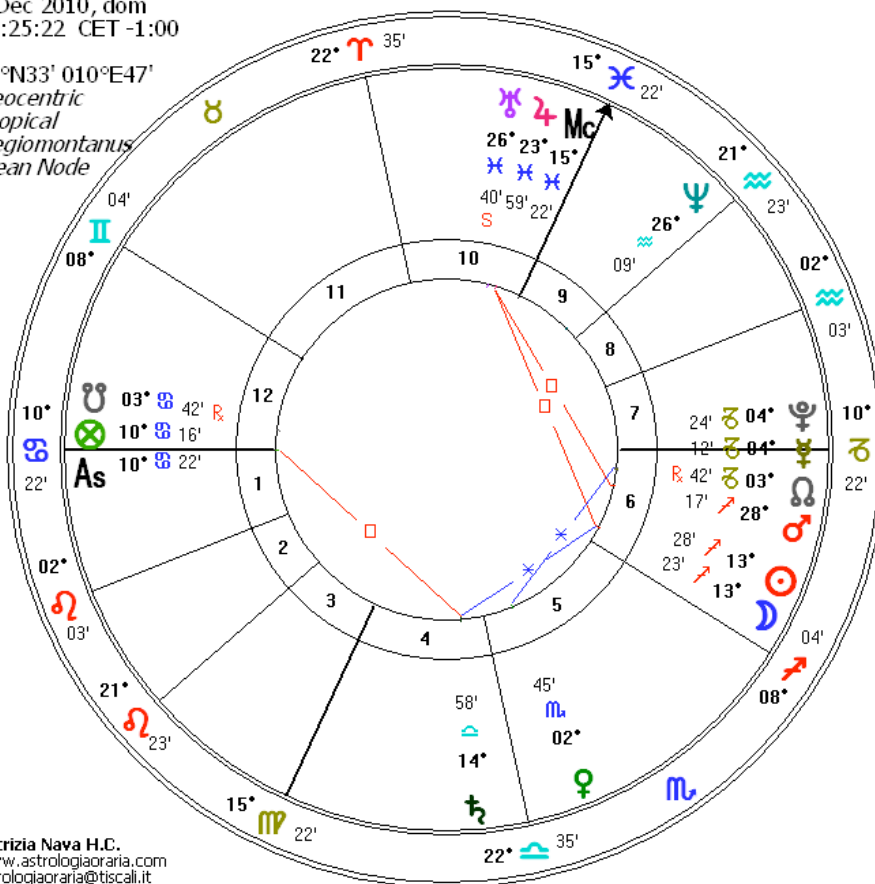
Given that the exact conjunction mentioned by Bonatti occurs only when the Moon is on her Node, with latitude 0° on the occasion of a solar eclipse, we can see that it is a rare occurrence. In that case the disc of the Moon obscures the light of the Sun weakening him, making him temporarily harmless, to the advantage of what is signified by the Moon and disadvantage of what is signified by the Sun. But the variations in the Moon's latitude are considerable and, in most cases, what looks like a perfect synod is only a conjunction in longitude, not in latitude. This explains why the longitudinal cazimi of the Moon "never works", because it is, almost always, a combustion in all respects.

In the chart examined the Moon's latitude is 1°45' South so she is actually out of the Sun's body, with nothing to protect her moistness and cold from the burning heat of the day luminary. In spite of the excellent conditions, the project was not realized.

### Will the Sicilian workshops be held?

**Horary Chart**  
5 Dec 2010, dom  
18:25:22 CET -1:00

44°N33' 010°E47'  
Geocentric  
Tropical  
Regiomontanus  
Mean Node



<sup>9</sup> Guido Bonatti, *cit.*, Treatise V, the 123rd Consideration, p. 325.

## Conclusion

The charts examined for the present study are, of course, more numerous than the few I can present here, and the research is still going on. I am also aware that a few examples cannot be taken as evidence of a theoretical statement. However, the results point at some conclusions:

First, the definition of cazimi derived from Lilly and applied by some Western astrologers is too wide and should be restricted.

Second, the role of latitude in the definition of cazimi is fundamental and cannot be overlooked. The introduction of latitude makes true cazimi an extremely rare occurrence.

August 10<sup>th</sup>, 2017

Patrizia Nava MA, PhD hc, HC  
[www.astrologiaoraria.com](http://www.astrologiaoraria.com)  
[astrologiaoraria@tiscali.it](mailto:astrologiaoraria@tiscali.it)