

The Psychology of Astrology

Part II

A Mathematical and Symbolic Art

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Within the field of traditional psychology there are multiple theories about how our personalities are formed. However, these theories acknowledge only the material plane of existence. The research with its associations and evaluations assume that there is such a thing as “human nature” and that the newborn brings certain human traits into the world, generally in the form of physical predispositions and potentialities. I have come to realize that these theoreticians, sincere as they are about their point of view, don’t have a cosmic framework to give them a broader perspective. To me, traditional theories seem incomplete.

In recorded history, man’s relationship to nature has been either one of nature diminishing man or man being over inflated with himself to the detriment of the Earth and all its inhabitants. The latter perspective has separated him from the natural world and the cyclic universe. The scope of this essay doesn’t allow for a full discussion about why modern people are separated from the natural world, but I can suggest one reason: they don’t identify with the earth and the cosmos as being a part of themselves. People need a more complete view of themselves and modern astrology offers just that.

However, astrology has to be “proven” before many will accept it as a valid science or art. In his book, *Astrology, Psychology and the Four Elements*, Steven Arroyo, states:

“Almost every culture that we know of had some form of astrology; and this is not attributable to their lack of modern “enlightenment,” but rather to their immediate sense of unity with the cosmic environment. More than anything else, the popular pseudo-scientific prejudices and adherence to out-dated scientific theories among working scientists, educators, and the general public stand in the way of a new synthesis of knowledge and a new hope for man’s future.”

While empirical science has enhanced our lives considerably, we are beginning to realize that we can’t count on statistical data to give us all the answers. To make creative breakthroughs in the field of psychology and health care, we need to be truly open to the new. And if we are open we naturally gravitate toward the unorthodox and the unconventional. If we are honest with ourselves, we are open to what “is” then we can begin to develop a psychology that deals with the whole psycho-physical being; a being that has multiple dimensions of consciousness.

Scientists have come to believe that there is an invisible organizing pattern *within* living things, a sort of psychological conscious pattern which guides and determines the form that energy will assume. These formative patterns in nature can be seen in everything from evolutionary theory to human physical and psychological development.

In the Middle Ages, each class of things was said to possess an essence (*essential* or *quidditas*); and that essence was considered to be not of a static quality but rather a source of activity. The essence of anything was the foundation of its being that would make that thing what it is. For the Medieval philosophers, the forms observable in nature were not static entities, but incarnate ideas. The source of these ideas was seen as the “Universal Mind,” the domain and repository of the essences or archetypes of all forms that could ever exist and of all ideas that could be thought. (The Universal Mind is similar to Jung’s concept of the Collective Unconscious.)

Modern physics, finds itself returning to these ideas, for what we see in the material world, we are now told, is only the outward *wave form* of the underlying reality of vibration and energy. The material *particle* has become an extended pattern. What was once thought of as the material atom is now seen as a field of energy. Once again we run into the archaic concept of a Universal Mind that actively shapes all forms.

A new understanding of the formative principles of the universe would not only help us understand the theories of physics, biological organization, and the workings of the mind, but also provide man with meaning that provides serenity. In astrology, every individual is considered a whole and unique expression of universal principles, patterns, and energies. The Zodiac was considered by ancient astrologers and philosophers as the “soul of nature,” that which gives form and order to life.

Astrology is a language of universal archetypal principles, a way of perceiving form and order in the life of an individual, a way of symbolizing each person’s oneness with these principles. It understands that the individual is a unique form expressing a unique relationship of universal factors.

In modern terms, the universe is one whole process and consists of innumerable interpenetrating fields of energy. The energy field of any individual is related intimately to the larger energy field of his or her cosmic environment. Through an understanding of the universal factors operating in us, we can attain a greater understanding of the universal principles of life itself. Science accepts fingerprints, cardiographs, and encephalographs as useful tools, all of which are relatively unique manifestations of human energies and rhythms. The astrological birth chart is the graph through which the cosmos enables us to understand its archetypal energies and rhythms, and particularly how they operate within each of us.

In psychology, the main body of work that deals with universal and formative principles is that of Dr. Carl Jung. Jung’s archetypes are not physical structures but might be compared to the axial system of a crystal, which performs the crystalline structure in the mother liquid. Although it has no material existence of its own, the archetype in itself is empty and purely formal, no-thing but a possibility of representation which is given a priority. Jung thought that it was possible that the real nature of the archetype is not capable of being made conscious, that it is transcendent. Dr. Edward Whitmont (1970), a Jungian psychiatrist, has written of “archetypal fields” related to the astrological symbols

of the planets and defines the archetypes as “universal, cosmic form patterns and dynamics.”

It would seem that if the archetypes are the foundation of all psychic life and if they are too subtle or transcendent for immediate conscious comprehension, then it is especially important that we have a language to describe their reality. We can at least attempt to understand how they function and what they mean to us by studying the only science that deals with such forces....astrology.

Whatever label we may use to indicate these universal principles, archetypes, essences, or formative principles, the fact remains that such forces exist and constantly influence us. For this reason, some counselors, psychologists, and psychiatrists have begun to use astrology as a tool for understanding the inner dynamics of their clients. They understand that the innate psychic predisposition of an individual seems to be expressed in a recognizable way in the horoscope. Jung wrote that astrology includes the sum total of all ancient psychological knowledge, including both the innate predisposition of individuals and an accurate way of timing life crises. Dr. Whitmont stated:

“Applied in this broader sense, astrological techniques can become as valuable to the depth psychologist as dream interpretation. They would inform him, not of future events or even fixed character traits, but of unconscious basic dynamics and form patterns that a given person is “up against” and to which he continues to react throughout his life in his own particular, individual manner as the characteristic way his particular life is embodied in the cosmic whole.”

Astrology has been defined as astronomy applied for psychological purposes. The horoscope interpreted by a skilled astrologer not only provides a synthetic picture of the person’s hereditary inclinations, but points to latent potentials, and suggests directions of needed growth. It gives a symbolic map of the process of self-realization.

Astrology is a complete theory of personality, unifying and providing a foundation for all the other theories. Astrology comprises both the mathematical and the symbolic languages of life, synthesizing both into one system that is broader than any other system, mathematically or symbolic. Astrology proves its comprehensive uniqueness by accurately describing types of individual differences and uniqueness and the types of conscious energy operating through the person. It reveals the operation of universal laws of harmonics, polarities and psycho-physical energies.

How Does Astrology Work?

The Causal Approach

Many scientists have tried to explain astrology within a causal framework. One of the most common attempts can be called “Cosmic Conditioning.” This refers to the delicately balanced electromagnetic fields within the solar system and within man. These electromagnetic fields are constantly changing as the positions of the planets change. One can envision the cavity between the earth and ionosphere as a resonant system. It has a

characteristic period of about one-eighth of a second--the time it takes for light to travel once around the earth. The resonant frequency is thus about 8cps. approximately that of the alpha rhythm of the human brain. It has been suggested that the geomagnetic field might provide the fine tuning mechanism for this characteristic frequency. If behavior were affected by changes in this frequency, then the position of the planets might play a large part in human affairs (Pay, 1967).

The causal theory takes into account such things as gravitational field changes, tidal effects, solar flares, solar wind, ionospheric changes, alpha waves on the surface of the earth, emotional changes in the individual and birth quickening.

Dr. Eugene Jonas of Czechoslovakia provided an idea of a "Birth Quickening" theory. Jonas discovered that at the time of birth, the baby is at the peak of his metabolic cycle and actually causes its own birth by releasing adrenalin into the mother's bloodstream. Jonas' experiments indicated that this peak always occurs at the same sun-moon angle for the individual. The most logical explanation is that the embryo has an inherent personality and that the time of birth is then precipitated by the planetary alignments that most strongly influence the baby. Therefore the birth chart shows the planetary alignments to which we are most sensitive (p. 30).

The Symbolic Approach

The symbolic approach considers the planets and signs to be symbols of cosmic processes and universal principles. The following example attempts to correlate the yearly rhythm of the seasons with the signs of the zodiac.

<u>Sign</u>	<u>Season</u>	<u>Psychological Correspondence</u>
Aries	Germinating time, unfolding of energy	The will, the urge to act, the spirit of enterprise, the desire to lead, self consciousness, breakthrough
Taurus	Invigoration and Strengthening, creation of form	Perseverance, consolidation, the power to shape, sense of form stubbornness, strength
Gemini	Blossom-time vivification	Vivaciousness, versatility, superficiality, mental agility
Cancer	Fertilization, producing	Feeling of father and motherhood, caring for other
Leo	Maturity of the seed	The will to create, self-confidence, pride
Virgo	The harvest of what has	Diligence and care, tidiness,

	been grown	a domesticated nature, orderliness
Libra	Balance and adjustment in nature	Sense of justice, striving for harmony, sense of community
Scorpio	Life-terminating forces in nature, continuation of life in the seed	Endurance and Perseverance, struggle for survival inner awareness
Sagittarius	Winter dormancy	Cultivation of the inner spiritual, planning for the future, inspiration
Capricorn	Crystallization of forms in winter	Untiring struggle for self-preservation, patience, structured social forms
Aquarius	Waiting time before spring	Expectant attitude, good powers of observation, planning
Pisces	Swelling of the seed in the earth	Stirrings of new life, new life within the old, visionary idealistic, hopeful, trust in the universal forces

Symbols refer to *living realities* that are inexpressible in any other way. Symbols are man's way of expressing what words cannot express about the transcendent realities of the cosmos. Psychologists have called astrology the most complete symbolic language known. In astrology, we make the best use of this symbolic language if we consider it to represent universal patterns, principles, and forces. However, the symbolic approach is only complete and useful if it is seen within the framework of *holistic* approach to all of life.

The Holistic Approach

The philosophy of the holistic approach assumes that the entire universe is one whole system and with the great whole, there are lesser wholes whose patterns, structures, and functions correspond completely to those of the greater whole. Since antiquity, the idea of the microcosm in the macrocosm; the heavenly bodies were seen as a Cosmic Man. An example would be the correlation of a single atom to our solar system. The atom is a microcosm of the macrocosmic solar system. By studying the cycles and patterns in the greater whole (planets), we can learn about the cycles and patterns within man himself.

The holistic approach does not assume that causality is the one and only law of the universe. Rather the law of correspondences is a more appropriate way to look at holistic phenomenon. Jung called this law of synchronicity an a-causal, connecting principle. One of the qualities of this principle is that whatever is born or done at a particular moment in time inevitably bears the qualities of that moment. For instance, in astrology the horoscope is drawn for the moment of the individual's first breath, for that is the time when the new-born begins his individual rhythm in tune with the greater whole of all life.

Einstein's objective in the broadest sense is to show that all forms of nature-- planets, light, electricity, stars, and tiny atoms obey the same universal laws. The primary use and value of astrology is the application of this knowledge of universal laws in our lives.

Dane Rudhyar, a modern astrologer and philosopher, expounded a holistic approach to astrology, psychology and philosophy as well as all things that touch upon the individual. He published dozens of books and hundreds of articles dealing with astrological, psychological, cultural, and philosophical subjects. In addition he developed *Humanistic Astrology* a modern approach to astrology which is entirely compatible with modern psychological techniques. He presented astrology in a thoughtful and sophisticated way that blends perfectly with the most hopeful insights of modern science, philosophy, and psychology.

The underlying premise of Rudhyar's works is that of holism, of which the basic premise is that existence manifests at all levels in terms of wholes, i.e., organized fields of interdependent activities. In his book *The Astrology of Personality* (1936) he called astrology an "algebra of life," that is, a way of understanding the order inherent in all life, individual and collective. Rudhyar saw astrology as man's most complete language of the form, structure, and rhythm of functional wholes.

The Energy Approach

For many people, the holistic philosophy is the most intellectually satisfying approach to astrology. The energy approach may hold the possibility of resolving many of the differences between advocates of other perspectives. This approach deals with the essential archetypal energies and energy patterns operating through individuals. These energies are symbolized by the planets and signs in the horoscope. The energy approach offers the point of view that focuses upon the fundamental energies which *enliven* each of us. This approach is in essence a holistic approach, for it incorporates all dimensions of man's life simultaneously. Much work is presently under way which sheds light upon the subtle energies within man and the specific forms of energy in all of nature. It seems clear that a blind adherence to a purely causal framework will never enable us to develop a comprehensive theory of astrology and may prevent us from understanding its proper uses. The physician-astrologer Alexander Ruperti writes:

"Where Paracelsus speaks of identity of Macrocosm and Microcosm, where Rudhyar speaks of the principle of sympathetic resonance of all parts of the

universal whole, where Jung speaks of a synchronistic principle governing identical manifestations of psychic phenomena in terms of time, modern astrology, because it follows the scientific attitude, insists on objectifying such correspondences into a law of cause and effect. In this way, modern astrology betrays its ancient heritage to the fetish of scientific respectability.

Astrology's true role has been, and should continue to be, that of demonstrating the existence of universal order at the level of development where man's attention is focused at any given time. The time of astrology's usefulness in bringing order to the physical plane existence is over. Modern science is far better equipped now for this task than is astrology. But *at the psychological level*, man's nature today is in chaos, and it is for this reason that we suggest that astrology's highest mission, in terms of modern man's crucial needs, is to present a proof of the existence of harmonic order at the psychological level."

The art and science of astrology gives us a perspective that includes universal forces and energies. The most meaningful part is that as we study this symbolic art, and we look to the heavens for understanding, we begin to feel a unity with the whole cosmos. We may never know how everything works whether it is causal, symbolic, holistic, or energetic or all of these. The how and why of astrology may not be as important as the knowing that we have a *divine connection* to the whole. For as we look to the heavens for answers, we begin to see ourselves in the stars and eventually come to know that we are indeed a part of all creation.

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