

## REAPPRAISING ASTROLOGICAL CONCEPTS, OLD AND NEW

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

---Paracelsus

### 1. Establishing Some Limitations of Astrology

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 only that the Sun and his host, including Earth, will be journeying still in their cycles; and these astronomical positions in the Ecliptic provide this base. Derived from such mathematically exact and certain factors in time and space, one is prompted to consider why astrology in all its genethliacal and predictive phases is still so far from a state of perfection.

One admires the frankness and courage of such a noted astrologer as Mr. C.E.O. Carter, who has observed, that “sometimes we have to admit that events occur without appropriate directions, or, on the other hand, directions fail to act, or act at the wrong time or in the wrong manner or with more or less power than the astrological rules would lead one to anticipate. Very many systems have been advocated and fresh ones still appear from time to time, but it is doubtful if any approaches perfection” (The Seven Great Problems of Astrology, p. 10).

In lieu of any considered appreciation of what an “ideal” system of astrology should display, the public-at-large, skeptics and sympathizers alike—and all too often, astrologers themselves—exhibit a strange propensity to judge the question on the accuracies or failures of individual astrological judgment or prophecy. But as the noted French astrologer-researcher, Paul Choisnard, once remarked, “the success or failure, in the matter of prophesying, is no evidence, at least when considered by itself.” And, he added, “The divinatory successes and failures, like the arbitrary symbolism, have most often only produced premature convictions in

one way as in the other. Therefore, at present divination in astrology must be excluded from the scientific discussions aimed at a proof of astral influences” (The Proofs of Astral Influence on Man, pp. 13, 14).

At the 1942 Convention of the AF(S)A, Richard Svehla, in his lecture, Astrology, Horoscopy and Astromancy, recalled that at Cleveland in the convention of the previous year, “the matter of psychic qualities being employed in connection with Astrology was discussed, but apparently without much headway being made. Some speakers admitted that they were using psychic qualities in their work, but on the whole sentiment seemed to prevail that psychic qualities should not be admitted as an integral part of Astrology” (1942 Yearbook, AFA, p. 132).

It would be both unwise and unfair to protest any indication of an astrologer using “psychic qualities” in his work. Indeed, it would be practically impossible to exclude such employment, unconscious as it might generally be; for these suspected faculties—however feeble—would seem to be universal in their manifestation, intruding into every human endeavor and judgment. But the problem is one of a different kind. As set forth by Svehla, “Whereas Astrology as a Science should be based on a solid scientific foundation, and concentrate its efforts on the establishment and verification of the correspondence which assertedly exists between the Stars and the sublunar events, this should not require any resort to supernatural or psychic powers, or the acceptance of necessity of extraordinary endowments of the human mind” (Ibid., p. 135).

To be scientific, a system of Astrology must operate by certain fixed rules, rules by which anyone working with identical date would arrive at like conclusions. “The ideal directional system would provide an event, or at least some appropriate unfoldment, for each direction, and a direction for each event, each appropriate to each and also synchronous within a

reasonable limit. Nay, some would say that almost the minute of an event should be previsible, as well as its nature and intensity” (Carter, Some Principles of Horoscopic Delineation, p. 136).

Here we see Astrology projected as a Science; and, beyond that, to an infallible, exact Science. But how far are we from the first—and what, if any, are the limitations that bar the way to such perfection?

Unless we can discover and appreciate the limitations as well as the potentialities of Astrology, until we can define the nature and scope of the forces we are professing to interpret—to paraphrase Mr. Carter—, we will fall into grave errors of practice, and, by thoughtless boasts and claims, invite refutation and ridicule. The temptation is to cite our successful prophecies, whether they be the products of “chance hit”, intuition, ESP, or whether read by root and rule.

According to more than one noted practitioner who has represented Astrology to the public, the natal chart appears to be an almost infallible guide. The late Grant Lewi, in his on-the-whole commendable work, Astrology for the Millions, declared that the horoscope “provides a blueprint from which the following may be read”

“1. The hereditary (physical, mental, psychic) equipment with which the individual is born. 2. The environmental pattern into which the individual, with his equipment, is born. 3. How (1) and (2) react and interact to produce a new personality, a new life, and thus a new and unique career” (Ibid., p. 13)

Now, obviously, if this were literally true, Astrology today would not only a Science but somewhat of an exact Science. But is it true? Hardly, for a moment’s consideration shows that, far from denoting the “hereditary equipment” and “environmental pattern” peculiar to the native, the natal chart not only fails to reveal such important facts and characteristics as sex and nationality or race of the native, it even fails to show whether or not the native is dead or alive,

inanimate or animate, human or otherwise. I am not aware of any “rules” by which it is professed that these things can be determined from a “natal” chart. But indeed, it would be foolish to expect to find them in the first place, and for good reason too.

## 2. Fallibilities of the Natal Chart

One of the chief phenomena of this century is the tremendous, almost explosive, increase in world population. It is a pity that astrologers who speak glibly of “your horoscope” and “my birthchart” have so little appreciation for the significant fact that the annual world birth increase is now approximately 35,000,000. Consideration of this shows 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 average moves but one degree in two hours, this means that approximately 8,000 births occur during each two-hour period in which the Sun, Moon and all planets do not move beyond one degree. But there are few if any astrologers who limit the “orbs of influence” of the Lights and Planets to one-half of a degree, plus or minus. If the orb of the Moon is alone increased to 4 degrees (plus or minus), the volume of births rises to more than sixty thousand!

Of course, it may be urged that no nativity is complete without those chief personal points, the Midheaven and Ascendant. But here we discover a fact not generally known or appreciated. It is that a horoscope with its contents and exact angles cast for an exact date, hour and minute at a precise position in earth longitude and latitude is of itself by no means an unique chart. (Even if the orb assigned to the Moon and Angles is limited to one degree (plus or minus)—which on the average covers a period of eight minutes, Local Mean Time—, at different localities on the same latitude (plus or minus 180 miles) during a period of two hours (GMT)

over an area 2,200 miles in longitudinal length, the personal points (Asc., MC., and Moon) will still fall within this same orb. In other words, a person does not acquire an unique nativity because his happens to be the only birth within 8 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 cases in which the birthchart Ascendant and Midheaven will coincide within one degree (plus or minus) while the Moon traverses but one degree. If this orb is held, the similar (practically identical) nativities will average out at ten. If the orb is increased to two degrees (plus or minus), the average will be about 85; and, taking the general practise of using an orb of about 5 degrees, the number of (practically identical) birthcharts is raised to between 500 and 1000!

These calculations are, of course, made only approximate by the fact that population density over the earth is not uniform. In great population centers, however, these figures would rise even higher. In London, for example, during a period in which the Moon moves but 30' and the Angles progress only eight degrees (plus or minus 4), the births average out to thirteen. In fact, it is only when we reduce the simultaneous orbs of Moon and Angles to one-half degree (plus or minus) that we reach a point at which there is no place on earth for the average birthrate to allow a coincidence of birth-times.

By all this it is evident that there were several humans born with the practically identical horoscope of Adolf Hitler—although there was but one Adolf Hitler—; and, that the birthchart of an Einstein or a Churchill was also the possession of parties unknown to science and history. This truism is not new, but it gives rise to objections which Astrologers should long since have set to rest. Choisnard mentions the case of Siamese twins who were, in many respects, of different character, and only one of whom became a mother; he cites this to prove “that the astral

factor of birth is not the only one that can govern the human destiny.” He writes, “The astral birth factor never produces human identities... it only results in a whole scale of resemblances, not only because of the diverse analogies we find in the natal heavens, but also because of the heredities, circumstances and various environments which contribute to the formation of the human personality”—but this need be no decisive difficulty, for, he adds, “if we deny astrology under the pretext that the same heaven does not produce human identities, it would be just as logical to deny heredity under the pretext that brothers and sisters can be different from one another” (Op. cit., pp. 34, 22-23).

Hence, it is clear that while Mr. Lewi chose to represent the horoscope as a “blueprint” to the hereditary and environmental factors in the native’s life, Choisnard maintains that there are hereditary and environmental facts (and other powers) which are decisive in a career but which lie outside of horoscopic delineation. I think the latter conclusion forces itself upon us. Moreover, Mother Nature does not temporarily suspend her universal parturition during periods of human birth; so our birthcharts are also the natal signatures of all manner of animal, bird, fish, insect, vegetable and bacterial life. It is not simply a problem of finding a birthchart with its factors held within orbs such as to preclude any duplication of human nativities which might belong to persons of varying destinies. Our nativities are the birth signs universal to Nature.

So the primary limitation which confronts us indisputably is the fact that Astrology is only one of several factors which relate to our constitution and destiny. The “Stars” are, like the factors of heredity, merely elements—merely some of the elements—in our environments.

This being so, the question arises why it has ever been thought that the natal horoscope contains anything like a “blueprint” to man’s “physical, mental and psychic” and “environmental” heritage and patterns? Why, when confronted with such serious and obviously

fundamental limitation, is it at all imagined that a “perfect” system of astrological prediction might ever be discovered?

### 3. The Fallibility of Celestial-Terrestrial Correspondences

One of the outstanding phenomena of the astrological progress in this century came just after the close of World War I with the discoveries (and revelations) of Alfred Witte, which led to the establishment of the so-called Hamburg Schule of Astrology. This system was introduced into the United States by Richard Svehla in 1936 at the Chicago Astrological Association Convention of that year. This school, justly admitting the need for a scientific system dependent upon fixed rules instead of arbitrary or dubious interpretations assisted by psychic glimmerings, professes to supply “the true astrological key to the mystery of life” (Svehla, Rules for Planetary Pictures, trans., p. 1). The vindication of this claim is to be found, so it is said, in the axiom that “similar events are accompanied by similar astrological configurations”, and that “every event will prove the correctness of the rules describing it” according to the precepts of the Hamburg Schule (Uranian System of Astrology, Ibid., p. 41)

Having experimented with these “rules” for more than fifteen years, I beg to say that, rightly understood, this axiom is absolutely true. In fact, if one may venture so profound a pronouncement, it would be that herein—in the concept that like events are accompanied by like astrological (astronomical) “configurations”—lies not only the Master Key to Astrology, but the very bait that has “hooked” every believer in Astrology since the dawn of its discover. It is truly not the predictions nor the accuracy (or inaccuracies) of prophecy that convince one of the realities of horoscopolical signification, but it is the striking correspondence between known events (and traits) and accompanying astronomical “constellations”. There is more than raillery in the accusation of our critics: it is not so much our failures which impress us as it is our

successes. We know that no Martian disaster has been suffered without an affliction from Mars; that no death has occurred except beneath the shadow of Saturn; and no great joy, without the blessing of Venus or Jupiter.

Qualifying this claim of correspondences with two observations (a.-trivial incidents of no consequence are seldom if ever reflected in the heavens; and, b.-the necessary correspondence can otherwise always be found, even if not every astrologer can find it), it would be trite to here persuade astrologers of such celestial-terrestrial correlation. But just what is the significance of such correspondence between event and the momentary (or natal) configurations? This much being true, does it inevitably follow that similar configurations always “produce” similar events? That is perhaps what an “ideal” or “perfect” and exact Science of prediction would demand. In fact, that is what too many followers of astrology—and especially those who follow it only to mock—are looking for. Because one may make 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 our “system”, or is it what might logically be expected from the limitation nature puts upon any astrological system? Is it not the same kind of difficulty which confronts us in genethliacal astrology?

“Every genius ever born since great cities have existed must....*[text missing]*... observes Carter, “Geniuses seem, indeed, to require certain characteristic aspects, at any rate if their gifts are to be manifest. But many thousands are born with like configurations but no genius” (Seven Great Problems of Astrology, p. 33).

In short, although traits of similar kind are accompanied by similar configurations, the same configurations do not always “produce” similar traits. Anyone who attempts any rational appreciation of genethliacal astrology must of necessity admit this significant fact. One cannot



elude this principle. Why then should the implication be ignored; why should its logical application to predictive astrology be disregarded? Does it not equally follow that though similar configurations accompany similar events, one should not expect such configurations to always “produce” like “effects”?—or any “effects” at all?

Beyond this primary indication, there are other considerations which compell one to recognize that this “Master Key” turns not two ways but only one. It is possible to study the rise of modern civilization, with all of its discoveries and inventions and events, not only in the nativities of the world stage’s leading figures, but also in the momentary configurations of the heavens as these great events occur—the beginning of motor transport, aviation, world wars, nuclear discovery, automation, space explorations, etc. One can rightly trace the expected correspondences between the heavens and these notable occurrences, so that the old axiom holds true: “similar events are accompanied by similar configurations”. But this is as far as the rule can be pushed. Such an epoch of events and inventions is unique in the history of mankind and in the records of the 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” those like “effects” then!

There are certainly powers apart from astrological ones—however much the two (or many) may co-operate, 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 repressed 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 simple logic tells us 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 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 limited environmental cell, so to say, fails to furnish the (mans) for “like events” to accompany the “like configurations.”

Thus, it is seen that the search for a “perfect” system of astrological prediction, no less than for the same in respect to genethliacal delineation, is a vain hope, a chimera. Moreover, as Mr. Carter sagely observed, such perfection might “mean the enmeshment of a man in a rigid mathematically exact machine” and would be “self-defeating in the sense that its perfection would mean its own undoing. For its goal is to foretell the future completely and exactly—a goal the attainment of which would be entirely valueless, since nothing could be more useless than precise knowledge of an inevitable future” (*Ibid.*, pp. 11, 35).

#### 4. An Alternative: The Search for An “Ideal” System

It is interesting in this respect to note that Mr. Svehla, in introducing the Uranian System with its prime reliance upon proof of astral-sublunar correspondences, was himself not so confident that this correspondence worked both ways: “So Mr. Witte’s contention that similar constellations are apt to produce similar events will be amply corroborated” (*Op. cit.*)

If the “perfect” system is nought but a long-sought illusion, if Mr. Witte’s “apt to” is no corollary to certainty, what is to be looked for? Simply, I submit, an “ideal” system of astrology by which it can be readily shown that “like configurations always accompany like events (and genethliacally, traits)”. I have already said that, for myself, experience has proved this axiom to be true when examined by the “rules” of Mr. Witte, “properly understood”. By no means is this to be taken as any indication of belief that the Hamburg (Uranian) System meets the requirements of an “ideal” system. Its initiator in the USA, Mr. Svehla, complained that “throughout the ages many misconceptions and false interpretations have brought into the

science (of Astrology) a lot of superfluous—and in many instances directly harmful—matter.” He claimed that the Hamburg School system was no “wild outgrowth of eccentric fancy... but rather an exceedingly systematic and logical development of an ingenious understanding and combination of all the best in Astrology throughout the ages”(Introduction to the Uranian System of Astrology, p. 3)

If one may concur with the claim that in the Uranian System may be found “all the best in Astrology throughout the ages”, there is nevertheless equal reason for raising the objection that, perhaps more than any other astrological system extant today, it is itself guilty of embracing “many misconceptions and false interpretations... a lot of superfluous—and in many instances directly harmful—matters”! Keeping in mind what an “ideal” system should be able to do, one notes that hope, echoed by Mr. Carter—“if but a pious one”, he says—that “a complete system based only on transits may be discovered, so great are the advantages of work based on these phenomena when contrasted with the directional systems...” It is his objection that the apparent barrier to this hope is that the motion of the Lights and minor planets are too swift and their contacts...(text line missing)...are too rare to signify all the changes of life. These objections will shortly be considered, but it is interesting to note that Mr. Carter, although a strong proponent of symbolical systems of directing, adds, “So far as personal experience goes I believe that three-quarters, at least, of the events of my not uneventful life could be adequately accounted for by transits, properly understood” (Some Principles etc., p. 131).

It was the claim of Mr. Svehla, that if a system of Progression was only thirty-seven percent effective “in the simplified kindergarten horoscope, it naturally follows that by inserting the Antiscions the effectiveness of progressions would be increased to seventy-four percent” (apparently on the premise that adding the Antiscions would double the factors of the chart, since

an Antiscion inherited from ancient astrological useage, is a point as far on the opposite side of the 0° Cancer-Capricorn axis as the Light or Planet from which it is derived is on this side, e.g., the Antiscion of Mercury is in 5° of Cancer if the planet be in 25° of Gemini). By “re-instating the tewo Wheels of Fortune and some of the more important Arabian parts, the effectiveness would rise to a still higher percentage,” adds Svehla; and, he concludes, “The Uranian System claims... and proves... to be 100 percent accurate and dependable in directions as well as transits” (Introduction etc., p. 5).

Having already disposed of the question of any system being “100 percent accurate and dependable” (and I know of no attempt by anyone to “prove” that by the “rules” of Uranian Astrology and series of similar directions or transits over a subject’s lifetime produced like events at ever contact), one discerns a fallacy in the argument that doubling the horoscope’s factors willy-nilly would double the accuracy. What happens when this doubling occurs and, as in Mr. Carter’s case, the accuracy was at least 75 percent to begin with?! This may give rise to the suspicion that by saturating the Ecliptic with a mass of dubious or hypothetical... (text missing)... “event” or any “trait” out of any Radix and Directional or Transitting Chart.

And, unfortunately, this is so. In fact, it is so true that, in any search for an “idea” system this must present a special danger.

In appreciation of this, the spokesmen for the Hamburg Schule have with pride pointed out that their system eliminates a great many factors upon which conventional astrologers often rely when the more commonly accepted astrological tools fail to “explain” events. In this category have been placed:

Essential and accidental dignities and debilities

Rulerships and dispositors

Triplicity and quadruplicity interpretations

Faces, Decanates

Degree Significations

Minor Aspects (18, 24, 30, 72, 108, 144, 150 degrees, etc.)

Opposite natures of N. and S. Lunar Nodes

Planetary nodes

Pluto

Fixed Stars

Locality charts

Now the search for an “ideal” system of astrology, just as for every scientific system, should aim for as much simplicity as Nature allows, free of unnecessary complications and superfluities. In so far as the Hamburg School succeeded in divorcing its methods from any such useless accumulations of tradition, well and good. But in place of these discarded factors, lo! The Uranian System now offers in its turn:

“Planetary Pictures”

Cardinal Points as “Personal Points”

8 Hypothetical “Trans-Neptunian Planets”

Antiscions (20)

The Earth Horoscope

The Sun Horoscope

The Moon Horoscope

The Ascendant Horoscope

The Meridian Horoscope

## The Planetary Horoscope (at least 15 “Auxiliary” charts!)

It is plain to see that having doubled the horoscopolical factors by introduction of Antiscions, the number of factors is then multiplied by twenty through use of the additional Horoscopes possible! But this is not the most impressive multiplication in the Uranian System. There are the Planetary Pictures.

### 5. The “Planetary Pictures” Examined

“The simplest form of a planetary picture is what is commonly called a Mid-point, i.e., a point equi-distant from two planets or exactly between them” (Rules for Planetary Pictures, pp. 5, 6).

According to the handbook (rulebook) of this school, there are at least 21 Horoscopolical factors which can enter into a Planetary Picture, although no more than four (here denoted as A, B, C, and D) are introduced into a given formula at one time. Thus “A plus A” denotes the zodiacal longitude of, for example, one planet added to the same longitude (or doubled, really the “sum” minus the Cardinal Point of 0° Aries which is itself zero degrees longitude). This is called a “Sum”. “A plus B” would be the addition of the longitudes of factors A and B, another Sum. While A/B (the midpoint between factors A and B) is a “Half-Sum”, this being obtained by halving the sum of their zodiacal longitudes. Again “A plus B minus C” would be found by adding the longitudes of factors A and B, afterwards subtracting the longitude of factor C, the resultant position being counted as a “sensitive point” in the ecliptic. In addition to these fundamental formulae, there are others, not delineated in all possible combinations, but introduced rather desultorily in Rules for Planetary Pictures. The formulae are here listed with the corresponding numbers of possible combinations which may be derived therefrom using the 21 basic horoscopolical factors employed in the Uranian System:

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, or approximately one point to every second of zodiacal longitude (60"x60'x30°x12 Signs); and, since each aspectual axis, with appropriate orbs, consists in the Uranian System of eight arms (or the 8 “hard angles”: conjunction, opposition, squares, and semi-squares), roughly 300,000 “planetary pictures” or “sensitive points” would be thus contained within orb of every planetary axis. All of which is, of course, altogether preposterous.

It may be objected that no Uranian astrologer uses eleven million points in a chart—well, so much the worse. His rulebook and chief authority lists “Mars/Zeus plus Meridian minus

Mars/Saturn”, giving it the connotations, “Death by Firearms”. If this “sensitive point” were in any sense valid, then every other combination of four factors in like formula would be equally valid as a potential chart factor. That follows as a matter of sheer logic. But no one has ever tested the other 926, 099 like points—nor is it likely to be done just presently.

It is equally evident that having undertaken by “exceedingly systematic and logical development” to devise a “scientific system of astrology”, the designers of the Hamburg School have so buried their primary working data under an avalanche of superfluity and nonsense that only some wonderous “psychic power” would enable anyone to snatch an accurate prediction from this great mass of contradictory and “directly harmful—matters”! By the same means, however, if by none other, these “Uranian” astrologers have inevitably succeeded in devising a “perfect” system which always enables one to “read” a proper correspondence between any known event and the heavens—but from the heavens calculated not alone for the time of the particular event but indeed for any time!

#### 6. The Truth in the Uranian System of Astrology

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 bulk down to that core of reality? It is not only possible to do just that, but, strange to say, Alfred Witte, the ingenious founder of the School, has provided us with a chief means to do so. Quoting Witte, Svehla repeatedly stressed the contention that the principle underlying the theory of Planetary Pictures was that “planets enter into active co-operation producing influences when they are grouped symmetrically around a common axis (RPP, p. 5). And another leading representative of the Hamburg School, Mr. F. Sieggruen, has also stated that the “effects of the planets” are “expressed in sidereal equations”



when “planets are grouped symmetrically around such axes” (as conjunctions, oppositions, squares and semi-squares).

Study shows that if this original principle of symmetry had been scrupulously adhered to, there would have followed no multiplication of Planetary Pictures such as we have seen, for there are only two formulae which can build a symmetrical planetary picture, i.e., “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 horoscological factors, the midpoint being in contact by conjunction or aspect with a third basic factor (mundane angle, Light or Planet) 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 ... (word missing)... the so-called Planetary Pictures (even those derived from the 21 basic factors acknowledged in the Uranian System) down from more than 11,000,000 to but 210, replacing chaos with order.

Thus the only valid Planetary Picture is seen to be nothing more or less than a midpoint or meeting of midpoints, a revelation fully in accord with what Mr. Sieggruen writes when he asserts, “Witte’s basic rule was ‘the effect of two planets, united, shows in their midpoint or half-sum.’ From this simple statement giving the underlying principle of the equation, he formulated the basic rule of the new astrology” (In Search, Summer, 1958). What a pity that the human mind loves to complicate the simple truth when once discovered!

Thus we arrive at the heart of Alfred Witte’s momentous contribution to 20<sup>th</sup> Century Astrology; for more than anyone before him in history he brought to the forefront the immense significance of the midpoint in astrological work. Truly his “system” was founded not on any “wild outgrowth of eccentric fancy”, however much the weeds of fancy may have overgrown it

in time, inviting the pruner's shears. For 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 must surely have noted first of all the conjunction of the planets, first of two, and then of three—when the third moved to the midpoint between the others.

It is from such origins we must suppose that the use of the midpoint has come down to us across the ages, whether later utilized under such terms as “balance points”, reflex points, and highly regarded (in Primary Directions, once so prevelant) as “rapt parallels” and proportional arcs. The Antiscion too is nothing but a sensitive point which when occupied by a second factor forms a midpoint on the Cancer-Capricorn axis, much as a rapt-parallel centers on the Midheavan-Nadir axis. Again one suspects that the midpoint played a part in the discovery or formulation of the principle of so-called “transference of light.” And just as we see the Midpoint in the Hamburg School's “half-sum” (whether expressed as  $A/B=C$ , where C occupies the midpoint between B and the Cardinal Point), so the conjunction of half-sums (the Uranian System's “ $A/B=C/D$ ” or “A plus B [minus  $0^\circ$  Aries]=C” where  $A/B=C/0^\circ$  Aries) is seen in the Part of Fortune (Ascendent plus Moon minus Sun, where  $Asc/\mathcal{D}=\odot/\oplus$ , the sensitive point,  $\oplus$ , being in conjunction with another horoscopolical factor, thus producing a symmetrical picture). And so it is with all of the similarly conceived so-called Arabic Parts, another heritage from the ancients' use of the midpoint.

Increasingly, more and more astrologers are finding the midpoint to be a valid and revealing factor in astrological understanding. In England, E.H. Bailey and V. Robson, among others, made use of them in public exposition during the last decades; and in this country, the late Clement Hey and other noted practioners have relied upon them for necessary signification.

Yet the worth of midpoints can never be rightly appreciated, nor can their positions be easily utilized, unless one employs a 360° protractor and circular chart 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.

But why, it may be asked, should one look for midpoints as all? Someone may be so puffed up as to think that his system of Astrology is “perfect” without such usage. Another, perhaps repelled at their advocacy by the Uranian System with its eight hypothetical planets, may shun them altogether out of mere prejudice. Still someone else may think that midpoints augur nothing and are of no value whatever. But let us see.

#### 7. Reducing Astrology to Its “Idea” Universals

It has been noted that Mr. Carter complained that it may seem impossible “that a complete system based only on transits may be discovered”, simply because of the too-swift and too-repetitive motion of the minor planets, and the too-slow and too-infrequent movement of the major ones. But here Witte offers an unique solution, for the progress of a midpoint formed between, say, Neptune and Mercury (and carrying the mixed natures and signification of the two at once) travels the zodiacal circle at approximately half of the speed of Mercury itself. In fact the use of midpoints between all the planets and Lights, mundane angles, and Equinotical Points not only adds immeasurably to the dissection of planetary meanings but at the same time provides certain necessary and new divisions of time periods. That this multiplication also adds to what is already a surplus of “too frequent” minor planetary factors, is no fault of the transit system of astrology, but, as heretofore shown, is an inherent limitation peculiar to any system of prediction based upon astronomical factors. Only someone who fails to appreciate the true nature and scope of “influence” open to Astrology per se will complain that a system involves more

contacts than are required to explain events. It is only when the volume of contacts is so multiplied that any chart may signify anything that we must question the addition of factors by their number alone.

Instead of adequately having “three-quarters, at least” of the events of a not uneventful life “adequately accounted for by transits, properly understood”, one ventures that all of the noteworthy events of a lifetime can be adequately accounted for by transits alone as these and the natal chart are set forth by no more than these simple factors:

Mundane Angles (Asc.; MC.; N.; Dsc.)

Sun, Moon, and 7 Planets

Cardinal Points

Midpoints between all basic factors

Connections by “hard” angles only

At least in my own experience, I have not found it necessary to go beyond the use of these simple tools in search for any adequate signification in any chart concerning any noteworthy trait or event examined during the last ten years. Once the importance and use of the midpoint is learned, once one comprehends the scope and limitations of Astrology, it becomes simply a matter of eliminating “many misconceptions and false interpretations... a lot of superfluous—and in many instances directly harmful—matter”.

There are in use among astrologers, House methods ascribed to Ptolemy, Porphyry, Campanus, Regiomontanus, Placidus, as well as later ones, the Equatorial System of Carter and others. Instead of spending a necessary lifetime examining and comparing these many methods about which generations of astrological authorities have disagreed, why should not one settle for the four mundane angles (Asc., Dsc., MC, N.) upon which all authorities agree? Then there are

the controversies concerning the Tropical and Sidereal Zodiac. No one, on the other hand, has ever denied that the primary power is in the Planets and Lights—no Zodiacal sign, decanate, asterism, face or degree or itself ever effected anything. And whichever Zodiac one might select—or even none at all, employing simple ecliptic longitude instead—, the inter-relationships of the planetary positions themselves are not in any way altered. So, one finds it quite feasible to work with the Planets alone, disregarding any Zodiacal “influences”.

Perhaps the most difficult test of restraint, however, is to work without the use of the “soft” aspects (the Trines, Sextiles and Semi-Sextiles); but here again there are those authorities who question these factors, although the power of the “hard” angles is questioned by no astrologer, being universally admitted in practise. And once one realizes that the “hard” aspects are not necessarily “bad” aspects (they point to the “virtues, e.g., daring and courage” in “a criminal map”, says Carter), one can experiment—and if experimentation shows the uselessness of the “soft” angles, there need be little hesitancy in overlooking them. Indeed, as regards any system utilizing midpoints, the “hard” angles should a priori seem the more significant, for, like the midpoint itself, they are designed or derived from the symmetrical division of the ecliptic by the factor 2.

There are myriads of Directional Systems one might adopt: Primary, Converse Primary, Secondary Progressions, the Radix System of Progressions, Symbolical Directions (many kinds), applied in turn to several types of auxiliary charts, Epoch, Locality, etc., in addition to Solar and Lunar and Planetary Return and Luration charts, etc. etc. And while the proponents of none of these systems deny the power of Transits—on the contrary, often insisting that an appropriate transitory contact is required to “release” the direction—all of these methods, unlike the Transit method itself, depend upon either a symbolic movement in the ecliptic or symbolic

correspondence between the time of movement and the time of event, or both. Before one devises hypotheses, it is better to test the economy of Nature; and before one complicates, it is best to simplify!

But above all, it is most helpful to ever keep in mind the maxim of the ancients, the solution to more than one occult mystery: that in all her manifestations, Nature is twofold, both good and evil, both positive and negative. Just as there are no good or bad planets, so there are no good or bad aspects, no good or bad “Planetary Pictures”, no fortunate or unfortunate midpoints, configurations or horoscopes. The potentialities are ever dual, the virtues and vices of Venus are to be more admired or (as the case may be) no less despised than those of Mars, and the excesses of Jupiter can be as disastrous as the deprivations of Saturn, however much humanity at its present stage may have a proclivity for the evil manifestations of those planets termed the malefics.

#### 8. Demonstrating the Superior Signification of Midpoints

It will be understood that writer’s view is that it is only possible to approach the “ideal” in a system of astrology and “astrological prediction” (by Transits) if the base of the system is supported by the systematic use of midpoints. Without these, nothing of the sort can be accomplished. For this reason, one wants some indication of what may be done with such simplified horoscological features in use with the midpoint and “hard” aspects. The following is an example.

It is never encouraging to see a proponent of some “system” attempt to prove his special point by appeal to some obscure subject whose horoscope he himself has drawn or “rectified” by his own methods. Hence, I cite the following factors taken directly from charts drawn and

published by that eminent practitioner, C.E.O. Carter, in his noted work, Some Principles of Horoscopic Delineation (W. Foulsham and Co., London, 1934).

In his Chapter, “The Voilent Criminal”, the birthcharts of four such subjects are given (Angerstein, a defalcator who suddenly went mad and within three days slaughtered eight persons; Haarman, the notorious German mass-murderer and cannibal who killed about 27 young people; Kuerten, the “German Jack-the-Ripper”, guilty of many assaults and murders; and Leggs Diamond, the New York white-slave kind and gang leader who was assassinated by his underworld enemies. All died violent deaths themselves). Of the ten other example charts printed in this work, only one is that of a criminal, Ivar Kruegar, the infamous international swindler who, when his shady financial empire came to collapse, committed suicide by leaping from a flying airplane.

In additional to these, I cite from Carter’s book, The Foundations of Astrology, the birthcharts of what might be described as the most celebrated butcherers of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, one whose nefarious work was in the public domain, the other whose dark deed were private—respectively, Adolf Hitler<sup>1</sup> and Landru, the modern French “Bluebeard”, whose victims seem to have numbered a hundred or more.

The Zodiacal positions of Ascendant, Midheaven, Mars, and Uranus for each are here indicated as given by Carter, together with any major aspects within orbs of 5° (plus or minus) to these former Angles:

ANGERSTEIN      MC=8° Taurus (Trine Sun by 5:19°; sextile Mars by 5:17°)  
ASC=21:30 Leo (Sextile Moon)

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<sup>1</sup> One is naturally reminded by this discussion of a second great despot, political sadist and genocidal maniac of the age—Joseph Stalin. Rather than resort to any example of a “rectified” nativity, it suffices to say that his MARS/URANUS in the 12<sup>th</sup> degree of the sign Cancer directly opposed his SUN (Authority, government power, rulership) in the tenth degree of Capricorn.

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; conj. 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

Appraising the most personal factors (ASC and MC) in these seven special charts is by conventional method somewhat disappointing, to say the least. Despite the fact that there are 7 “bad” aspect points taken into account (Opposition, 2 Square, 4 Semi-squares), whereas there are but 4 “good” aspect points (2 trines, 2 sextiles) and one neutral point (Conjunction), there are of the total number of contacts within the orb allowed (and again few astrologers permit an orb of 5° on the “bad” semi-squares), 17 “good” and 18 “bad” aspects to the Angles—9 of the former and 7 of the latter directed to the ASC. More discouraging yet is the fact that there is no planet nor any particular kind of aspect directed to either MC or ASC which is found to be common to all these charts. Indeed, while one might expect Mars to be prominent here, whether or not by “affliction”, 3 of the 7 show no Martian contact to either MC or ASC; and of the four charts that do, Mars is in “good” aspect to the personal point in two of them!

Now, on the other hand, there need be no dispute that the most violent and explosive admixture of planetary qualities is to be found in the combination of Mars and Uranus. Together,

in the Hamburg School parlance, the midpoint between these two signifies “Bloody injury”, to which one might add other synonymous interpretations: Unexpected (♃) Violence (♂); Unrestrained (♃) Slaughter (♂); Blitz-kreig (Lightning=♃ War=♂); Sudden(♃) Knifing (♂); Anarchy(♃) and Holocaust (♂); Gun(♂) Shot explosion (♃); Frenzy(♃) of Lust (♂); Rebellious (♃) Passion (♂), etc., etc. All of our example subjects met death by sudden (♃) injury (♂) after their criminal (♂) insurrections (♃). If anything would be appropriate, it would surely be to find both of these planetary “influences” directed together to the personal significator in such charts. But, alas, by conventional methods, we perceive nothing of the kind.

But here is where we are able to discover by impressive illustration the striking efficacy of the planetary midpoint (as well as the value of the conjunction of two midpoints and the power of the “hard” angles, especially of the semi-squares which are so often neglected). We note that the “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! Thus in these five instances, the respective positions of this midpoint and its contact are:

ANGERSTEIN: 7:06 Capricorn (∠ Asc. within 37')

HAARMAN: 17:02 Cancer (∠ Asc. within 3')

KUERTEN: 8:05 Cancer (∠ Asc. within 36')

KRUEGAR: 22:25 Cancer (§ Asc. within 6')

HITLER: 2:56 Leo (σ Mc. Within 57')

But what of the exceptions, Diamond and Landru? These show:

DIAMOND: ♂/♃ in 13:07 Libra

ASC/MC in 14:15 Libra

So here  $\♃/\Psi=ASC/MC$  by  $\sigma$  within  $67^2$

LANDRU:  $\♃/\Psi$  in 0:12 Leo

ASC/MC in 15:00 Pisces

And here  $\♃/\Psi=ASC/MC$  by  $\angle$  within 13'

By the accuracy of contacts (only one exceeding  $1^\circ$  and then only by seconds, the average of all contacts being only 31'), by the direct involvement of the most personal points, by the uniform application of the formula, "Mars/Uranus" to Asc., MC., or Asc/MC, and by the cogency of the planetary "influences" involved—by all these findings as contrasted with those previously elucidated by conventional astrological method (the writer in the meantime having only cited horoscopes not of his own making), it becomes indisputable that the astrological midpoint, the "sensitive point" which stands at the base and foundation of all the achievements of Alfred Witte and his Hamburg Schule, is a vital and powerful factor in the horoscope, a factor that opens great new vistas of research and study, by which one may well obtain something of an "ideal" astrological system, the Astrology of Tomorrow. Properly appreciated it can become a vital, newly discovered (but not new) tool for progress, though it promises neither perfection in delineation nor prediction. For as Sepharial once so aptly put it, "The final word of Astrology will not be written by anyone of this, or the succeeding age, we may safely say. Perfected humanity alone will be capable of perfection in the science of foreknowledge."

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<sup>2</sup> It is hoped that no one will take fright at finding their own birthchart to bear a 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 ASC/MC exactly conjunction MARS/URANUS—if that be of comfort to anyone else!