

The Basis of Symmetrical Astrology

Overview: *Why Symmetrical Astrology?*

Astrology needs to create its future form. While many astrologers have seized astrology's history and others have integrated modern psychological forms into the field, the technique for the future growth of astrology needs definition in modern technical terms and methods. Without a new definition and direction, astrology has no future, only a past. *Symmetrical Astrology* is not a school or the teachings of a specific set of ideas. It is an anchor to ground astrological ideas to a fixed point and this fixed point should allow unlimited development of astrological innovations in all directions. As the future techniques of the regenerated field of astrology are integrated and the face of astrology revitalizes and merges into the larger social collective, then Symmetrical Astrology will have served its purpose as a launching pad for the future and can wither away.

Introduction: *Finding the Future of Astrology*

There is no doubt that astrology experienced a major reawakening broken into several segments during the twentieth century after a long period of decay in the learned minds of the world. With the first great reawakening people began to rediscover the astrological craft in the late 1800's with the coming Neptune-Pluto conjunction in 1892 and what they found was pretty anemic and frail. Astrologers had more folklore guiding them than organized knowledge and scholars that had to work with the subject treated it with abhorrence and contempt. During the early part of the last century, a cottage industry began to grow around the reintroduction of these ideas. Various thinkers and writers began to emerge that started to re-examine elements of the field in a more forward way of thinking. Many more were content to transmit whatever they learned in a very conservative way. Some cultures in the western and eastern worlds had a great and relatively unbiased view of history and astrology's role in it. Some do not view astrology kindly at all.

As the second phase of the great reawakening of astrology approached in the mid 1960's with the coming Uranus-Pluto conjunction, astrology's knowledge was scattered and in disarray. While the astrologers were beginning to organize their knowledge, associations formed that gathered the practitioners and gave them voice. Many of these groups formed around revolutionary astrological ideas and some around charismatic teachers, but most fostered the mainstream astrological ideas of the time. Some of these schools and groups were very good, some very bad and others that were just ridiculous as was the level of knowledge among students and teachers alike. Throughout the twentieth century, so many ideas were flying around the field that it brought a deeper meaning to the word eclectic. Publishing houses began to rise with the greatest intent to open the field to a larger public and writers were encouraged to be creative. No standards of knowledge or modern

academic approaches were applicable to the condition of the astrological field. Very few individuals had exposure to the wide range of emerging techniques that were a product of this time and a lesser few had a full understanding of what this implied.

For a brief period during the 1970's in various world centers, the work of pioneers like the Gauquelins and other researchers began to be widely disseminated. Schools of thought from central Europe began to point to a new formulation of the field, particularly the work of Alfred Witte and the derivations of his ideas promoted and shaped by others. Astrologers like Charles Jayne and his peers carried on a uniquely American tradition, that did not treat astrology with kid gloves and like the central Europeans, stripped it down to extract new concepts and new ways of analyzing astrology's foundations. Within the astrological world it was a very exciting time if one was well informed and socially connected. Things were surfacing at such speeds and with such deep implications for the future that without a very strong astrological education to tie it all together, it just washed over most of the minds interested in the field. It was during this time that astrology's newness to modern western culture began to fade and there began a drop in the numbers of students entering the field.

As the 1980's emerged so did the rise of computerized astrological calculations that facilitated the adoption of the basic forms of astrology and spread it further among the masses. One of the trends that began to emerge rapidly in the 1970's and took off in the 1980's was the adaption of modern psychological ideas to very basic and generic astrological frameworks among the mainstream astrological techniques available. In addition, many astrologers went looking for authenticity and a sense of tradition in the work and turned to more primitive and natively indigenous schools of thought. They were not finding a deep authenticity in the limited western tradition available, at least not on the surface of astrology or through the limited knowledge of the student-teacher experience or books. When the teachers have limited exposure to the breadth of the field, books are a pale approximation of the deeper astrological concepts, students, and practitioners get hungry for more fulfilling and useful information. This created the stage for astrology's next revival.

Modern western astrology reached its ebb in the late 1980's. While exciting techniques were finding their way into software, the traditions and history of western astrology was guided by sometimes poor and out of context academic and amateur translations of scarce ancient source material, particularly in the English speaking world.

As we entered the 90's, computing styles went graphical in a large way and computer programs began to adapt and mature. Various high level minds began meeting and shaping a strategy for regaining astrology's roots. The Internet began to unify computers into a giant worldwide databank and all of this convergence gave astrology a major push into the general public. If Guttenberg's press pushed the

Renaissance exponentially forward, then the rise of the Internet is truly the dawn of an unimaginable revolution of thought and ideas with astrology swept towards the vanguard of this intellectual movement. The end of this transformative decade brought great and innovative advances in programming tools creating great astrology programs. It brought access to previously obscure material and witnessed the jump of well-trained astrologers seizing the translation of ancient astrological material from unenlightened academicians setting the stage for astrology to make inroads into the university system and mainstream thinking. This was the time of astrology's third major reawakening in the modern era coinciding with the Uranus Neptune conjunction of 1992-3.

As we ended the century, the downside of this new movement began to appear. The unfolding of re-discovery and deep academic structuring created a polarizing effect among all the parties interested in the forward movement of the field. Two major groups began to appear out of the eclectic and previous colorful collection of practitioners. The contemporary ancient pioneers or *traditionalists*, rediscovering the rich western (or eastern) tradition and priding themselves on the new academic heritage they seemed to be creating, began to emerge and characterizing themselves as white knights of the field. They swept through astrology with an air of legitimacy, while attempting to wedge their view of astrology into the academic mainstream. To a large extent, they are making a great impression, legitimizing the history of astrology as a major social phenomenon. We have to remember that astrology permeates all recorded history and was purposely and embarrassingly overlooked by the old orthodoxy that was intent on wiping astrology as a subject off the face of the earth.

The *traditionalist's* counterparts are referred to as the *modernists*. They are termed to be anyone who studied and uses watered down techniques based on the various British based rediscoveries of the early twentieth century. It also applies to students or practitioners who use these techniques and variants of them in relation to modern psychology, psychotherapy, new age counseling, counseling in the therapeutic sense and many other forms too numerous to mention. While it is generally true that while the astrological technique is questionable, the modern sensibilities and social awareness the new counselors bring to the field is definitely in keeping with our current societal styles and concerns. They are clearly in command of the linguistic transactions that underlie the communications of our mercurial field and that position is very powerful indeed.

Apparently, the dividing line is that one is either pre-1800 or post 1800 in technical style. The general belief is that the *traditionalists* have little or no counseling skills and are fatalistic in their approach with very little latitude of free will. The *modernists* are represented to have terrible technique, are therapists masquerading as astrologers having no desire to help clients through forecasting and making predictions.

Of course, these are misleading, prejudicial generalizations and couldn't be further from the truth. I love making outlandish generalizations that become gross distortions of reality. Astrology is a rich and varied subject with gradations of every stripe of technique and interpersonal experience. There are gifted and mediocre astrologers everywhere in all camps and groups. Nevertheless, I use these gross generalizations to illustrate a major problem – Where and what is the future of astrology?

Is the future of astrology in the counseling and therapeutic areas or the ancient areas, or mundane or any of the other branches or fields?

It is an interesting speculation and the major subject of this paper. I know this much – *The astrology of the future will look nothing like the past.* As much as alchemy looks like modern chemistry or how much modern building methods and materials resemble cathedral construction or what modern surgery must look like to doctors following the ancient doctrine, astrology will also morph and change with the times. This process will happen faster and with greater depth and implication than any of the transformed activities I mentioned above. Astrology has been held back, dammed like a strong river and when that dam opens, the flood of change will be very swift.

One of the most important events prior to the 1960's Uranus Pluto conjunction and the signature event for the future implications of astrology was the statistical work of Michele and Françoise Gauquelin. Their work conclusively established astrology's primary conviction; there is a clear and demonstrable correlation between planetary phenomena and action on earth, human action in particular. Not only is this a major milestone that will be seen in the light of decades of time, their work illustrates precisely the argument I am making in this paper. What the Gauquelin's discovered has no basis in any known astrology. The closest ideas in astrology to what the Gauquelin's found are the teachings about the strength of the angles (Asc, MC, Desc and IC) in the horoscope. In the Gauquelin diagram, the angles are not the strong points in the chart, points past the angles are stronger than the angles themselves. More importantly, there are no symbolic astrological techniques used to arrive at their conclusions, just the dynamic positions of the planets relative to the offsets of the angles. This observation is critical and marks a major departure from orthodox astrology.

Early in the 1970's, Arch Crawford was a trader in NYC and figured out the idea of mashing planetary cycles together until they mimicked moving gold prices. He called the technique *Composite Cyclegraphs*. This methodology looks nothing like anything seen in astrology. While the process combines various cycles between celestial factors into a single waveform graph, horoscopic positions or symbolic connections have no bearing on creating these graphs. Nothing we would associate

with known astrology approximates Crawford's observations. While astrologers have always worked with cycles of various factors in the sky, they have used them to describe positions (like eclipses, ephemerides, etc.) or cyclic changes (general business changes, saros cycles and their meaning to society, etc.), but not to combine them into things that have the potential to mimic historical wheat yields or frequency of ship collisions, etc. – any periodic data set of events over time can theoretically be described and forecast by Crawford's Cyclegraphs.

The technique is still quite primitive and some tools have been developed to harness some of its potential, but it is for the future and again illustrates that astrology of tomorrow will not be what we use or work with today. With Crawford's work we start to see the absolute importance of resonance tying together various dynamic factors.

I could go on with illustrations – even ones that perversely show how orthodox astrological techniques cannot stand up to statistical methods without a big stretch, but that is not the purpose of this paper.

Most of the significant observations and successful studies of the last century are dynamic in nature. Unless one is trying to replicate specific ancient techniques or taking common astrological teachings at face value, the idea of symbolic connection seems to be the dividing line between what is old and outdated and what is new and yet to come.

Section 1: *The Groundwork of Astrology's Future Techniques*

The basic floor for looking at the history of the western tradition and its relation to the early twentieth century starts with Alfred Witte. His background, training and the times he lived through gave him a great opportunity to analyze our historical tradition in the spirit of Johannes Kepler. Prior to 1914, the libraries of pre-war Europe contained original copies of many of the great western works pertaining to our field, ripe for analysis. European scholars created well-crafted, scholarly translations in native languages from the ancient sources. Although a native German, Witte's classical training in Latin and Greek enabled him to absorb this ancient material in a direct fashion.

The other practitioners of the period were also making advances in reviving astrology. What differentiates Witte's approach from his contemporaries concerned what they were all trying to accomplish. While his contemporaries were trying to rediscover the field and became creative when the information they were distilling did not fit into the contemporary mode of thinking, Witte stripped what was known about astrology until he grasped various core ideas that meshed with the structure of 19th century styles of science and thinking.

He took Kepler's quote about cleaning up the beautiful baby of astrology without discarding its essence very seriously. While he expressed the now quaint scientific worldview of his era in his reworking of astrology's fundamental principles, he nonetheless managed to extract a view of the subject that is as clean today as it was almost one hundred years ago when he proposed his reforms. That his work survives and thrives in today's astrological climate is a testament to his farsighted efforts.

His work is now quite mature and in some ways antiquated, yet it is still highly revolutionary when compared to the mainstream work of the traditionalists and modernists. His teachings have been interpreted, amplified and differentiated through his various students. Witte's associate Friedrich Sieggruen and Witte's publisher and friend, Ludwig Rudolf helped create the early Hamburg School and pioneered the use of dials, graphic ephemerides and other tools. Hans Niggemann, another early student and my teacher, reformulated the System (as it was called) and took a different track than the Germans. His interpretation of Witte's ideas is cleaner and makes the System highly visual. Reinhold Ebertin, another student of Witte, further reduced Witte's ideas and streamlined them even more, further integrating them into the counseling experience. Edith Wangemann gave a richness and unique observation of Witte's concepts. All of Witte's students and the secondary schools they spawned added to Witte's core concepts. Today we can mash all the material that emanated from these passionate and creative workers and bring the result right back to Witte and distill a more pure form of what he observed about astrology.

What Witte grounds astrology into is a form of Modern Hellenistic Astrology with a garnish of Medieval and Renaissance technical observations. His result is something very similar to chemistry at the turn of the last century. He created a language of astrology that is large enough to include all the current psychological concepts of his time and anticipated future observations in the way he laid out his work, many before their widespread use today. He derived meaning not only from observation, but also from the fundamental concepts underlying the very framework of the heavens. And, yes, he reduced much of dynamic planetary action to a symmetrical conception and meaning.

Most of all, Witte created a true theoretical view of astrology that is conceptual in nature. As a people, we have rapidly developed and evolved during the last few thousand years and most of that evolution is in the way we conceive knowledge. The observations and information of the ancients, gave way to different ways of grouping and preserving information, organizing it into larger categories and recording this material. The rise of the Enlightenment, fueled by Guttenberg's Press, led our collective thinking into a larger process of conception. The rise of modern scientific inquiry was one of the consequences of this conceptual evolution of humanity. In other words, the rise of the technical world and the way we conceive of

it created the methods that we use to describe it, not the other way around. It is the way people think and organize information that has led to our highly organized and integrated world. This world as we know it is an expression of the consciousness of humanity. It is modern humanity's method of conceptualizing and processing information that makes us quite different from our forbearers. Witte captured a modern mode of thinking about astrology's underpinnings very successfully and with great foresight. This is one of his major contribution to astrology. It will be very hard to dislodge what he has introduced because his fundamental concepts are elegant and simple. They are truly core observations and theories about the structure of astrology.

Two major themes come out of this elegant astrological core of ideas. One is the absence of *symbolic connection*. The regimen of rulerships and associations that permeates most historical astrological writing is a limiting concept. While it preserves the magical connection to the planets as Gods moving around the ecliptic, holding forth in various places and interacting as lords and ladies of the court, it is from a different time. As one studies Witte's core ideas and makes one's own observations, it will become clear that he is correct in rejecting these technical forms. The second major theme has to do with *resonance*. While you may still be upset over the overt rejection of what would seem to be the major technical structure of astrology, the symbolic connection between factors, the concept of resonance is much more important.

Resonance describes what astrology actually does and how it does it. Witte had some interesting ideas about the cause and effect of the mechanics of astrology. I think they are antiquated and a product of his times. Buried in plain sight throughout his work, however, the idea of resonance shows us the working process of astrology. Resonance does not indicate what causes the interaction and connection between activity and the heavens as the modern scientific mechanists would like us astrologers to demonstrate. It only shows how it works.

The refined concept of resonance arose out Witte's use of the *differences*. That is, the arc openings formed between factors in the sky. Witte worked with what we call the *sums* and the differences would seem to be an afterthought to complete his theory of *planetary pictures*. I recognized the implication of working with the differences and it was an enlightened time. I separated the differences and began to develop *difference tables* and other tools. I began to call what I was using the *Difference Theory* in the late 1970's and have worked with and expanded the concept through the years. I consider it one of the most important observations of my career.

To illustrate it simply will also imply how the concept is so large that it can even encompass precession, the role played by the *Great Year* in astrology. This illustration also clarifies why astrology bases itself within the tropical framework. Let us suppose we are working on a horoscope where the natal Jupiter is 35 degrees

from zero Aries or 5 degrees Taurus. The native is 70 years old and we observe Venus transiting 5 degrees of Taurus or 35 degrees from zero Aries. We would say that transiting Venus is conjunct the natal Jupiter and be quite correct. However, the native's Jupiter is not in the sky, it moved away a long time ago and although it revisits the same place in the ecliptic every 12 years, the background stars have slightly moved in the intervening years. Put another way, the 5 degrees Taurus Jupiter's natal position has shifted back almost a full degree against the background stars by the time the native is 70 years old. Along comes Venus to 5 degrees Taurus as measured from zero tropical Aries and an event occurs in the native's life as described by the natures of the Venus and Jupiter when they interact. Not only has Venus gone over a place where there is no natal Jupiter, but the position where we measure the natal Jupiter has shifted against the background sky as well. Yet, our conjunction does what it is supposed to do and the proper events ensue. Even more important is the role of zero degrees Aries. It is also not a fixed position against the background stars and nor is it a visible or dynamic factor, but all celestial factors are related to it through the Earth-Sun connection.

What has transpired with this illustration is an example of a difference, equal opening, equal arc or resonance. The difference of Venus to zero Aries is 35 degrees and the difference of the natal Jupiter to zero Aries is 35 degrees as well. This action allows the natal Jupiter to resonate to the transiting Venus. What is implied is that every collection of factors with a 35-degree arc opening between them will also resonate with transiting Venus – living things, places and objects as well as other factors in the horoscope and the sky. It will also resonate using various harmonics of arc openings between factors. An event sequence is never a single factor, but the expression of a collection of factors.

A careful study of Witte's concepts, with good guidance will yield a great insight into a large portion of the foundation of the new astrology.

While Witte's work traces back to the origin of Greek writing and reflects what was historically available during his lifetime. He did not integrate other pre-Greek material nor does he seem to have studied Chinese, Mayan or especially Babylonian source material. He did observe Indian technique, but clearly concentrated on the western tradition. With the material he did consult and study, he did a very thorough job. I remember Rob Hand discussing with me (for several years) his differences with conclusions Witte came to adopt as Rob dug into his own research of astrological history. While he may have differed with some of Witte's conclusions, he clearly acknowledged that Witte mastered his sources.

From what I can see, once one has encountered Witte and his conclusions, the western tradition becomes well-trod ground. It is the other ancient sources that Witte did not study or comment on that are of interest in looking at the foundations of Symmetrical Astrology.

This leads to the work of Arthur H. Blackwell, who takes us off the ecliptic altogether. Witte's work is anchored in the great circles and is very two dimensional or oriented towards the use of planes. This gives his methods great focus and strength. Arthur was concerned with the entire sky and its motions. Arthur trained as a Western Sidereal in the Fagan-Allen tradition. He acquainted himself with Greek, Egyptian and Babylonian origins of astrology with great diligence and an excellent scholarly ability to cite sources. His historical research on ancient birth data (*Historical Data Collection*, published by Astrolabe) is a classic and unrivaled close to twenty years after his death. He was the first person to successfully explain to me how a heliocentric rising worked, why it made sense and was so important. Over time, he rejected the zodiacal view of precession due to placement against the heavens. He was concerned only with processional corrections without regard to interpretation by sign placement. He was very concerned with fixed stars and with oblique angles as related to the horizon. He perfected a view of *paranatellon* (or parans for short) that was not only conceptually sound, but also beautiful to visualize. Arthur's approach to Lunar and Solar Returns had to do with angularity and oblique parans that formed at the return latitude. One might say that AH had a unique view of astrology.

Not only was Arthur's great gift to us in the form of a clear awareness and usage of oblique's and off ecliptic work, but he left us a very powerful tool to understand and use his ideas. His father was a cartographer (mapmaker), his grandfather was a horologist (watch designer), and of course an astrologer with such a lineage should invent interesting ways of displaying the movement of the heavens. Arthur worked with a polar map projection of the heavens, a stereographic projection called the *Polar Azimuthal Equidistant Projection* or the PA for short. You may know this form of charting by looking at the UN Flag or a stereographic star map that has a large oval ring for a given horizon. A PA can be utilized as a true armillary sphere, can illustrate paran material for any latitude, show any forms of astro-cartography and astro-map material, and can be adapted for primary directions using any of the various rates of motion. It is truly a chart form of the future.

Witte brings to the table of twentieth century innovation a well worked theoretical basis for a technically modern astrology set in a plane-based geometric system. Blackwell opens the sky to everything else. The application of Witte's theories to Blackwell's three-dimensional methods and view is now emerging. While many of us discussed such an approach in the 70's and 80's, the tools are now becoming available to make research and observation a reality.

With this basic bedrock of theory and observation and the fundamental ideas of *resonance* and rejection of *symbolic connection* and all its limitations, the possible technical applications and innovations for astrology's future are astounding.

Section 2: *Why this is all Revolutionary - Beyond the Boundaries of Astrology*

In the mid-seventies, as astrology's popularity was rising in the public eye, a group of disgruntled advocates for a mechanized world-view targeted our rag tag body of knowledge and its practitioners as a pariah on society. They created a petition of 176 folks associated with academia, commercial technology applications and other areas including a few Nobel Prize winners condemning astrology as a magical system of thought that did not work, was historically rejected and had no demonstrable use or consequence. They further stated that knowledge and use of the subject detracted from the progressive and enlightened thinking of modern society. They landed on the front page of the *New York Times* in 1976. Ouch!

The petition's organizers created a *Committee for the Investigation of the Paranormal* to debunk magical ideas and purge them from society. We called them the *Keystone CSICOPs*. A Canadian newspaperman, Malcolm Dean took on the CSICOPs in his great newsletter called *Phenomena*. Eventually the CSICOP committee became aware of the Gauquelin study and brashly put together a sub-committee to investigate and replicate the Gauquelin study in order to debunk and trash it. They were not prepared for the results that vindicated the Gauquelins and clearly showed that the basic premise of astrology was correct. If this material hit the general public, they knew they would completely lose credibility for judging the innocent defendant, astrology, before the trial. Therefore, they changed the data the Gauquelins worked with and thought they could get away with it. They did not due to the honesty of the only trained statistician working on the project, Dennis Rawlins, who publically blew the whistle on the malfeasance of the CSICOP committee in *Fate* magazine (adding insult to embarrassment). With egg on their face, the CSICOPs held a news conference in 1982 in NYC to announce the scandal and astrology's vindication. Sarcastically and in their devious way, they barred the press from attending this announcement.

My extended family of astrologers were deeply offended by this treatment and while we were vindicated and given great credibility (by those following this debacle), we were not only still unaccepted by the social and scientific orthodoxy, but we were swept under the rug of the public eye and kept out of sight. Meanwhile the CSICOPs continued to condemn our craft with every opportunity. While attending a conference at Mills College in California during this time, Rob Hand was to give the main speech of the conference. Prior to his talk, a group of us discussed this very issue and Rob got angry. I had not seen him that mad in many years (if at all). He threw out his talk and strode to the podium to give an impromptu and passionate talk that came to be known as *Astrology as a Revolutionary Science*. He later refined and wrote several versions of this thesis with the final version landing in a compilation book assembled by A.T. Mann called, ironically, *The Future of Astrology*.

I consider Rob's article, *Astrology as a Revolutionary Science*, a seminal work for our field. It provides the philosophical underpinning for a platform like Symmetrical Astrology to exist. While Rob is currently knee deep in medieval astrological studies, his heart is with the spirit of this work, although he may not agree with my approach. For a new astrology to emerge, not only should the language, form and technique need to come of age and modernize, but the philosophical basis needs to modernize as well. Rob's work provides that strong voice and his ideas will also resonate as strongly for the philosophy of astrology as the Gauquelin's did for the legitimacy of the astrology's core principles.

Rob's thesis compares astrology and science to specific types of religions. He starts by looking at the merits of astrology as it is and how it has affected our cultural history. He correctly points out the uniqueness of astrology as a symbolic language deeply rooted in our collective psyche and its persistence in our social history. He shows how astrology is not a science like our "hard" sciences, but more like an ongoing study similar to the development of modern medicine. This illustrates that we must tighten up our craft and follow the model of sciences like medicine.

Rob goes on to clearly state that if astrology is valid on any level, then *"the metaphysical foundations of the sciences and of our culture are wrong! And it is the metaphysical assumptions of modern science and their broader cultural counterparts, not the intrinsic nature of scientific inquiry, that are threatening the world we live in."*

The article goes on to define various types of religions, including modern science and astrology as well as the more orthodox styles of belief. These distinctions are critical to understanding how revolutionary and threatening our views are to the world-at-large. The very nature of how we view time is at great odds with the current worldview. From Rob's perspective, the current cultural belief surrounding the study of modern science, has become a linear death culture and quite dangerous to humanity's future.

This is the reason that at this time in our collective history we astrologers are clearly the revolutionary cutting edge. *"The most powerful reason for developing a science of astrology is to make a conscious attempt to overthrow the mechanist-materialist worldview."*

He closes the article showing what astrology must do and the resistance orthodox astrologers will have to realizing the burden of responsibility they hold for the survival of the world. *"If astrology simply persists as it is, it will do very little for the culture as a whole. It will remain a deviant little group doing strange things within their own little world and disregarded by the rest of the*

world. Meanwhile the rest of the world will go on treating nature as if it were dead, until it is."

He clearly recognizes the importance of work like the Gauquelins. As he puts it. *"The work of Michel and Françoise Gauquelin, limited in scope as it is, is one of the strongest threats to mechanist-materialism in existence. What they have found has no known mechanistic explanation and it will strain the possibilities of mechanism to find one."*

There are several roads of legitimacy that astrology must cover to emerge as an accepted part of the future. The Gauquelin's and other successful studies from great researchers that followed them have demonstrated proof of concept in modern terms and hopefully, that trend will continue. The philosophic consequence of the reintegration of astrology into the modern world is well documented by Hand's essay. The technological superstructure for the new astrology is emerging through the concepts and tools developing through Symmetrical Astrology and, hopefully, systems similar to it. The re-integration of astrology into mainstream academic structures, however, is a flawed process and presents some disturbing issues.

The academic integration of astrology as a core study into the university system is necessary for the field to grow in a setting on par with other great core curriculums. This is an integral part of establishing astrology as a legitimate field in the modern western tradition. Not only is it tough to gain recognition for an unjustly discredited field of study, but the politics and current mind-set of academia present a formidable obstruction. In addition, school resources are hoarded as in any bureaucracy and the recognition of the need to add education of astrological subjects is often seen as a needless waste of funds and school resources.

New efforts must be made to rectify this situation. It is so crucial for astrology's future and this paper is a statement of what to do to create a positive future for our field. Perhaps the influence of the traditionalists will plant subversive seeds that will slowly germinate. I hope so, but I feel action on a conscious level must be undertaken as well. As the Uranus approaches the square to Pluto, radical steps may become possible. The introduction of the scope of techniques and the criteria for their development can rebuild our view of what the field is actually capable of becoming. Demonstrating a language and ability in line with modern conceptions is a key to gaining credibility. Of course, good studies and research to back up assertions is always a plus. The truth can always cut through any barrier.

The academic and philosophic issues are observations at this time. The character of Symmetrical Astrology is technical innovation, not academic and social integration. The purpose of stating these broader issues brings us to what Symmetrical Astrology can actually do and what it cannot accomplish. To create a positive future for the field needs all of the above. The ideas Symmetrical Astrology introduces

need to be observed and worked with. For Symmetrical Astrology to play its part, the other legs need to support it. Astrology needs to expand Rob's philosophic position. It needs its place in the university. It needs good research and research modeling and Symmetrical techniques are a good place to start for this area. Investigate what these ideas have to offer and retrain your mind to look at the technique without prejudice. In the worst case, it will make you think.

Section 3: *Contributing Techniques*

The ideas that comprise technical Symmetrical Astrology are not limited to Witte and Blackwell with a little bit of Christen thrown in. There are whole areas of astrology that are extent and thriving and easily fit the criteria for inclusion in this technical umbrella. The only criteria for separating technique out of the Symmetrical umbrella concerns *symbolic connection* and *historical boundaries*. Take that away from central consideration and all sorts of things are possible. In the large view of the field of astrology, innovation is everywhere. Much of it, I am sure is beyond my perceptions. I will point out some areas and approaches that I feel good about.

Bruce Scofield is an old friend and well known astrologer. His work with Mayan Astrology with Barry Orr and others is outstanding. It is the only view of an indigenous astrology uncontaminated by western or eastern traditions and gives insight into what the true ancients expected from astrology and the methods they used. The study of cycles, Venus, day counts, heliacal risings, and other dynamic phenomena are a prototype of the technique that arises from a people's consciousness as astrology evolves into a culture and becomes prominent. Bruce is experimenting with synodic cycle charts based on principles that he has derived from his study of this work. He has also advanced some interesting ideas about the nature of human consciousness.

The work on declinations by Leigh Westin et al is a direct extension of Witte's ideas and very innovative. The vertical planes often are shortchanged and the work that this group is engaged in will logically lead to more work in alternate planes. These areas have murky origins in western historical tradition, but seem to be crucial in the roots of all indigenous astrology from the Egyptians to the Babylonians to the Mayans and Chinese. They all used obelisks to mark parallels. All ancient rock calendars measured declination before longitude. They looked for the turning points, the limits.

Fixed stars are a great and meaningful tradition. This area is a goldmine. There are the compilers like Diana Rosenberg and the innovators like Bernadette Brady. While Rosenberg will be a source of lore and historical observation for many years to come, Brady adopts and uses this material in a thoroughly modern way. She employs methods that would make AH Blackwell proud with her innovative use of

star parans and meanings. She does great work with cycles, as well, demonstrating an innate ability to ferret the proper meaning into Saros cycles among others. Here the history and lore of the fixed stars needs much more study and integration into new methods. Many, many great astrologers in our history did great work with the fixed stars and it spans time before the Babylonians. The limitations of a single plane like the ecliptic make this area cry for more three-dimensional tools where spherical projections and oblique illustrations can take the stars back to the heavens in new ways. Bernadette is currently creating a vision is how the Babylonians worked with the “Moon Diaries” and points out that these tables are actually horoscopes made prior to the static “horoscopes” of the Hellenistic Greeks. If her thesis is even partially correct, it clearly upends the current Greek philosophic supremacy over ancient astrological development.

Cycles of themselves are a huge area to employ for the future. I have already mentioned Arch Crawford’s work. The Institute for the Study of Cycles in Pittsburgh, PA has collected a large body of raw material over the years. This work will also serve as a benchmark for research for a long time to come. Modern pioneers like Grant Lewi, John Townley, Andre Barbault and so many others started looking at cycles in a new way and with great insight. This is one of the most fertile areas for astrology’s growth.

One of the great emerging cycle researchers that departs from the traditional view is Dietrich Pressin in her revised work, “Lunar Shadows” where she takes apart various Lunations, Moon cycles, Venus cycles and applies them to a continuum of events and how these events are linked over time. As an example, she observes the recurrence of the 9 month Lunar and Venus cycles that permeate standard activities like the development of a meeting amplified via specific turning points or the “gestation” of any project in the same way. This particular observation seems to follow Mayan traditions and other indigenous forms of astrology, yet, she comes to it only using modern methods of observation.

While the ancient Egyptian astrological knowledge needs to be further data-mined and distilled, the nearby Babylonian civilization is the fertile crescent of astrology. I have found the academic treatment of the Babylonian sources dry and, well, too academic to the point of a bad headache. Researchers who had more distain for astrology than is humanly tolerable did most of the original translation of the cuneiform tablets and interpretation of the artifacts. Later researchers have much more sympathy for the science and astrology of the Babylonians. Academicians like Francesca Rochberg take the new work and modern revision of the Babylonian’s role in influencing the pre-western era to new heights.

I especially like Rumen Kolev’s take on this knowledge, where he has made inferences as to the true nature of Babylonian astrology unlike the academic approach, which can only interpret source material without making inferences due

to the nature of the old academic approach. In the case of historical and critical historical sources, connecting the wires and making inferred observations without direct sources is a sin. To me it is the only way to connect incomplete dots, but only with a great talent, knowledge and insight into what the astrologers were trying to do. Rumen clearly demonstrates that talent and ability. You have to hand it to someone who goes into Saddam Hussein's Iraq, climbs the ruins of an original Babylonian ziggurat to photograph a specific combination that would have been seen exactly the same way by the ancients that used the same platform several thousand years ago. The information to be gathered and distilled from these sources is vast and of great interest is the period from the fall of Babylon to after Alexander the Great when astrology moved from Babylonian origins to Greek thinking.

Arthur Blackwell considered the Babylonian material the next great source for bringing astrology to the future. He based his concepts about oblique astrology and usage of the celestial sphere on his own research and interpretation of the Babylonian ideas. Fortunately, for all of us he did not try to replicate what the Babylonians were doing and reduced many fragments of ancient knowledge into modern unified concepts.

One might say that New York City's East Side was a spawning ground for astrological innovation. The New York Astrology Center started there and was a magnet for gatherings with astrologers from worldwide. AH Blackwell grew up on those streets and played stickball with Jim Lewis. Both independently studied Sidereal Astrology and both became obsessed with the concept of angularity. Jim took his ideas directly to the globe in a visual sense and plotted planetary poles and projected horizons onto a Mercator projection of the Earth. He called his device *Astro-Carto-Graphy* and contracted with the pioneering Astro-Numeric Services to program and produce it for market. Lewis created and sold the first mass-market astrology tool based on serious modern astrology and it was a major hit. The idea of plotting planetary and celestial action on various projections is central to Symmetrical Astrology. When Lewis's methods are combined with Blackwell's projections very powerful material becomes available. Working with the horizon and locations on the planet goes to the core and origin of astrology's primal observations.

While on the concept of off-ecliptic timing, several workers in the field have developed timing tools, using local parans (see Brady, Orr and Christen, above). The most notable has been Jim Valliere and his Kinetic Mundoscopes. Jim was also a close associate of AH Blackwell and the staff at Astrolabe. For his work, he was awarded the Mark Edmond Jones Award and has published the KM's (as we call them) on a yearly basis and set for NYC for close to forty years. His graphs show the rising and setting of the planets corrected for the local horizon. The published one's were for NYC only, soon computer versions will be available that can be modified for any locale. The graphs show a month's worth of motion at a time and crossings

are parans while the scale of the graph is in hours. This tool is a unique contribution to the field.

While Witte worked directly with various harmonics, it was John Addey and his student Charles Harvey along with many others that created a new look at the Pythagorean number theories and their deeper implication for astrology. In a sense, Addey westernized a Hindu system of dividing the horoscope by prime numbers and creating a sub-horoscope with a meaning associated with the number used to divide the chart. While Witte used hard harmonics to group factors for timing and dynamic interaction, Addey gives all the possible number divisions a rich texture of meaning. Addey created a way of looking at aspects and divisions unlike anything before and was a true innovator. Derived from his work, students like Susan Town work with fractions of harmonics and applies the result to timing and age progressions.

These various applications and new ways of looking at the old dog of astrology all have great promise for the future of the field. The field is so vast that many other workers and ideas that are germane to Symmetrical Astrology are surely glossed over in this paper. If I have missed great work, forgive me and I am sure many approaches are contributing to a greater good if they are following the simple guidelines discussed above.

Section 4: The Impact of Computers

Computers were built for astrology. The first programmable calculators (that is what those giant machines were – big programmable calculators) were designed to calculate artillery projections during World War II. Artillery moves following Newton's laws and are calculated from orbital elements just as planets are calculated. These machines stayed big and dumb until the mid-sixties (Uranus-Pluto Conjunction) when innovative companies began to make smaller machines the size of refrigerators. They were still pretty dumb but not so big and expensive. Universities bought into this new generation of machines in a big way, democratizing access to computing power. Shortly after, the first known astrology program was born at UCLA called the CCRS Astrology Program (Community Church of Religious Science – don't ask) created by the children of astrologer and clinical psychologist, Zip Dobyns.

One thing led to another and over the course of several years in the late 1970's Rob Hand, Steve Blake, AH Blackwell, Pat White and I slowly created the pre-cursor of Astrolabe called Astro-Graphics Service, Inc. The reason was the shrinking computer that was smaller and cheaper than the refrigerator sized machines and called a microcomputer. The first consumer computers were weak and primitive and became the start of a major revolution for all of society. AGS was arguably the first astrology software company. Our competition was Michael Erlewine's Matrix

Software. While Matrix sold the first cassettes of software, Rob published the earliest routines that allowed those programs to be created.

Over the decades, one of the major themes of discussion at Astrolabe has been what to do with all the techniques and innovations introduced to us and innovated by our staff. We realized during our formation as a group (before we were a company) that the techniques we insert into our software would be the techniques that will survive into the future. We were also aware that what we stressed and included into our code could greatly influence the direction of the field as it moves forward. We had to get it right since we were at the very beginning and vanguard of the great personal computer revolution as it affected astrology.

Instead of being fully revolutionary and introducing advanced concepts as well as modern computing code and programs, we wisely chose to start with mainstream ideas and methods. It was a wise way to go because it allowed us to establish a business instead of a short-lived revolt. We correctly felt that the introduction of computers to astrology should try to be as familiar as possible. In addition, the work of establishing all the computing standards that we all take for granted today was enormous and daunting. Fortunately, our in-house talent and extended family of knowledgeable peers gave us a great understanding of everything we have made since our founding. All of us came from the publishing and production end of the field. Part and parcel of that end of the work brought all of us into contact with the leading minds of astrology prior to creating the astrological computer revolution. Having a very fertile, forward thinking backdrop to the integration of computers made personal computers a logical extension all of the advanced concepts floating around.

It has been over thirty-five years since Rob Hand began making calculators and small machines produce astrology. Go back more than 40 years and Neil Michelsen was programming industrial mainframe IBM computers to produce astrology. Go back more than 50 years and the Gauquelins are organizing their research work with only the help of mechanical tabulation machines and index cards. Some of the earliest mainframe computers produced the calculations for advanced central European ephemerides in the fifties and sixties. All of the modern tools we use today had these humble beginnings.

By the late 80's and early 90's, Astrolabe created the software outlines of many of the techniques we either individually pioneered or we were closely associated with the innovators themselves. Our programming style and practices allowed us to finalize modules and hone them to a highly debugged state. While computing platforms change, the logic and structure of our coding does not. This has allowed us to continue to make advanced tools and create products that integrate these tools. While we have much of this material scattered around in-house, we release various iterations of Nova ChartWheels as a showcase of some of these concepts as

we polish them up and make them presentable. ChartWheels and tools like it should, over time, become unrecognizable and that will be very good for astrology.

Computers and astrology go together like a pair of shoes. We producers of programs can fabricate anything that any far thinking practitioner or researcher can come up. Therefore, the technology of computers is ripe and ready for astrology's coming changes.

Right now, most software available commercially caters to the popular conception of astrology. The traditionalists and the modernists are well represented in most of today's commercial and popular software. Communities and web locations are proliferating and new social organs are starting to replace traditional face-to-face classes and conferencing. Much like the shift from astrological books of the past as a medium of knowledge exchange to the new search engines assuming that role, the social web will reshape the current astrological knowledge web. What knowledge and outlook will go into this reshaping?

It is a critical question and it is happening as you read this without any guidelines or any single influence or any preconceived structure. Will there be strong, wise and guiding voices for the field? If any arise, they will certainly not be coming from academia. More than likely marketing will play the larger role in shaping the future perceptions of the astrological field. The publicity created around a discovery can influence the field's public perception more than anything else can in this new world. Our relevance as a positive influence in our social fabric will hinge more on our public perception than any discoveries or innovations themselves.

Being at the mercy of such social forces of perception means that we have to progress and make astrology presentable to the modern world and the interconnected media.

Section 5: *From Here to Eternity*

When I conceived of a position paper to explain the need for Symmetrical Astrology I did not intend to do a full survey of the field. Yet, as I gathered together the origins and material needed to demonstrate a full astrological system for modern times it became clear that a cursory survey was needed to illustrate the kind of material the new world needs from astrology. This paper is highly opinionated and deliberately so. While I am not an aged man (just entering my sixties as I write this), my career is very long and rich so I have the view of an aged astrologer, hopefully wise and observant (and with all my faculties). Not many of my peers or predecessors have been in this field as long or with the professional experience, my destiny gave to me. The professional interaction with my peers has been a thread that has followed my work everywhere. I have had to satisfy the needs and tastes of

all kinds of astrologers since the days of working at the NY Astrology Center over forty years ago.

Unlike book publishing or creating periodicals, selling books to one's peers or giving technical support to software users brings one face to face with catering to ideas often alien to one's training and observation. The sheer diversity of concepts and teachings permeating astrology is astounding. Some of it so good and of such pure genius that I have been moved to tears of pride and some so bad and ignorant that I have become sick with shame. So many folks are not aware of advances in the practice and the knowledge is so fragmented that how can a smart and capable student be able to discern the good from the bad? How can the teacher do the same?

I have developed my observations through practical training and work. My luck was exposure to material that was solid and rare. My greatest gift has been my peers and associates who, as a group, surrounded me with a sense of a center to the field. While my views are alien to the mainstream thinking about astrology and are often derided, I have been on to something very good for a long time. Uranus is strong in my horoscope and Uranus is truly concerned with the group. A good Uranus is an Eagle Scout or a great politician, someone who is representative of the fabric of a people. A bad Uranus stands out and tries to be different and eccentric just to be different and eccentric. Uranus does rule this astrological craft and it can be the great good for the whole of our social fabric. However, truth is often innovative and revolutionary and because it is so different is often rejected outright without consideration of its merits. This work clearly is innovative and revolutionary. It is the work of now and the concern of the future.

Schopenhauer said, *"All truth passes through three stages. First, it is ridiculed. Second, it is violently opposed. Third, it accepted as being self-evident."*

I sincerely hope that this work is about to enter the third stage.

Gary Christen, April, 2012