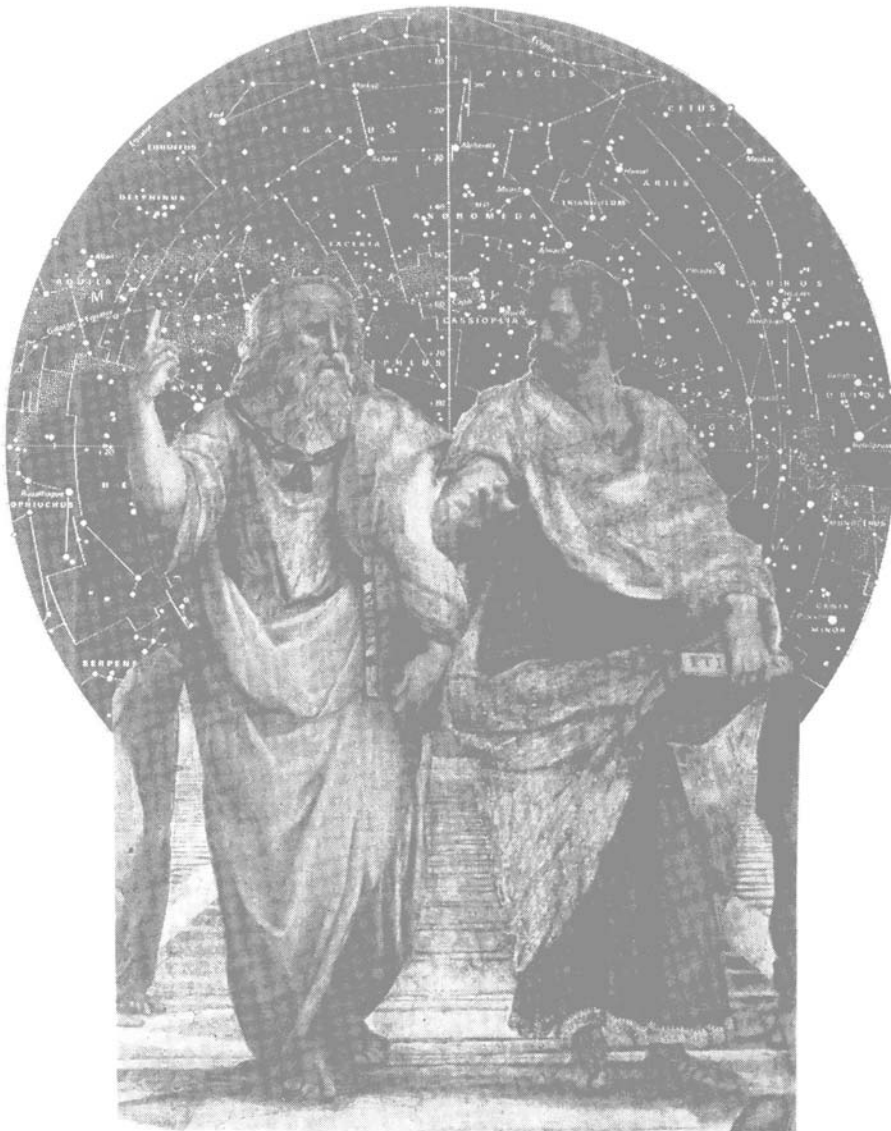


THE ASTROLOGER'S APPRENTICE

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THE APPRENTICE NEEDS YOU!

Contributions to The Astrologer's Apprentice are welcomed.

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.

We are especially keen to publish informed articles on the historical and intellectual background to astrology.

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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WARTS AND ALL

William Lilly's fascination with bodily blemishes can seem as inexplicable a product of its time as the gales of laughter guaranteed to greet the words 'Fred Bloggs' in the early sixties. He tells how, to liven up an evening in company, he would set a chart and describe from it the position and nature of the warts, moles and scars of his companions. This is one of the few things that can make us truly grateful for the invention of television.

Many modern horary astrologers will preface any account of a horary judgement with a physical description of the querent, taken from the chart. One can only assume that they do not actually give this description to the querent: being told by someone whom you have met that you are tall and blond is not likely to astound you with their astrological skills. Far more impressive to take the psychological approach, telling the client that they are more sensitive than people realise and that they had a difficult childhood: this will convince almost anyone of the astrologer's omniscience.

Lilly used warts and moles as his convincer. Indeed, he says that the verity of these rules was one of the main things that convinced him of the truth of astrology. Seeing eight or ten clients a day, he would not do it with all; but a quick "You have a large red mole on the inside of your left thigh, near the top," would persuade the more sceptical enquirer of his talents. He could then proceed to judgement of the question asked.

This area of horary is neglected today, but Lilly's rules have not stopped working over the last three hundred years: they are still dazzlingly accurate. Most surprisingly, perhaps, they work just as well for scars and tattoos, whether in a horary chart or a nativity. It is as if the scar comes to roost at a place ordained since birth. We can compare the way palmists will read scars just as any natural marking on the hand.

Lilly says that the querent will have a scar on the part of the body represented by the sign Ascending, and on that signified by the sign on the sixth cusp. Then also, on the parts shown by the rulers of the Ascendant and of the sixth house, and by the Moon. The sign and planet concerned being masculine or feminine will show whether the mark is on the left or right side of the body; whether the planet is above or below the horizon shows if the mark is on the front or visible part of the body, or on the back or hidden side (eg under the arm). The number of degrees of the planet or cusp will show how far down the particular

member the mark lies: the fewer the degrees, the higher the mark.

Our Chief of Men



Cromwell and warts

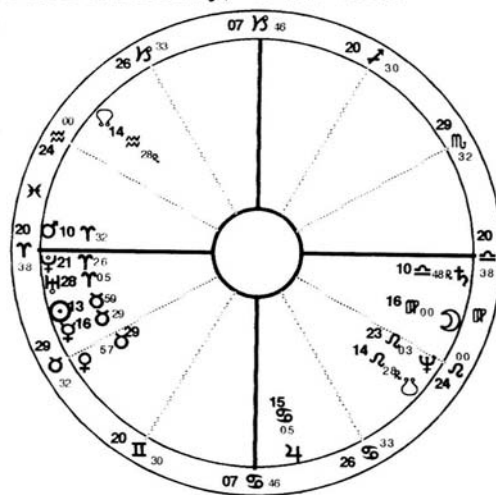
As a wart fan, Lilly lived in the best of all possible times. The most famous warts in history adorned the face of his contemporary, Oliver Cromwell. We can safely follow Gadbury's birth-chart for Cromwell, disregarding Partridge's rather eccentric rectification, based primarily on his sure but puzzling conviction that 'summo mano', the top of the morning, obviously means five past one a.m.

Rectification by events will always remain unconvincing: astrologers who cannot exactly time an event in the future from an aspect are magically able to exactly determine aspects from the timing

of events in the past. Rectification of a nativity by physical appearance is a study today unduly neglected. It will not give a birth-time to the second; but what purpose a birth timed to the second may have, except to warn, "This chart is rectified, don't take it seriously," is one of the more inscrutable mysteries of our art.

Gadbury gives Cromwell as having 20 Aries on the Ascendant. Aries rules the head; 20 degrees indicates a point about two thirds of the way down. The Ascendant ruler is Mars, at 9 Aries. Mars in Aries again represents the head; here, we have a point about one third of the way down. The two luminaries in exact aspect would give a mark on one of the eyes: as they are in feminine signs, it would be the left eye.

I am not familiar with the appearance of Cromwell's knees (Sun, Lord of the sixth, in Taurus) or arms, shoulders and bowels (Moon in



Oliver Cromwell
Apr 26 1599 3.44 AM LMT
Huntingdon

Virgo); but on the evidence of the famous portrait, the above indications are pretty accurate. The three main warts were below his lower lip, in the left eye-socket and above the left eye-brow. Mars being a masculine planet in a masculine sign gives us the wrong side of the face for the one above the eye-brow, but we haven't done badly.

The Witchfinder General

While Lilly was enjoying his wart-fests in Walton-on-Thames, bodily blemishes were far from a source of amusement in East Anglia. Matthew Hopkins had appeared from total obscurity to convince many, though by no means all, of the local judiciary that he had infallible methods for searching out witches. Much of his evidence was in the form of moles, third nipples and the like, whose unfortunate owners were said to use them to suckle their satanic familiars. These teats also prevented the body from sinking: final proof of demonic league was found by tying the suspect's thumbs and toes and throwing them into a pool. Those who floated were guilty.

Completely against the trend, which was showing a marked decline since Elizabethan times, Hopkins was the inspiration behind a brief but bloody revival of the witch-craze in which hundreds were hanged (not, as tradition reports, burned at the stake). What with one thing and another, blemishes in the mid-seventeenth century were clearly the talk of the nation.

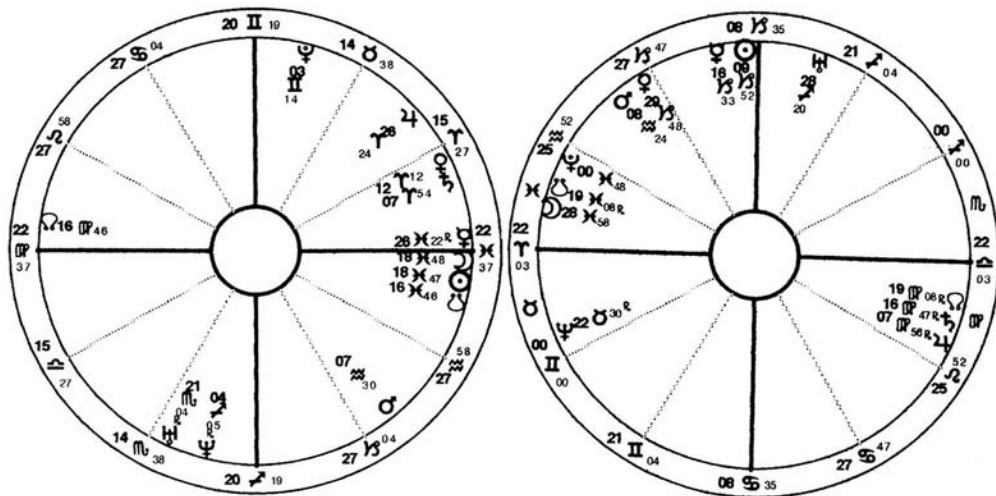
So obscure was Hopkins' early life that we do not know even in which year he was born. The chart given is for the eclipse immediately before his first case. It is set for Manningtree, near Colchester, where his career both began and ended.

In traditional astrology, eclipses are of immense importance. The chart for an eclipse contains the potential for everything that can happen until the next eclipse. How it will happen depends on the relationship between the chart for the time of the eclipse, cast for the relevant location, and the chart for whatever it is we are considering, be it a person, an institution, a country, or whatever. Here, we are concerned with the eclipse's effect on the people of England, so we take the chart for the coronation of William the Conqueror in 1066, as being the 'birth-chart' of England.

The time from eclipse to eclipse contains



Matthew Hopkins



Eclipse
 March 8 1644 N/S 6.10 PM LMT
 Manningtree, Essex

Coronation of William I
 December 25, 1066 Noon
 London

smaller periods from lunation to lunation. In classical practice, the chart for each successive lunation is considered as defining more closely what can happen in that period, within the overall limits established by the eclipse. A chart for an event, an election or a birth cannot bring forth anything that is not possible within the limitations of the period of time in which it takes place. It would not be incorrect to say that the chart for the preceding eclipse is more important than the chart for a particular event (or birth); it is not so finely focussed, but it paints a broader picture.

This eclipse is conjunct the South Node in the Coronation chart, and this Node is in the twelfth house: the eclipse is going to dredge up something mucky from the national psyche. The twelfth is the house of witches, and the eclipse is also conjunct the antiscion of Venus in its own chart. With Venus in its fall, women had best look out, especially as the eclipse conjuncts the fixed star Markab, associated with violent death. This throws an extreme emphasis onto the conjunction by antiscion of Venus and Markab.

Mercury is emphasised by its angularity, and could hardly be weaker: in both its detriment and its fall, it is retrograde, combust and heading deeper into combustion. There will be some very distorted thinking. It is conjunct the malefic fixed star Difda, which is concerned with shame and secret vice. Despite this, when conjunct Mercury, Difda is said to produce laws and social advances favourable to the community; but with Mercury so severely debilitated, the law will be used in the most perverted way.

On the midpoint of Mercury, this distorted thinking, and Jupiter,



natural ruler of the law, is Venus in fall: we now see how women are going to suffer. The North Node at the eclipse conjuncts Denebola, a star of Venus/Saturn nature: further testimony that the drive of this eclipse is towards the harming (Saturn) of women. The eclipse being in Pisces, it is disposed by Jupiter: it will work through the law; yet Jupiter is on the midpoint of the eclipse and Pluto. According to Ebertin, Sun and Moon midpoints with Pluto give physical suffering, martyrdom and 'the pursuit of selected objectives with fanatical zeal' - in this instance, through the medium of the law.

Apart from being the law in general, Jupiter could also be taken to signify Hopkins, who had been a lawyer before

inventing the new trade of witch-finding. Being in its own triplicity, Jupiter is powerful, yet the close square from Neptune to its antiscion suggests it is subject to delusions. Hopkins seems to have been quite sincere in his belief that he was seeking out witches and performing an invaluable public service by doing so. Four out of the first batch of twenty-nine witches for whose deaths he was responsible were hanged for sending the devil, in the likeness of a bear, into his garden to kill him. Square Neptune indeed.

The eclipse falls on the Mercury/Neptune midpoint in the Coronation chart, so, apart from the indications in the eclipse chart itself, it is touching a point on which English thinking is innately woolly and self-deceiving (if such a point can possibly exist).

Falling on the Coronation South Node, the eclipse opposes the Coronation Saturn, with its singular relationship to Mercury. With Saturn retrograde, the two planets are both applying to an immediate trine, with very strong mutual reception, showing that combination of propriety, respect for authority, priggishness and inhibition that in a later age manifested as the stiff upper lip. Pulling in the Sun/Neptune midpoint, the Saturn indicates 'bad or unhealthy blood', which is as good a description of its effects as any, and singularly appropriate to the events following this eclipse. We should not forget that, by antiscion, the eclipse Venus, in all its weakness, is thrown into this emotional maelstrom. The energies of this 'bad blood' found the weakest connected point, the debilitated Venus, at which to come out.

And how, exactly? Jupiter, ruler of the eclipse, is on the English

Moon/Neptune midpoint. Concisely, this would indicate delusions involving women; Ebertin elaborates to 'sensitive women, weakly or feeble persons - Disappointed or disillusioned women - Mediums, people connected with psychical phenomena' and so on, giving as close a portrait of Hopkins' victims as is possible without actually saying 'witches, real or imaginary'.

Hopkins was finally hoist with his own petard in 1647, when his intimate knowledge of witchcraft was taken as evidence that he was a witch himself. He too had his toes and thumbs tied and was 'swum'. He floated, and was duly hanged. After all this turmoil, the good citizens of East Anglia could once again enjoy their warts in peace.

Elections

On the theme of coronation charts, we can correct a recent query in the *Astrological Association Journal* about the time of Elizabeth I's coronation. It did, of course, take place at noon. The time was elected, in a stunning piece of creative astrology, by John Dee. In electing the time for a coronation, the first, most elementary step is to put the Sun - natural ruler of monarchs - on the Midheaven. That is, the coronation must take place at noon.

The point of electing the time for an event is to arrange the event so it takes place at that time; it is not just a means for keeping idle astrologers out of mischief. In Elizabeth's day, a coronation would have been a small-scale affair: there would have been no problem at all in arranging it within at most a few minutes of the time desired. The lack of any historical indication that it took place at any other time, and the way the promise of the chart was fulfilled throughout her reign, leaves no reasonable doubt that Elizabeth was, indeed, crowned at noon.

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WHAT HAPPENED TO TIME?

O tempora! O mores!

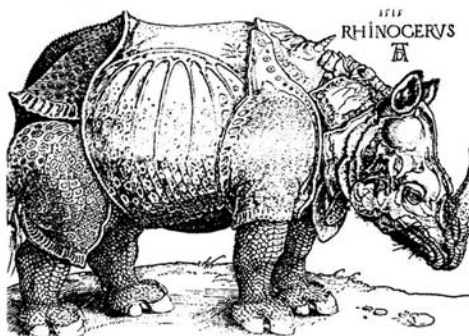
The planetary rulers of the hours were once of the greatest importance to the astrologer. Yet his counterpart using modern techniques is scarcely even aware of their existence, while even in horary practice we glance at them, have a vague feeling that perhaps we ought to be doing something with them, and then pass on. Far, however, from being just niceties of astrological technique, they are a key to our understanding of the universe.

Dealing with the considerations before judgement, William Lilly puts the hour ruler first and devotes far more space to this than to any of the other cautions. He did not always observe the rules he gives, but this emphasis must be significant. So what are the hour rulers, why do we ignore them, and does it matter?

Technicalities

Astrological hours do not correspond with our uniform civil hours of 60 minutes. The astrological hour is one-twelfth of the time between sunrise and sunset, or sunset and sunrise. So hours vary slightly in length from day to day, and are of the same length by day and by night only at the spring and autumn equinoxes.

Each hour is ruled by one of the seven traditional planets, as are each of the days of the week. Astrological days differ from civil days in starting at sunrise, so the first hour of the astrological day will be in the morning, not the middle of the night. The first hour of each day has the same ruler as that day (eg the Moon on a Monday, Mars on Tuesday) and the succeeding hours are ruled by the planets in the order: Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Sun, Venus, Mercury, Moon. So the first hour on Wednesday is ruled by Mercury, the second by the Moon, the third by Saturn and so on.



It is our familiarity with the idea that Monday is connected with the Moon, Tuesday with Mars that leads us to remark that the first hour after sunrise is ruled by the ruler of that day. In fact, it is the other way round: Monday is Monday because the first hour of that day is ruled by the Moon, and so on. The hour-ruler is more

fundamental than the day-ruler. It is notable that when the forces of darkness decide to decimalise the hours of the day, giving us ten hours by day and ten by night, the days - each named after its first hour - will then flow in their 'correct' planetary order, rather than the present apparent jumble.

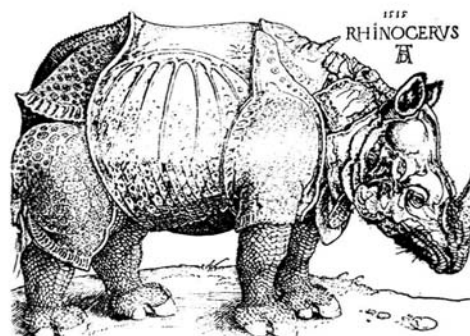
When referring to the hour-rulers, we usually mean the rulers of the astrological, or true, hours. Since early records, however, these rulers have also been applied to the artificial equal hours, as represented on the clock. Our preference for time in its wild, rather than caged, condition leads us to refer only to the natural hour rulers from here on. The application of the system to clock time must, as we shall see below, be even at best an inferior one.

Lilly gives tables for calculating the hour ruler at any time of any day. It is easier by computer. Change the chart from whatever house-system you are using into Placidus (it doesn't work with any other). Mentally divide each house in half: each half represents one natural hour. Give the bottom half of the 12th house, adjacent to the Ascendant, to the day-ruler, and then distribute the planets in the usual order, counting clockwise, one to each half-house. The planet ruling the half-house in which the Sun falls is the Ruler of the Hour. Note that the line between one astrological hour and the next is just as clear and just as precise as that between successive civil hours: the hour-rulers are either on duty or they are not - there is no period of imprecision around the dividing-lines.

Although it is not a conclusive argument - Regiomontanus, for example, works well for horaries, and if it is not broke we shall not attempt to fix it - this correspondence of the Placidian houses with natural time has a compelling elegance. By its very structure, the Placidian system relates the nature of the time closely to the mundane houses with a neatness redolent of truth.

So what?

The single, fundamental assumption of astrology is too rarely stated. This is not just why astrology works, but why it is, why it exists, and why people for thousands of years have bothered to try to understand it. The assumption is this: *time varies in its quality*. Everything else in astrology follows naturally from here. This is what we are doing in



"Time is the interval between rhinoceroses" - Salvador Dali

practising astrology: assessing the quality of different moments. This is not an assumption that is accepted by the scientists, and hence by the educators.

Modern science regards time as a constant. It may stretch or shrink or fold or do the strange dances that post-relativist theory demands of it, but each moment of it is indistinguishable. Take the classic idea of the experiment: if the same action is repeated with the same temperature and the same pressure, the same result should follow. It is taken for granted that time will have the same nature whenever the experiment is done. The experiments of science being gross, they will usually trample to the same result whatever the quality of the time (though there are exceptions enough), rather as elephants will have much the same effect in a field as in a garden. Results that - quite possibly because of variations in the quality of time - do not produce the same result are discarded, until such occasion as there are so many of them that it becomes necessary to revise the experiment.

But time does vary, just as place. When the sower goes forth to sow, some of his seed falls on fertile soil, some on stoney ground, some among thistles. When we act, some of our actions fall on fertile moments, some on stoney ones, and some too among thistles. When we are told 'there is a time for every purpose under heaven', this does not mean 'everything has to be done sooner or later'. It means exactly what it says: there is a specific time for everything. If we try to do things at unsuitable times, we will succeed only partially, or not at all.

The combination of day-ruler and hour-ruler gives a system of great subtlety for describing the nature of each hour. A Venus hour on a Venus day will have a different quality to a Venus hour on a Mars, Mercury or Saturn day. 3 o'clock today will not have the same nature as 3 o'clock tomorrow, and, as the clock position of each astrological hour changes with the time of sun-rise, very possibly not the same as 3 o'clock on the same day next week. This combination of rulers gives the broad background against which the positions of the planets paint the fine detail: we obsess over the detail at the expense of an understanding of the whole picture. The broad expanse may not be so exciting, but it is more vital for a correct understanding of what is going on.

We can still see a few of the hour rulerships in action, although, as even Sunday becomes a day like any other, the idea that time is uniform and undifferentiated now goes unchallenged. Shortly after sunrise on Monday we have a Saturn hour on a Moon day - no fun: a conflict between duty and our most basic instincts, or - in the terms of the psychologists - between our adult and baby selves, telling us, as we hurl the alarm-clock across the room, just why we don't like Mondays. Mid-morning on Sunday we traditionally have formal (Saturn hour)

worship of God (Sun day), while mid-afternoon on Saturday, we have sporting (Jupiter hour) fixtures (Saturn day).

This perception of time has not only a temporal but also a spatial subtlety that exceeds that of the clock. Because the time of sun-rise varies with location, I can be talking to someone on the phone in what is, say, a Mars hour for me, but which may well be a Jupiter hour for them. This can be true even if they are only a few streets away. We may well have experienced the confusions this causes.



Radicality

For a horary chart to be radical - that is, readable with confidence of the possibility of correct judgement - Lilly demands that the hour-ruler be the same as the Ascendant ruler, that it rule the triplicity of the Ascendant, or that it be of the same nature as the Ascendant (ie hot & dry, cold & moist etc). Its casting an aspect to the Ascendant is irrelevant.

Note that agreement by exaltation is not enough. If a planet is in its own triplicity it is, literally and metaphorically, 'in its element', as a planet in the sign that it rules is 'in its own house'. But a planet exalted is not in its own home, its own surroundings. It is likened to an honoured guest in someone else's home: powerful as this is, more so in many ways than triplicity rulership, it is a power endowed rather than inherent. Well as you may treat them, you don't necessarily expect your house-guests to open the door and decide who may come in.

Charts for events - such as births - do not need to conform to this criterion of radicality to be valid, probably because an event, being more tangible than a question, is considered to be real whether we like it or not.

Now Lilly, as we have seen, placed great emphasis on the consideration of radicality by planetary hour - at least in theory. Dealing with some 2000 questions a year, however, he often ignored it in practice. It is unrealistic to expect otherwise. It is not part of the astrologer's job to tell his clients "Go away, and don't come back until you're in harmony with the universe." Many modern horary astrologers, in a slavish devotion to the word rather than the practice of Lilly, seem happy to do this.

Even when his published charts are radical by hour, Lilly rarely finds this significant enough to mention. It seems that the emphasis he gives to this consideration when laying down the rules is not at all an

accurate reflection of his own attitude, but is a survival from the older authorities from which he was working. Its importance has diminished over the centuries.

The Road to Ruin

By Lilly's day, uniform clock-time was becoming the standard, as it had never been before: even in villages, the time would be tolled by the church bell, in accordance with its clock. With the coming of the railways, the various differing local times were homogenised. Today, our lives are dominated by this artificial conception of time to such an extent that the consideration of radicality by planetary hour can be safely disregarded. Our sense of time is now so hopelessly out of joint that it is idle to demand this correspondence between our actions and the nature of the hour.

This is not to say that the hour-ruler lacks all significance - just that we are, by and large, no longer open to its influence, as we seek to control time rather than being guided by it. Its power can be seen most clearly in those issues that are most clearly beyond human determination: charts concerning pregnancy, for example, or the behaviour of animals, as in horse-races. It would probably be worth examining its action in charts for humans behaving as a mass - elections, fashions or mobs. But, by and large, one hour is now the same as any other.

It is significant in the chart that the time is told by the position of the Sun, the Sun being the manifest body of the Divine. As we have seen, the hour-ruler is the planet that has rulership over the small section of the chart in which the Sun appears. It is the filter through which the Sun's light is directed, the particular fragment of many-

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coloured glass staining the white radiance of eternity at that particular moment. The stained glass of the great cathedrals embodies this notion.

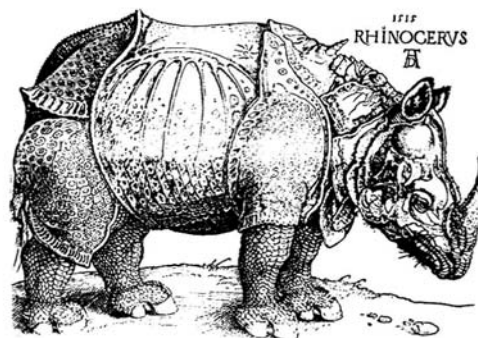
This same idea has another manifestation, which makes the nature of the hour-rulers and the mystery of their loss of power much clearer. An angel is, literally, a messenger: endless numbers of them speed and post o'er land and ocean on errands from God. They are, as we are, differentiated in their essence, and will be called into service accordingly. For an errand of mercy, Gabriel might be sent; on an errand of justice, Michael, and so on, the angel being the visible channel of the Will of God in the same way as the hour is the visible colouring of the white radiance of the Sun. It is, for example, a particularly sad hour that is summoned from all years to mourn Adonais.

And angels, like hour-rulers, were once rather more familiar to man than they are today. As with astrological magic, there exists a vast literature of angelic appearances, which we now choose to regard only as fairy-story or, at best, symbolism. As with the literature on magic, we have no reason for disregarding it other than its not fitting our current preconceptions. When William Blake tells us he bumped into an angel on Peckham Rye, we are able to write this off as the testimony of an obvious looney because the scientists assure us that such things cannot possibly happen. These are the same scientists who tell us that cows eat sheep; but it is Blake who is the looney. It is noticeable that the evidence for appearance of angels has declined at exactly the same rate as the use of the planetary rulers of the hours. Lilly laments that even in his age it is no longer easy to communicate with them, as they speak 'like the Irish, much in the throat'.

A recurrent argument in the literature of the great traditions is that the universe becomes progressively more gross. If we compare this with our astrological theory, we find a plausible explanation of where the angels - and the hour-rulers - have gone.

The Times They Are A-Changing

Modern science believes that the laws of nature remain unchanging. As they were in the beginning, they are now and forever shall be. This may be true, but there is not one scrap of evidence to support it. The only reasons for accepting it are arrogance, fear and convenience. In the traditions, the idea that the



laws of nature change is commonplace; that the ancients never managed to invent Coca-Cola or the machine-gun should not blind us to their intellectual achievements: they may quite possibly be right. Their views are of particular relevance to us, because they provide the structure on which astrology is based. Astrology is not born from our modern culture, and we cannot understand it within contemporary terms.

Our idea of 'elements' has been clouded by the modern use of the word. There is something of that in it, but the idea of four different levels of being would perhaps be closer to what is meant by elements in astrology. These levels can be seen as a pyramid, with fire, the lightest, at the top, then air, water and finally earth. It does not do to see these too literally, as the fire in the grate, for example, is something far grosser than the elemental fire with which we are concerned here.

Earth, obviously enough, is the level of matter, or form. Water is the level of emotion; air of reason and fire of spirit. Time, as we perceive it, exists at the level of water: it is an emotional measure. We need only consider how the apparent speed of time changes with our emotional state. Time and place are what connect us to the world: this is why we cast a horoscope for a certain time at a certain place. Place is the physical connection; time the emotional connection. Emotion moves far faster than form. Air, the reasoning connection with the world, works far faster than emotion: we can zip backwards and forwards as we please, at apparently limitless speed.

The Norse legends tell of Thialfi, the fastest runner on Earth, who challenged the giants' champion to run three races. In the first, Thialfi was just beaten. In the second, he had completed only half the course by the time his opponent finished. In the third, he had not even raised one foot from the ground before his opponent reached home. The giants' champion was, of course, Wit. Reason runs at up to the speed of light. This is why the scientists tell us that this is the fastest at which anything can move: trapped in the cell of reason they cannot see beyond its walls.

Beyond reason, however, lies fire, the spiritual, the realm of intellection. At this level, time is irrelevant. For example, this is the level of eternity: we tend to think of eternity as being an immensely long time; but it is not - it is a state in which time, as we are aware of it, no longer exists.

Fire is of particular interest to astrologers, as this is the level through which astrology works. Fire is the spirit, the essence in all things. Similar essences will move as one. When we speak of the planetary rulers of objects, we are speaking of essence. Consider the rose: its essence is its 'rose-ness'. This essence is primarily of the nature of Venus, giving it beauty, and Mars, giving it thorns. Venus and the

rose, and Mars and the rose, are essentially connected. What moves the one will move the other.

This is what is meant by planetary influence - though influence is not quite the right word. The idea of influence is stuck in Enlightenment corpuscular theory: we cannot accept that one thing can influence another without the physical or metaphorical equivalent of a length of rope joining the two together. Things of similar essence will move as one with no connection between them other than their existence: they are as one; the different forms into which they have been poured provide no boundary.

This connection, fire to fire, is that towards which the grosser levels strive: sexual and romantic love, for example, are the attempts of earth and water to achieve the same.

But, according to the traditions, we have slipped further and further down this pyramid, at a speed that increases as that of a stone rolling down a hill. Man, a being of essence clothed in form, has identified more and more with form until he completely denies the existence of essence: for perhaps the first time in any civilisation ever, we have an age where the absence of any religious faith is regarded as not lamentable, not even as a positive, liberating leap forward - that is, as a reaction against faith - but as totally unremarkable, normal. Man has reduced himself to the level of a machine - a being of earth; as he has done this to himself, he has done the same to time.

A major milestone on the journey downhill, where the gradient suddenly changed from the gentle to the precipitous, was the strangely-named 'Enlightenment': how Orwellian a reversal of language to give such a name to the period at which the light was finally turned out. The natural rhythms of time, to which the human organism responds by its very design, are not suited to the inexorable rhythms of the machine. The owners of the dark satanic mills found it expedient to override these natural rhythms by imposing regular clock time on their employees. The imposition of clock over natural time was done quite deliberately and, with a surprising degree of perceptiveness, often quite consciously as a means of breaking the will of the work-force¹. We still see today the bizarre ritual of giving a clock to someone who retires - at the very moment when he no longer needs it. It is like giving a freed slave his shackles as a souvenir. By now, he is probably so institutionalised he cannot feel comfortable without them, and will still wear them, free or not.

As time is related to emotion, the suppression of natural time was mirrored in the repression of natural feeling required to be servant to a machine for fourteen hours a day. As the cult of the material grew, so

¹: See E P Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class and Customs and Commons*.

did the ideal of the stiff upper lip, as man became the machine that he served.

The hand guiding this great change was that of Reason. Typical of the aims, if extreme in its means, was Josiah Wedgewood's planned Etruria, the mother of all Brave New Worlds, where offspring would be raised strictly by the clock and - above all else - not a second was to be wasted in idleness, even by a child. Reason is still tidying the loose ends of our natural lives away for us: "Sunday trading? - you know it makes sense." And such Del Boy logic betrays the last vestiges of humanity that remain to us. The first time the Apprentice lectured on this theme was one Mayday. Mayday, however, one of the great festivals that mark the organic year, was to be celebrated on May the sixth: being a Monday, it was so much more convenient.

Two hundred years of keeping machine time, with all the emotional disorientation to which this leads, may explain much in our society. We are now asked to take yet one step further, to abandon GMT and switch to European time - Prague time, to be precise. There is a simple, human, solution to the problems we face with dark mornings and Greenwich Mean Time: stay in bed. That is what the human organism is designed to do when it lives in this location, just as the organism living in Spain is designed to have a siesta in the heat of the day - a feat which the Spaniards evidently manage without the world coming to an end. Rather than contorting ourselves and our natural sense of time, born of our Britishness, to suit our institutions, we have the option of adapting our institutions to suit ourselves. But mad dogs and Englishmen will doubtless continue to go to work when it is still pitch dark.



The horoscope relates time to place: it is set for a particular time, in a particular location. If man could put in the same eight hours wherever he lived, if it didn't matter whether he were resident of Prague or London, we wouldn't have to do all the complicated arithmetic necessary to set the chart for place. We are products of a time in a location: that is why we do bother with this arithmetic; that is why we relocate a chart whenever we move for any appreciable length of time. We forget this at our peril.

Peter Simple commented on the 'conquest of space': "here we find enshrined the idea that man is doomed perpetually to be at total war with his environment, conquering or being conquered. No one asks what we are to do with space once we

have conquered it. We are to conquer it for conquest's sake, spurred on by a reckless, unreflecting and all-consuming restlessness." The same is true of our desire to conquer time and bend it to our will.

The Measurement of Time

Since the Enlightenment we have become obsessed with measuring time. When we measure space, we do it with space: that is, we hold a calibrated piece of space against the space we wish to measure. We cannot measure time by time: we can measure that too only by space. All our measures of time measure only the movement of an object through space. With this spatial, linear measure of time, we are measuring time in terms of earth, mechanising it, burying it in the grossest form, ignoring its true qualities. It is no more correct to measure time in terms of space than any other of the properties of water, air or fire. Space is the measure of space alone, earth for earth.

We are so used to this that we no longer see its imperfections, but if we can measure time by space, we can just as well ask "How much do you love God?" and answer "Thirty-two centimetres." This mixing of levels is pernicious, as the resultant mixture will always sink into the grosser. There is a way of measuring time as it actually is, that is of measuring it qualitatively: it is called astrology. Whatever we may think we are doing when we practise astrology, what we are doing is defining the nature of an instant of time, and thence the possibilities that can flow from it.

The coarsening of our perception of time is why the planetary hour rulers are now so unimportant. The angels are still sent out on their errands, but we are now of such dense substance, so completely identified with form, that they cannot make themselves known to us. We would rather believe the scientists who tell us they cannot exist than the loonies who tell us they do. Among the ancients, radicality by planetary hour, the affinity between the querent, as represented by the Ascendant, and the messenger through which the Divine was working at that moment, was vital. It was the check to see, as it were, whether the querent was in the right temple for that particular prayer and if he was open to the response; the check to see whether the channels of angelic communication were open or closed.

The chart reflects the situation, that is why we use it. We have a secular society, so we have secular charts. As even astrologers, being children of this society, contort themselves pretending to be scientists, we have exorcised the divine from our craft, shutting the door on hour rulers and angels. This is not necessarily to our benefit.

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IT REALLY WORKS!

The published horaries about finding lost objects, diagnosing illnesses, rescuing mankind from imminent destruction and so on are all very interesting, “but,” the sceptic asks, “surely it’s all done with mirrors?” Here are a couple of horary predictions, on subjects of public record, that were published before the event.

There is a myth that political and other public questions cannot be judged by horary astrology. It is claimed that, because many people will be asking the same question - eg “Will Labour win the election?” that it contravenes the rule about asking the same question more than once.

This is an example of the muddy thinking to which horary is an antidote. We are not dealing with ‘She loves me, she loves me not’, where I will keep pulling leaves off twigs until I get the answer that I want. Asking the same horary over and over again to get an acceptable answer is futile: if I don’t believe the negative answers, why should I believe the positive one when I get it? But if Joe asks me “Will Labour win?” and two hours later Jane asks me “Will Labour win?” their questions are, most definitely, not the same.

It is the fundamental premise of astrology that things that happen at different times have different qualities. No matter how similar the words may be, a question asked at one time is not the same as a question asked at another time. We cannot possibly practice astrology if we do not think astrologically, and in thinking that all questions with the same wording are the same question, we are not thinking astrologically.

When will the Bhutto government fall?

This question was asked in May 1995. The situation in Pakistan was very unsettled, and it was widely believed that Mrs Bhutto could retain power for only a matter of days.

As the querent was Pakistani, usually living in Pakistan, the government is shown by the tenth house. This point about nationality is important: the ordering of houses and the things they represent depends on their relationship to the querent. The tenth is the house of kings, leaders, the boss in whatever the immediate situation may be. If I ask a question about my own country, the tenth shows the rulers; if I ask a question about another country, its rulers are not my rulers, and so are not shown by my tenth house. If I am asking, for example, about President Clinton, I would have to take the ninth house of foreign countries, and then turn the chart to take the tenth from the ninth to

show the ruler of a foreign country. It is important to think clearly about exactly what we are asking.

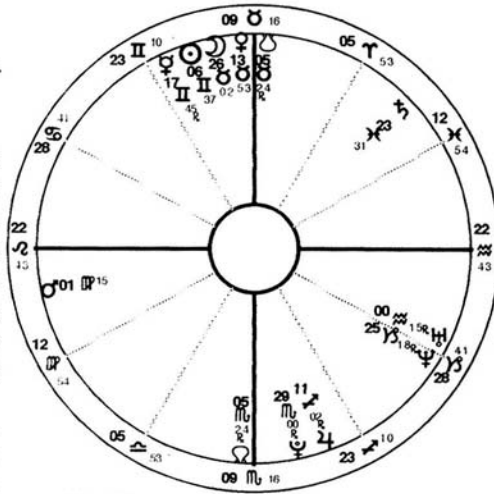
With fixed signs on the angles and the ruler of the tenth so powerfully placed in both its own house and its own sign - and a fixed sign at that - this government is clearly going nowhere. The belief that it is on its last legs is unfounded. It is quite secure.

The Arab astrologer al-Biruni gives Venus as significator of Islam, while the Moon is Islam's ubiquitous symbol, so Venus in Taurus - the sign of Venus and exaltation of the Moon - is an appropriate significator for a woman ruling an Islamic government. Although strong, Venus is in the terms of Mercury, so the country's finances (second house) and military (eleventh house) have influence.

The almuten of the Sun, Mercury and Mars is Mercury, significator of the military, while that of the Moon and Venus is Venus, the government. We can see the struggle for power between the two forces. Although strong by being in its own sign, however, Mercury is retrograde and applying to combustion. When things are combust they cannot be seen: the military cannot exert its force openly.

Why not? Although all the inner planets are involved in this power-struggle, Jupiter and Saturn stand aloof. The "Great Chronocrators", it is they who determine the long-term picture. With Saturn in Pisces and Jupiter in Sagittarius, they are both ruled by Jupiter, Lord of the eighth house. The eighth is the house of other people's money: foreign investment is the key factor, and it is this consideration which makes it unwise for the military to take overt control.

The Moon in a mundane question shows the people. The Moon conjunct Caput Algol shows they are in state of chaos; the client confirmed that there was a virtual breakdown of law and order. Venus is in the exaltation and face of the Moon, while the Moon is in the sign and triplicity of Venus: this mesh of reciprocal dignities illustrates their co-dependency. The people's unrest is caused by the government, yet the government benefits from it, as it allows them to consolidate their power by 'divide and rule' and giving an opportunity to arrest



Mrs Bhutto: when fall?
 May 28, 1995 11.06 AM BST
 London

opponents.

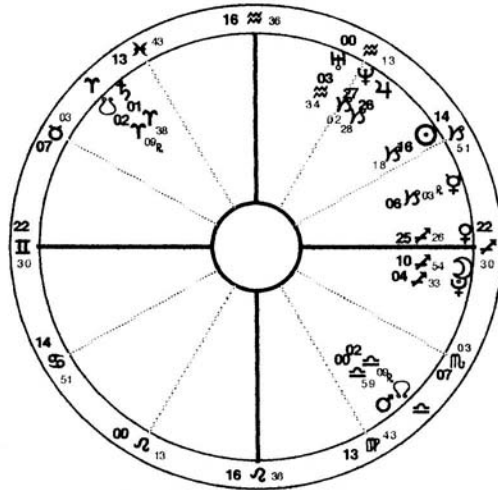
The Moon's conjunction with Caput Algol can also be taken as a push from the grass-roots for fundamentalist Islam. But the Moon makes no aspect before leaving its sign; by the time of its next aspect, it is in Gemini, where it has no power: nothing will come of this movement.

Strong though it is, Venus cannot stand still. Taking a degree to a month it will move into Gemini in just over sixteen months. Once in Gemini, it loses all power and becomes peregrine, and is under the control of Mercury - the military. But we cannot expect an instant effect, the second it leaves Taurus. The prediction, published in the August 1995 issue of *Horary Times*, concluded: "in eighteen months - November 1996 - the Bhutto government will lose power and be either in the political wilderness or, more probably, in exile." Mrs Bhutto's government was deposed by the army, acting through the president (Sun would be natural ruler of presidents: Mercury is hidden by the Sun), in November 1996.

Will England beat Italy?

England were to play Italy in a qualifying match for the football World Cup on February 12th. The querent wanted England to win, so England are given the first house and its ruler, on the 'extended-ego' basis that makes supporters say, "We're going to beat X on Saturday." Italy, as the enemy, have the seventh house.

Mercury, signifier of England, is in the seventh house: this would put England in the power of the Italians, but it is too far away



England beat Italy?
Jan 6 1997 2.12 PM GMT
London

from the cusp and - most importantly - in a different sign, so this has little effect. Both Mercury and Jupiter, the Italians' signifier, are weak. They are both under the sun-beams, which depletes their strength. Jupiter is being overtaken by the Sun, however, and so is heading into combustion, which is devastating, while Mercury is moving farther away from combustion. This would leave Jupiter weaker; but Mercury's being retrograde balances things out. The eighth is the house of death, but it is also the turned second, so Jupiter's being there is not weakening. Had England's signifier

been in the eighth, it would have been an unfortunate indication; as this is the Italian signifier, we can take it as being in its own second.

Both signifiers are similarly weakened. This is emphasised by the Sun, who, as Lord of the fourth house, shows the end of the matter. He is exactly midway between the two planets. This would

be strong testimony for a draw. With so little strength, we cannot expect many goals: a goal-less draw seems to be on the cards.

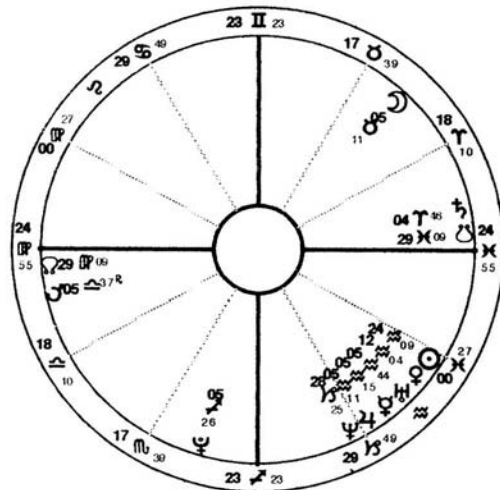
But there are two strong indications that tip the scales in favour of the Italians. The dispositor of Fortuna, Venus, is just three degrees inside the seventh house, putting it under their control. Most significantly - and this is the deciding factor - the antiscion of Mercury falls at 23.57 Sagittarius: only one and a half degrees inside the cusp. England are firmly in the power of the Italians.

Prediction: Italy to win, 1-0. This was recorded by London Weekend Television in January and repeated in a lecture at the Urania Trust on the evening of the match.

The Match:

An event chart, set for the time and place of kick-off, gives the same result. In this case the favourite is given the first house and their opponents the seventh. Determining who is the favourite when a British team plays a foreign one can be tricky, as the bookies quote unnaturally short odds against our brave boys, but in this case even Eurobet, an Italian firm, made England favourites - somewhat surprisingly.

Again, both signifiers are weak: at 5 Aquarius, they are both peregrine. Their physical



England v Italy
Feb 12 1997 8.00 PM GMT
London

proximity, just separating from conjunction, suggests a close match. Uranus does not seem to be malefic in these charts - at least, not reliably so - though Mercury's immediate conjunction may give an indication of a surprise result.

The Moon makes a series of aspects over a very short space. She is exactly square Jupiter - the Italians - at kick-off, then applies to square Mercury, quincunx Pluto, quincunx Mars, square Uranus and quincunx Fortuna. At seven degrees of separation, Venus is just too far away to be relevant: the upper limit for a football match seems to be 5-6 degrees. When the Moon makes a series of aspects, the important one is the last: quincunx Fortuna usually gives victory to the favourite, although it is not totally reliable. That one of the main significators disposes Fortuna seems not be important in these charts.



Bodily Conjunction

The deciding factor here, however, is the position of Fortuna herself: just half a degree from Pluto. Pluto's influence seems to extend for only one or, at most, one and a half degrees in the direction in which it is moving, and is thoroughly malign. Fortuna shows the favourite's chances of success: we see them destroyed.

Italy will win. With both Mercury and Jupiter so weak and so similarly placed, we can expect a low-scoring, drawish game - though even weak event charts can occasionally produce a goal-glut, so indications of score cannot be relied on.

And again:

The original question was posed only to provide a prediction for a TV programme, by someone who had no real interest in the result, so I was uncertain how reliable it would be. As the England football team has for many years seemed to be an animated form of Valium, the Apprentice has little sympathy for their cause and could not frame a committed question himself. There is, however, one subject dear to his heart on which he could frame a valid question: "Will I make a profit by backing Italy?"

As in all questions about money, we are not usually asking about our own money, but about someone else's money that we would rather like to have. So they do not concern the second house of our possessions so much as the eighth house of 'other people's money' - or, if it is our wages we are concerned about, the eleventh house: the boss's money. What we hope to find in the chart is effective movement connecting the Lord of the eighth with either the Lord of the Ascendant, representing us, or the Lord of the second, representing our pocket.

This chart admirably illustrates the theme of Neptunia's article in this issue: we cannot be hide-bound by the rules. The laws can necessarily reflect only a proportion of experience: they cannot cover every eventuality. They are helpful signposts left by those who have gone before, but they are there to guide us, not to bind. Working strictly to the letter of the law, the judgement to this chart would be "No, you will not make a profit."

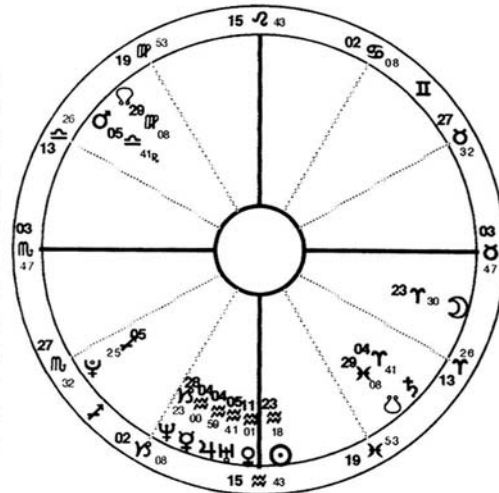
The Ascendant is ruled by Mars and the Descendant - the enemy: the bookie - by Venus.

These same planets also rule the cusps of the second and eighth houses respectively. We need to find different signifiers for the houses with which we are concerned, so in these circumstances it is sound to take the planet that rules most of the house as signifier, even if it does not actually rule the cusp. This gives us Mercury for the bookie's money and Jupiter for the querent's.

Mercury applies immediately to conjunct Jupiter: strong positive testimony. The bookie's money is coming into the querent's pocket. But. There are two big buts. First, the Moon is void of course. Even taking the definition of void of course that allows aspects in the next sign if the Moon is already within orb, it is still void, for it is not quite within orb of the square to Mercury. Aries is not one of the signs - Taurus, Cancer, Sagittarius and Pisces - where void of course can be safely overlooked.

This would be strong testimony that nothing will happen - or, at least, nothing good. If, however, the positive testimony is strong enough, the indications of a void of course Moon can be overruled. The closeness of the approaching conjunction between Mercury and Jupiter is strong enough to do this.

It is strong enough, even taking into account the second major problem: the intervention of Saturn. However short the distance from Mercury to Jupiter, Mercury must still make a sextile to Saturn before it perfects the conjunction. This is technically a



*Profit on Italy?
Feb 11 1997 11.45 PM GMT
London*



prohibition, which would preclude a positive judgement.

Saturn is, however, Lord of Fortuna: he governs the querent's 'treasure', which, in the context of this question, is his profit. If Mercury - or any other planet - were separating from aspect to Saturn and applying to Jupiter, they would be *translating light* from the Lord of Fortuna to the Lord of the second: positive testimony. But Mercury has still to reach Saturn. If we are to be pedantic, we cannot allow this as a translation of light.

In practice, translation can be allowed if the first aspect has not yet been made, *provided it makes sense within the context of the question*. Indeed, this is the rule of rules: we can allow anything provided it makes sense within the context of the question. We must always accept the total reality of the chart: just because we see it only as a series of markings on a piece of paper does not mean it is not real.

Mercury here (the bookie's money) picks up the querent's treasure, or his heart's desire (the wish for profit) and brings it to his pocket (Jupiter). This is facilitated because both Mercury and Jupiter are in Aquarius, ruled by Saturn, so the whole transaction takes place within his milieu, as it were, while, with Saturn in the triplicity and terms of Jupiter, there is very strong mutual reception between Jupiter and Saturn. Looking at the receptions, we can see that Mercury is bossed about by Saturn, being in his sign, while Saturn and Jupiter have great love for each other: it is quite natural, therefore, that Saturn should do his friend Jupiter a favour by passing Mercury on to him. To our financial benefit.

So the judgement is "Yes, backing Italy will show a profit." All three charts, two horaries for different questions and an event chart, have shown the same thing, each in its different way. Italy won, 1-0.

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HORARY CONSULTATIONS

Horary is a form of astrology that finds specific answers to specific questions. It has been used for hundreds of years to get straight to the heart of the matter in a way birth-chart readings cannot do.

John Frawley is a Qualified Horary Practitioner and member of the Association of Professional Astrologers. He is tutor on the Qualifying Horary Diploma Course and editor of *The Astrologer's Apprentice*. His fees are from £25 per question, and his phone number for consultations is

0181.365.2553.

ASTROLOGY ON THE BARRICADES

Just above the bench where the Apprentice sits whilst polishing his master's astrolabe, hangs a signed photo of one of the great English astrologers: Nicholas Culpeper. Although remembered mainly for his *Herbal*, his outspoken opinions, radical ideas and frequent humorous interludes ensure that anyone appreciating The Astrologer's Apprentice would find much to value in Culpeper's astrological writings.

That the *Herbal* seems today the most innocuous of books, a suitable gift for any maiden aunt, makes it hard to realise that its publication was a revolutionary act, akin to, and less ineffective than, that of *The Anarchist's Cookbook*. This was, remember, in the days when refusing to tip ones hat bordered on the treasonable, and politics had yet to become something indulged in only by foreigners. Culpeper's overt aim was to enable every man to be his own physician by providing him, at a very reasonable price, with all the requisite knowledge. Worst of all, this knowledge was not obscured by being written in Latin, but was, for the first time, set forth in the common tongue.

His work to this end, of which the *Herbal* was a part, was damned, attacked not only by the College of Physicians, whose excessive earnings he threatened, but by the whole battery of the religious and political establishment. The public was warned that every one of his prescriptions was mixed 'with some scruples, at least, of rebellion and atheisme'. In the seventeenth century, science was not as free of political and social constraint as it is today.

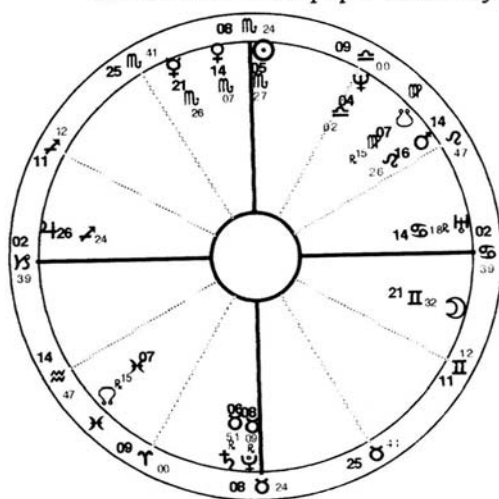
Culpeper's astrological textbook is his *Decumbiture*, a decumbiture being the time at which a sick person took to their bed. It was common practice for the physician to cast a horoscope for either the moment of decumbiture or the moment at which he received a sample of the patient's urine. From the chart and consideration of the urine and any other bodily effusions - into which Culpeper delves with the greatest delight - he would diagnose, prescribe and prognosticate. This method had the virtue, now again becoming more popular, of treating the patient rather than just the illness - of regarding, that is, the patient as an individual organism with individual qualities, not as one of a race of identical machines who has developed a mechanical fault.

Although the book is primarily concerned with medical astrology, there is much of general application. He is, for example, the first to point out the extreme debility of the Moon in Gemini. Watching the progress of his patients' illnesses provided ample opportunity for refining his

theoretical knowledge in the fire of practice. Nor must the entertainment value of the book be discounted: it is the forerunner of every medical black comedy you may ever have seen.

The greatest and blackest act of comedy, however, happened in Culpeper's life rather than his writing. He was about to be married when his bride was struck by lightning on her way to the church. As an example of the unforeseen occurrences that plague astrologers, this could hardly be bettered.

Graeme Toby, whose biography of Culpeper is eagerly awaited, has pinned this down to the summer of 1634. The seeds of the event can be seen in Culpeper's nativity.



Nicholas Culpeper
Oct 28 1616 N/S 11.55 AM LMT
Ockley, Surrey

marriage, and lightning, which Lilly ascribes to Mars. At perfection of the opposition, the Moon would be sextile the Part of Death, calculated for the wife (Descendant+8th cusp-Moon=25Leo 54).

The Moon also falls on the midpoint of Neptune and the Node, giving his bride an inclination to 'occasional unreliability', though we may feel that on this occasion at least, she had sufficient excuse.

The Part of Marriage (Ascendant+Descendant-Venus=21Leo11) is on the fixed star Alphard, a malefic of Venus and Saturn nature. Venus/Saturn stars often manifest as harm to women or to principles of female nature. This one is traditionally associated with sudden death, which, as the Part of Marriage falls exactly on the midpoint of the Part of the Wife's Death and Mars - lightning - proved an omen only too true. Its being in the eighth house, while its dispositor, the Sun, applies to

His wife would be shown by the seventh house and its ruler, the Moon. In Gemini, in a malefic house, this is straightaway inauspicious. She applies to opposition Jupiter, and when this aspect perfects, she will be on the midpoint of Saturn and Mars. For Moon on Mars/Saturn, Ebertin gives 'death of members of the female sex'. As Jupiter rules the thunderstorm, this aspect gives us the cause of death as well. Apart from this, and the obvious deep misfortune of arrival at the juncture of the two malefics, this movement of the Moon also brings the bride to the midpoint of Culpeper himself (Saturn, Lord of the Ascendant), who was presumably the instigator of the

immediate opposition with retrograde Saturn is further indication that marriage was to be undertaken with some trepidation.

The Moon itself - the bride - falls on Polaris, another thoroughly malefic star, also of Venus/Saturn nature, while its dispositor, Mercury, opposes Caput Algol². This is the most unfortunate star in the sky - the Chinese know it as 'piles of bodies' - and is, according to Robson, associated with electrocution.



Things clearly look bad for marriage, particularly for the bride. A modern astrologer would read dire consequences into the position of Pluto on the IC, with the Sun moving to opposition, though, whatever the scientists tell us, we must take these past positions of Pluto with a pinch of salt. Culpeper, of course, would not have known of Pluto. Nor would he have known of Uranus: that evidently did not stop it having its effects.

The seventh cusp, showing the bride, is on the midpoint of Uranus and the Moon. Ebertin gives this as 'an energetic and excitable woman': the woman would have been highly energized and very excited, and no doubt found it 'an upsetting experience' - as did Culpeper himself, who somehow failed to see the funny side of it and was quite devastated. The Part of the Wife is taken by adding the Ascendant to the Descendant and subtracting the position of the ruler of the Descendant, in this case the Moon. It falls at 13Capricorn46: Uranus applies retrograde to immediate opposition. The modern astrologer would take Uranus as the obvious significator of lightning. It seems that the modern astrologer may well be right.

Lilly the Pink?

Reflecting the life in the distorting mirror of one's own vainglory, autobiography is inevitably the least reliable form of historical evidence. All the more so when, as with William Lilly, the autobiography is of an outspoken supporter of a failed revolution, written under the restored crown. Yet almost all we know of Lilly's life comes from his autobiography.

When writing his life-story, after the Restoration, Lilly played down his efforts in the Parliamentary cause. His apparent apostasy has been criticised by historians; but if the greatest threat to one's safety is through one's tea arriving a few minutes late, it is easy to criticise. Lilly

²: As with all the fixed stars, Algol has moved since the seventeenth century.

escaped execution only through the intervention of well-placed friends: many whose actions had been far less suffered far more.

So how far left was William Lilly? Was he really in the pay of the Kremlin, or just an imperialist stooge? Evidence is nothing but circumstantial; but, speculative though it is, we can draw some reasonably convincing conclusions.

It is the fashion among historians to assume that, as an astrologer, Lilly was necessarily of dubious moral character, and so his support for the Parliamentarians was that of a man following the main chance. This is confirmed by the way he plays down this support in his autobiography. Again, this judgement is easier to make from the safety of a university cloister. That Lilly had an understandable desire to keep his head in conjunction with his shoulders, and was prepared to moderate his public pronouncements in order to increase the likelihood of this happening, does not prove he was a fraud. Unlike the historians in the tranquil groves of academe, Lilly was living very much in the real world.

It is easy, but wrong, to view the Civil War and the Interregnum from a modern perspective as integral, unchanging events. From the very start, everyone is assumed to have known just what was going on, just what they thought about it and just where it all would lead. But those who lived through these times lacked the clarifying benefit of hindsight. Their views would necessarily change and develop as events unfolded, making some positions untenable and revealing new possibilities. Even astrologers can work only within the limits of apparent possibility: in 1642, the execution of the king was undreamed of, so it is unreasonable to expect any astrologer to have seen it in a chart. Lilly's views, like those of anybody else, changed, and not only

At the high Court of Justice for the tryeing and tryng of Charles
Stewart King of England January 30th Anno Domini 1649.

Whereas Charles Stewart King of England is and standeth convicted attainted and pronounced of high treason
and other high crimes and misdemeanours against his Majesty King Charles the first by the
flowing of his blood from his body of his said Majesty's right and authority to be tried and
tried and to be put to death in the open streets of London by the executioner of the law
this 30th of January 1649 between the Court of Justice and the said King in the afternoon of the said
day at full office And for seeing this shall be sufficient reason and cause to require all officers and ministers
and other the good people of this nation to be affilings unto you in this present Court under the hand and
Seal of

De Witts of France's by order of the Court of Justice
of them

For the Parliament
The City
The Army
The Commonwealth
The Whalley

John Waller
John Blakeney
John Hey
Hauts
Go Bourchier
H. J. Norton
The Auditors

Walsbyth
For Latham
Ri Deane
Robert Hoborne
The Bishop
James Blythe
Owen Rome
William Grayson
The Scribe
Gamy Trench

London
Edm. Ludlow
Henry Marten
Wm. Prynne
John Waller
The City
The Army
The Commonwealth
The Whalley

John Waller
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Hauts
Go Bourchier
H. J. Norton
The Auditors

The Death-Warrant of Charles I

with developments in the political situation, but also with the passage of time through his own life. These events took almost twenty years; he was not the same man at the Restoration as he was when King Charles first raised his standard.

There are few historians who avoid this trap of assuming that their subjects held consistent ideas throughout this twenty-year period. Christopher Hill points out that it is - amazingly enough - possible to consider at least some forms of radicalism of that age as being the revolt of teenage boys against their parents. Had Charles I had the wisdom to provide each of his opponents with a Nintendo and a new pair of Reeboks, the course of history could well have been different. A lesson that has not been lost on our present rulers.

In this context of teenage rebellion, it is worth noting the copious consumption of tobacco by many religious radicals: tobacco, still a novelty drug, being regarded as a means of increasing spiritual awareness, and religious and political radicalism going hand in hand. One vicar even had a reputation for smoking his bell-ropes when out of tobacco. As the ropes were presumably made of hemp, he may well have been a couple of centuries ahead of his time.

We should not, therefore, unlike Ann Geneva, be surprised if Lilly's astrological judgements on the Civil War and the fate of King Charles did not leap fully formed and perfect from his head at the moment when war began. The astrologer relates symbols to reality; he does not relate them to fantasy. Only when certain hypotheses began to coalesce into real possibilities could he include them in his judgements. It is for this reason, and an understandable caution regarding his own safety, that his pronouncements became stronger and more overtly anti-royalist as the war progressed, not through a following of fortune.

The Evidence

We have political histories, social histories, economic, intellectual and military histories; if ever someone should write a spiritual history, the Civil War will be seen as a turning point, forming the mould whose shape English society has borne ever since. We can begin to piece together Lilly's part in this.

The War can be seen in the context of an economic struggle between the more modernised - I hesitate to use the word 'advanced' - south and south-east, and the comparatively old-fashioned north and west. Even without the evidence of his writings, we could be fairly confident that someone of Lilly's particular class, living in London, would probably have stood, in anachronistic terms, somewhere left of centre. His religious faith was clearly millenarian, though its exact form is unclear, and he looked forward eagerly to the day when kings would

become as mere men. He would have had far less reason to exaggerate his radicalism during the ascendancy of Parliament than to conceal it during the Restoration, so the general impression his writings give of an eagerness to see the last king strangled with the guts of the last priest probably reflects his true beliefs reasonably accurately. His supposed sympathy for King Charles as an individual human being, while apparent, seems to have over-emphasised. He might not have been willing to wield the axe himself, but was surely not sorry to see it fall.

We must remember that the execution of the King was far from being a purely mundane event, like the removal from office, or even the assassination, of a modern head of state. His death was widely seen as a necessary step towards the creation of the Kingdom of God on Earth, the Second Coming of Christ or some such - the exact emphasis differed from sect to sect. It is the error of a secular age to see the Civil War in purely secular terms, a necessary step towards the creation of a constitutional monarchy. Insofar as a division can be made between them, Lilly's attitude to the execution is a product more of his religious than his political beliefs.



Severing the link between human and divine

chose to write, but the attitudes implicit in his writing betray his inherent radicalism. Not for him the elitist role of omniscient master of the arcane, deigning to disclose his secrets. He describes himself as 'student', not master, of astrology, and after weighing up various differing theories is not above shrugging his shoulders and admitting "I don't know" - even about such important matters as the nature of Fortuna.

Like Culpeper, Lilly too was in the van of those ushering knowledge from the shadows of dead languages into the light of the vernacular, though the lack of an astrological establishment in the way there was a medical establishment enabled him to avoid the opprobrium heaped on his contemporary; Lilly was threatening no one's earnings so much as his own. Not only the language in which he

An early likeness of William Lilly

Interesting, too, is his growing retreat into the profession of medicine. Even in *Christian Astrology*, a work from the Spring of his career, he devotes more space to medical than to any other horary questions. After the Restoration, more and more of his work was as physician rather than astrologer, treating the poor - as did Culpeper - for little or no fee. This may not seem a radical action; yet consider how hot a political potato is free medical treatment, even today.



We may wonder if Lilly turned away from astrology in disillusion; if looking into the future had lost all point after the refusal of the Kingdom of God to manifest in England. The failure of the revolution, its collapse into greed and property squabbles, the suppression of the radicals must have been shattering. He was far from the only, and far from the last, disappointed revolutionary to turn from curing the body politic to curing the body carnal.

Most curious of all is his removal from London to Walton. Lilly did not make the final move until 1652, but had spent much of his time there since 1638 or before. Nowadays, Walton is cosily conservative; yet, remarkable as it may seem to any who have attended the annual pilgrimage of Lilly Day³, it was once the most fervent hotbed of radical politics in England.

While Lilly was writing *Christian Astrology*, also resident in Walton was Gerrard Winstanley, the leading light among the Levellers - in modern terms, anarchists. The first practical Leveller community was established just down the road at St George's Hill. Winstanley had high regard for astrology, it being one of the few subjects which were to be taught in his ideal community. It is hardly likely that he would not have been client to so eminent an astrologer sharing so small a home-town.

This is no reason, of course, to assume that Lilly agreed with his views; he may have detested the man and all for which he stood. He may have moved to Walton for a thousand reasons unconnected with politics. But this juxtaposition of two figures, so much of whose lives remain unknown to us, is intriguing. Were the Leveller experiments set up with advice from Lilly? There is nothing in his work to deny the possibility - though nothing either to confirm it.

Of one thing we can be certain, however: the great disservice that Lilly did to astrology. Unbeknown to him, his fervent support for Protestantism and Parliament was one more factor helping to dissolve the bond between human and divine without which astrology loses all credibility. The rise of Protestantism, with its assumption that the individual is in a position to judge in matters of religion and its stress

³ : this year, July 26th. Details from *The Astrologer's Apprentice*.

upon the rational, and the execution of the king, which fatal blow killed also the sense of divine involvement in the mundane affairs of man, and hence isolated the spiritual in a sphere apparently removed from daily life, were milestones on the path to the materialist society we enjoy today. In this society, the underlying assumptions of astrology, which can be neither weighed nor measured, cannot be understood: here, the cause of astrology's decline.

He must weep within his grave, but, for all his joy in his craft and conviction that astrology can be practised only with religious faith, Lilly's personal convictions, the idiosyncrasies of his persona, bred of time and place, betrayed him. Though his aim was quite the reverse, his writings and his influence helped to build the gallows on which astrology was to be hanged.

*This article owes much to Patrick Curry's "Prophecy and Power" and the work of Christopher Hill, notably "The World Turned Upside Down" and "The Experience of Defeat".
Culpeper's Decumbiture is available from the Ascella Press, 3 Avondale Bungalows, Sherwood Hall Road, Mansfield, Notts, NG18 2NJ.*



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THE ETHICS OF PREDICTION

- by *Caroline Norris*

As horary astrologers, it is our business to find answers to questions. That is the practical side of our work. The ethical aspect enters when we are asked a question which, though not technically difficult, touches on issues which are sensitive, controversial or sometimes even dangerous for either querent or astrologer. What should we do in these cases?

I would start by asking an expert. In Lilly's *Christian Astrology* we read a list of 'considerations before judgement', a guide to help us decide whether a question is appropriate by looking at the chart itself. Certain features warn the astrologer either to be careful how he answers the question, or to discard it altogether. These rules provide a safety mechanism which sifts out questions that should not be judged for various reasons. If the astrologer adheres to them, he may feel safe in judging whatever questions result in valid charts. And if he should choose to override these rules, this should be only as a result of many years of horary experience, and then only in rare cases. Anyone who assumes he can alter the rules of the game after having played it for only a year or two is surely taking a risk.

Then there are two rather important questions: first, does the querent expect us to answer his question correctly? And second, does the astrologer expect to answer it correctly? It would seem that the ethical issue of whether one is morally justified in answering sensitive questions arises only if the answer to both the above questions is 'yes'. If the querent (or anyone else affected) does not believe wholeheartedly in the astrologer's judgement, then if the answer is not the one desired - even if it is on a sensitive issue - the querent can easily choose to dismiss the whole affair with no resultant damage - except perhaps to the astrologer's reputation.

But if the astrologer feels he can give an infallibly correct judgement, and if the querent fully believes the answer, then that certainty, in itself, will have consequences. Apart from the possibility of expectation bringing reality, if the outcome is not the one desired, the client is obviously going to be more or less upset. The more someone is capable of blind belief - in an astrologer or any other outside authority - when that belief is not accompanied by reasoning and intelligent inquiry, the more likely they are to have an extreme reaction to an unwanted answer, with potentially dangerous results. And it is these very people, often desperate for advice, who can most easily arouse the

ego of the unwary astrologer, who in turn may then be so eager to help that he becomes blind to - or thinks he can override - strictures warning against judgement.

I doubt, though, that any astrologer would regard himself as infallible. And this poses a problem. Horary astrologers are offering, not just to answer questions, but by implication, to answer questions *correctly*. An art which is based on providing specific answers to specific questions, or predicting specific outcomes, *has* to be based on a system which is exact and infallible, and if the astrologer does not believe this is so, then why is he using it? The problem lies, not in the system, but in the people who use it, and this applies not only to astrologers, but to psychics, dowsers, mediums and all others working in similar fields.

Astrologers *are* fallible, and no amount of experience and practice in our field will make us otherwise. This is because our fallibility is due mainly not to individual lack of expertise, but to our present stage of evolution, in which the faculty of intuition is still virtually latent. Mankind is still in the transitional stage between 'animal' and 'real human being', guided sometimes by blind instinct, sometimes by reasoned intelligence; our psycho-physical organism, which we use to actually interpret the horary system, is not yet as perfect as the system itself - a fact that can be repeatedly demonstrated, and which reveals itself daily in our lack of control over our thoughts and reactions: we no longer have the instinctive knowledge of the animal, but neither are we reliably skilled yet in the humanitarian functions of reasoning, intuition, judgement and ethical behaviour.

So if the astrologer admits that he is fallible and may occasionally get it wrong - even if he is right 99% of the time - then is he not ethically obliged to inform his clients of this before offering his services? If he does not do so, he is misrepresenting himself. There is a difference between saying, 'Yes, I can predict the outcome of this situation,' and 'Yes, I can try to predict the outcome and am often/sometimes/nearly always right, but not always.' The first assumes infallibility, the second accurately describes the service offered.

If the blind believer brings a life or death question to an astrologer who accurately describes his services so that the client understands what is offered, then whatever outcome is predicted - whether 'life' or 'death' - the astrologer has provided a possibility for the querent to avoid being adversely affected if he does not wish to accept it. After all, the astrologer may be wrong.

This approach need in no way give horary astrology a bad reputation, because we are not telling the querent that the system is at

fault. We are simply reminding him that we are only (half!) human, and that he should not assume that we are infallible if what we say does not match with his own sense of rightness. After all, it is the querent who came up with the question, and as the answer is wholly dependent on the question, then it is ultimately the querent who really 'knows' the answer, and what he is actually coming to us for is a second opinion. This is particularly obvious in questions which begin, 'Should I...?' If this is the case, it must be more ethical to present the horary answer as a guide designed to encourage the querent to develop his own decision-making abilities, rather than a fixed prediction which leaves him helplessly awaiting his fate.

So should the horary astrologer take responsibility for deciding which questions he may ethically answer and which he should avoid, and in doing so run the risk of assuming that he is somehow superior to the querent? Or should he let the querent take responsibility for his own question, whatever it might be? Again, the whole issue can be taken care of by the strictures against judgement. If the chart is invalid, we do not attempt to answer the question. If we can no longer trust even these simple rules, what else can we rely on? They form part of the horary system precisely because the majority of people do not understand how to ask appropriate questions.

In this field, the astrologer needs to take responsibility for being in a position of superiority over his client. How can he answer questions if he has not first attained any skill in asking them? The client comes to an astrologer expecting him to have superior knowledge in his field, and this field includes not only finding the right answer, but also formulating the right question which will give the querent just the information he wants. Wrong question - wrong answer.

Of course, it is not the astrologers' responsibility to decide what



Ethics Man

the querent wants to know, nor is he responsible for the querent's reaction to his answer. But he is indeed responsible for how he handles his part in the interaction between himself and his client. And if his querent is not happy with the result, he must indeed - as any normally caring person would - examine how he might have contributed to the difficulty, and how he might act differently next time to avoid it.

As horary astrology becomes more widely recognized and accepted, sooner or later there will be the demand for a general standard to be set up, in the form of a Code of Ethics. Eventually some body will draw one up, and those astrologers who agree to work within the written guidelines will form a society with a council to uphold the standards set out in the code. This society will have its opponents (those who did not get a say in drawing up the original guidelines) who disagree with its decisions and argue for different rules, different wording of the rules, etc., and in this way, over a number of years, a more or less stable standard of ethical practice will become established and adhered to by the majority of practitioners, and this standard will gradually form an integral part of horary training courses.

In the current wave of pro-individualism, absolutes are 'out', relative values are 'in' and no one trusts either themselves or anyone else to set standards for other people. But this does not alter the fact that such external standards will be considered necessary as long as people in general are not yet skilled in ethical or moral behaviour. And in the meantime, if someone asks us to answer a question we do not feel comfortable with - we can always say no.

- and by John Frawley:

Astrology does not exist in a vacuum. Astrologers do not make their pronouncements to the empty air, but to their clients or to the public. And as soon as this contact between the astrologer and another human being is made, the question of ethics arises.

This is particularly apparent with horary, as with a natal reading we can skate delicately round any part of the life we may not feel like facing - most usually, its end, which, although it is the single most significant event in any life, is the one least to be talked about. With horary, we are asked pointed questions



on particular issues, and so must know what we are prepared to handle, and how we shall handle it.

“Do I have Aids?” (asked by someone too impatient to wait for their test results); “My daughter is living with this dreadful man. When will she kick him out and find someone that suits her?”; “I am terminally ill. How much longer do I have to live?” are examples of the questions that the astrologer may have to face.

The problem questions fall into two groups: those that may have a negative effect on the client, and those with such an effect on a third party. The second of these, involving essentially an issue of privacy, is often the more straightforward. A question such as the one above is clearly none of the concerned mother’s business. But what about “*Is my husband having an affair?*”? Is this the wife’s legitimate concern, or a breach of the husband’s right to privacy; and who are we to decide? I suspect that many astrologers would see this in different ways, depending on the gender of the erring spouse.

It is tempting to decide that we should judge nothing that intrudes on another’s privacy; but if we were too nice about this, there would be few questions left for us to handle. The most innocuous questions can be perceived as intrusive by a third party who doesn’t welcome their repercussions, while, not uncommonly, the act of consulting an astrologer is in itself seen as invasive.

Our attitude to those questions with whose answers the querent may find difficulty coping must be seen in its historical context. We are told that we should have a ‘responsible attitude’ to our clients: this has come down to us from the Theosophists, via the psychological school. The Theosophist astrologers held that there exist evolved and unevolved souls, who would react to the same planetary stimulus in different ways, the assumption being that the astrologer is able tell them apart. The present writer is, like most present writers, on the very highest plane of evolution and is well equipped to do so; as I look at my peers, propping up the bar of the Hamster and Horoscope, however, I have serious doubts about their ability to do the same.

This attitude was inherited by the psychological astrologers, appearing in this particular incarnation as the idea that the client is in a mess, from which the all-wise astrologer, with the aid of his trusty chart, can help him find a way out. This assumption of superiority on the part of the astrologer is open to question. If we question that, we must question also the responsibility that this assumed superiority brings with it.

It is often suggested that many questions should be answered only when we have satisfied ourselves that our client is able to cope with the answer - an ability often displayed by their having been



counselled. This attitude in itself raises various problems.

It still leaves it up to us to decide who gets the answer and who doesn't; whatever criteria we may adopt for making this decision, they are likely in many cases to be wrong. The virtues of counselling are vastly overrated: it is debatable whether a couple of hours spent talking to a card-carrying member of the middle classes is really enough to enable someone to cope with the news of their imminent death; while if we did come across one of these fabled evolved souls, they would probably be somewhat peeved at the suggestion that information about their lives could not be imparted without their undergoing the counselling ritual.

Finally, it is not only the obviously dramatic questions whose answers can upset the querent. To someone at the end of their tether, even the most innocuous question can have potentially devastating consequences. Are we to undertake a lengthy psychological analysis of our client before answering "Where is my library-book?" - or is Joe the plumber to ensure his customer is undergoing therapy before breaking the news that she needs a new boiler?

We may choose to hold ourselves responsible for the effects of our pronouncements on our clients; but to do this is to put ourselves in the position of the drug-pusher, who is held responsible for whatever disaster may befall his customer. The grocer, however, can sell a jar of peanut butter with a clear conscience, knowing that even if the purchaser should suffer a violent allergic reaction, even unto death, it is not his fault. Caveat emptor.

The astrologer needs to be quite clear about what he is actually doing. The astrologer's job is to practice astrology: nothing else. Should he choose to offer counselling, pest-control or any other services, this is something quite separate.

It is helpful if we can detach ourselves from the view that we are dispensing some kind of arcane knowledge, with which only those who are 'evolved', or who have been counselled, or who have passed some other form of examination (paying us enough money?) can safely cope. Astrologers would do their profession immense benefit if they would drop this attitude of superiority and accept that having knowledge of the future is just as natural as having knowledge of the past, and it can be just as democratically dispensed.

Above all, the astrologer need not accept responsibility for his clients' actions or reactions. If I tell my client that, in my judgement, his shares are going to lose value, it is up to him to make the decision of how much he values my judgement before he acts upon it. If he accepts it blindly, he is a fool, and his foolishness is not my responsibility. The same applies to any other question: unless obviously otherwise, we must assume that our clients are consenting adults. If they don't like the answer, they should not have asked the question.

The mores of our society and a healthy awareness of ones own fallibility preclude the handling of certain issues, notably those of death. But, overall, the astrologer's only credible philosophy must be 'You ride at your own risk'. The phrase "having a responsible attitude" usually translates as "carrying the clients' responsibilities for them". This is not the astrologer's job, and we should not behave as if it were. If the astrologer is to be responsible, we must assume that the client is too.

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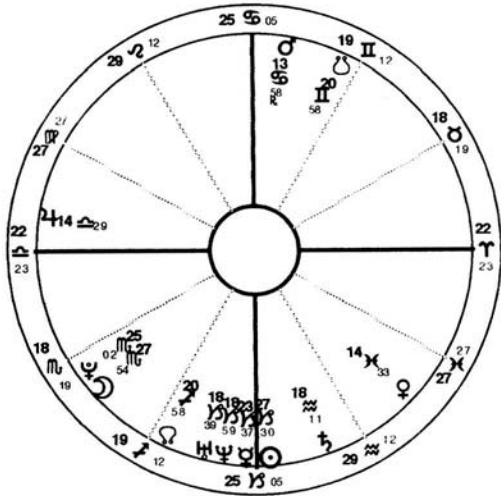
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DIVORCE? - a horary by Hideaki Kokubu

Can I get divorced from my husband? The querent is signified by the Ascendant ruler, Venus, with the Moon as co-significator. Her husband is shown by the ruler of the seventh, Mars, and by the Sun, the natural ruler of men.



Can I divorce husband?
 Jan 17 1993 11.41 pm JST
 Tokyo

children, which have an important bearing on the question. The Moon

Mars is retrograde, moving away from Venus, showing the husband's differing views and their disagreements. Venus trines Jupiter, and the Moon sextiles the Sun, but both these aspects are separating: the querent has been in harmony with her husband, but is now trying to get away from him.

Venus, however, is in a succedent house: the querent cannot be too optimistic about the outcome of her question. The Moon is void of course: she can expect nothing; the status quo will be preserved.

The querent's significator is in the fifth house of children, and is in mutual reception by sign with Jupiter, the ruler of most of that house: she has strong ties with her

and Mars are also in mutual reception: with the Moon in the second house, this shows the querent depending on the husband for her living expenses. She has no hope of finding a job that would allow her to live independently, for the Moon, which also rules the tenth house of career, is in its fall.

This is, indeed, what happened: despite her wishes, the querent's financial position and responsibilities constrained her to stay in the marriage.

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DEE TIME

The recent verification of the Orwinian Museum's exhibit as the true scrying stone of John Dee has sent a hurricane tearing through the peaceful islands of Elizabethan scholarship, turning previous conceptions of the Virgin Queen's favourite mage on their head.⁴

Professor Nimeenie's careful research has not only authenticated this stone, hence revealing those exhibited in other museums as nineteenth-century fakes, but has also unlocked for the first time Dee's private code in which are written the arcane inscriptions on the back of the stone.

At the top is inscribed a crude sketch of a domino, with the numbers 497.3210 beside it. This code gives a series of mystic finger movements which Dee would perform, strictly in the correct order, to summon his attendant spirits. These spirits are then listed: Marinara, a devil who gave him control of the oceans; Quattro Stagioni, who gave him control of the weather; and Vegetariana. It is not yet clear exactly what this last spirit conferred on the conjurer, but he was obviously a powerful entity, possibly connected with the wind. There is also a devil listed as 'SPECIAL!!!!', who was stronger than any of the others, and known simply as 'The Hot One'.

Below this list is 'AAAAAAAAA1 Supercars'. AAAAAAAAA1 is a kabbalistic word of power, transcribed from the Hebrew, which could not be pronounced except by the initiate. It gave Dee the ability to travel wherever he wanted, though it is believed that this ability was only within the London area, extending as far as the villages of Gatwick to the south and Heathrow to the west. From the inscriptions on the stone, it seems to have been a particular tradition to summon this spirit

⁴ E. Nimeenie, Myny & Mow: *The Orwinian Museum, Catalogue Raisonne, Lower Galleries, Vol XXII* (London, 1996)



John Dee at work

during the Christmas period, though it was necessary to perform the spell several hours before he was required to appear.

Then follows a list of names with coded inscriptions from one of Dee's mystical number squares. Some of the names are familiar to us - 'Bill Shakspear; Raleigh, Kit Marlowe' - and the numbers are thought to represent

instructions for summoning their particular attendant spirits. The name Doll Tearsheet has been scratched over with the words 'Poxed and Garlickie', though the exact connection of this with Dee's occult activities remains unclear.

Queen Elizabeth's diary, long thought lost, but recently discovered in Hampton Court library, sandwiched between an illuminated edition of The Celestine Prophecies and a well-thumbed copy of Women Who Talk Too Much, gives a fascinating glimpse into the nature of Dee's arcane rituals:

Jan 21st: My house. Dee and Raleigh came round. Walt had some wicked tobacco! Dee summoned up The Hot One. Yum! Tried to summon him again, but no answer. Bummer. Bill S turned up - he had some tobacco too. Tried a potato, but couldn't keep it alight. Bill stared at his toe for a long time, then said "To be, or not to be - that is the question!" Wet myself laughing. Dee summoned up AAAAAAAAAA1 Supercars and they all went home.

Perhaps the most remarkable feature of Dee's scrying stone is the mysterious markings around its edge. Otherwise apparently meaningless, it has been discovered that, when the stone is revolved in an anti-clockwise direction at exactly 16 revolutions per minute, they spell out the words "Bill is dead". When a mirror is placed horizontally through the centre of 'AAAAAAAAA1' it reads, in Syriac, 'Yorick is Bill, alas!' What more confirmation do we need that the so-called Swan of Avon went to an early grave, leaving Francis Bacon to write his plays, invent modern science and singe the King of Spain's beard, while still

managing to hold down a job at The Daily Planet.

Investigations into the stone still continue; but even at this early stage it is obvious that our understanding of the Elizabethan world is to be altered beyond recognition.

—————*—————

NEPTUNIA REPLIES...

Dear Neptunia,

At last I have found happiness! My boy-friend has been studying Volume 1 of the Collected Shopping-lists of Claudius Ptolemy in the new Project Hindsight translation, and has come across a reference to aubergines. Now, Bonatus and Dariot make no mention at all of aubergines, while Lilly has only a couple of passing references, and clearly has no idea what they are for. How can we base our astrology on the work of a man who so misunderstands the ancients? I am appalled.

I am just looking forward to the arrival of Volume 2, which should clear up once and for all the vexed question of parsnips in horary practice and put William Lilly in his place once and for all.

Dear Tracey,

Why have you stopped taking your medication?

It seems that your boy-friend shares in the pastism that is one of the few prejudices that are still socially acceptable nowadays, and you are clearly coming down with a bad case of it yourself.

Now pastism was originally practised only by the forces of darkness: we see classic examples in the work of such as Hugh Thomas, Richard Dawkins etc. You will no doubt have observed the shared cultural heritage of Thomas, leaning so heavily on the patronising anthropological works of the imperialist culture (Durkheim, Evans-Pritchard, et al: *Little Black Sambo Practices Witchcraft*) and Dawkins' upbringing, shouldering the white man's burden in Kenya. Both share the perception of a culture of enlightened Us and benighted Them, the Them in this case being anyone born before around 1700, when the human race was so uniformly daft it is a miracle it managed to reproduce itself.

Just as certain feminists have gone to extreme lengths to balance centuries of 'male chauvinism', so there are those whose reaction to the modern is the conviction that no virtue is to be found except in the farthest recesses of the past. When a fossilised text-book of astrology by Og the Primeval Amoeba is discovered and deciphered by Project

Hindsight, its age alone will endow it with an infallibility the Pope would envy. They too suffer from this same debilitating disease of pastism, albeit in an inverted form.

They long to return to a mythical golden age, when astrologers always got it right, were given the respect they deserve, and had the fastest cars and the best-looking women. This leads to a great deal of squabbling on the themes of 'my authority is older than (or in a more obscure language than) your authority' and the number of angels who can dance on the end of Ptolemy's nose.

You need to decide what you are doing, Tracey. Do you wish to be an academic, or a practical astrologer? The academic study of astrology is all very interesting (well, some of it is moderately interesting), but is most certainly not the best way to learn astrology as a practical art.

This fascination with ever more ancient texts, each citing its own variants of the rules, is like an attempt to learn a language by studying a grammar book. In practice, you can find your knowledge of the pluperfect subjunctive totally superfluous, while having no idea what real, living people are talking about. Astrology as an academic study is for the historians; astrologers are concerned with astrology as she is spoke.

When I was first learning to drive, I was advised to change up to second gear when the car reached ten miles an hour. Now, as I surge from the traffic-lights in my blood-red Ferrari, experiencing a force of several g and scattering pedestrians as a small child scatters autumn leaves, this abstract rule is quite irrelevant. I am in total harmony with my machine; the feel and sound of the engine alone tell me when to change gear, while 10 mph is an unreal concept I can scarcely remember.

Astrology is much like driving a car: the rules are there to guide us when we start; once we know the rules, we can then start learning how to do it properly. We do not need to waste our lives seeking out ever more recondite rules. As Caesar said of his generals, the best is he who has learned the rules and then forgotten them (which is not at all the same as not knowing them in the first place). Beyond a certain point, the accumulation of ever more and more rules, and the squabbling about whose rules work best, is quite pointless. It is not to know, but to do.

So who do you want to be, Tracey: the one who drives the train, or the one who stands at the end of the platform, noting down its number? Lilly may not have known much about aubergines, but he did know a trick or two about judging a horoscope. Leave that boy-friend of yours to sink into the dust of his library, taking Ptolemy's shopping-lists and the complete works of Og the Amoeba with him!

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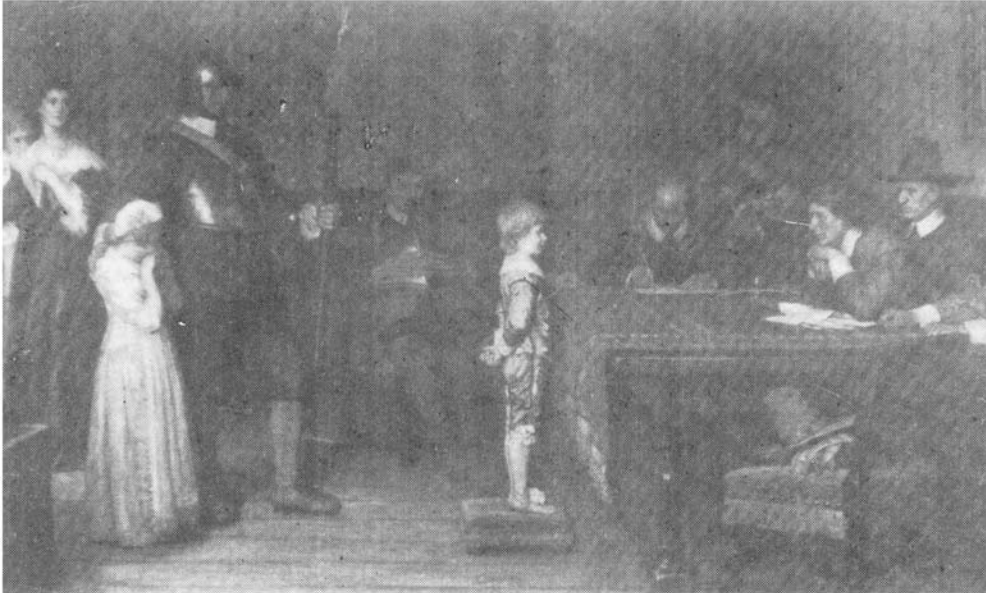
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