

REAPPRAISING ASTROLOGICAL CONCEPTS, OLD AND NEW

“It is absurd to believe that the stars can make a man.”

---Paracelsus

Of all sciences or systems of prognostication, prediction or prophecy, Astrology alone enjoys the unique and peculiar advantage of employing a base in the future from which one may calculate a pattern of relationships to the present and the past. If we know anything at all of tomorrow, it is that the Sun and his host will be journeying still in their cycles, their astronomical positions providing this base. Derived from such mathematically exact and certain factors in time and space, one must ask why Astrology, genethliacal and predictive, is still so far from perfection.

Instead of understanding what an “ideal” system of Astrology should provide, the skeptic and the sympathizer—and too often the astrologer himself—errs in judging the question on the accuracy or failure of individual astrological judgment or prophecy. One must deny the validity of individual prediction as a test, for even in success there still remains the question whether the isolated prophet has not foreseen the event in a horoscope much as the scryer envisions the future in a crystal ball. In fact, we have seen some mis-readings of charts which proved remarkably accurate! The temptation is always to cite a successful prophecy whether the product of “chance hit”, ESP, “intuition”, or whether read by root and rule. And as for the failures, skeptics are not interested in tracing them to their source, so long as the failures are perpetrated in the name of Astrology. Nevertheless, it would be unwise to protest any indication of an astrologer using “psychic qualities” in his work, for these suspected faculties—however feeble—may be universal in their manifestation and not subject to conscious exclusion.

Fortunately, the problem is quite different. To be scientific, a system of Astrology must operate by certain fixed rules, rules by which anyone working with identical data would arrive at like a conclusions. Beyond this, however, it has been demanded of the “ideal directional system” that the nature, intensity and timing of every noteworthy event should synchronize with a characteristic direction, and that each direction should be accompanied by an appropriate event. But may there not be inherent limitations barring the way to such perfection? Unless and until we can define the limitations as well as the potentialities of Astrology, the forces with which it deals and their scope in Nature, we are liable to fall into grave errors of practise and, by thoughtless boast and claim, invite refutation and ridicule.

One example of this is typified in the case of a noted astrologer who for years represented the Natal Chart to the American public as an infallible guide to the Native’s physical, heredity and environment and their mutual interaction. A moment’s consideration shows this position—held by not a few astrologers today—to be utterly untenable. Far from denoting the hereditary equipment and environmental pattern peculiar to a given subject, the birthchart not only fails to reveal such important facts as sex and race, it even fails to show whether or not the subject is alive or dead, human or otherwise. But, indeed, it would be foolish to expect the chart to supply such information. Mother Nature does not temporarily suspend her universal parturition during periods of human birth, so our birthcharts also must serve as the natal signatures of all manner of animal, vegetable and bacterial life.

We have heard much of the world’s population “explosion”; but how many astrologers, speaking glibly of “your” horoscope or “mine”, have discerned the

implications for Astrology in 35,000,000 new births annually? This means that almost three million persons are born each year under each zodiacal Sun-sign; and about 96,000 are born each day with identical Solar horoscopes!

Since the Moon on an average moves but one degree in two hours, this shows approximately 8,000 births during each two-hour period in which Sun, Moon and all planets do not move beyond one degree. But there are few if any astrologers limiting the natal “orb of influence” of the Lights and planets to one-half of a degree, plus or minus. If the “orb” of the Moon alone is increased to four degrees (plus or minus) the number of births rises to more than sixty thousand!

Of course, no nativity is complete without Midheaven and Ascendant. But here we discover a fact not generally known: a person does not acquire an unique nativity simply because his happens to be the only birth within eight minutes at a specific location, for there will be other births distant in time as much as two hours and in place as much as two thousand miles and more, other instances in which the birthchart Midheaven and Ascendant will be the same (within one degree, plus or minus) while the Moon traverses but one degree. With the present birthrate, such practically identical birthcharts average out at ten; if the orb is increased to two degrees (plus or minus) the average will be about 85; and if the customary orb of 5 degrees is used, the number of practically identical birthcharts is raised to between 500 and 1,000!

These statistics show that there were several humans born with the practically identical horoscope of Adolf Hitler, although there was but one Adolf Hitler; and the birthchart of an Einstein or a Churchill was also the possession of parties unknown to science and history. Such a truism is not new, but it gives rise to objections astrologers

should have long since set to rest. The French astrologer-researcher, Choisnard, mentions the case of Siamese twins whose characters were different in many ways, and only one of whom became a mother; he cites this to prove that planetary influence is not the only factor governing human destiny. He maintained that there are hereditary and environment forces which are equally formative in a career and which lie outside of horoscopic delineation. But this is no more than what Claudius Ptolem, the “Father of Astrology”, conceded almost two thousand years ago. Beyond dispute, the primary limitation which confronts us is that Astrology is only one of several forces which shape our constitution and destiny.

One of the outstanding astrological advances of this century came in Germany just after World War I with Alfred Witte’s exposition of his now-famous “Planetary Pictures”. His findings led to the establishment of the so-called Hamburg School of Astrology, introduced into the U.S.A. as the Uranian System, by the late Richard Svehla in 1936. Justly admitting the need for a scientific system depends upon fixed rules instead of dubious interpretations assisted by psychic glimmerings, this school professes to supply “the true astrological key to the mystery of life” by proving that “similar events are accompanied by similar astrological configurations”.¹

In this concept of concurrency of events and configurations conveys not only the “key” but the very “bait” that has “hooked” every educated believer in Astrology since the dawn of its discovery. It is truly not the accuracy of prediction that convinces one of the validity of horoscopic signification, but it is the striking correspondence between known events (and traits) and the accompanying astronomical formations. We know that no blood has been shed without the participation of Mars, no death has occurred except

beneath the shadow of Saturn, and no great joy experienced without the blessing of Venus or Jupiter. Keeping in mind that inconsequential incidents are seldom if ever reflected in the heavens and that the necessary correspondence between event and chart can always be found—even if not every astrologer can find it—, one asks whether it inevitably follows from this that similar configurations always “produce” similar events? This is perhaps what an exact science of prediction would demand, and what too many astrologers as well as mockers are looking for. Because one makes a great deal of money under the transit of Jupiter, the temptation is to predict more money under a later like transit—but nothing of the sort may occur. Is this the fault of a system, or is it what must logically be expected from the limitation Nature puts upon any astrological system? Is this not like the difficulty confronting us in genethliacal astrology where identical or similar nativities fail to “produce” identical genius or similar notoriety? Why then should the logical corollary be disregarded in predictive astrology? Though similar horoscopic formations accompany similar events, one should not expect such formations to always “produce” like “effects”, or any “effects” at all.

It is possible to trace the rise of modern civilization, with its discoveries, inventions and events, both in the nativities of the leading figures on the world stage and in the momentary configurations as these great events occur, thus proving appropriate terrestrial-celestial correspondences. But such an epoch of events and innovations is unique in the life of this world; and, although the mundane and planetary configurations of this age have been repeated before during the billions of years preceding, the like configurations did not “produce” like “effects” then!

¹ R. Svehla, Rules for Planetary Pictures, p. 1. Cleveland, 1939.

There are certainly powers apart from astrological ones—however the two or many may cooperate, as it were—which are required to generate and shape things and events. When a man is imprisoned or when he dies, certain of these factors are represented or removed from the scene. Yet, though he may be immobilized, his directions or transits continue on as before, ever new or repetitive, always active and diverse in their cycles. Here again, much may be “promised” astrologically, but commonsense tells us that little if anything can happen (though if the prisoner is knifed in his cell, or the corpse stolen from its grave, we may assuredly find the proper correspondence in force with regard to the nativity). So, on a less impressive scale, a daily life, confined to routine and imprisoned in its own environmental cell, so to say, fails to furnish the means for “life events” to accompany the “like configurations”. Thus it is seen that the search for a “perfect” system of astrological judgment or prediction is a vain hope, a chimera.

This being so, what then is to be looked for? Simply, I submit, an “ideal” system of Astrology by which it can be shown that like configurations always accompany like traits or events. More than fifteen years of personal research into thousands of problems charts has shown that this criterion can be satisfied when astrological problems are examined by the “rules” of Mr. Witte, properly understood. By no means is this to be taken as an indication that the Hamburg (Uranian) System meets the requirements of an “idea” system. It was the claim of Mr. Svehla (to whom the writer shall be eternally indebted) that in working with directions as well as transits, the Uranian System proves to be one-hundred-percent accurate and dependable even after discarding a great many horoscopic factors upon which conventional astrologers often rely when the more

commonly accepted astrological tools fail to “explain” events: Essential and accidental dignities and debilities; Rulerships and dispositors; Triplicity and quadroplicity qualities; Decanates; Faces; Degree interpretations; “Soft” and minor aspects (18, 24, 30, “60”, 72, 108, “120”, 144, and 150 degrees); Planetary nodes; Pluto; Fixed stars; Locality charts, etc.

Since the search for an ideal system of Astrology, as with any scientific search, should aim for as much simplicity as Nature allows, it was well and good that the Hamburg School succeeded in divorcing itself from any useless accumulations of tradition. But lo! In place of the eliminated factors, it in turn adds: eight hypothetical “Trans-Neptunian” planets; 20 Antiscions; Cardinal Points as U points; and Planetary Pictures—all of these in the “Earth Horoscope”, the “Sun Horoscope”, the “Moon Horoscope”, the “Ascendant Horoscope”, the “Meridian Horoscope”, and at least fifteen “Auxiliary” charts, the planetary horoscopes! Having doubled the horoscopic factors by introduction of Antiscions, the number of elements is then multiplied by twenty through use of the additional horoscopes possible. But the most impressive multiplication in the Uranian System are the Planetary Pictures.

According to the Rulebook of this school, there are at least 21 horoscopic elements which can enter into the formation of a Planetary Picture (the Lights, 7 planets, Moon’s node, Asc., and MC., Cardinal Point Aries, and 8 “Trans-Neptunian” planets). A “Sum” is calculated by doubling the zodiacal longitude of a single element (A plus A) or by adding the longitude of two different factors (A plus B). A “Half-sum” is found by halving the sum of two different factors (A plus B divided by 2), thus really establishing the midpoint between the two (A/B). A “Difference” is determined by subtracting the

longitude of a third factor from any given Sum (A plus B minus C). The Sums, Half-sums and Differences are counted as sensitive points in the Ecliptic, activated by the contact of a third or fourth factor as the case may be (the contacts being by conjunction, opposition, square, and semisquare only). Additionally, other formulae are recognized, though introduced rather desultorily in Rules for Planetary Pictures. The formulae, together with the number of possible combinations derived therefrom, using the 21 basic horoscopic elements, are:

A plus A	21
A plus B	210
A/B	210
A plus B minus B	210
A/B//C	4,200
A plus B minus C	4,200
A/B plus C	4,410
A/B minus C	4,410
A plus B plus C/D	44,100
A plus B minus C/D	44,100
A/B plus C minus D	92,610
A/B plus C minus A/D	926,100
A plus B minus A/C plus D	926,100
A plus B minus A/B plus C/D	9,261,000

All of which gives a grand total of 11,311,881 Planetary Pictures to be found in every horoscope! This results in 3,144 “sensitive points” to every degree; and, since in

the Uranian System, each occupied degree is in contact by “hard aspect” with other degrees, one finds roughly 300,000 Planetary Pictures involved with every degree examined in a birthchart—an altogether preposterous situation! By such multiplication of horoscopic factors, a “perfect” system has been devised by which one “reads” a proper correspondence between any known event and the heavens—but the heavens calculated not alone for the time of the particular event, but indeed for any time!

If there is any special truth to be found in the Uranian System of Astrology, is it possible to systematically and logically reduce this unwieldy mass down to that core of reality? It is not only possible to do just that but, strange to say, the ingenious founder of the school has provided us with the means to do so. Throughout the writings of Witte, Svehla, Sieggruen and other leaders of the Hamburg School, one finds reiteration that, “A Planetary Picture is the symmetrical arrangement of two or more planets or other elements around a common axis.”

Analysis shows that if this original principle of symmetry had been scrupulously observed, there would never have followed the multiplication of Planetary Pictures such as we have seen, for there are only two formulae which can build a symmetrical Planetary Picture, viz., $A/B=C$, and $A/B=C/D$. In short, by Witte’s own fundamental rule, only two kinds of Uranian sensitive points are valid: one consists of a midpoint between two horoscopic elements, the midpoint being in contact by conjunction or aspect with a third basic element which brings it to “fruition”; the other, when two midpoints are themselves in contact. This simple criterion, utilizing one of Nature’s most beautiful, basic and universal laws, the Law of Symmetry, reduces the so-called Planetary Pictures (even those derived from the 21 basic elements of the Uranian System) down from more than

eleven million to but 210, replacing chaos with order. Hence the only valid Planetary Picture is seen to be nothing more or less than a midpoint or a meeting of midpoints.

Here, indeed, is the heart of Alfred Witte's momentous contribution to the 20th Century Astrology; for, more than anyone before him in history, he brought to the forefront the immense significance of the midpoint in astrological work. At the dawn of Astrology, on the plains of Assyria, atop the ziggurats of Babylon and the pyramids of Egypt, before the twelve Zodiacal Signs and the planetary aspects were first conceived, man surely must have noted first of all the conjunction of the planets, first of two and then of three, when the third moved to the midpoint of the two. It is from such origins, we must suppose, that the use of the midpoint has come down to cross the ages, whether later utilized under such terms as "balance points", Antiscions, "reflex points", proportional arcs, "rapt parallels", or Arabic parts (E.g., the formula for the Part of Fortune, Ascendant plus Moon minus Sun, is merely the Hamburg School's "Difference", A plus B minus C, the sensitive point or Part of Fortune being in conjunction with another horoscopic element, thus producing a symmetrical formation: Ascendant/Moon-Sun/Part of Fortune). But the value of midpoints can never be rightly appreciated nor their position easily determined unless one employs a circular degree-graduated chart and a 360° protractor after the method devised by Witte. To look for a midpoint only when nothing else seems to "fit the bill" is hardly a commendable procedure.

The use of midpoints between all planets, Lights, Mundane Angles and Cardinal Points, not only adds immeasurably to the dissection of planetary meanings, it also provides certain necessary and new divisions of time periods. Thus the progress of a midpoint formed between, say Neptune and Mercury, and carrying the mixed natures and

significance of the two at once, travels the zodiacal circle at approximately half the speed of Mercury itself. That such multiplication also adds to what may already be a surplus of “too frequent” planetary elements in a transit system, is no fault of the midpoint, but, as heretofore shown, is an inherent limitation peculiar to any system of prediction based upon astronomical elements. Only someone who fails to appreciate the true nature and scope of “influence” open to Astrology per se will complain that a system gives more contacts than are required to explain events. It is only when the multiplication is used to duplicate rather than dissect symbolic meanings, and only when the volume of contacts is so increased that any chart may signify anything, that we must question the addition of elements by their number alone.

It is never encouraging to see a proponent of some “system” attempt to prove his special point by appeal to some obscure subject whose birthchart he himself has “rectified” by his own methods. Therefore, in illustrating the superiority of midpoint analysis, I cite the following date as taken directly from charts published by that eminent astrologer, Mr. C.E.O. Carter, in his famous work, Some Principles of Horoscopic Delineation. In his Chapter, “The Violent Criminal”, the birthcharts of four such subjects are given (Angerstein, a defalcator who suddenly went mad and in three days slaughtered eight persons; Haarman, the cannibal of Munich who butchered 27 young people; Kuerten, the “German Jack-the-Ripper”; and Leggs Diamond, gangster and white-slave king, assassinated by the underworld. All died violent deaths). Of the ten other charts in this book, only one is that of a criminal, Ivar Kruegar, international swindler who, on exposure, committed suicide by leaping from a flying airplane. In addition, I cite from Carter’s The Foundations of Astrology, birthcharts of the most celebrated mass-murders

of the 20th Century, one whose nefarious work was in the public domain, the other whose dark deeds were in private: Adolf Hitler and Landru, the modern French “Bluebeard”, whose victims seem to have numbered a hundred or more.

Zodiacal positions as given by Carter, together with any major aspects within orbs of 5° to Angles are: ANGERSTEIN, MC 8° Taurus, Asc. 21°30' Leo (sextile Moon), Mars 13°17' Pisces, Uranus 0°56' Scorpio; HAARMAN, MC 28°30' Capricorn (trine Mars, trine Venus, square Sun, semisquare Moon), Asc., 2° Gemini (square Jupiter, semisquare Moon's Node), Mars 26°11' Taurus, Uranus 7°53' Virgo; KUERTEN, MC 24° Capricorn (conjunction Moon, square Mars, trine Neptune, trine Uranus, semisquare Sun), Asc. 22°30' Taurus (conjunction Neptune, trine Moon, trine Uranus, semisquare Jupiter), Mars 26°57' Aries, Uranus 19°13' Virgo; DIAMOND, MC 17° Aquarius (trine Neptune trine Pluto), Asc. 11°30' Gemini (square Jupiter, conjunction Pluto), Mars 1° Virgo, Uranus 25°14' Scorpio; KRUEGAR, MC 4° Sagittarius (sextile Venus, square Uranus, opposition Mars), Asc. 22°30' Capricorn (sextile Moon, sextile Jupiter, sextile Mercury, trine Pluto, semisquare Mars, semisquare Uranus), Mars 8°07' Gemini, Uranus 6°43' Virgo; HITLER MC 2° Leo (sextile Neptune, sextile Pluto, square Sun), Asc. 25°07' Libra (opposition Mercury) Mars 16°23' Taurus, Uranus 19°30' Libra; LANDRU, MC 19° Capricorn (square Venus, Sun, Moon, and Neptune, Asc. 11° Taurus (sextile Uranus), Mars 16°52' Leo, Uranus 13°36' Cancer.

A conventional appraisal of the contacts to the most personal elements in these charts proves disappointing, to say the least. Although seven “bad” aspect points are taken into account against only four “good” aspect points and the conjunction (and few astrologers would permit an orb of 5° on the “bad” semisquares), there are 17 “good” and

18 “bad” aspects to the Angles, about evenly divided between Midheaven and Ascendant. Even more discouraging, no planet or particular kind of aspect directed to either Midheaven or Ascendant can be found common to all. Indeed, while one would expect a prominence of Mars, three of the seven charts show no Martian contact to either Angle, and of those that do, Mars is in “good” aspect to the personal point in two of these!

But if Mars can also participate by midpoint, then we must look for that most violent and explosive combination, the midpoint between Mars and Uranus. In the Rulebook of the Hamburg School it signifies “Bloody injury”, but synonymous interpretations would be: unexpected (Uranus) violence (Mars); sudden (Uranus) knifing (Mars); gun (Mars) shot (Uranus); Blitz-kreig, lightning (Uranus) war (Mars); beastly (Mars) frenzy (Uranus); unrestrained (Uranus) savagry (Mars). All of our examples subjects met death by sudden (Uranus) injury (Mars) after their criminal (Mars) insurrections (Uranus). We note that this appropriate “Planetary Picture”, MARS/URANUS, in five of these seven examples contacts either the Midheaven or Ascendant by “hard” aspect within an orb not of 5° but of less than one degree! The respective positions of this midpoint and its contacts are: ANGERSTEIN, 7°06' Capricorn (semisquare Asc. within 37'); HAARMAN, 12°02' Cancer (semisquare Asc. within 3'); KUERTEN, 8°05' Cancer (semisquare Asc. within 36'); KRUEGAR, 22°25' Cancer (opposition Asc. within 6'); HITLER, 2°56' Leo (conjunction MC within 57').

But what of the exceptions, Diamond and Landru? These show: DIAMOND, Mars/Uranus in 13°07' Libra, MC/Asc. in 14°15' Libra (so here Mars/Uranus equals

MC/Asc. by conjunction within 67'; LANDRU, Mars/Uranus in 0°12' Leo, MC/Asc. in 15°00' Pisces (and here Mars/Uranus equals MC/Asc. by semisquare within 13').²

By the accuracy of contacts (only one exceeding one degree and then only by seconds, the average of all contacts being only 31'), by the direct involvement of the most personal of horoscopic points, by the uniform application of the appropriate formula (Mars/Uranus to MC, Asc., or MC/Asc.), and by the cognacy of these findings as contrasted with those elucidated by conventional astrological method, it becomes indisputable evident that the astrological midpoint, the sensitive point that stands at the foundation of all the achievements of Alfred Witte and his Hamburg School, is a vital and powerful factor in the horoscope, a tool which opens great new vistas for research and study and by which one may well obtain something of an ideal astrological system, the “Astrology of Tomorrow”.

² It is hoped that no one will take fright at finding their own birthchart to bear like configuration. One cannot emphasize too strongly the admonition of Paracelsus, for we are dealing with planetary factors which are susceptible of many different interpretations, both “good” and “bad” within the same context of qualities and forces; factors which show no more than the limits within which a subject may operate. In fact, the writer too has MC/Asc. conjunction Mars/Uranus—if that may comfort someone else!