

THE ASTROLOGER'S APPRENTICE

THE TRADITION AS IT LIVES

Issue 21.

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Edited by John Frawley



THE ASTROLOGER'S APPRENTICE

Prospective contributors are advised to write or phone first with an outline of their projected article. They should bear in mind that The Apprentice's bias is towards sound traditional practice. Some charts have a crystalline beauty all their own; we would generally, however, prefer to see charts that illustrate or elucidate some particular point of technique.

All submissions should be accompanied by an SAE; while due care will be taken, we cannot guarantee their return. Articles are submitted gratuitously.



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Martien Hermes: how the promise of a house is realised

Erik van Slooten: ethical matters in horary astrology with concrete examples

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John Frawley: The Fixed Stars

A day workshop on the stars, nodes and constellations, developing themes from this issue of
The Astrologer's Apprentice

Congress languages: German and English

Price: 100 euros

Hotel and meals not included. There is a hotel nearby.

Details from Oscar Hofman

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ANIMA ASTROLOGIAE

That fab Dutch mag of traditional astrology has been reborn!

Full details of the new issue from

Martien Hermes

mahermes@worldonline.nl

HOMER SWEET HOMER

Here in the workshop few indeed are the astrological texts that we possess; fewer still those to which the apprentices, with their propensity for flying off in more confusion than a covey of startled antiscia, are allowed access. It is a truth that students are ever reluctant to confess: no matter how gaudy the modern book, nor how dusty the old, it will not contain the magic feather that makes judgment infallible and easy. No, not even incorporating the firdaria of Dark Moon Lilith into your calculations will bring you to the chimerical Golden City that is perfection.

Few indeed are the astrological texts that load our shelves, for few indeed are the astrological texts on which time devoted is not time better spent lazing in the midday sun. While on the one hand the modern author may seek to convince us that some ever more trivial technique - the insertion of a particular speck of cosmic flotsam; the relocation of our Chiron return chart to the place we first thought of - will define our nature in a manner compelling enough to convince the most sceptical of How Wonderful We Are, on the other those poor ancients, too dead to be able to complain, find their work ransacked by cobwebbed fanatics in search of that One Vital Aphorism that is so illuminating that no other author in our tradition could be bothered to write it down.

As neither of our readers, we are sure, would be among that throng whose gaze is attracted by lurid cover-art and titles aquiver with promise of titillation, we turn instead to those ancient works the reading of which is akin to a self-administered six of the best: painful to experience but, no doubt, character-building. When, on their first admission to our yard, our apprentices, having been divested with strigils and pumice of that layer of childhood grime that serves both as insulation against an uncaring world and as a useful source of protein when harvests fail, catch sight of one of the works on which our tuition is based, their eyes gape wide with cormorant glee, eager to swallow all it contains. Our Master counsels discrimination, that most important of lessons. For no matter how fabled the author's name, the work that bears it will contain both jewels and dross.

There are three particular cautions with which our apprentices are armed before being allowed to open even the most reliable of texts. The first is the awareness that passages in these texts are written on the assumption that the astrologer is working for the king. As such, the astrologer is much concerned with resolving that impossible equation of keeping a smile on his employer's face without betraying art to such an extent that events would reveal his equivocation. Most of the

considerations before judgment, as has been discussed in *Apprentice 20*, are a product of this, offering the astrologer a diplomatic way to avoid making judgments in which telling the truth would compromise his position now, fabrication would compromise it tomorrow.

The rules for determining the hyleg have an whiff of this, in their determination that the hyleg shall not be in the unfortunate eighth or twelfth house.

It is this too that provides the lurid palette with which the ancients, most notably Ptolemy, paint the effects of the planets. He writes of effects untrammelled by material constraint: absolute power allowing corruption to manifest absolutely. Our client's seat upon the Clapham omnibus is likely to provide a life the less debauched for being the more confined.

The second caution is against what our Master calls 'fairground astrology': specious testimonies allowing an instant judgment for someone whom the astrologer will never see again. 'How many husbands will I have?' 'Three planets in the seventh house: you'll have three. That will be two shillings please.'

The third caution is against the empirical. While the intrusion of such might be regarded as a post-Baconian aberration, the logic of 'I saw this in a chart once so it must be generally true' infests the traditional texts as fleas infest dogs, especially when their authors begin aphorising. If any aphorism, or statement of a rule, is contrary to first principles it will be wrong. Fido may yet be man's best friend; his fleas we can do without.

In part, the prevalence of such empirical statements is an illusion caused by the modern eye seeing a rule where the ancient pen provided an example. But the desire for easy 'signatures' that can allow the astrologer to draw the most specific conclusions from the most general of testimonies is by no means new. 'If you have X square Y you will suffer Z.' No, in all likelihood you will not. There is no testimony in any chart that carries any meaning in isolation. I shall repeat this, because you were probably not paying attention. There is no testimony in any chart that carries any meaning in isolation.

There are those of our tribe - those whose tents are pitched at the more arid end of the astrological plateau - who obsess with finding such signatures. A certain aspect, for example, is a sure sign of TB or cancer. This is dangerous nonsense. It may be justly criticised from so many perspectives a writer with time on his hands could spend his life on such work. To briefly name but two, it disregards the first step in all medical analysis of the nativity - the consideration of the temperament - and implies a mechanistic view of the human being as if we were no more than jigsaw puzzles.

Some years ago a pigeon arrived in the workshop bearing a message from a databank. Such places, it seems, collect birth-data for much the

same purposes as Count Dracula collects blood. In return for sending our own birth-data, which would be added to their stockpile of astrologers, we were offered the all but irresistible enticement of having 'a thousand German homosexuals coming through your letterbox'.

Such a prospect caused consternation throughout the yard. Tudge, our cook, gasped in astonishment at the number of meals he would have to prepare, and wondered if our humble refectory could hold such a throng. Old Amos, our gatekeeper, long enough in years to recall the packed bridges of Rome in the Year of Jubilee, feared lest the number of animals larger than goats needed to bring sufficient victuals to feed so many new mouths would leave us submerged in a rising tide of dung. Robin, the smith, demanded to know if we had enough discarded squares in our aspect pile (we run a green yard, and are forever recycling) to melt down for the studded belts and chokers that would doubtless be the souvenir of choice for such a visit.

The Master, as ever, calmed their concerns, taking his pipe from his mouth and asking, more of himself than of those who clustered round him, hungry for guidance, what the benefit of such an influx might be. The intention behind this more than generous offer was clearly that we should subject our visitors to statistical analysis, from which we would glean a signature for being homosexual, or for being German, or maybe for being both. Such a discovery would have endless uses: we can only imagine how impressed with our astrological prowess would be the future client in whose chart we discovered such a signature. Learning that he was, after all, a German homosexual would surely be knowledge worth the scraggy chicken or small piece of cheese for which our Master, if in benevolent mood, will work.

Aspects, it seems to be forgotten, do not occur in the sky solely for this chart I have before me now. Even the briefest of aspects will be in not only this chart, but in those for a huge number of other births at around



Preparing sextiles in the workshop

that time. There is not some cosmic production-line which suddenly switches over to the creation of mass-murderers or TB patients when X is square Y - any more than it starts producing Germans or Chinamen. It can be seen that the desire for signature is not unrelated to the fairground astrology: born of the wish to say something convincingly specific without the necessity for doing any work. 'You have X square Y, therefore...' is no less fatuous a statement than 'You're a Pisces, therefore...' or 'You're of the Pluto-in-Leo generation...'

We cannot, of course, believe that our gentle reader, girded with the hair-shirt of traditional practice, would ever say such things; yet even in our austere world we must be cautious, never forgetting that **there are an awful lot of charts out there**. Not just the one we are judging! Consider: Saturn is now moving through a five-year period of being in detriment. Saturn is natural ruler of father in a night chart. It is unlikely that every child born at night during these five years has a lousy father. Whatever their therapists might tell them.

There is no testimony in any chart that carries any meaning in isolation. Testimonies must always be judged in context: the context that is given by the circumstances of the investigation, and the context that is given by the chart itself and, in many cases, by the chart from which the one we are considering is derived or within the scope of which it operates.

The context given by circumstances is commonly neglected. We accept too readily the image of the astrologer pulling rabbits from the hat that is a set of blind birth-data. Whyever should any astrologer do this? How many of us are wakened by hooded figures at dead of night, thrusting a chart and a bag of gold into our hands with not a word of explanation? We have every right to interrogate our client - preferably mercilessly - to find out The Story So Far. The necessity of such a context is shown most clearly in horary, where the role of any planet is determined by the question asked. So the Mars/Saturn square that might seem a Bad Thing can be what provides just the answer that we desire. That the importance of context is so obvious in horary does not make it any less vital in other branches of astrology. At the opposite end of the astrological spectrum, that highest branch of astrology that is mundane, it is the very lack of such a context that makes so many published judgments no more than a mockery of the art, as is discussed elsewhere in this issue.

Context is also given by the chart itself. The traditional approach to natal judgment emphasises this. The chart reading can be seen as a pyramid composed of several horizontal layers. Each layer gives the context within which all the layers above must be read: it is a pyramid, and so each layer will be squarely within the one below; it will not be hanging out at one side or suspended in space in isolation. The aspects in the chart form one of the topmost layers of this pyramid. As such, they

may provide some refinements of detail, but tell us little in comparison to what we learn from the more fundamental levels. Everything we read from the aspects must be read in the context given by these lower layers.

The first layer with which we engage is that of the temperament. Is our native choleric (fiery), sanguine (airy), melancholic (earthy), or phlegmatic (watery)? Any aspect will manifest quite differently if in a fiery temperament or a watery. Any planet, in whatever condition it might be, will manifest differently; so contacts between these planets will be different. The temperamental division divides humanity into four classes: we are either warriors, scribes, farmers or slaves. The division is not so simple: as often as not there will be two dominant natures, so we might be a warrior with scribal leanings. This simple division has already told us a great deal about our native, even down to such specifics as the illnesses from which he is likely to suffer and those to which he will be resistant.

There are layers more fundamental than this, but we do not need to explore them. Poring over the chart in order to inform our eager client that he is a warm-blooded biped impresses no one. This does, however, underline the importance of context.

Aspects, on which all the signatures of which we are aware are based, are generally overrated as parts of the astrological equation, and the distinctions between them overstressed. Aspects are our verbs, and as such show events. If, as often in horary, we are looking for an event, the aspect is of great significance. In most investigations, we are not. It is our practice in the workshop to ignore any aspect not exact to within three or, on days when Jupiter is high in sky and Tudge has prepared us a particularly warming meal, four degrees. In most nativities this will give us only three or four aspects to consider; often fewer; sometimes none.

More important is a close understanding of the web of receptions between the planets. A useful metaphor for the birth-chart is that of the planets - the faculties of our soul - as a bunch of children in a school playground. For all that the moderns may get excited about unaspected planets, the fact that no one happens to be playing with little Sammy right now (no aspect) is of the most minor importance. Sammy could be quite happy on his own; he could even be the most popular boy in the school. If, however, our study of the web of reception shows us that none of the other kids like him, we have uncovered a problem: here is one faculty of this native's soul with which none of the other faculties will cooperate. Why is this? Maybe he is a horrible child (in detriment), so the others wish quite understandably to keep away. Maybe he is the only good boy in a school of delinquents, so the other children resent him. Maybe they just don't like him. Whatever it is, this is a major issue, far more deserving of attention than the lack of an aspect.

The nature of the aspect, if aspect there be, is of much less

significance than the condition of the planets making that aspect and the receptions between them. To say that A squares B tells us little. We must first consider their natures: how much essential dignity do they have? We must then consider their receptions, if any. Two strongly dignified planets in major mutual reception: this aspect could be the most beneficial feature of the chart, square or not. Two debilitated planets in powerful negative mutual reception, it would be a curse, even were the aspect a trine. It is the failure to recognise this that gave birth to the groundless idea, of which Lilly speaks, of stretching inconvenient squares into trines.

In some charts much of the context is given by other charts. This is true of derived charts, such as return charts derived from the nativity, and of charts which must be read with the awareness of a larger cycle, such as many mundane charts which must be read against the relevant conjunction, eclipse, great aspect or lunation charts. The meanings of the planets in these smaller charts will be largely, but not entirely, given by the roles of the planets in the larger charts. The same is true of any chart that we elect: each planet must be judged according to the houses it rules in both the elected and the radical charts. This reading of the planet in two different lights can be tricky, especially at first; but it is not so dissimilar to watching the sequel to a film: we bring a knowledge of each character based on the first movie, and are prepared to update this knowledge depending on what happens within the film we are watching now. The first film gives a context for the second. So if we know that Keanu is the good guy, yet Part II opens with a shot of him kicking a cat, we will assume there is some good reason for this untoward behaviour. Without the knowledge given by having seen Part I, which is our radical chart, we would assume he is a baddie. So we must be, at the very least, cautious when we read such things as Gadbury's statement that Jupiter in the tenth house of a return chart 'makes the native famous in his profession, gives him great gain therein, gives him some eminent office or preferment, &c . So it may; but whether it will or not depends not only upon its condition and its role in the return chart, but upon both its condition and its role in the radix.

So, as that frequent visitor to our workshop, Mr Culpeper, can often be heard to say, 'Let everyone, that desires to be called by the name of Artist, have his wits in his head (for that's the place ordained for them) and not in his books'.

But, as the winter nights are long and the fire is warm, with what shall we charm the passing hour if so few are the texts that repay concern? For all our fascination with astrology, it is but a small part of real knowledge, and the study of astrology without delving into some other areas of knowledge is akin to the study of engineering without delving into

arithmetic. Astrology is the practical application of certain truths. If we are to apply these truths it is well to know what they are. The texts that will guide us in this study tend to mention astrology more rarely than our palates might desire; but the astrologer will find more of value there than in any number of books devoted to the subject.

A key text was written in his youth by the very Mr Homer who now nods beside our hearth - when not disturbed by the younger stable-lads' pleas of 'Tell us another, Mr H!' His *Odyssey* is carved from astrology as Michelangelo's *Pieta* is carved from marble. To quote perhaps the most obvious evidence of this, recall how Odysseus, casting off his beggar's rags, identifies himself as the hero by taking the bow that none but he can draw and shooting an arrow on so straight a path that it passes through the hanging-rings of twelve lined-up axes, thus revealing his solar nature.

Our Mr Homer is a poet in the true sense of the word, hence his being quoted as authority equivalent to scripture by Plato; as such his works are not the random effusions that the current image of a poet might suggest. They have all the careful architecture of a Renaissance painting. So if something is exactly in the middle of his story, it is there for a reason: because it is that story's central point.

At the centre of the *Odyssey*, Odysseus is set, while sleeping, by mysterious hands on the shore of Ithaca, his homeland. He is alone, his crew gone - his crew and he being but one person, the soul and its attributes - wrapped in a linen sheet, with gifts of gold beside him, as if 'trailing clouds of glory' in this image of birth. The beach where he is laid is before a cave, sacred to the nymphs, which Homer describes, its ribs of stone, covered in raiment of purple hues, its springs of flowing water, making it at once the picture of a cave and of the human form. Into this cave are two gates, through the one of which mortals may pass, through the other immortals.

These gates, as Porphyry explains in his essay on The Cave of the Nymphs¹, are the solstices. The line between them is the backbone of our life, as the spine is the backbone of our body. The line between them is the backbone of the whole cosmos. It traces the path of the initial fiat that brought all life into being, brought our individual life into being.

Extending from that initial *let there be light*, or *be*, the perfect light fades. We must be careful not to take the geographical metaphor literally, but in a sense the light diminishes as it moves further from God. Similarly, from the high point that is the summer solstice, light fades as we move into winter. But, by the Divine Mercy, from the winter solstice, at the shortest day, when light is so diminished, it begins to regain its strength, returning to summer.

¹ Included in Vol II of the Prometheus Trust's edition of Thomas Taylor. See our book reviews for more details. How pleasing in reading such old texts to realise that there was a time when it was not only astrologers, in all their crankiness, who took this stuff seriously!



*Homer wanders our yard like Jericho,
telling stories to all who will hear...*

Thus the solstitial axis is a dual carriageway: there is a road in either direction. At times in the texts and in the iconography the axis is shown as one; at other times the twin directions are shown separately. For example, in Eden the trees of life and of death grow side by side; yet the cross on which Christ was hung is cut from Adam's fatal tree.

We shall develop this in articles on the fixed stars, time, and the astrology Adam was taught in the Garden in forthcoming issues: there lacks space here. That the solstitial axis is the backbone of Creation relates it to the spindle in Plato's myth of Er.² As such, time must radiate around it, not being the

locomotive track from 'way back when' to 'the future' passing through 'me here' that we perceive it. Hence Homer's statement on this being in the middle of his book, not at its beginning. And, to cite one of many examples, calendars folding around the central point of revelation in the same way that antiscia fold around the solstitial axis.

'As above; so below'; so this axis echoes through the levels of the cosmos. The solstitial points, being fixed at 0 Cancer and 0 Capricorn, are at the sphere of the signs of the zodiac. The constellations, it is of extreme importance to remember, are separate from the signs and at a lower level. On the sphere of the fixed stars the solstitial axis is painted with vivid brush in the Milky Way; vivid once, at least, and still, to those not in city pent. As we would expect, the stars having material form, there is discrepancy between this level and that of the zodiac: the material increasingly falls away. Thus we have the Milky Way slowly precessing against the zodiac. There is yet a sense that it 'ought' to be between the solstice points.

This correlation of the Milky Way with 'the gate through which souls

² Compulsory reading. It is a stand-alone piece of some four pages at the end of his *Republic*. Astro-fans can skip the rest of the book to arrive there, at what is perhaps the most remarkable piece of astrological writing ever. More on this in issue 22.

descend' and 'that through which they ascend, and exchange a material for a divine condition of being',³ Cancer and Capricorn respectively, explains why having one of the lights on it in a natal chart is held to afflict the eyes: we cannot see beyond these gates.

Similarly, the Moon's nodes 'ought' to lie on the solstitial axis. They do not, revolving around it at the comparatively breakneck speed of one revolution in nineteen years. As such, they operate like the flywheel in a piece of clockwork, spinning out our reality from the thin strand that is the solstitial axis. The nodes are the junctures of the orbits of Sun and Moon, and so, just as the solstice points, they mark the gates at which the divine and the material meet. In a natal chart they might be compared to our personal solstice points, a kind of vitalised version of this principle.

That they thus revolve against the solstitial axis allows us a deeper view of the puzzle over their nature. It is common to see the North Node as good, the South as bad; yet as they switch poles relative to the solstices it must be that they are both good. We may rejoice at a birth, weep at a death; but this perception of which is the better is based only upon our own Earthbound perspective. So it is with the Nodes. While the placement of the North Node may show where we gain, of the South where we lose, this immediate tally of gain or loss has no direct correlation to what is truly for our benefit. The South Node, with its general indication of decrease, is a mobilised winter solstice - the gateway to the divine, the shortest day of the year; so how fitting those words *strait is the gate and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life*.

Finally, the four key fixed stars, those that mark the quarters of the sky, 'ought' to be aligned with the solstices, but at their own slow pace precess from that point, marking the fallen state of Creation and the longest of the mundane cycles: the cycle of time itself. Aldebaran, the South Eye of the Bull, brightest star in Taurus, relates to the Spring Equinox. Regulus, the Heart of the Lion,



...while, in another corner of our yard

brightest star in Leo, relates to the Summer Solstice. Antares, the Heart of the Scorpion, brightest star in Scorpio, to the Autumn Equinox. Fomalhaut, the Mouth of the Fish - according to the blueprint it should be in Aquarius; but the created world must fall short, so it is in the nearby constellation of the Southern Fish. It marks the Winter Solstice.

³ Porphyry, *On the Homeric Cave of the Nymphs*, in *Select Works of Porphyry*, trans. Thomas Taylor; pub. Prometheus Trust. p 155.

As the names of these stars show, they are no longer situated even in the signs that mark the cardinal points. They are a long way from the solstitial axis. But once upon a time they did indeed mark these points: these same stars, doubtless with different names, sat on the solstices and equinoxes. Since then they have precessed, slowly but steadily. Remember now the nature of the modes: the cardinal signs are the initial creative impulse falling into each element; the fixed are the working out of all the possibilities of that element; the mutable are the rolling up of all that has been done, cardinal and fixed, and returning it to the Divine. The precession of these four stars from the cardinal signs of the solstices and equinoxes into the fixed signs was echoed by a shift into fixity on Earth: the rise of the great empires and the beginning of what we regard as history. Some 700 years ago the first of these stars, Aldebaran and Antares, precessed from their fixed signs into the mutable signs that they currently occupy. This was echoed in the birth of the Renaissance, one of the major milestones in man's spiritual history. Around 350 years ago the third of these stars, Fomalhaut, precessed from fixed to mutable sign. This saw the Enlightenment. Within the next few years the last of these stars, Regulus, will precess out of Leo and into Virgo, so all four of these key stars will be in mutable signs.

This must mark another turning-point in the story of life on Earth, a change of similar scale to the Renaissance and the Enlightenment, but, because now all four stars are in mutable signs, much the greater. As their arrival in the fixed signs marked our entry to a fixed mode of existence, so their entry to the mutable signs must mark the rolling up of all that has been done, cardinal and fixed, and returning it to the Divine. Frithjof Schuon likens the passage of time to the movement of sand through an hourglass.⁴ We watch and watch as it trickles down, with little change in the amount left above. Then whoosh! all is gone. This movement of the four key stars suggests that we are now entering the whoosh stage, the rolling up of the scrolls of time. Those of our readers familiar with jyotish will recognise the kali-yuga: similar result through different methods.

Fear not, *The Astrologer's Apprentice* has not amalgamated with *The Watchtower*, nor do we advise our readers to head for the mountains now to await those silver saucers. Not in our time, nor that of our children. But the entry of Regulus into Virgo is of somewhat greater significance than the advent of the 'Age of Aquarius', or the non-existent mutual reception between two orbiting objects in signs with which neither of them has the slightest connection, with which astro-land is so agog these days ('mutual deception' in Marybeth Beechen's memorable phrase). We stand indeed at the dawn of a new age; it's just not quite the one the commercials have promised us.

⁴ In his *Logic and Transcendence*, Perennial Books, London, 1984; chap. 10.

YOU 'AVING A LARF?

We learn today that astronomers have discovered this week's new planet, and have named it Sedna, after the Inuit goddess of the ocean. Has astrology's sharp-eyed kid brother achieved another triumph? Or is there a different explanation - one which in the workshop we regard as rather more plausible?

Are these regular new discoveries really made by painstaking observation; or are they the product of a cloudy night at the observatory, when idle astronomers decide to pass the time by teasing astrologers as boys might torment a cat by tying a firecracker to its tail? Light the blue touchpaper with the announcement of a new planet, and watch the fun as astrologers rush hither and thither to determine its significance. We doubt not that even now many astrologers have found they have a deep knowledge of Inuit mythology, sufficient for them to decide Sedna's meaning in any chart, while contracts for the first twenty-five books on the subject have already been signed.

The workshop itself has not been slack. Colin, who is perhaps not the most salubrious among the stable-lads, but who has a raw wit adept at parting fools from their money, has the yard donkey saddled and handbills in circulation, offering to transport the unwary so they may benefit from spending their solar return on the return's Sedna line. We suspect the objective observer might be surprised how many of Colin's clients have this line within half a day's journey of our yard gate.



"Let's call it Sedna!"

BACK ISSUES:

Issue 3 includes: Warts and Witchcraft; The Changing Nature of Time; Astrology on the Barricades - Two Radical Astrologers; The Ethics of Prediction; It Really Works - Horary Predictions of Public Events.

Issue 5 includes: The William Hill Astrology Awards - and how to claim them; How the Zulus destroyed a British army; The Most Beautiful Music: how cultural changes have formed our astrology; Neptune - The Short Version.

Issue 6 includes: In Search of Shakespeare - rectifying the chart from the works; The Ancient Japanese Astrologers; The St Lilly's Day Massacre - debating the foundations of our art; Predicting the Soaps; Theda Bara, femme fatale.

Issue 8 includes: 'Death and the Devil' Issue, including: Selling Ones Soul, with Faustus and Robert Johnson; Predicting Death from the Nativity; Death and the Dead - Jerry Garcia; The Nostradamus Tapes - at last, the truth!

Issue 10 includes: The Apprentice Goes to the Races - how to pick a winner; Sepharial and Horses; Catherine the Great; Casablanca - the plot told in the stars; Time is Money - the connection between money, time and thought.

Issue 11 includes: The Moon's role in the mind; Coleridge and the Ancient Mariner; Galileo and the Fall of Man; more on the William Hill Awards.

Issue 12 includes: William Lilly, the truth about the life; Why It Goes Wrong; Wordsworth, the Lost leader; The Default Option in Judgement.

Issue 13 includes: Choosing a Mate - we show you how; Clarifying Basic Issues of Technique; Power-cuts - a study in mundane astrology; the Truth about Female Astronomers; Will the Witches be set Free?

Issue 14 includes: John Milton, the life and art; Tales from the Forge - astrology in action: horaries and an unusual election; On the Heavens - traditional cosmology, astrology and how it all works.

Issue 15 includes: Janis Joplin; The Logic of Lost Objects; James Dean, Teenage Rebel; an unpublished judgement by William Lilly.

Issue 16 includes: Medieval lunar astrology; Born to be Bad - the true nature of the malefics; two medical horaries; the Arabian Parts in prediction.

Issue 17 includes: Paganini, Mercury and the Devil; the astrology of the saxophone; Barbie Girl - the birthchart; a three-tissue horary on love.

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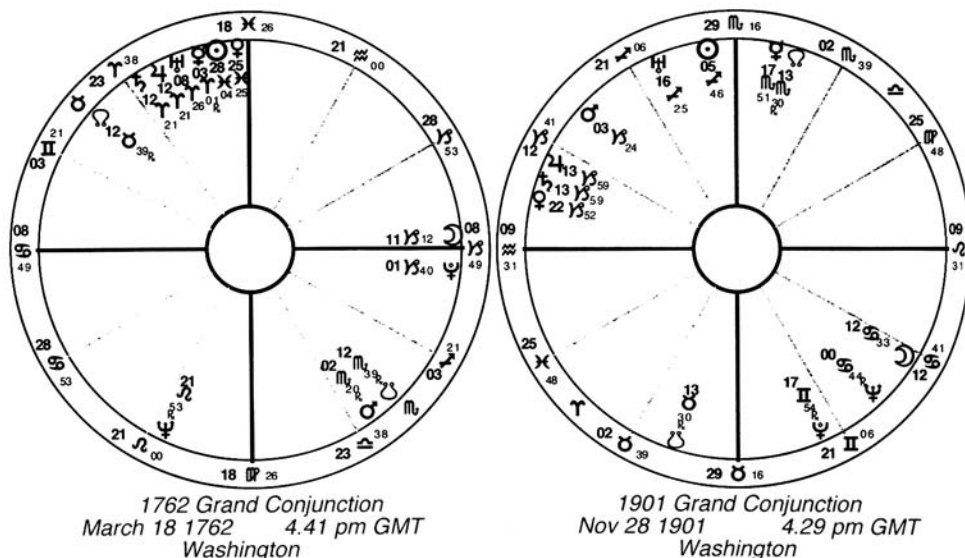
LET'S GET ENGAGED

In even the Olympian fastness of our workshop, several days' travel down a muddy road from the Twenty-first century, rumours of war abound. Young Egbert, a poor waif quite unsuited to any astrological future, has yet a proboscis of extreme sensitivity; so rather than cast the lad from our gates, our Master keeps him employed with his nose pressed hard to the ground to keep a seismic tally of events in the world outside. Recently he has had to be excused duty for an badly bruised nose. Amid this turmoil, where so many 'for a fantasy and trick of fame go to their graves like beds', or carelessly cause others to so do, the example of William Lilly is ever before our eyes.

For all that we on the side of the righteous may pour scorn on the astrological methods of the moderns, a deeper distinction between astrology as practised today and as practised by our illustrious forebears is that in their day someone or other took it seriously. For them it was not an amusing parlour game; not a quick pick-me-up in the face of lost love. Lilly, as his writings show, and most of his peers were engaged with the real world - a place of which many of us have heard, but into which few have ventured.

Lilly used his astrology as a weapon of warfare, seeing himself as a soldier in the parliamentary cause, fighting a degraded monarchy. A favourable prediction by Lilly was said to be worth a battalion of soldiers in battle. Those of our readers brought up on BBC radio (O/S), and especially its World Service, will be familiar with the *Lillibulero*, a tune written in celebration of one such forecast. One of Lilly's greater gifts was his ability to write politically weighted astrology with less compromise of art than that of, for example, his pupil, Gadbury. That Lilly was backing the winning side while Gadbury favoured the royalists doubtless made this feat that much the easier.

Appalled as we are at the bloody goings-on beyond our door, we have yet a tear to shed in the name of mundane astrology. Reading yet another astrological account of the latest bomb-blast (we may note that astrologers are as selective as the newspapers in their view of which blown-up bodies are worthy of note and which are not), which invariably does nothing except prove that whoever is responsible is not a very nice person, brings tears to our heart. Hearing yet another user of astrology convincing herself that the Channel Tunnel/Brooklyn Bridge/local supermarket is going to be bombed tomorrow induces despair. We must be thankful that we live in a world where astrological forecasts do not command front-page headlines.

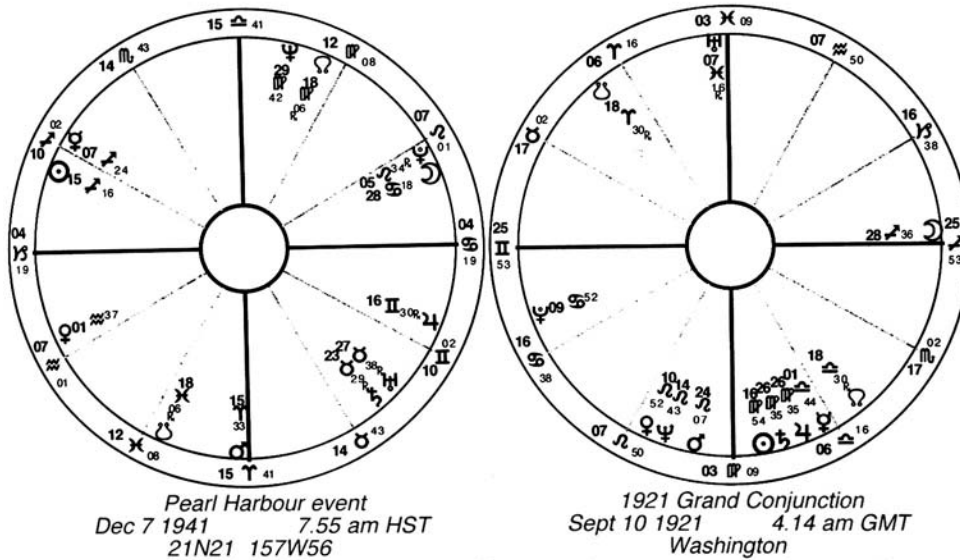


Mundane astrology is not practised by spending thirty seconds glancing at one chart. To do thus would be to judge one move of a chess game - Q-KB1, perhaps - without knowing what other pieces are on the board, where they are, and, even, what strange variant of chess is being played. The astrologer who looks at an event chart alone will do nothing more than confirm whatever fears, hopes or prejudices he brings to the reading. It can be done only by the close study of a series of charts: the relevant Grand Conjunctions, ingresses, eclipses, lunations. All these must be considered before we venture into judgment of the chart cast for an event. Too much work for writing an article for an astro-mag? Thought so.

Even more important, the charts cannot be judged without knowledge. Knowledge is not something disseminated by the media. Only the astrologer close enough the throne to be vouchsafed the true picture of what has been done can judge these charts. Consider: our only information comes from the media. So on September 2nd, 1939 we pick up our Berlin daily and cast an event chart for the moment at which those expansionist Poles started firing on our peace-loving soldiery. The situation is no different today. The astrologer who is that close to the throne is unlikely to publish the results of his study in *Astro-Weekly*.

Nor is he resident in our yard. So how can we gain some knowledge through astrology? For, to be sure, so secular a perspective should be able to give us some insight into what is going on.

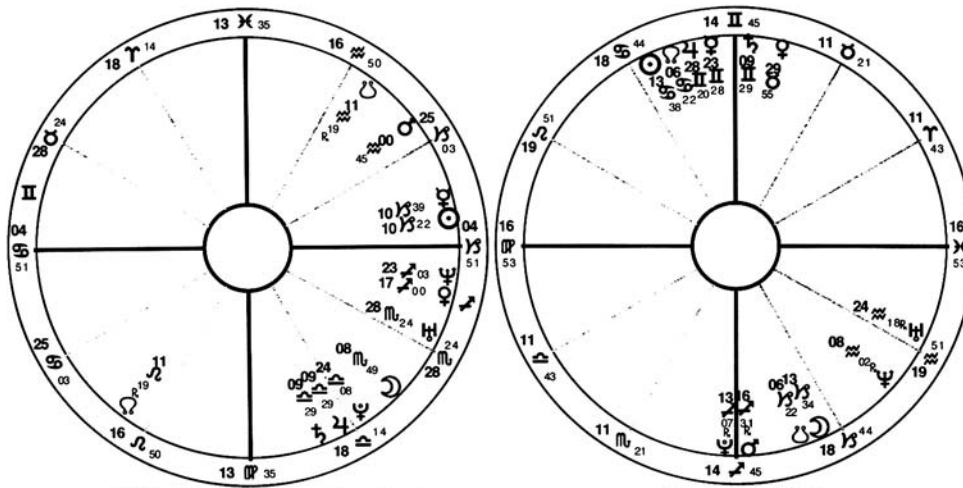
Such an analysis is far too laborious and depends upon the simultaneous examination of far too many charts to allow a readable



presentation. Too many testimonies for easy digestion! Yet without such an accumulation of testimonies we have no evidence. To our eager reader who wishes to investigate the current situation for himself, we would suggest the Grand Conjunction of March 18th, 1762 as a good place to start: the conjunction prior to the colonists gaining their independence. With enough study of this chart and the various relevant eclipses and ingresses, we could save ourselves the endless debate on the true chart for the USA. Note here especially the placement - celestial and mundane - of the Moon, and its close square to the conjunction.

Skipping lightly over time, we can move on to the Conjunction of November 28, 1901: that prior to the colonists' shrugging off their isolation by joining the First World War. Note especially the Moon's degree and its close opposition to the conjunction; also the - most appropriate - reversal of the nodal axis against the previous chart. Outer planet fans will thrill to the close and applying Uranus/Pluto opposition conjunct the Moon/Conjunction opposition by antiscion. In the chart for the eclipse prior to declaration of war, Mars sits on the Ascendant of this chart.

Fast-forwarding again, we come to the event chart for Pearl Harbour. This reverses the Asc/Desc axis of the pre-independence Conjunction chart, while the nodal axis hits that chart's MC/IC exactly, with the South Node at the MC. This holds potential for serious problems for the US (that it picks up the angles, not the conjunction itself, pins it to that country). But that country does not exist only as its independence, as a concentration on the charts for 1776, whether the event itself or the



1980s Grand Conjunction, No 1
 Dec 31 1980 9.26 pm GMT
 Washington

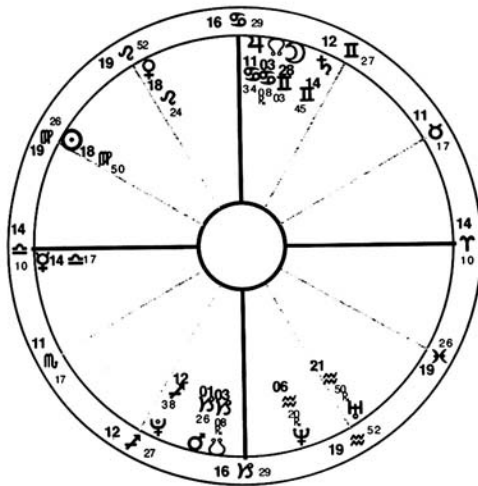
Pre-9/11 eclipse
 July 5 2001 2.55 pm GMT
 New York

preceding Conjunction, would imply. It exists as a history, one event being consequent upon another: it is this that makes the study of such a chain of charts important. So note the connection between the Sun/Jupiter opposition in the Pearl Harbour chart and the two intertwined oppositions of the 1901 Conjunction chart. The eclipse prior to the event (Sept 21, 1941; 4.33 am GMT) exactly opposes the Sun of the independence Conjunction. This Sun is on the Ascendant of the eclipse chart cast locally; cast for Washington, that chart repeats the independence Conjunction's angles. So while the event is so devastating, especially locally, the outcome for the country is positive.

A similar picture of devastation is painted by the Conjunction prior to the Civil War (Jan 26, 1842; 6.12 am GMT), which fell to within a few minutes of arc on the Descendant of the independence Conjunction chart.

There were three Grand Conjunctions immediately before Pearl Harbour (August 1940 - February 1941); but mundane events are plants of slow growth: their roots are more often found in an earlier Conjunction than in one so soon before. That of 1921 opposes the independence Conjunction's Sun, and is therefore picked up by the eclipse before the event. Its significance to America is underlined by its being square the Asc/Desc axis in that place. Note the Moon's position.

The repeated Conjunctions December 1980 - July 1981 cover the immediate path to the present situation. Particularly interesting is the first, with its tight Sun/Mercury conjunction on the independence Conjunction's Moon and its Nodes square the nodal reversal highlighted



9/11 event
 Sept 11 2001 8.45 am EDT
 New York

above. With the Cold War ending not with the anticipated bang, but with a whimper, this is a picture of a choice of direction for the US. Yes, the Nodes in this chart square the Nodes of the other charts in these eclipses for every country on Earth; it is the significance in the world of the previous charts, as they unfold in that place, that gives a context within which any other testimony has meaning. Such is the truth of history. All three of these charts repay close study.

Let us, though, move ahead to the eclipse of July 5th, 2001, that prior to 9/11. The eclipse is at 13 Capricorn, with Mars conjunct by antiscion. This refers us directly to

the Conjunction of 1762 and, especially, that of 1901. The Jupiter in this chart that is bothering the 1762 Sun has by the day of the event moved on to bother the 1762 Moon, its place square the 1762 Sun being taken by the Moon itself. Note also the connections with the 1921 chart. At the event, the South Node has reached the 1901 Mars.

The reader who has not yet disappeared beneath this tide of testimony is encouraged to use these hints as basis for development. Striking though the points noted are, it is only the consideration of the other charts in the string - other eclipses; ingresses, not considered here; the lunation charts that must be considered together with ingresses and major events - that put flesh on these dry bones. If we are not close to the throne, it is only through the study of history, which is what these charts show us, that we can arrive at anything approaching truth.

----- * -----

- look how the floor of heaven
 Is thick inlaid with patens of bright gold,
 There's not the smallest orb which thou behold'st
 But in his motion like an angel sings,
 Still quiring to the young-ey'd cherubins;
 Such harmony is in immortal souls,
 But while this muddy vesture of decay
 Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it.

- The Merchant of Venice

THE MEDICAL HORARY

*To him with questions and with urine,
They for discov'ry flock, or curing.*

- Samuel Butler, on Lilly

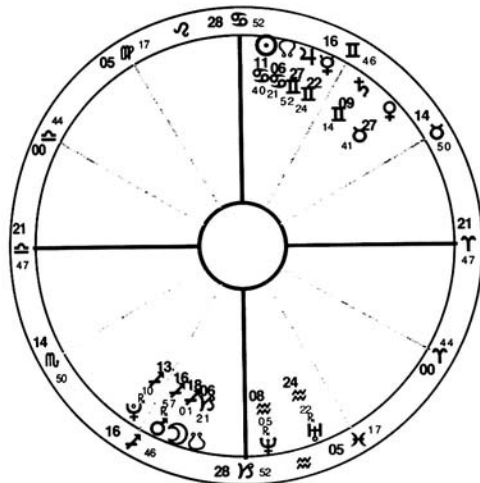
There is a belief common among astrologers that practice should make us blasé about the miracle we see before us in each chart. 'I believe in astrology,' we often hear, 'So why should I be surprised at seeing it work?'

We in the workshop are not so hardened. Scarcely a day goes by without yelps of delight from one or other of our craftsmen drawing a crowd of eager faces to wonder at the beauty of the chart he is judging. Each turn of the cosmic kaleidoscope produces yet another image, perfect in its precision. It is our regret that so few of those who enter our yard as clients have the knowledge necessary to appreciate this beauty. Frequent is the desire to clap them on the shoulder, 'OK, so he doesn't love you. And your cat won't be coming back. The cat never loved you either. But look at the chart: isn't this beautiful!' Indeed, beyond all the snippets of information, advice or understanding that astrological judgment brings forth, no matter how accurate they might be, we are sure that the main purpose of the consultation is to expose the client to just such beauty. Alas that for most it is written in an alien tongue.



This is one chart whose beauties are etched finer than most, for all that its theme is a sorry one. It is a horary. The client asked: 'My friend has been taken to hospital. She is in intensive care in a coma. The doctors examining her don't know what is wrong; they suspect a brain haemorrhage. What is the problem, and what will happen?'

The texts are more confused on the judgment of horaries on medical questions than on those cast for any other topic. Which means they are very confused on medical questions. An immediate problem is the mixing of precepts for judging decumbiture charts with those for judging horaries. A decumbiture is the chart cast for



Sick friend?
 July 3 2001 2.18 pm BST
 London

the moment the sick person takes to his bed, though the term is extended to include the moment the physician first visits or when someone gives the physician - who would have been casting the chart as part of his procedure - a sample of the patient's urine. As these extensions imply, decumbiture drifts into horary. So use the horary! It's quicker, it's simpler, and, above all, it makes perfectly clear which house signifies the patient. If the patient's servant brings us a bottle of urine, he is effectively asking a question about his master's health. The bringing of the bottle should make this a decumbiture chart, with the master as first house; the asking of the

question, even if implicit, would make it a horary, with the master as tenth. Always go for the horary. This can be taken as a general principle: with event charts it is usually, if not always, hard to know who gets which house, for we become moiled in gordian philosophic knots about causation, in all its different levels. So use the sharp sword that is horary: it makes it so much clearer.

Lilly begins his 'judgment of sickness by astrology' referring to decumbiture, not horary: 'In the first place, we ought carefully to take the exact time of the party's first falling sick... that very time when he first was so ill, or so extremely oppressed, that he was enforced to take his bed'. The alternative is to 'accept of that time when the sick party's urine was first carried to somebody to enquire of the disease, whether the party enquired of was the physician or not'. If neither of these, 'let the physician take the time of his own first speaking with, or access to, the patient, or when first the urine was brought unto him'. If there is an established time for the event of the sickness - and the person taking to his bed would be much the more reliable than urine sent, which is akin to horary - this can be used to set a decumbiture. But there is no purpose in casting a decumbiture unless treatment of the patient is to be based thereon. The purpose of the decumbiture is to allow the erection of the derived charts ('the chart of sixteen houses', or eight, or even thirty-two if our invalid is sufficiently rich and sufficiently demanding to call his physician that often) which will show how the treatment should be adjusted over the course of the illness.

Decumbiture is a story for another day. Let us concentrate here on horary. Lilly says that he always followed Dariot's method of judging charts on sickness, and it is not until he starts presenting Dariot's method that his own chapter on sickness gets into gear. We begin by establishing 'if the party be sick'. This is usually, of course, a redundant question: the hale rarely give their prize chicken to the yard in payment for a medical judgment. Lilly evidently had enquiries from those who were feeling a bit off-colour and would wake the next morning feeling fine, and there are today circumstances in which 'Is this really going to be an illness?' is a burning question.

The first indication that there is something wrong is that the patient's significator is in a sign contrary to its own nature. This takes us to the very roots of our astrology: the hot, cold, moist, dry that are the foundations of this elaborate edifice. It relates directly to the assessment of temperament that is the first step in natal judgment. It shows graphically that the nature is dis-eased. If the planet is in a sign of its own nature, any other affliction to the significator will do - combustion, detriment, etc.

In most cases, we can accept that our patient is ill without needing to confirm this through the chart. But this enquiry is not redundant: it leads us to the significator of the illness. Although the sixth is the house of illness, Lord 6 is *not* the significator of the illness itself. Lord 6 signifies illness only in general questions on other subjects. Suppose the question were, 'Will I win the gold medal?' and the chart showed Lord 1 applying to aspect with Lord 10, which would show success, but being prohibited by Lord 6. Judgment would be, 'You would win, but illness will prevent you'. It does not signify the illness in a chart specifically about that illness, because in such cases the whole chart shows the illness. Or, to be more exact, it shows the patient and what is ailing him.

The significator of the illness is the planet that is causing our patient's significator problems. In most medical charts the patient's significator will not be in a sign of its own nature, so the logic runs: we can see that he's ill because he's in an incompatible sign; the ruler of this sign must be the significator of the illness. The same is true of whatever other affliction our planet may be suffering.

Planets in the patient's first house can also be considered, although their role is usually secondary. We can have more than one significator for the illness. Sometimes this shows different levels of causation ('the pain is caused by an excess of phlegm, but this is brought on by your financial worries'); sometimes there is more than one problem. Note that any planet in any condition can be a significator of illness: it's not only the bad guys. When Jupiter was passing through Cancer, we saw many charts where the illness was shown by just this excess of moist humours.

While the planet that is affecting the main significator is our chief significator of illness, the planet that the Moon has most recently aspected also gives us valuable information. Lilly's listing of the Moon in each sign, separating from Mars, Mercury and Saturn (Mercury's effects are similar to those of Saturn, both planets being cold and dry) is excellent. The key text of medical astrology, however, is *The Astrological Judgment & Practice of Physic* by Lilly's contemporary, Richard Saunders.⁵ This is indispensable for anyone with an interest in medical astrology.

Lilly had the highest regard for Saunders' abilities, but their approach to the medical chart differs markedly. On every point of difference, follow Lilly! But we do not recommend Saunders for his method. He does give a valuable discussion of the various principles that mix together to make the human creature. His description of praxis is seriously flawed. The core of the book, however, and its true worth is in his diagnostic and his prescriptive.

With his diagnostic he runs through each planet in every sign, breaking the signs down into usually three unequal chunks. For each chunk he states the seriousness of the condition, the humoral cause, and how and where in the body it is likely to manifest. So having identified the significator of the illness, we can turn to Saunders for its analysis, and then refer to the second section of his book, which tells us what to do about it.

The gravity of the illness is given on a scale of one to four. It might be 'hot at the third degree and dry at the fourth'. The first degree is a minor nuisance. The third is seriously unpleasant - hence the cops giving you 'the third degree'. The fourth is 'beyond nature' and as such often fatal. This must, of course, be read within the reality of the ailment: if you are casting a chart for your cold and Saunders tells you it is in the fourth degree, you have a bad cold: you are not going to die. The degree of the ailment will guide us in treatment. First degree illnesses get mild medicaments. If the illness is fourth degree, we can bring up the heavy artillery - the poisons and other extreme treatments that would usually be noxious - in the knowledge that they cannot make the patient much worse, and may just cure him.

For each ailment Saunders provides a treatment. This leans much on bleeding, which in that strange land that is the Twenty-first century is beyond the astrologer's remit. In even this barbaric land, much can still be done, as is proved in that hidden corner of our yard where stands a ramshackle shed from whence a variety of strangely coloured and even strangely odoured smokes may be seen to pour. Within this shed,

⁵ This, as with many of the classic texts, is available from The Wessex Astrologer at www.wessexastrologer.com and, in Australia, Spica Publications at www.spica.com.au. We warmly commend, however, the edition published by Dave Roell at www.astroamerica.com. This is how astrological reprints should be done!



Oscar arrives in our yard...

hunched over his furnace, clad in motley rags and muttering to himself in a tongue that some say is to call down spirits, some say is Dutch, is one Oscar Hofman. Oscar was brought to these shores by pirates, or so he claims. Escaping, he made his way to our workshop, where he was put to work grooming the Sagittarius, until we realised he was a skilled astrologer and our Master granted him a place of his own within our demesne. There he brews potions derived from Saunders'

recipes and other such, for treatment of sick stable-lads and whom else should find our door.⁶

To return to our muttons. Our querent is not involved in this question, so we go straight to the eleventh house. Its ruler, Mercury, signifies the friend. With Mercury in Gemini, our first thought might be that the friend is doing fine. But no: although Mercury is in a sign that it rules, for our present purposes it is in very bad condition. Mercury is a cold, dry planet. It is in a hot, moist sign: a sign contrary to its nature. It is dis-eased. The friend is not well. This much we know, of course: the woman is in a coma.

Which planet is causing Mercury problems? We can follow our usual logic by looking to the ruler of the sign Mercury is in. This brings us back to Mercury. There is no reason that the significator of the illness should not be the same as that of the patient. But here we have a more likely culprit, especially considering the sudden, acute onset of the illness. Mercury is just separating from opposition to Mars. Mars is peregrine and retrograde, so it is a nasty sort of Mars. Any 'tec on the force would finger Mars for this case.

Our suspicions are confirmed by the Moon. Its last aspect was to this nasty Mars. Mars is our main suspect for The Illness.

Before we begin our diagnosis, what will happen to her? She is in a coma, so our immediate question is, 'Will she live or will she die?' When looking into the death of somebody other than the querent, we must consider both the turned and the radical eighth houses. Usually one or other of them will be in play; occasionally both. Here, the turned eighth house (the radical sixth) is ruled by Mars. Mercury is separating from

⁶ Oscar, who has by now learned some words of English and had an email connection made to his hut, can be contacted on oshofman@xs4all.nl. He also teaches an email course on medical astrology (in English or Dutch).

opposition to it. If the sick person is sitting up in bed and chatting, this is a most positive sign: he has come into contact with death; he is still alive; he is going to survive. In the context of someone in a coma it can be taken that death, in the real sense of the word, has already happened. The Moon separates from Mars and applies to Mercury, translating light between them and so remaking the aspect: the friend will die. The degrees the Moon must travel to perfect the opposition gives the timing: she will be pronounced dead at the end of that afternoon. In the blessedly small number of horaries we have been asked to judge on such subjects, this remaking of a separated aspect by translation of light is typical for showing the doctors' recognition that hope has gone.

The beauty of this chart is in the diagnosis. We have fingered Mars as significator of the illness. Mars in this part of Sagittarius, Saunders says, 'is hot and dry above nature, consuming and drying up the radical moisture and humidity of the body, and utterly extinguishing the life of man'. It does this by infecting 'the body and blood with much thick, red choler that is hot and very dry'. Choler is the fiery humour. The doctors suspected a brain haemorrhage; had this fatal Mars been in the friend's first house, it could well have shown this: a kind of fiery explosion



... and is set to work

in the brain. But it isn't; it is in her fifth, the house of the heart. She has had a heart attack. This was confirmed at the post mortem.

Horary, with its assumption that we can find answers by casting a chart for the moment a question is asked, can seem unlikely enough. Here we have something even more unlikely: the querent is asking about someone else. The doctors, for all their skill and experience, were unable to determine the problem from a close examination of the patient. The astrologer was able to do this at a distance, in a matter of minutes, and not - it must be stressed - through any ability of his own, but simply by taking the standard textbook off his shelf, opening it at the relevant page and reading what it says. Blase? Not yet.

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To illustrate what happens inside the human being, who is a microcosm, it is fitting for the macrocosm, which was made for the sake of the human being, to have the order or lack of order that there is in the human being.

- Robert Grossteste

THE WATER CYCLE

One of the key images in traditional knowledge, and therefore in our astrology, is that of the water cycle. The Sun shines upon the ocean, taking its salt and barren water into the clouds, from where this rains down upon us as sweet water. This is a representative example of the operation of Divine Mercy in the world.

Our kid brothers, the scientists, too smart for their own good, would reduce ritual images of this cycle to the simple desire for rain. So when seeing, for instance, the remarkable murals in the temple at Coronado, in New Mexico, all of which focus on the gods giving rain, they see a society obsessed with the need to water its crops, and hence the need to propitiate the forces that have this water in their wilful gift. But having had the good sense to build their village on the banks of the Rio Grande, provider of not only all the sweet water a village could use, but also fish and, the river flowing north-south, migrating birds delivering meals to the door more reliably than Domino's Pizza, the inhabitants must have been blinkered indeed were their religious rites limited to the desire for a downpour. As we have previously remarked about what kid brother regards as Sun-worship, so here: the images are just that - images. What is desired is the sweet water of mercy raining into the soul. Of which the benefit of the odd shower is an example.

So when considering those most beautiful of words,

*The quality of mercy is not strain'd,
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven
Upon the ground beneath*

we lose much by seeing the image solely as grace delivered from on high. So it is; but Shakespeare makes here a direct reference to the water cycle, in that it is the bitter water of justice that is lifted up by the Divine radiance to produce this mercy. It is not a benevolent deity showering largesse whenever he has the whim, but a necessary, inbuilt part of the structure of Creation. Ignoring this limits the resonance of this glorious image, for the overcoming of justice with mercy is the central theme of the play. And, as subplots ever echo the main theme, it is this image of the water cycle, and this alone, that makes sense of the casket scenes in *The Merchant of Venice*.

Portia tips the wink to Bassanio by advising him to 'confess and live'. He accepts the justice implicit in confession by opening the lead casket (lead = Saturn = salt water = Shylock) within which he finds the image of Portia herself, that most desired mercy. The alchemical reference is also obvious and, as it will be, congruent with the astrological.

The ancients tell us that Saturn rules the sea (which, in common with everything else, has various rulers which become relevant depending upon which of its qualities we are considering), giving as their justification the fact that if you leave something cold and hard (Saturn) out overnight you will find it covered with water in the morning. This explanation, no matter how true the experiment might be, was quite as unconvincing then as it is now. It is this logic of salt water = justice, sweet water = mercy that determines the rulership. This is no doubt the reason behind the texts' description of Saturn at certain times being moist. There is some disagreement between the authorities over when these certain times might be; this attribution survives into the era of modern traditional astrology - Lilly's day - only in the prescriptions for the assessment of temperament. This is a crux to which we shall return.

In each element in the zodiac there are three signs: the element in its cardinal, fixed and mutable modes. The cardinal mode is the entry of the creative impulse into manifestation in this element; the fixed is the fulfilment in manifestation of all the potential of that element; the mutable is the turning of that element back towards its divine source. The water cycle is most apparent in the air signs (remember that this cycle creates sweet water, which equates with reason: Aquarius is the only sign in which we find sweet water), so let us start here.

The cardinal air sign is Libra, whose glyph shows two parallel horizontal lines. These lines show the upper and the lower waters. As the distinction between the two on the second day of creation might suggest, this idea is of the profoundest significance; the first thing that happens after the initial fiat and separation of light from darkness. What concerns us here is the facet of it that is the distinction between justice and mercy. The straight horizontal line in the glyph is justice; the one with the bend in it, which is a symbol of the rainbow (seal of God's covenant with Noah), is mercy. The line with the bend in it is above the straight line because 'God's mercy ever exceeds his wrath'.

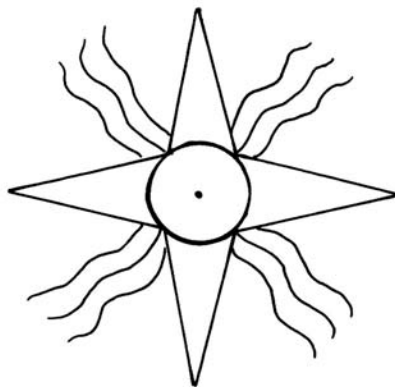
The physical manifestation of this being built in at so deep a level - second day - into creation is the water cycle. Justice, the horrorability of what we are, is redeemed by the Sun (the image of the Divine) shining upon it and forever rescuing us from ourselves to lift us up to something better.

The cardinal sign is the initiating mode in each element, the initial spark of the creative impulse. So here, in cardinal air, we see justice and mercy born into the world. Hence the well-known Sun-sign prevarication of Librans: what are they choosing between as we wait impatiently for them to decide? At root, the decision is between justice and mercy. A tough call, especially as, by the nature of the initiating creative impulse,

the cardinal sign is directed into the world. Looking into the world, justice and mercy appear distinct; it is only looking out of the world that shows that the actions of Jupiter and Saturn are not only intertwined, interdependent, but the same.

Libra is the sign of the Autumn equinox, the watershed between summer and winter, mercy and justice. Libra is the new kid on the zodiacal block, known previously as the Claws of the Scorpion. The Scorpion is that dire beast Necessity, its one claw being justice, its other mercy - a hard man with Love tattooed on one set of knuckles, Hate on the other.

So cardinal Libra gives us the existence of justice and mercy in the world. Most importantly, as we know, alas, that we have justice, it introduces mercy, the rainbow. Our gentle reader can pursue the imagery himself, so ubiquitous it is. To give but one example, the rainbow directs our attention immediately to Noah, the raven and the dove: Saturn and Venus, exalted planet and ruler of Libra, Venus being, as Ovid tells and Velikovski reminds us, offspring of Jupiter - a little bite-size morsel of mercy.



Fixed air is Aquarius, the glyph for which is commonly interpreted as an image of waves on the sea. But it cannot be this alone, for the sea is salt and the water that Aquarius pours out is fresh. As Rene Guenon explains, this glyph is an ancient solar symbol. The illustration here is from an Assyrian tablet of the 9th century B.C. There are two kinds of rays emanating from the Sun. Yes, the straight lines represent light and the undulating lines heat; but the undulating lines

are indeed also a symbol of water, these two meanings being resolved in the water cycle.⁷ The lines in the Aquarius glyph are again the upper and lower waters; as in the cardinal sign, Libra, we had the introduction of justice and mercy, so here, in the fixed sign, we see the cycle up and running, as the radiance of the Sun ever lifts and refines the lower waters, for them to fall as rain and return to the salt ocean.

In the glyph for the mutable air sign, Gemini, we have again the parallel lines that are the upper and lower waters, justice and mercy, the

⁷ See his *Fundamental Symbols: The Universal Language of Sacred Science*, chapter 62. This article owes much to this book, which is compulsory reading for anyone with an interest in traditional knowledge. It is currently available published by Quinta Essentia, n.d., from www.fonsvitae.com

human and the Divine. The fixed mode explores all that is possible within that element. The mutable mode takes us back to the Divine, or, on smaller scale, on to the 'next' within creation - the next day, the next cycle, the next campfire. The glyph for Gemini shows us the axis of the solstices, seen as a duality; which axis equates directly with the upper and the lower waters.

This glyph is an image of the Pillars of Hercules, the *ne plus ultra* of the ancient world. There was, of course, always plus ultra the geographical pillars: sailors regularly sailed through this gate to the Mediterranean. But these pillars, in their direct relation to the solstitial axis, mark the boundaries of our life. Hercules is challenged to recover the Apples of the Hesperides, the Blessed Isles that lie beyond the pillars. (Where do you get to if you sail through the Pillars of Hercules and keep going? This is why New York is known as the Big Apple) Being mortal, he is unable to pass beyond them himself, so he makes a deal with Atlas, offering to hold the sky for him if he will go and get the apples. Atlas, thinking he has found a mug who will take over his unwelcome task, gladly agrees. He fetches the apples, but Hercules then tricks him into changing places again. The important point for the present discussion is the going beyond the dualities of mercy and justice, life and death, which fence around our earthly life, in order to reach and retrieve that taste of the world beyond which redeems our own.

Guenon tells that Spanish coins bore the picture of the Pillars of Hercules that is the Gemini glyph, with a scroll twined around it, on which was written 'ne plus ultra'. This symbol, he says, was adopted as the symbol for the dollar - from which there is, of course, *ne plus ultra*.

Let us consider the cycle in the other elements. Aries is cardinal fire: the initiating spark that is the arrival of the Divine creative impulse into the element of fire. This is the brief spark of the cigarette lighter or match. Fixed fire is this initial impulse, scarcely more than the idea of fire, working out all its potentials. This is the fire before which we can sit, over which we can cook, or which burns our house down. With Sagittarius we have that mutable idea of returning to the source, or, within our world, of moving on to a next cycle. So Sagittarius is the gathering of an ember from today's fire so we may carry it forward to light tomorrow's.

Sagittarius is connected with Prometheus, whose name means 'forethought', without which we are doomed to rubbing two sticks together every time we need fire. It is this sense of picking up something of value and passing it on that makes the connection of Sagittarius with teaching. He is an archer, not a pole-vaulter: he does not travel himself, but shoots his knowledge into a new place: it is a transmission, not a journey.

The Archer is Chiron, who thus already had his place in the sky before the discovery of the insignificant object now named after him. Chiron was the son of Chronus (Time) and a daughter of Ocean. The ocean being our desire nature, this parentage gave him knowledge through experience of life, a knowledge he passed on to various heroes. Being accidentally wounded by one of Hercules' arrows, dipped in the blood of Hydra (the desire nature in its most destructive form), he suffered so much that he surrendered his immortality to Prometheus: again, there is the idea of transmission.

The earth signs give us the same progression in the seed cycle. Capricorn, the sign of the winter solstice, sees the seed that is the initiating spark of the earth cycle buried in the ground. As we have seen, the solstitial axis can be shown as either one line or two. The latter is what we see in the familiar Chinese yin/yang symbol. The white half of the circle is the summer solstice: the longest day of the year, when all is merry and bright. But within this is the seed of darkness, which will grow, for, from now on, the days will get shorter. This is the cycle of the day in the primary motion of the Sun, of the seasons, of the wheel of Fortune; this is why Manilius holds a



placement on the Midheaven as unfortunate; why Regulus, star of the summer solstice, promises success, with fall after: even Caesar must die, as the dark spot that was the whispering slave would remind him in the brilliance of his triumph; from the uppermost, the only way is down. The dark half of the circle is the winter solstice, the shortest day, within which lies the germ of new life - like the picture of Portia in the casket of lead.

This new life begins to sprout at the Spring Equinox, associated with Aldebaran, bright star of Taurus, the fixed sign of the earth element. Fixed being when all the potential of that element is worked out, Taurus gives us all that springs from the earth, sown crop and weeds.

The harvest comes with Virgo, the mutable earth sign. Again, we find the image of the carrying on into a new cycle, as from the harvest the farmer takes the seed that will be sown to bring forth next year's crop.

And so to water. The water signs relate to our desire nature, so here we see a cycle of desire. It is easy for us to think of desire as concerned only with physical yearnings; but even such estimable longings as that for the next issue of *The Astrologer's Apprentice* is yet desire. This cycle is exemplified in our desire for generation.

Cancer, whose glyph is a stretched version of that yin/yang symbol of the solstices, is the gate of the initial fiat of Creation; to our perceptions, this must relate it to desires. As the cardinal water sign it is the first spark of desire: that careless thought 'Let's have a baby,' with no

consideration for all that this entails. All that this does entail is experienced in depth in Scorpio: fixed water, so the desire worked out in its fullness, in this example with all the pains of childbirth, mess, vomit and tantrums that are not considered in Cancer's initiating spark. Scorpio is the desire growing, both sown crop and weeds.

But once we have that which we desire, we must give it up. That which we cherish most dearly must be sacrificed. This is the mutable, returning, water sign, Pisces. Fortunately, we are not asked as was Abraham; but the principle remains: the sacrifice must be of the dearest and the best, of what we most desire. Taking the worn-out jeans that we once so desired to the charity shop doesn't count. But if the sacrifice is made, it calls down a response as grace descending, exceeding all that has been given up. This is the significance of the two fish swimming in opposite directions. The ribbon tying them together shows the inevitability of the contract: the response is not an optional favour by God, but is built into the system, created as it was by His infinite goodness.

This is a brief review of the modal cycle working in each element. The same cycle is echoed among the constellations, zodiacal and non-zodiacal. Our perception of the fixed stars must be changed, for the idea that so many of them are malefic is counter to first principles, and so must be wrong. Nothing in the cosmos was created evil, therefore no star can be of its own nature malign. Algol as a good guy? Yes! Read our next thrilling instalment to find out why.

Article to be continued in issue 22.

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ERRATUM

One of the scribes having spent far too long in Mr Culpeper's herb garden, there was a serious error on page 33 of issue 20. Robert Nunn's judgment of the question 'Will the Queen Mother live to see her 100th birthday?' should read:

'The Queen Mother is royalty, so could be given the tenth house. But as she is specifically the mother of the Queen, she is here the tenth from the tenth, or the radical seventh. So she is signified by Venus, her birthday by the Sun. The Moon translates light from Venus to the Sun, making the second aspect shortly before the Sun changes sign. Yes, she will arrive at her 100th birthday shortly before she dies.'

Our apologies to Robert for mangling his work. The scribe has been soundly flogged and Mr Culpeper instructed to keep the gate to his garden securely locked.

FOUL PLAY, REF!

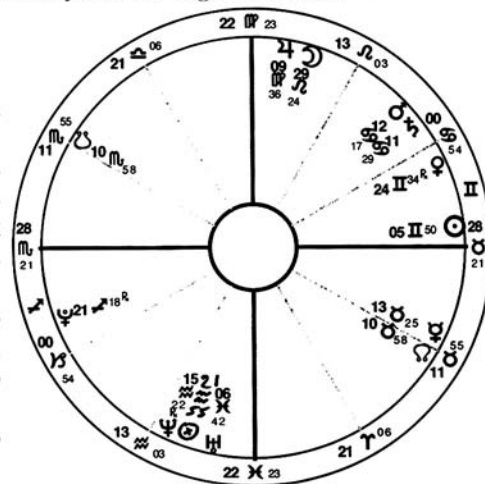
Are there no lengths to which the footballing authorities will not go to thwart *The Astrologer's Apprentice's* predictions? Not content with their usual ploys of switching dates, times and venues of matches at the last moment, the shadowy figures that staff UEFA have devoted weeks to scanning the skies in search of a moment when nothing whatever is happening, so that moment can be used to kick-off this year's Champions' (sic) League final. 'That,' they seem to have thought, 'Will fox them.'

But are we downhearted? No! Picking up our trusty astrolabe and marshalling the antiscia into a neat crocodile, we set forth to judgment. The chart is set for kick-off. The Ascendant ruler and Lord 10 are for the favourite; the Descendant ruler and Lord 4 (being the 10th house from the 7th) are for the underdog. Dignities matter little, if at all; what concerns us is movement.

Mars, Lord 1, is separating from conjunction with the dispositor of Fortuna. Had this conjunction been applying, it would have been a strong testimony for the favourites. That it is separating may be a slight testimony against them; but we are unconvinced: it may do nothing.

The Moon's immediate aspects, if such there be, are of the greatest importance. At 29.24 degrees of its sign, it makes none. Its next aspect is a sextile to the antiscion of Lord 7; but while in other charts we might pay some attention to what the Moon at late degree does after changing sign, for our present purposes the sign boundary can be regarded as an impassable barrier. Even were it not, a sextile to an antiscion is - with due regard to the tender feelings of any antiscia among our readers - of a quite Virgoan level of triviality.

The only testimony of note is Lord 7 applying to trine Fortuna. This is not a powerful testimony; but if it is all we have, it must be the basis for judgment. This should give the game to the underdog. There are two cautions, however. Venus, having recently left station, is moving so slowly that the two and a half degree journey to Fortuna could be too much. Soon after making this aspect, she opposes Pluto - though this



European Cup Final 2004
May 26 2004 7.45 pm BST
Gelsenkirchen

demands a further 47' of travel. Overall, we will go, with more caution than is our wont, for the underdogs, Monaco, to win. Should they take the lead only to lose at the end, we can blame Pluto.

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BOOK REVIEWS

Christian Astrology, by William Lilly; *Astrology Classics edition*.

For one 300 years dead, William Lilly continues to display an admirable industry, plying his pen with almost as much verve as when still alive. His latest work, produced with the sterling assistance of Dave Roell, of the Astrology Centre of America, is a new edition of *Christian Astrology*. And a very fine edition it is too.

When first unwrapped in our yard all work ceased, as everyone from stable-lads to craftsman astrologers, even the Master himself, marvelled that a traditional text could be so well produced. The design, paper and binding are every bit as good as those lavished upon the Tyls and Greenes. Such luxury could quite turn a traditional astrologer's head!

This book contains volumes 1 and 2 of *Christian Astrology*: all that is needed for the horary student. Volume 3, dealing with natal astrology, will appear later in the Astrology Centre's growing and excellently produced series of reprints of classic texts. It follows the original - and hence the Regulus facsimile - page by page and often line by line, with ample margins for notes. Most of the misprints in the original have been corrected.

Roell has had the wisdom to limit his tinkering to rendering the text in a modern font and updating spellings and some obsolete word formations. We hear frequent calls for a 'translation' of Lilly into modern English; calls which, we note, come almost exclusively from those who share Lilly's native tongue. Our workshop has a large number of apprentices from distant lands - one or two from distant planets - many of whom do not have English as even a second language: scarcely as a language at all. Yet they manage to study his work. Lilly's writing is usually clear enough. Where it is not, it is the muddy reasoning of a Mercury almost in station in fixed earth Taurus that must take the blame, not his archaic language. His muddy reasoning would be just as muddy in translation. We speak not of the number of broken heads such a translation would inevitably occasion, so great is the frenzied hunger for controversy among those who read this book without reading it.

The original, usually square, charts have been retained. The square chart form having a sacred significance, it is not unimportant that the

student should make its acquaintance; while seeing Lilly's smiley-faced Suns and man-in-the-Moons makes modern chart design appear the product of the harshest of commissars. Modern versions of all the charts are included as an appendix; but it must be stressed that these are approximations only: they often differ in important detail from the charts that Lilly was using. The reader is urgently advised to work only from the originals.



William Lilly

Classics is now the standard edition. Beautifully produced, built to last, reproducing the original more accurately than other modern-type editions: this is the bee's knees. We can well imagine Mr Lilly raising a cup of celestial ale in celebration of its appearance.

Available from your local astro-store or www.astroamerica.com in the USA; www.wessexastrologer.com in the UK. \$39.95; £29.99.

Thomas Taylor

We know that in the colonies scarcely a day goes by without a ship descending from the skies to abduct the finest specimens of humankind

Another appendix contains a glossary of archaic words and Latin phrases, with the worthy aim of ending such confusions as that over Saturn's rulership of circus performers with red noses: the original meaning of 'clown' was a country bumpkin; the modern meaning derives from this being a stock character in the theatre. Similarly, when Lilly locates a lost object in the 'hall' it is not in a corridor or entrance chamber, but in the grand feasting-hall where visiting dignitaries are entertained.

Christian Astrology is the greatest textbook of astrology in the English language, indispensable to anyone with an interest in the craft; the *Astrology*

for medical research. So in our workshop, scarce a day passes without some emissary from a future age encouraging us to frame our knowledge in e-books, whatever they might be. For all that we are told of how convenient, to the minute, and generally clean such things are, we here have an antique fondness for books that nestle in the hand like doves and coo pleasingly to their reader above such works as peer and grunt like prisoners through the bars of a computer screen. So we are more than ever pleased to find books that are proud and unashamed to be such: say it loud, the Prometheus Trust edition of the works of Thomas Taylor is books that are books. Books furnish a room? Not, books being what they are in the modern world, unless that room is a bedsit. These proud volumes, hard-bound in their purple and printed on strong paper, would furnish a palace.

So they look good; but can they play? Taylor, born in 1758, was at that training-ground early: a day without a volume or two translated before breakfast seems to have been a day wasted. The amount of work he rendered into English would itself be remarkable, without the copious notes and additional essays. The whole of Plato, the whole of Aristotle, most of Plotinus, Proclus, Porphyry, &c &c: this would be a phenomenal output from a dull day-labourer at the task of translation. Taylor was far from that. There are translations that read more easily; there are translations that better satisfy linguistic pedantry; there are none that are written from as close to the heart of the work as are these. He not only talked the talk, but walked the walk. His footnotes (things read usually only by the unwary) are worth the price of the books on their own, linking text to text and providing a valuable commentary.

Taylor has his limitations, no doubt born of his time. Known as 'the English pagan', he proclaimed 'his philosophical observations on the limits of Christianity' (his editor's words). *Zeitgeist 1: Reason 0*. The Plotinus that he translated explains that things can be received only according to the capacity of the receiver - a statement on reception that is one example of how important these texts are to anyone practising astrology - which might have led him to make such observations of the higher from the lower with more caution.

But the problem of astrology in the modern world is its lack of an intellectual underpinning: even those most adept in its practice often have little idea of why it is as it is; nor do we have the intellectual ammunition to mount a serious defence of our art against the illogic of the sceptics. It is exactly in such texts as these that the intellectual underpinning, the ammunition, is found, to say nothing of an increased depth of awareness of the true significance of any number of astrological techniques. There is a certain canon of philosophic works that are *essential* for anyone with a serious interest in astrology. Much of this canon is available in Taylor's

translations. Nor does its importance stop with astrology: the poets, painters and composers of the western tradition invariably, until a late age, assume a knowledge of these ideas in their audience. To approach their work without such knowledge is to lose so much.

For their immediate relevance to astrology, the starting points must be volumes II and XVII of the Prometheus Trust edition. The former contains Porphyry's essay on the Cave of the Nymphs, discussed elsewhere in this issue, and Taylor's own essay on the wanderings of Ulysses. The latter has Iamblichus' *On the Mysteries of the Egyptians, Chaldeans and Assyrians*, one of the great works in astrological history. I could devote the whole of this issue to explaining why these should be read; space forbids: just go read!

Thomas Taylor: volumes range between £13 and £28. Available, with discount, direct from the publishers at www.prometheustrust.co.uk +44(0)1373.467528

The Music of Love, by Felicity Uzas,

The first words of the amorous astrologer on spotting his prey are ever, 'Where's your Moon?' But no matter how straightforward such an enquiry might seem to the initiated, used to discussing their natal placements of any number of the most minor asteroids without need for reference to a chart, there is a majority among the Real People - a race to whose members astrologers are sometimes attracted - which is ignorant of even this elementary piece of astrological information. Closing in on a victim without a painstaking study of the synastry between the two charts being contrary to the Rules of Engagement, such ignorance has presented an insurmountable problem, restricting astrologers to breeding with their own kind, with the unfortunate results visible on any astrological bookshelf.

With Ms Uzas' groundbreaking new book, the problem is insurmountable no longer! For she has simplified synastry to an extent that we no longer need consider planets, yet have a system that is significantly more accurate than the usual comparison of natal charts.

This book being one to work with, rather than one to browse at leisure, it is produced in a handy size to slip into a pocket or handbag so it is ready at the moment of need - which is that all-important first visit to the victim's den. Instead of time-consuming labours over Solar Fire, all we need now do is head for the CD collection, comparing what we find there with what we have at home. Pithy paragraphs in the usual astro-cookbook style delineate all major aspects between all leading recording artists. A helpful star rating on each one tells us whether to 'Stay for an hour', 'Stay for life', or 'Turn and run - fast!'

Imagine the testosterone-fuelled nightmare that would be an AC/DC - Celine Dion opposition! (Ms Uzas is perhaps a little more graphic in her

description of this than is compatible with good taste.) Or the rigor mortised tedium of a Mike Oldfield - Phil Collins trine. Conjunctions, of course, are most favourable: even a Leonard Cohen conjunction is ideal - for suicide pacts. The unusually long delay between pen and press has unfortunately resulted in an outdated claim that a Britney Spears conjunction is impossible. But this is a minor quibble in a book that stakes out a rich territory that many other authors will cultivate.

Simple, yet profound: this is set to become a classic. And the stable-lads assure me that the theory works. Highly recommended!

Pub: Atterbury & Doyle; paperback; 180 pp. £9.95. From all bookshops.



"Golly gee! This book on synastry really works!"

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THE MOON IN THE MAN

How often do we hear the words, "This traditional stuff is very interesting; but I prefer psychological astrology"! We used to keep a ducking-stool by the yard pond for dealing with those who spouted such nonsense; but so frequent was its use that Elias, our carpenter, spent far too much of his limited time repairing the ravages of overuse and far too little producing the finely crafted hardwood glyphs that adorn our charts. So now we assign a couple of the less productive stable-lads to herd the culprits into an isolated section of the yard where they can babble harmlessly among themselves without disturbing others. That traditional

stuff offers us a close study of the psyche; how the modern astrology, which, whatever its New Age pretensions, is fundamentally materialistic, can claim to do the same baffles us.

As *The Apprentice* has discussed before, in traditional practice the assessment of the native's mind is made by considering the condition of and relationship between Mercury and the Moon. At the most superficial level, this gives us a division of the mind somewhat akin to the modern distinction between left and right brain: the Moon does the sensitive stuff; Mercury does the arithmetic. More accurately, the Moon's job is to gather impressions; Mercury's is, like a good filing-clerk, to put these impressions in order, store them, and then remember where he put them so they can be retrieved as needed.

It is important that the two planets are connected, that they at least behold each other, as we hope to find them working together. Such a connection is especially important in view of another aspect of the Moon's role here: it shows the action of grace. We may be able to decide that we shall think about some particular subject. We may even be able to keep this resolution for an instant or two. We cannot make a particular thought wander into our head. This happens only as a gift, and is the Moon's to give.

While the texts speak of the Moon/Mercury combination when considering the mind, however, they customarily omit the third member of the team: the Sun. We would hope to find all three of these planets in good condition, with a good relationship between them. The Sun is truth; the Moon's job is to reflect the light of truth to Mercury, who can articulate it, whether for internal or external expression. Compare Plotinus' statement: 'As speech is the echo of the thought in the Soul, so thought in the Soul is an echo from elsewhere: that is to say, as the uttered thought is an image of the soul-thought, so the soul-thought images a thought above itself and is the interpreter of the higher sphere'.⁸

So a combust Mercury can be an indication of a good mind, as if the close connection between Mercury and Sun cuts out the middleman that is the Moon. More often, however, the downside of combustion is more evident. It 'incites the wit to meddle with impertinent matters, or mere niceties', even if said wit be strong, and the absence of the Moon's intervention removes an insulating layer affording Mercury protection from the Sun's full glare. We may imagine the hurry and scurry among the clerks when the king pays a sudden visit, production disappearing in chaos as each collides with his fellow in their urgent desire to please. Such is the more typical result of Mercury combust: a tendency to system overload. How much more practical when the king is led along an ordered line of clerks by the intermediary Moon, advised on whose hand to shake and

⁸ *Ennead* I, 2.3

what to say to whom.

As we have noted before, yet is of such importance that we shall stress again, what is meant by a good mind is one that is correctly ordered. Whether its owner can finish *The Times*' crossword before his toast gets cold is neither here nor there.

Ptolemy derives the bulk of his character description from the Moon and Mercury. Not, note, from the sun-sign! The planet or planets that dominate Mercury and the Moon, which can include Mercury or the Moon itself, is 'the ruler of the soul'. Lilly calls it/them 'principal Significator of Manners'; not of how polite the person might be, but of their general mode of behaviour. Lilly gives greatest importance to a planet in the Ascendant. This needs to be close to the rising degree to be of such importance, so in most charts there will be no such planet. Even if there is, the planet dominating Mercury and the Moon should be considered: the ascending planet will be apparent in the native's nature, as a veneer laid over the rulers of the soul.

Domination can be by aspect or disposition. What we are looking for is the planet whose influence over Mercury and the Moon is in one way or another the greatest. So if Mercury were in Libra, where it exalts Saturn, and the Moon were conjunct Saturn, Saturn would be ruler of the soul. In which role he might have a partner: perhaps the Moon is in Pisces and Jupiter closely squares Mercury; Jupiter would be included. Sometimes each of Mercury and the Moon is dominated by a planet which has no significant connection with the other; again, we have two rulers.

These planets must then be judged according to their condition in that chart: 'the ruler of your soul is Saturn, therefore...' is no more accurate than 'you are an Aries, therefore...'. The planet's nature must be qualified by its accidental and essential dignities and its relations with the other six planets.

It is, of course, reasonable that we should be looking to the Moon and Mercury both when assessing the mind and when assessing the manner, or general behaviour, of the native: what colours the one will colour the other. Lilly distinguishes between Mercury as governor of 'the rational soul and animal spirits in the brain' and the Moon, ruler of the vegetative soul 'more near to the senses'. Hence the roles as described above, with the Moon reflecting truth and Mercury filing it.

'Soul', however, is a word of many meanings, most of them so obscure in our secular world that some definition may be of use. What we would call the soul cannot be located in the chart with the precision with which we might locate the liver or the fingers. Its substance, though, may be seen as being shown by the Moon. So insofar as the soul can be said to have a body of its own, in contrast to that body which it inhabits, we can

look to the Moon to show it. It is from this that comes the idea of Moon as vegetative soul.

This is too abstract to be of use to the Twenty-first century astrologer. I know exactly where my fingers are; I have a fair idea of where my liver is; but what of my soul, a thing of more importance than either? With the aim of saying something sufficiently clear to be useful, even if at the sacrifice of a degree of nice accuracy, it could be said that the soul is what we are left with when everything else inside us for once shuts up, once our proud-hearted are scattered and our internal mighty cast from their thrones. The commonest of life's experiences bringing us to this point is bereavement. In the helpless silence where nothing can be said or done, the soul is found. So if this place within us is shown by the Moon, Mercury, spirit of articulation, is the principle of not-shutting-upness that draws us out of that place.

This is not to blame Mercury for all our ills: all the planets have agendas of their own. Without Mercury, however, they would have no tongue to press their urgent claims on our attention. The apple doubtless looked delicious, but it was only through the serpent's words that it tempted Eve.

So it is that the tensions between the Moon and Mercury, and the condition and relationships of the planets having significant influence upon them, show the defining structure of the native's being: the internal architecture that makes him what he is.

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PIED BEAUTY

Lest Mercury fell hard done by, here is Gerald Manley Hopkins' hymn of praise to all things mercurial:

*Glory be to God for dappled things
For skies of couple-colour as a brindled cow;
For rose-moles in all stipple upon trout that swim;
Fresh-firecoal chestnut falls; finches' wings;
Landscape plotted and pierced - fold, fallow, and plough;
And all trades, their gear and tackle and trim.
All things counter, original, spare, strange;
Whatever is fickle, freckled (who knows how?)
With swift, slow; sweet, sour; adazzle, dim;
He fathers-forth whose beauty is past change:
Praise Him.*

LET'S GET THIS STRAIGHT

Peregrine

As is demonstrated in the worked example in his natal volume, William Lilly is of the opinion that a planet in its detriment or fall can also be peregrine. Gadbury, unsurprisingly, as he was Lilly's pupil, follows him. But Lilly, living on the cusp of the modern age, is unreliable on matters depending on an understanding of first principles. Our Master was heard only yesterday explaining to Simon, one of our new-fledged journeymen, his feathers not yet dry and ready for full flight, that such an opinion is contrary to reason.

A peregrine planet is one without essential dignity: this much is agreed. The amount of essential dignity a planet has tells us how much it conforms to its essential goodness. So if it has lots of essential dignity it is one of the good guys. If it is essentially debilitated - in detriment or fall - it is in a place where it cannot conform to this essential goodness. Saturn gives an example: his essential goodness is of the nature of structure, form, discipline. What happens to these qualities if we put them in the fast-running water that is cardinal water Cancer, or the fast-moving fire that is cardinal fire Aries? The centre cannot hold; the structure falls apart. The same is true if it is in fixed fire Leo: in the roaring furnace, even steel melts. Saturn's good qualities are destroyed. Whether the planet is nominally a malefic or not, if it is in detriment or fall it is a baddie.

Bonatti tells us, 'To consider whether the significator is Peregrine, for then the person whom he signifies, either in a Nativity or Question, etc., will be subtle, crafty, malicious, one that shall know how to act both good and evil, but be more inclinable to the latter'. The key phrase here is the last: it knows how to act good or evil, but inclines more to evil. It isn't one of the bad guys; it's one of the townfolk who stand weakly by. But what is more likely: that the storekeeper will find sufficient character to aid the good guy, or that from fear his actions, even if not deliberately supportive, will aid the bad? The peregrine planet is one without a moral rudder. It is drifting, and the currents of nature draw any drifting vessel to the stormy shore. Hence hotels having minibars and adult video channels, to profit from the drifting of their, literally, peregrine clients. The Gideon's Bible is not pay-per-view!

This idea of peregrine being rudderless is what makes it impossible for a planet in detriment or fall to be peregrine. They have their rudders, held fast to the worser cause; the peregrine planet has none. There is a further comparison to *So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth* (Rev. 3.16).

So what's so bad about horses?

The twelfth house is nasty; this much we know. So how did animals larger than goats, most of whom have no previous convictions, get dumped in this house of sin?

Young Jonas, one of our more advanced apprentices, was recently sent to the colonies to pass on the rudiments of the art. While there he met Richard Redmond, one of the few settlers who has not yet quite gone native, managing to scratch a living from a small plot of sweet potatoes and tobacco of poor quality, while keeping his musket cocked against visits from his irate landlords. Sharing a pipe one evening, as they waited for Mrs Redmond to prepare their repast of McNuggets and medium fries, Richard explained the connection.

Large animals, of which the type is the horse, are essentially untameable. We may think we master them, may control them for a while, but they will, we can be sure, at some point show us the limits of our mastery. As such they image our desire nature, which is the root of this house of self-undoing.

Our readers, who probably inhabit the Twenty-first century, will have a different acquaintance with the horse than we in the workshop. The horse is the most powerful thing that is part of our daily world. Our workshop painter, one Rembrandt van Rijn, recently depicted just this in a work he calls *The Polish Rider*. This young lad astride his steed is the hottest thing in town, waiting outside the 7/11 for any boy racer who will dare hit the strip with him. While the stable-lads may gawp at this picture in admiration, our craftsmen, that much older, look at it with a tear, knowing the sorrow of passing years.

It has long been standard iconography to show kings on horseback to signify their command of their desires, and hence their fitness to rule their people. Horses equate with the sea, that other wild, untameable, passionate beast; both are our desire nature (a feature of Neptune that the moderns, whose knowledge of the sea seems to extend no further than the Woolwich ferry, have forgotten). We may saddle the one, sail across the other, yet they have more power than we.

This sea of desires, this powerful beast, is our twelfth house. By extrapolation smaller animals are sixth house.

You cannot be Sirius!

Many times have we had to roust that Billy Blake and his friend among our craftsmen astrologers, John Varley, from the hayloft, where it is their wont to idle away the afternoon enjoying a spliff and sketching the souls of fleas. Despite his odd habits - or dishabits, given as he is to wandering our yard naked - the lad has picked up a smattering of astrology from this acquaintance.

I well recall the evening when he was carried giggling from the loft, pointing at that bright red star that speared the sky, and demanding:

*Tyger, tyger, burning bright,
In the forests of the night:
What immortal hand or eye,
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?*

It has been claimed, with the customary academic disdain for knowledge on matters astrological, that he was speaking of Sirius. As those of the stable-lads who were unfortunate enough to have the messy and vituperative experience of dousing him in the yard pond well know, he was not. It was of Antares.



*Christ debates with Satan:
from Blake's illustrations to
Paradise Regained.*

His *Tyger*, in the *Songs of Experience*, makes a pair with the *Lamb* of the *Songs of Innocence*. The contrast between *Innocence* and *Experience*, 'showing the two contrary states of the human soul', is that of the upward and the downward thrust of the solstitial axis. With 'Little Lamb who made thee', Blake hymns, if not directly, Aldebaran, star of the Spring Equinox. With his *Tyger*, Blake engages most directly with Antares, 'the rival to Mars', fiery star of the Autumn Equinox.

Antares is the star of Hallowe'en, of All Saints, of the grim fires burning to presage the coming of winter's cold. How can this happen, this corruption, in the world of growth and all things good promised by Aldebaran? In his illuminations, Blake makes the point that the *Tyger* is Antares by putting an eagle above the word *Tyger* in the first line of the poem. He paints a tree that has shed its leaves, not because, in the words of one authority, it is 'scared leafless' by the tyger, but because Antares is the star of autumn and this is when leaves fall. When he illuminates his *Lamb*, the tendrils that surround the text are vibrant and budding: it is spring. The birds here are doves, bird of Venus, ruler of Taurus.

In *Paradise Regained*, Milton has Christ say to Satan 'my rising is thy fall'. Both poets would have been aware of the astrological reference: when Aldebaran, star of the *Lamb*, rises, Antares, being directly opposite, sets. It must be probable that Blake, who believed the spirit of Milton had made its home in him, found the germ of his twin poems in this line.

NEPTUNIA REPLIES.....

Dear Neptunia,

I was watching a video of *Snow White* with my boyfriend last night, when he told me that scientists have recently discovered an eighth dwarf. At first I thought he was joking; but he was so insistent that I am almost convinced. Now I am so confused, and all my belief systems are threatened. Can there really be an eighth dwarf? Only you can help me in my distress.

Yours in desperation, Tracey

Dear Tracey,

Boys love to say this kind of thing. It makes them feel powerful, and they think it impresses us girls. Scientists are much like boys: they will say anything to create an effect, without giving even a moment's thought to whether their statements have any foundation in truth.

Neither he nor these soi-disant scientists can have been paying attention to the movie. I have watched it again and again as I relax after long days at the astrological forge, while Alphonso, his sinewed arms still fragrant with the aphrodisiac perfume of my Ferrari's gearbox, with which he has been tinkering in hope of coaxing another horsepower or two into my yoke, massages my feet and breathes love sonnets into my yearning ear. Yet in all those times I have watched it, I have not seen one single trace of another dwarf. Nor have I heard one, for this eighth dwarf, if such there be, clearly has no part in the script. Nor is there any need for one to be introduced: the story is completely contained as it is, so there can be no possible purpose in introducing an eighth dwarf - let alone a ninth, to say nothing of a cartoon dog.

Yes, there are many woodland animals flitting among the leaves of the forest. But just because a creature possesses large eyes and a cuddly demeanour, it is not necessarily a dwarf. Indeed, dwarves there are seven: for you will, I am sure, have noted that the dwarves' house has no facilities for an eighth. Cups, plates, towels, table-settings: of all these there are seven, and only seven.

Snow White is obviously too advanced viewing for this lad. So, Tracey, I suggest you keep that video for when you have the good fortune to spend an evening out of his company. I'm sending you a copy of my own new video release, *101 Astrological Bloopers*, to provide harmless entertainment for your romantic evenings together.

Your friend, Neptunia.

NEWS FROM THE FRONT

- publications and lectures by John Frawley

The Astrologer's Apprentice

The heavy schedule of touring that has caused such delays with this issue of the magazine is over. John will now be making only European trips and one or two long-haul tours a year. Together with other major changes in the workshop over the coming months, this will allow him to devote far more time to writing, so the magazine will once again appear more regularly, with two or three issues a year. Subscribe now to make sure of your copy!

The Books

Signed copies of *The Real Astrology* and *The Real Astrology Applied* are available from Apprentice Towers. We are aiming to publish *The Horary Textbook* late summer or early autumn. John has numerous other projects in hand, at least two of which should be out during 2005.

The books are or will soon be available in Serbian, Hungarian, Russian and Spanish; a Portuguese edition is being negotiated. Edited and expanded editions of titles currently available only in Serbian will soon be out in English.

The Mailing-list

There are few levels lower than that of the average astrology mailing-list. A cut above the average is the new list devoted to the study of Real Astrology: this is sure to be of interest to aficionados of *The Astrologer's Apprentice*. Details from starology@aol.com

The Apprentice Live!

Bookings currently confirmed are: Edinburgh, June 20th; Amsterdam, October 1st; den Bosch, October 2nd; Aachen, February 20th; Belgrade, in March. Check www.johnfrawley.com for further dates and details.

There are any number of recordings of John's lectures and workshops in circulation: none is presently available from Apprentice Towers. In the footsteps of the King, John has recorded with Sun: its tapes and CDs of various sell-out appearances at the Avalon Ballroom in San Francisco are made to a particularly high standard and are supplied with printouts of all charts discussed. Details from PO Box 4184, Mountain View, CA 94040, USA; SunRecording@earthlink.net



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