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**The Influence of the Theosophical Movement on the Revival of
Astrology in Great Britain and North America in the 20th Century**

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A Thesis
in
The Department
of
Religion

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
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Abstract

The Influence of the Theosophical Movement on the Revival of Astrology in Great Britain and North America in the 20th century

This dissertation traces the part played by the Theosophical Movement in the enrichment and popular revival of Western astrology in this century in Great Britain and North America, through an exploration of the philosophical and practical influences at work. In particular, we explore the extent to which the Theosophical teachings have affected the self-understanding and practice of modern astrology in the two countries.

Theosophical teachings claim to represent the common spiritual heritage of mankind that is found in all the major religious traditions of the world, including Hinduism, Buddhism, Neoplatonism, Hermeticism and early Christian and Jewish mysticism. This thesis proposes that modern astrology has, to a considerable degree, enriched and renewed itself by drawing upon these traditions through Theosophy, leading to enhanced interest and prestige for astrology in society at large. Four major themes in contemporary astrology were identified as having been inspired by Theosophy: the notions of the macrocosm and the microcosm, of karma and reincarnation, of planetary cycles, and of the psychology of the soul.

In addition this dissertation identifies the Theosophical channels through which these ideas were transmitted, and traces how they came to be incorporated by the mainstream astrological communities in these two countries. The most important source of Theosophical inspiration and insight for modern astrology is to be found in the writings of Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, one of the founders of the Theosophical Society. After reviewing her ideas and attitudes towards astrology as given in particular in The Secret Doctrine as well as in her other works, this thesis traces their subsequent vicissitudes in the attitudes to astrology of major figures in the Theosophical Movement, astrologers and non-astrologers alike. A review of the Theosophical Movement and other literature about astrology, its history, and its merits as part of Theosophy, enables us to identify the contribution of the many local Lodges of the T.S. towards astrological education in the two countries, and hence their role in training succeeding generations of astrologers. *The Astrological Lodge of the Theosophical Society* in London, for example, is found to have played a particularly important role in preserving the Theosophical link to astrology. In addition, an archival search of Theosophical membership lists served to highlight the numerical importance of Theosophists among the founding members of *The American*

Federation of Astrologers, the oldest, largest, and for decades the most influential astrological organization in the United States.

Finally, we trace the dissemination of Theosophical ideas in astrology through the lives and thought of four eminent authorities, recognized for their contributions to contemporary astrology in the two countries, all of whom were strongly influenced by their Theosophical background or affiliation. In a brief biography of their life and work, as well as a selected presentation of their type of astrology, we illustrate how each of these men have, in their own way, enriched astrology. They achieved this through the Theosophical content in their writings and their activities (e.g. lectures, classes), thereby promoting a renewed enthusiasm for its practical utility in the helping professions and a greater standing among the wider public.

Acknowledgments

Thanks for this thesis have to go to many individuals and institutions who participated in this project through their advice and assistance. But I first want to turn to my own Department of Religion at Concordia University. Here I wish to thank my supervisor John Rossner for offering his support to write a Ph.D. thesis on this topic. His insightful guidance from the very outset, as well as his unfailing trust in my capabilities, have been invaluable to the completion of this undertaking. I further want to thank Sheila McDonough for her continuing support once this project got underway. She always responded promptly in commenting on my progress. Her criticism and advice was always helpful and never without encouragement up to the very end. Despite all his other administrative duties, Fred Bird took time to read and comment on my progress as well. As an outsider to this topic, his questions helped to deepen my study in certain areas and made it more comprehensible, and I am most grateful for his support.

On the Theosophical side I would like to extend my special thanks to Joy Mills, former president of the American section of the Theosophical Society (T.S.). We met at the International Theosophical Headquarters in Adyar (Madras) where she was lecturing at the time. Her sympathy for my project led to many interesting conversations in Adyar, and finally, to my stay with my husband at the *Krotona Institute of Theosophy* in California, currently under the presidency of Hein van Beusekom. Here Ms. Mills introduced me to a number of people who were to be helpful to my project, before going on yet another lecture tour. I am also grateful for the expert advice of Shirley Nicholson at Krotona. As a Theosophist, author, and former editor of Ouest Magazine, she agreed to comment on a draft of chapters 3 and 4. I also feel indebted to Lakshmi Narayan, the librarian at the *Krotona Library and Research Center*, who helped me and my husband make the most of her extensive facilities. My thanks also go to various other residents and dedicated helpers at Krotona

Also in California I wish to thank James Santucci, Professor of Religion at California State University and editor of Theosophical History, for also commenting on my draft of chapters 3 and 4. Further, I would like to thank Dr. Caren M. Elin for her enthusiastic support in so many ways, as well as to the people at the *Theosophical Library Center*, Altadena, for their kindness and willingness to dig into their archives. My thanks also go to Marguerita dar Boggia, Membership Chairperson of ISAR, who provided me with much valuable information, as well as to Michael Meyer for his willingness to share information, particularly on Dane Rudhyar.

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In England my thanks and appreciation go to a number of people associated with the different Theosophical and astrological bodies. I would like to mention, in particular, Nick Champion, astrologer and author, for helping me with important source data; Charles Harvey, Trustee of *The Urania Trust*, and Leslie Price, founder of the *Theosophical History Center* and Journal, for their help and encouragement; David Broad, a solicitor and volunteer at the Urania Trust, for his help and kindness; Patrick Curry, historian and author, who shared valuable information with me; Anabelle Kitson, historian and writer, as well as Zach Matthews who provided valuable data on Charles Carter.

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I also wish to thank the staff of the Concordia Library, particularly the helpful personnel at Interlibrary Loans; furthermore the staff at the Theosophical Headquarters in London and the Adyar Library, as well as those at the British Museum Library.

Finally, I want to thank my husband for the many helpful discussions we had, and for his unfailing support at all stages of this thesis.

Preface

The idea for the topic of this thesis developed early in 1989, after Professor John Rossner encouraged the present writer to go back to studying. However, what had started at the age of thirty as a hobby, had meanwhile become a major interest. Professor Rossner agreed to a topic on astrology of a historical nature. The present writer was inspired by some articles in a British astrological journal from a Theosophical Lodge, to find out more about the whole matter. Thus, the seeds for this thesis were planted.

For our use of the term 'West' in this thesis we will adopt Antoine Faivre's definition. For him the term 'West' encompasses "the vast Greco-Roman whole within which Judaism and Christianity have always cohabited with one another, joined by Islam for several centuries."¹ He also often calls it 'the Latin West'. The term 'East' will refer specifically to the Indian subcontinent, and more particularly to its philosophical heritage.

The word 'Theosophy' as well as 'Theosophical' with a capital T used in the text always refers to the Theosophical teachings of HPB (and her followers), unless otherwise stated. However, both may occasionally be found with small caps in quotations. If square brackets [] occur within a quotation it will indicate something added by the present writer. The use of *italics* is reserved for special names, and to emphasize the meaning of a term. References to sources and materials from the archives of Theosophical Society libraries in various locations in India, the U.K. and the U.S.A. have been indicated wherever possible, as circumstances allowed. The identity of individuals who provided other materials for our research have also been given in either the main text or in footnotes.

A list with abbreviations will follow since a number of terms or names used in this thesis tend to be fairly long. We will usually introduce the abbreviation after the first usage. The item may occasionally be spelled out to emphasize its meaning.

¹A. Faivre, "Ancient and Medieval Sources of Modern Esoteric Movements", in Antoine Faivre & Jacob Needleman, editors. Modern Esoteric Spirituality (New York, Crossroad, 1995) p.xiii.

Abbreviations:

A.A.	=	The Astrological Association
A.T.	=	<u>The American Theosophist</u> , journal
AFA	=	American Federation of Astrologers
ALL	=	Astrological Lodge of London
A.L.T.S.	=	Astrological Lodge of the Theosophical Society
C.W.	=	H.P.Blavatsky, <u>Collected Writings</u>
ERE	=	<u>Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics</u>
HPB	=	Helena Petrovna Blavatsky
K.T.	=	<u>The Key to Theosophy</u> , 1995
L.W.A.L.	=	<u>Life and Work of Alan Leo</u> , (book edited by Bessie Leo, 1919).
M.A.	=	<u>Modern Astrology</u> , issued by Alan Leo
O.D.L	=	<u>Old Diary Leaves</u> , by Colonel Henry Steel Olcott
S.D.	=	<u>Secret Doctrine</u> , by H.P.Blavatsky
S.P.R.	=	Society for Psychical Research (London)
T.H.	=	<u>Theosophical History</u> , A Quarterly Journal of Research
T.M.	=	<u>The Messenger</u> , journal
ULT	=	United Lodge of Theosophists

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1. INTRODUCTION

Since the turn of this century Western astrology has slowly grown in popularity and respectability. However, the academic community has been slow to acknowledge astrology as a subject worthy of investigation, and the philosophical and social roots of this revival have not yet been studied. This dissertation seeks to fill this gap in part, by looking at the formative influences bequeathed from around the turn of the century by Theosophy, an important spiritual movement founded by Helena Petrovna Blavatsky (hereafter HPB), and a number of others interested in the investigation of unexplained natural and psychic phenomena. More specifically, our purpose is to show the extent of the role played by the Theosophical Movement (hereafter T.S. Movement) in the philosophical enrichment and popular revival of astrology in North America and England. While we do not claim that the T.S. Movement was alone responsible for this revival, the available evidence shows that the influence of Theosophy has been profound, and that contemporary astrology would be very different today without this Theosophical influence. The T.S. Movement has thus influenced 20th century astrology in two ways: the revival of the popularity and public acceptance of astrology, and the enrichment of its content. The two are of course closely interrelated.

To validate this hypothesis has not been easy. Attitudes towards astrology and the occult in the West have been mixed for nearly 2000 years. The very term 'occult' refers to things concealed from view, not revealed, or 'secret'—hence the difficulty of obtaining information about them. It remains a taboo subject in many quarters as suggested in the titles of competent academic works such as "The Occult Underground" (James Webb) or "The

Other World” (Janet Oppenheim). Hence, most historians have shied away from exploring this subject.

We introduce our topic by first defining and describing its major elements. To start with our title: we have chosen the term T.S. Movement to encompass all the various branches which grew out of the original *Theosophical Society* founded in New York in 1875. Following the death of HPB in 1891, the Society was soon plagued with severe internal conflicts (which still linger today).¹ These had already started during HPB's life-time as we will explain in somewhat more detail in chapter 3. The conflicts worsened further after the death of each of the two other main founders, Colonel Henry Steel Olcott (hereafter Olcott), and William Quan Judge (hereafter Judge), both American lawyers. This resulted in the founding of several splinter groups which we will list below. All contributed to the spread of Theosophical ideas in general but also spilled over into the domain of astrology, though to varying degrees as we will show later in this thesis. This resulted in a kind of ‘Theosophical astrology’ which branched out under several different names.

Our use of the term ‘T.S. Movement’ thus covers seven main groups, though it is not necessarily restricted to them. First is the original *Theosophical Society* (hereafter T.S.) with its International Headquarters in Adyar (India). This organization is still the largest group today (with headquarters in London for Britain and in Wheaton Illinois for North America), possessing most of the originally-acquired assets.

¹. The history of the T.S. is complex, and views on it vary depending on the account one happens to read. Relevant literature on this subject will be identified for further study, especially in chapter 3.

Second is *The Theosophical Society (Pasadena)*, formerly known as the *Point Loma Community*, which was created after Judge's death by Katherine Tingley. Under her guidance the group created schools, and placed emphasis on music, drama and architecture.

Third is the *United Lodge of Theosophy* (ULT) which was formed in 1909 by Robert Crosbie and other disenchanted members who wished to focus more on the works of founders such as HPB and Judge.

Fourth is Alice Bailey's *Arcane School* which she founded with her husband in 1920 after being thoroughly disenchanted with T.S. politics.

Fifth is the *Rosicrucian Fellowship*, founded by Max Heindel, a former Theosophist, and his wife a few years earlier in California. They had close ties with two groups who were more indirectly related to the T.S.

Movement, Manly Palmer Hall's *Church of the People* in Los Angeles, and Elbert Benjamin's *Brotherhood of Light*, both of whom were inspired by Theosophical teachings.

Sixth is the *Sabian Assembly* founded by Marc Edmund Jones and his students in California in 1923.

And the seventh is the *Anthroposophical Society*, founded by Rudolf Steiner, a prominent German Theosophist who was expelled from the T.S. in 1913. His society has since formed branches in many parts of the world, particularly in Europe, though to a lesser extent in North America. Besides its theoretical teachings which lean more toward Esoteric Christianity, Anthroposophy also seeks to apply its spiritual principles to education, health and ecological farming.

These seven groups are part of what we in this study call the T.S. Movement.² Members of these groups have spread a 'Theosophical type of astrology' in various degrees in Europe and North America. Other groups indirectly related, or affiliated to this T.S. Movement through interconnected memberships will also be mentioned in the course of this study, where appropriate. However, only the above seven are specifically regarded here as part of the T.S. Movement.

We should also bear in mind in this context that those involved in astrology and other occult matters, now as also in the past, are often part of an extended network of similar organizations. This is particularly true for the period under investigation. For example, a person might belong at one and the same time to one of the Theosophical groups, Freemasonry, *The Rosicrucian Fellowship*, and/or several others.

Our second major subject, namely astrology, is often described as a method of divination; and it was most likely also used in this way by the Babylonians, Egyptians, Greeks and other ancient cultures. As such it is a cumulative tradition with a long history, dating back more than five thousand years. Astrology has been practiced in different cultures and bears the specifics of their traditions. Thus, for example, the astrology practiced in China differs from those practiced in Europe, or Egypt. Furthermore, the astrology practiced in the China of 3000 B.C. probably differs from the one practiced in that country today, just as the astrology practiced in ancient Greece or Rome differs from that now practiced in modern Europe.

² A number of other groups are also loosely affiliated. For example John Algeo, current President of the American Section of the T.S. in Wheaton, Ill., includes such groups as those formed around Krishnamurti, the "I Am" movement of Elizabeth Clare Prophet, groups following the ideas of Gurdjieff formalised by P.D. Ouspensky, "and much of the intellectual content of the New Age—such as it is." See John Algeo, "The Tree of Theosophy," *The American Theosophist*, Vol. 78, No. 6, November/December 1990, p. 2.

However, much of Western astrology still rests on two major works written by Claudius Ptolemy during the 2nd century A.D as we will spell out in more detail in the next chapter.

Chapter 2 will also explain ideas about the origins and history of astrology, focussing more on the Renaissance period since HPB's teachings draw upon Neoplatonism and Hermeticism which were revived during this period. A few technical details on astrology will also be included, though only sufficient to enable the reader to follow our argument (our purpose being to show the influence of the T.S. Movement on the revival of astrology, not to write a manual on the subject). And for better understanding of our particular quest, we will also provide a brief description of the historical background to astrology in England and North America.

The themes we present in chapters 4 and 5 are derived from the views of HPB on astrology as outlined in her major works, Isis Unveiled (1877) and The Secret Doctrine (1888) as well as in various articles, later republished in her Collected Writings (1968). These still represent a large part of the theoretical foundation for the Theosophical teachings. Our reason for proceeding in this manner stems from the fact that among leading Theosophists it is above all HPB who emphasizes the role of astrology, expressing both knowledge and respect for this ancient 'occult science' in her writings.

In chapter 6 we will illustrate the existence of a certain ambivalence toward astrology among most leading Theosophists as well as among ordinary members, as we discovered in the course of our research. With the exception of Olcott and Judge, our focus will be on the post-HPB-era.

On the other hand, we demonstrate in chapter 7 that efforts to spread astrology through classes and lectures at the grass roots level of the T.S. Movement were manifold, substantial and highly influential. This applies to the many local chapters of the Society throughout North America, England and beyond. Two specific Lodges, the St.Louis Lodge in Missouri, and the Astrological Lodge of the T.S. in London played a particularly important role in this regard.

Thanks to the generous cooperation and assistance of the major archives involved, we can also identify the substantial contribution of Theosophists to the foundation and later activities of the largest astrological society in North America, *The American Federation of Astrologers* (AFA).

To further support our hypothesis of the influence of the T.S. Movement on the revival and enrichment of astrology in the 20th century in England and North America, we carefully selected and analyzed the contributions of four prominent astrologers. In chapter 8 we illustrate their importance for the enrichment and revival of a new kind of astrology through a) a presentation of their biographies, b) appraisals documenting the scope of their influence, and c) the Theosophical content in their astrology, followed by a brief analysis.

1.1. Methodological Approach and Information gathering

This section will outline the approach used in conducting this study, and the information gathering process.

Methodological Approach

This study is a first attempt to shed light on the history of 20th century astrology. It is a selective approach, given the vastness of the subject. We may therefore consider this study as part of a history of 20th century astrology, as well as an examination of the influence of the T.S. Movement on this history, which hitherto has also not been considered.

Our approach to the topic is thus historical, which is to say that it relies on original data available to the researcher and the manner in which this data is interpreted. Both primary and secondary source data have been used in our study. As James Santucci puts it: "Historical research is based on the acquisition of raw data- primary source materials-based on the observations and experiences of the participants in the historical drama. It is not based on belief systems, or should not be...."³

However, Frances Yates—through her profound research on Renaissance esoteric currents, and Tamsyn Barton have pointed to the tendency among historians to *construct* history according to their own views, which are naturally mostly set by the political and social agenda of the society of which they are part. Thus the above historians have found that there are considerable differences between an 'official history,' and the picture which emerges if careful attention is given to detail. Robert Ellwood further points out that:

Historical insight or 'truth' is always partial and selective. The finite human mind can never know all the virtually infinite number of factors that go into any contemporary event, much less comprehend

³James Santucci, Theosophical History (T.H.), Vol V, No 5, Jan. 1995, p. 145ff. He there makes valuable observations on method in historical research. See also his editorial comments in *ibid*, Vol. VI, No. 4, October 1996.

all those that make up a happening back in the past. Furthermore, the selection by historians of the data that seems significant out of all the rest often tells us more about the historians themselves, and the age in which they write, than it totally unlocks the past...⁴

If we consider that astrology has a history going back at least 5000 years, it is surprising how little attention has been paid to it. It is all the more surprising when we recall the tremendous impact of astrology on key areas of the societies and cultures of the past, such as history, politics, religion, philosophy, science and art (as E.Garin has reminded us).⁵

A few gaps were encountered during our research with respect to the available source data on the history of astrology over the past hundred years. This is primarily due to the fact that people in prominent positions in particular had (and perhaps still have) reason to conceal their interest or involvement with the occult because of the mixed reputation it suffered throughout most of its history. Therefore much of the evidence rests in private hands, and attention to detail is essential though also time consuming, particularly for a topic like astrology.⁶ We were nevertheless fortunate in this study to secure the cooperation of most of the organizations and private parties involved. Gaps still remain with respect to biographical and certain other matters, but do not in any great measure affect our conclusions. However, they leave room for further research.

The main channels through which the influence of the T.S. Movement made itself apparent, as identified in our research, are as follows:

⁴ Robert Ellwood, letter in T.H., January 1991, p. 136

⁵ Eugenio Garin, Astrology in the Renaissance: the Zodiac of Life (London: Penguin Books Ltd., 1983) p. 24. Some of this influence still lingers today, as we point out in chapters 2 and 8.

⁶ For example ploughing through 100 volumes of unindexed journals just to spot the occasional little announcement of an astrology class held by a T.S. Lodge or an advertisement for astrological counselling.

1. The major works of HPB;
2. Astrological activities of the various local Theosophical Lodges such as the free astrology classes at Krotona, and regular classes at various levels at the St. Louis Lodge;
3. The spread of Theosophical literature;
4. The willingness to publish and distribute astrological literature through the T.S. Publishing House;
5. The Theosophical contributions of the four astrologers selected in support of our thesis hypothesis.

Material, verbal and written, was carefully assembled in each case and subsequently evaluated for its relevance to our theme of Theosophical influence in contemporary astrology.

The Information Gathering Process

This research is based on three main sources of information, the available literature both published and unpublished (lecture or conference transcripts and tapes, internet repositories), personal testimony, and miscellaneous survey data. All three sources were used for the present study. This involved the writer in extensive travel to institutions and individuals in England, the United States and as far afield as India. Two separate visits were made to England, one each to California (Krotona) and Philadelphia (Sabian Assembly Conference), and one extended trip to the International Headquarters of the Theosophical Society in Adyar (Madras), India. A brief summary follows.

1. First England Visit

The objective of both England visits was to get biographical information on Alan Leo and Charles E.O. Carter, as well as about the history of the Astrological Lodge of London (ALL). This was carried out through library

research at the Headquarters of the Theosophical Society in London, through contact with members of the main astrological organizations in England, and through introductions to noted authorities in the fields of Theosophy and astrology.

The Theosophical Society's library is an important repository of original documents dating back to the early years of the organization. It is also a major source of membership data.

During our first visit in 1989, meetings were held with leading members of the *Astrological Lodge of the Theosophical Society*, and we were fortunate in being able to attend one of their weekly meetings. We interviewed Mr. Geoffrey Cornelius, president of the *Company of Astrologers*. We also interviewed Mr. Charles Harvey, a leading figure (at the time) in *The Astrological Association* and trustee of the *Urania Trust*, an astrological study centre and library created by the *Association*. This latter body was a veritable gold mine of old journals and rare books. An interview was also arranged with Mr. Nick Campion, a well-known Theosophist, astrologer and author in Bristol, and with Ms. Frances Fisher, a long-time acquaintance of the astrologer Charles Carter, one of the four astrologers selected for a more detailed examination in chapter 8, at her home in Somerset. Valuable information and assistance was also obtained from Mr. Leslie Price, head of the *Theosophical History Centre* and then manager of the Quest Bookshop in London. Price initiated the publication of the journal *Theosophical History*, currently edited by James Santucci, (Associate Professor in the Department of Religion at California State University, Fullerton). Useful information was also gathered at the *Warburg Institute* in London, a valuable repository of rare books in the history of astrology and the occult.

2. Second England Visit

This second visit to England in the fall of 1995 was undertaken on the outward leg of an extended journey to India (see below). The objective was to renew the contacts made previously and to collect further information that had come to our attention in the interim. Many hours were spent once again in the library of the Theosophical Society, and also at the British Museum library which yielded a wealth of precious source data for our study. We were also fortunate during this visit to have a discussion with the historian Mr. Patrick Curry, who provided us with some valuable materials he had gathered during his own researches. We also discussed our theme with Mr. Leslie Price, and interviewed Mr. Paul Stanjer, an Anthroposophist and former manager of Watkins, a well-known occult bookstore in London.

3. Theosophical Society Headquarters, Adyar (Madras)

The visit to the International Headquarters of the Theosophical Society in Adyar (Madras), India, which was made possible to the present writer, posed an unparalleled opportunity for research on this project. The Society has extensive grounds that also house the Adyar Library, one of the best-known libraries in India for Hindu and other philosophies and for Theosophical material of all kinds. The Society is also the main repository for membership information going back (with certain gaps) to the very beginning of the Society's existence at Adyar in 1882. A very productive total of six weeks was spent in research and contact with leading Theosophists. The wealth of written material gathered almost overwhelmed the capacity of the tiny local post office when it was finally presented with a total of seventeen 5 kg. packages for shipment to Canada. This visit was particularly fruitful in terms of insights obtained from discussions with

long-standing residents. For example our fortuitous meeting in Adyar with Ms. Joy Mills (a former national president of the T.S. in the United States) was instrumental in bringing us, the following year, to the onetime U.S. national headquarters of the Theosophical Society at Ojai, California, as described in what follows.

4. Krotona Theosophical Centre and School, Ojai, California

Four weeks was spent at the important Theosophical Centre 'Krotona' on the outskirts of Ojai, north of Los Angeles, during February/March 1997. This centre houses a valuable library, bookstore and Theosophical school, and is a substantial repository of Theosophical and astrological literature related to the United States. It is also within striking distance of the two other main Theosophical groups, the *The Theosophical Society (Pasadena)* and the *United Lodge of Theosophists*, both headquartered in Los Angeles. Visits were arranged to both these organizations and research was also undertaken at the library of the Theosophical Library Center (*The Theosophical Society Pasadena*). Additional sources of Theosophical and astrological information were obtained from the *Krishnamurti Foundation Library* in Ojai, and the library at the *University of California Santa Barbara* in Santa Barbara. Numerous individual contacts were established during this visit, including interviews and discussions with leading figures in the *Philosophical Research Society* (PRS), the organization established by Manley Palmer Hall and headquartered in Los Angeles, the *International Society for Astrological Research* (ISAR), located in Santa Paula, the Arcane School of Alice Bailey, as well as persons related to the Theosophical and astrological communities.

5. Sabian Assembly Annual Conference, Media, Pennsylvania

We were fortunate in being invited to the Annual Conference of the Sabian Assembly near Philadelphia in July 1997. This was important to secure additional information about the life and activities of Marc Edmund Jones, one of the four eminent astrologers chosen in support of our hypothesis (chapter 8). Much of the necessary material on Jones (apart from his published books) is unpublished and managed by this organization. The visit was most productive in terms of the personal contacts made, the reminiscences obtained about the founder, and the unpublished lecture and biographical notes of Mr. Jones, which would not otherwise have been available to us.

The gathering and evaluation of the data on Jones and the other four astrologers was perhaps the most complex and time consuming owing to the importance of these men as major pillars of our argument. As we seek to show, they have each stimulated the revival of astrology in this century through the ideas they have introduced into it, ideas and a mode of thinking which, we argue, Theosophy was in large part responsible for.

1.2. Literature Review

This section will review noteworthy and/or useful academic research studies that fall within the general domain of Theosophy or astrology. Let us note immediately, however, that no historical work on 20th century astrology is in existence or in progress at this time, and there also exists no historical, sociological or other type of study about the influence of Theosophy on astrology. Thus our primary written sources for this study are first of all the two major works of HPB, Isis Unveiled and the Secret Doctrine as well as the Collected Writings, the remaining material consisting mainly of articles

from Theosophical and astrological journals and internal unpublished material. Only there did we find mention of any link between Theosophy and astrology as will be made evident in the course of this thesis.

Most studies about the T.S. Movement have approached it from the perspective of the sociology of religion under the category of religious movements.⁷ The cultural influence of Theosophy in fields as diverse as poetry, painting, and music has begun to be recognized, though so far mainly as a dissertation topic. An exception is the influence of the T.S. Movement on painting which has received the attention of a number of books.⁸ Very little has been done on the impact of the T.S. Movement on other areas of society.

Several doctoral theses since the 1980's have looked into different aspects of the influence of the T.S. Movement. An example of Theosophy's literary influence is an examination of the Movement's contribution to 'American Thought' through such well-known writers as W.B. Yeats, D.H. Lawrence, Jack London and Henry Miller.⁹ Another example is Joy Dixon's, Gender, Politics, and Culture in the New Age.¹⁰ A further dissertation is currently in progress in the Netherlands concerning the impact of Theosophy on Dutch artists such as Piet Mondrian.

⁷ See especially works by Rodney Stark, Robert Ellwood and Gordon Melton

⁸ see John Algeo's article, "Theosophy and the Zeitgeist", in The American Theosophist, Vol. 75, No. 10, November 1987. He gives a number of references in this regard on p. 332. Paul Johnson in The Masters Revealed writes (p. 2), "Her [HPB] cultural influence has been felt in fields as diverse as poetry, painting, politics, and astrology."

⁹ William R. Linville, Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, Theosophy, and American Thought, Ph.D., University of Hawai, 1984.

¹⁰ Joy Dixon, Gender, Politics, and Culture in the New Age. Doctoral Dissertation, Rutgers The State University of New Jersey, New Brunswick, N.J., 1993.

Three dissertations came to our attention as somewhat more closely related to our topic, two of which deal with Dane Rudhyar, one of our four prominent Theosophically-influenced astrological writers. However, their focus is on his adaptation of psychology in his formulation of a Humanistic and Transpersonal Astrology.¹¹ For example, Richard N. Fragomi analyses Dane Rudhyar's Humanistic and Transpersonal approach to astrology in relation to St. Augustine and Thomas Aquinas's views on astrology as well as their understanding of the role of cosmic symbolism in the Church. He further undertakes to criticize Rudhyar's approach from Bernard Lonergan's philosophical perspective. However, he fails to mention Rudhyar's Theosophical connections. This work is nevertheless interesting for the connections it identifies between astrology and its symbolism in the Church, particularly as exemplified in Rudhyar's type of astrology.

Paff-Santoro explores "why correspondences might exist between the life cycle and astrological theories and how such correspondences, if understood, might enrich both theories and add to our understanding of adult development."¹² This thesis explores and describes the benefits that both astrology and psychology can gain by mutual cooperation, an experience that a number of astrologers and psychologists already share as we will also point out.

The third dissertation by Carl Hurwitz explores how "occultism as expressed through Theosophy might provide an alternative unifying pattern

¹¹.Richard N. Fragomeni, A Critical Analysis of the Transformative Character of Cosmological Symbolism in the Transpersonal Psychology of Dane Rudhyar. Doctoral Dissertation. The Catholic University of America, Washington D.C., 1989. Janice Paff-Santoro, An Exploration of the Correspondence and Areas of Synthesis between Adult Life-Cycle Psychological Theory and Humanistic Astrological Theory. Doctoral Dissertation. Boston University, School of Education, Boston, Mass., 1984.

¹².Paff-Santoro, An Exploration of the Correspondence...p.iv

or paradigm for transpersonal psychology.”¹³ He adopts and adapts the Hindu concept of the seven *chakras*, a subject that Charles Leadbeater (a leading Theosophist under A.Besant's presidency) has successfully written on, as a tool in personality development, following Roberto Assagioli's concept of Psychosynthesis.¹⁴ The thesis thus links the Theosophical teachings directly to specific concepts of psychotherapy, something with which HPB would undoubtedly be in full agreement.

On the other hand, no attempt has yet been made to explore the link between Theosophy and astrology—hence the rationale for the present research effort.

The more prominent attempts at examining the history of the T.S.Movement are somewhat self-serving accounts written mostly by Theosophists, or presenting the historical perspective of events through the eyes of one of its branches.¹⁵ This may partly be due to the fact, as the current president of the T.S. John Algeo has observed, that: “Mainline historians have ignored Theosophy or dismissed it because it does not fit their preconceptions or because they do not understand it...”¹⁶ However, recently two books by Paul Johnson questioning the identity and role of the ‘Mahatmas’ in the T.S. Movement, (a mysterious and sensitive topic) have stirred up a lot of

¹³Carl Hurwitz, Toward The Development of a Theosophically based Psychotherapy, Doctoral Dissertation. The Faculty of the California Institute of Integral Studies, San Francisco, 1987, p.8.

¹⁴As later mentioned, Assagioli was much influenced in his work by Alice Bailey, a long-time Theosophist, who also founded her own group.

¹⁵Josephine Ransom, A Short History of the Theosophical Society, (Adyar, Madras: Theosophical Publishing House, 1938); Anonymous, The Theosophical Movement 1875-1925: a History and a Survey, (New York, E.P. Dutton & Company, c. 1925). However a somewhat more balanced analysis is given by Alvin Boyd Kuhn, Theosophy, (New York: Henry Holt & Company, 1930). Also the quarterly journal Theosophical History, founded by Leslie Price and currently edited by James A. Santucci of California State University, Fullerton. This journal explores the history of the Society in an innovative and objective manner. .

¹⁶Algeo, “The Tree,” p. 2.

controversy, making it obvious that more research in this area is needed.¹⁷ Nevertheless, astrology is usually mentioned only in passing, if at all.

James Webb was one of the first historians who sought to unravel the net of the 'occult underworld.' However valuable he is as an important general source, he is also somewhat cynical towards the subject as revealed by the title of the introduction—'The Flight from Reason', to his book The Occult Underworld. Again astrology is only treated in passing.

Four additional books on the subject of the occult have recently surfaced. They each explore their subject matter in an engaging and open-handed manner. Although attention is paid to the role played by Theosophy not much is said of astrology. Janet Oppenheim's book The Other World traces the history of spiritualism at the turn of the century, making the interesting observation that the lines between science and religion had not yet been clearly drawn at that time. Her book illustrates the influence of spiritualism and Theosophy as mediated through prominent personalities to whom an 'otherworldly' approach appealed more than that of the emerging rational and empiricist outlook. Unfortunately, astrology finds no place in her account of Theosophy.

Joscelyn Godwin's Theosophical Enlightenment, is another informative account of this period, albeit with a somewhat misleading title. Godwin himself admits as much, explaining that it "points to my thesis that Blavatsky's Theosophy owed as much to the skeptical Enlightenment of the eighteenth century as it did to the concept of spiritual enlightenment with

¹⁷ K. Paul Johnson, The Masters Revealed (New York: State University of New York Press, 1994); and also Initiates of Theosophical Masters (New York, State University Press, 1995).

which it is more readily associated.”¹⁸ It is a book well worth reading for the interesting facts he has uncovered on a number of prominent persons linked to ‘the occult underground’ and science. He does not focus specifically on the T.S. but covers the entire 19th century spiritualist and occult network of directly and indirectly related persons and groups. Even though he does briefly discuss aspects of 19th century British astrology, (which we describe in section 2.6) he does not pursue any link between Theosophy and astrology.

Other studies that deserve mention here include a recent collection of articles entitled Modern Esoteric Spirituality, edited by Antoine Faivre and Jacob Needleman. However, the article by Faivre is a more or less condensed version of an earlier book by him entitled Access to Western Esotericism. Besides Faivre's article, which is of interest only as background information for us, there is one article about the T.S. Movement by Emily B. Sellon and René Weber¹⁹ which basically offers a brief history of the Society, pointing also to its substantial influence on the religious outlook, as well as on science, the arts, and on a renewed ethical emphasis on personal responsibility.

Faivre holds a chair in Religious Studies at the Sorbonne in Paris—originally established in 1965, which is the only one of its kind to include esoteric studies in the official curriculum rather than merely tolerating them at the periphery. Faivre assumed this chair in 1979 after which the title was amended to “History of Esoteric and Mystical Currents in Modern and

¹⁸ Joscelyn Godwin, The Theosophical Enlightenment (New York, State of New York University Press, 1994), p.xi

¹⁹ A. Faivre, “Ancient and Medieval Sources of Modern Esoteric Movements,” in Antoine Faivre & Jacob Needleman, eds. Modern Esoteric Spirituality (New York, Crossroad, 1995), p. 1. Also E.B. Sellon and R. Weber, “Theosophy and The Theosophical Society,” *ibid*, p. 288.

Contemporary Europe.” Faivre seeks to develop a hierarchy of categories in an attempt to organize the vast amount of material. He admits this is a formidable challenge (likened to bringing order into a wild forest), cautioning however that his attempt is still preliminary. He discusses the pros and cons of various approaches, and proposes that: “if we approach esotericism phenomenologically as a form of thought, an ensemble of tendencies to be described, we can avoid doing violence to historical data.”²⁰ He offers an impressive literature survey and traces the network of many different esoteric currents which had formed into groups, for example Hermeticism, Rosicrucianism and alchemy. However, astrology is mentioned only as part of many of these currents; it is not pursued as a separate subject. And no attempt is made to link the current revival of astrology—which is acknowledged, to the T.S. Movement.

Gordon Melton has made a systematic effort to track down information on various ‘New Age’ currents and prominent figures in the field. He starts his chronology in the first edition of his New Age Encyclopedia²¹ with the foundation of the Theosophical Society in New York, emphasizing its important role in the history of what is now very broadly called ‘The New Age.’ This and subsequent editions draw attention to the occult in the New Age movement in general, including Theosophy and astrology. The difference between the first and the fifth editions is quite marked in terms of the amount of information added to various items. We were fortunate in being able to consult the latest edition while in California.

²⁰.Antoine Faivre, Access to Western Esoteric Currents (New York, State University of New York Press, 1994), p. 9. This book also has a valuable extensive bibliography, some of it with short commentary.

²¹.Gordon J. Melton, Jerome Clark and Aiden A. Kelly, New Age Encyclopedia (Detroit/New York: Gale Research Inc., 1990). This important compendium was progressively expanded through subsequent editions. We relied mainly on the latest (fifth) edition published under the title of Encyclopedia of American Religions 1996 (same publisher).

In addition, we should mention that James Santucci, current editor of the scholarly journal Theosophical History, has recently initiated a five year seminar with the American Academy of Religion on the history of Theosophy and the main philosophical and occult currents therein. Thus more light is likely to be shed on the T.S. Movement through serious research in the future. The link with astrology has so far not been a topic of investigation, although this thesis will hopefully encourage additional contributions in this direction.

2. HISTORICAL SKETCH OF WESTERN ASTROLOGY

This chapter offers a brief insight into the history and principles of astrology to provide the necessary background to the present enquiry. After introducing the reader to what is currently known about these origins and principles in five short sub-sections, the chapter concludes with a more detailed overview of the relatively recent history of the subject in Great Britain and North America, respectively.

2.1 Genesis of Astrological Belief

The origins of astrology will probably remain for ever lost in the mists of pre-historic times. There is a general consensus among historians (we mention a few in this context) who have written on the subject of astrology that astrology dates back to the first traces of human civilization. This is no doubt because the sky above with its ever moving planets has always been fascinating to the human eye, and has been endowed with mysterious qualities at all times. F. von Oefele has noted that even “in the interior of some of the larger South Sea Islands, as e.g., Borneo, a primitive astronomy and astrology are found amongst the aborigines, while the inhabitants of the sea board, as also of the smaller islands, exhibit a higher development in the science of the stars...”¹ This eventually led to planetary worship, particularly of the Sun and Moon. That the heavens are given religious significance in ancient traditions everywhere is evident from the fact that, “there is an almost universal belief in a celestial divine being, who created the universe and guarantees the fecundity of the earth...the sky directly

¹ Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics (hereinafter the ERE), Vol. XII, “Sun, Moon, and Stars (Introduction),” by F. von Oefele.

reveals a power and holiness”² The sky as a powerful symbol “has held its position in every religious framework, simply because its mode of being is outside time...”³ Mark Edmund Jones, a prominent American astrologer whom we introduce more fully in chapter 8, explains the early history of astrology as follows: “Out of all possible forms of natural religion in this sense, the worship of the sky—that is, man’s ultimate anchorage of his consciousness in the completely dependable vault of heaven—is the most significant in religious history. It is the historical beginning of horoscopy.”⁴ Star religion and star worship certainly played a role in the development of the planetary symbolism of astrology. However, this topic constitutes a vast subject by itself and will not be pursued further here.

Systematic observations of the course of the planets were first made for purposes of agriculture, navigation and religious rituals, and gradually led to the development of a calendar. Egypt, Babylonia, China and India are believed to have been the earliest centers for the systematic study of astronomy and astrology (the two subjects were then not separated). For example, the occurrence of a specific planet in a certain position in the sky became connected for the ancient Egyptian astronomers with the commencement of the annual flood of the Nile Delta. The timing of this event was vital to the country’s survival. Hugo Winckler and Alfred Jeremias, two German scholars, have contributed through their research, at the turn of the century, much to our understanding of the important role of

².Mircea Eliade, Patterns in Comparative Religion (New York: The New American Library, Inc.,1974), p. 38. See also chapters 3 and 4 with regard to planetary worship.

³.Ibid., p. 111.

⁴.Marc Edmund Jones, Astrology:How and Why it Works. (Baltimore, MA: Penguin Books Inc., 1971), p. 14.

astrology in Babylonia.⁵ Some of the oldest Babylonian predictions are those of 'Sargon the Old.', dating back to around 2470-2430 B.C. But the oldest physical evidence of astrology that has come down to us so far was unearthed in China. These records contain precise calculations dating back to around 3000 B.C. or even earlier.⁶ Specific planetary constellations are also prescribed in the Indian Vedas with respect to the timing of various sacrifices.

2.2. Major Research Sources

According to a recent historical study by Tamsyn Barton, our record of astrological history could have been more complete and more accurate, had the researchers of the past 200 years or so been more careful with their findings, and been more interested in deciphering and analyzing the ancient texts, many of which still remain to be catalogued.⁷ Franz Cumont, one of the rare historians to seriously research astrology, had pointed to this problem as far back as 1898.⁸ Around the same time, Winckler and Jeremias also pointed to a massive amount of material that remains to be deciphered. And Viktor Stegemann, who undertook research into the astrological writings of the Greek astrologer Dorotheos of Sidon in the early 1940's, also points to the huge volume of Arabic materials that lie waiting to be investigated.⁹ Thus, our present knowledge of the history of the origins of

⁵ Hugo Winckler, The History of Babylonia and Assyria, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1907), and Alfred Jeremias, The Old Testament in the Light of the Ancient East, (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1911).

⁶ ERE, Vol. XII, "Sun, Moon, and Stars (Chinese)," by T. Fu.

⁷ Tamsyn Barton, Ancient Astrology, (London & New York: Routledge, 1994).

⁸ Franz Cumont, Catalogus codicum astrologorum Græcorum, 12 Vols. (Brussels: 1898-1953); quoted in Eugenio Garin, Astrology in the Renaissance: the Zodiac of Life, (London: Penguin Books Ltd, 1976) Introduction, p.vi.

⁹ Viktor Stegemann, Dorotheos von Sidon und das sogenannte Introductorium des Sahl Ibn Bisr, (Prague: Druckerei des Protektorates Böhmen und Mähren in Prag, 1942) Forward.

astrology is based only on whatever artifacts have been discovered and deciphered. Our perspective will almost certainly widen as new findings and decipherments are made. Gordon Melton, a contemporary authority in the area of religious movements, puts his finger on a further difficulty when he complains that: "The neglect of occult history resulted from the long-standing scholarly disdain for the occult. Libraries did not save occult materials, and while a vast occult literature exists, it is almost invisible."¹⁰ The German contemporary author and Religionswissenschaftler Christoph Bochinger also hints at this dilemma in a thorough and voluminous recent study.¹¹ Barton also observes that: "The image of astrology today discourages scholarly investigation..."¹²

This discouragement of historians in conducting research into astrology goes back to the turn of the century, as revealed in criticism by Winckler of certain German establishment scholars whom, he charges, lack the necessary competence and knowledge to support their attacks (though he recognizes exceptions). Of a certain 'G' he writes for example:

Ich habe gesagt, daß die babylonische Weltanschauung 'astrologisch' sei und das die Astrologie bis an die Schwelle der Neuzeit ein Kind jener Weltanschauung sei...Wenn G. nur in meine Schriften hineingeblickt hätte, so mußte er das wissen. Er faßt Astrologie im handwerksmäßigen Sinne... [And he continues by complaining of the treatment that Zimmern, a contemporary colleague had received], der

¹⁰Gordon J. Melton "The Revival of Astrology in the United States," chapter 10 in Religious Movements, ed. Rodney Stark, (1985), p. 280.

¹¹Christoph Bochinger. "New Age" und moderne Religion: Religionswissenschaftliche Analysen (Gütersloh: Chr. Kaiser Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 1994) p.23.

¹²Barton. Ancient Astrology p.4.

nebenbei dasselbe in dieser Hinsicht sagt, wie ich, und deshalb ebenfalls schief angesehen wird.¹³

My own translation into English from the German follows:

I have said that the Babylonian 'Weltanschauung' is astrological, and that astrology up to the threshold of modernity is a 'child' of this world view...If G. would have only looked at my articles he would have understood. He looks at astrology in the manner of a tradesman...[And he continues by complaining about the treatment that Zimmern, a contemporary colleague, had received], who, by the way, says the same thing in this regard as I did, and who is therefore also looked upon askance [i.e. by other colleagues].

Most instructive for a detailed account of the history and usage of astrology throughout the ancient world—Egyptian, Chinese, Buddhist and Hebrew, among others, is the section of the ERE (James Hastings edition) entitled "Sun, Moon and Stars," written by various authors. A similar review is notably absent from the more recently published Encyclopedia of Religion, edited by Mircea Eliade—a curious oversight. Other histories of astrology, dealing mainly with Western astrology, include Lynn Thorndike's, The Place of Magic in the Intellectual History of Europe, and Jim Tester's A History of Western Astrology. However they tend to be more general in scope.

But progress on the broader historical front is, at long last, being made. More and better insights are coming to light with the growing interest of a number of researchers in the occult past as a whole.¹⁴ Patrick Curry's work,

¹³ Hugo Winckler, Die jüngsten Kämpfer wider den Panbabylonismus, in Im Kampfe um den Alten Orient, ed. Winckler and Jeremias (Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1907) p. 14-15. This defence of astrological scholarship is most enlightening. For a critical analysis of the academic debate at this time see also Christoph Bochinger, "New Age" p.322-332. Bochinger himself appears to give credit, albeit somewhat reluctantly, to the position of Jeremias and Winckler—one also shared at the turn of the century by several French historians.

¹⁴ Ida Zatelli, "Astrology and the Worship of the Stars in the Bible," Zeitschrift für Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft, Vol. 103, 1991, pp. 86-99.

though more limited in scope, does offer detailed insights into the social and cultural dimensions of astrology at a certain time period in England.¹⁵ And according to Barton, even the Corpus Hermeticum, the authenticity of which had long been in doubt, now appears to have been somewhat rehabilitated.¹⁶

2.3. Origins of Western Astrology

Knowledge of ancient astrology was traditionally kept and practiced by the priest class, or by magicians and/or other educated members of society, and was generally linked with alchemy and magic. They were viewed as a means of divination like the oracles (e.g. Delphi). However, astrology was more systematic than the oracles, in that it required difficult calculations etc., and was less ambiguous to interpret. The practitioners of these forms of divination—HPB calls them ‘initiates,’ were usually attached to the courts of kings or emperors, and were consulted on specific issues (private or public).¹⁷

The professed ability to predict the future has always attracted the interest of the ruling classes, even down to modern times; hence astrological counselling has regularly been provided to popes, and kings and queens all over Europe. To mention just a few among the numerous examples that may be given: Elizabeth I of England supported Dr. John Dee, a well-known astrologer and scientist of his time.¹⁸ The famous doctor, astrologer and

¹⁵Patrick Curry, Prophecy and Power: Astrology in early modern England (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1989). Cf. also his A Confusion of Prophets: Victorian and Edwardian Astrology (London: Collins & Brown Limited, 1992).

¹⁶Barton, Ancient Astrology p.25ff. The Protestant critic Casaubon (1559-1614), a known scholar of Greek, believed the Corpus Hermeticum to be mostly forged in early Christian times.

¹⁷For further reference see Franz Cumont, Astrology and Religion among the Greeks and Romans (New York: Dover Publications, 1912).

¹⁸Frances Yates, The Occult Philosophy in the Elizabethan Age (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1979). See also Peter J. French, John Dee (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1972).

clairvoyant Nostradamus offered counsel to the court of the Medici. Famous scientist/philosophers such as Albertus Magnus, Kepler and Paracelsus also practiced astrology, and used it in their work. The great Arabic historian and astrologer Ibn Khaldun wrote in the 14th century that:

Rulers and armies who want to know the duration of their own dynasties show the greatest concern for these things and the greatest curiosity in this respect... Every nation has had its soothsayers, its astrologers and its saints, who have spoken about things of this kind. [They have spoken] about a particular royal authority they were expecting, or a dynasty they felt was coming. [They have also spoken] of wars and battles... about how long the ruling dynasty would last... Things like this are called forecasting. ¹⁹

And our rulers and armies of today seem no less eager for astrological prognoses. The valuable study by Ellic Howe reveals the important role played by astrology during World War II.²⁰ More recently, media reports have disclosed that Ronald Reagan (supposedly prompted by his wife Nancy) found value in the ancient craft, while President of the United States.²¹ However, according to prominent American astrologer Marc Edmund Jones, Reagan had repeatedly consulted him on astrology as far back as his days as a movie star, and later as Governor.²² Furthermore, a recently published book has revealed that the respected former French President Francois Mitterand was guided over the last five years of his presidency by a well known French astrologer.²³ Roosevelt, Churchill,

¹⁹ Garin, Astrology in the Renaissance, p. 24.

²⁰ Ellic Howe, Urania's Children: the strange World of the Astrologers (London: William Kimber, 1967).

²¹ Joan Quigley, "What does Joan say?" My seven years as White House astrologer to Nancy and Ronald Reagan (New York: Windsor Publishing Corp., 1990).

²² Information supplied by students of Jones at the annual conference of the *Sabian Assembly* (founded by Jones), in Media, Pennsylvania, July 1997.

²³ Elisabeth Tessier, Sous le signe de Mitterrand: sept ans d'entrevues (Paris: Edition No. 1, 1997).

Hitler, Stalin, and Yeltsin, among others, are also said to have had their astrological advisers. Astrological counsel continues to be sought and respected to this day by the governments of Asian countries such as Burma, India and Thailand, to enhance the prospects of major political and social decisions.²⁴

Use of astrology as a policy-making tool has thus been central to the astrological profession from the very beginning due to the value attributed to astrological statements, not only as guidance to the personal lives of those in power, but to the destiny of whole nations.

In the ancient Oriental view of the world, astrology, religion, and therapeutics went hand in hand. In the conviction that all things in the universe proceeded in parallel lines, men spoke of a macrocosm (primarily the stellar world as the province of Deity) and a microcosm (primarily the human body), and sought for far-reaching analogies between them.²⁵

This assumption of an exact correspondence between the macrocosm and the microcosm was expressed in the oft-repeated statement, 'as above so below,' attributed to Hermes Trismegistus, the alleged author of the Corpus Hermeticum. This suggested that human destiny was timed by the movements of the planets through the zodiac which, when rightly interpreted, could offer practical guidance for the future. Astrology has thus always served as a link or mediator between the macrocosm and the (individual) microcosm, interpreting time as it relates to a particular entity.

²⁴As reported occasionally in the news media.

²⁵ERE, Vol. XII, "Sun, Moon, and Stars (Introduction)," p. 58 by F. von Oefele. This subject will be more fully discussed in chapter 6.

For various reasons, this view of the human being as the microcosm of the macrocosm has always appeared to exoteric Christian believers as rather presumptuous, and perhaps even blasphemous. This is in marked contrast to the pantheistic views of Hindu Vedanta, for example, which uses Sanskrit terms (Samashti and Vyashti) to express the same idea. The traditional Christian, however, is far from being viewed as symbolizing the microcosm, since he or she is doctrinally defined as a mere 'creature,' albeit one created "in the image" of the Creator. The Christian Church has also had reasons for being equivocal in its tolerance for astrology. In the first place, the 'fatalism' of the more vulgar or 'popular' type of astrology, which claimed a direct link of cause and effect through the stars, conflicted with the cardinal Christian doctrine of free will, originally promoted by Augustine.²⁶ In addition, human psychological and social conditions on the earth must be attributed to God's Providence rather than to the stars or planets. "Ominously, astrology and magic threatened to take the power of prophecy and miracle making away from God and to place them into the human hands."²⁷ Thus Bishop Hooper in 17th century England is recorded as having stated in a sermon that: "...it is neither Sun, neither Moon, Jupiter nor Mars, that is the occasion of wealth or woe, plenty or scarcity, of war or peace': it was God himself."²⁸

²⁶ Augustine was rather ambiguous towards astrology. See St. Augustine, The City of God (Garden City, N.Y.: Image Books Division of Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1962), p. 100-104. In his Confessions he condemns the 'fatalistic' type of astrology and a discussion over twins reveals that he did not contemplate reincarnation but interpreted the twin story in a rather simplistic manner (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1991 p.54, 112f).

²⁷ William Eamon, Science and the Secrets of Nature, New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 1994, p.63.

²⁸ Keith Thomas, Religion and the Decline of Magic: studies in popular beliefs in sixteenth and seventeenth-century England (London: Penguin Books, 1971) p. 425.

Beyond all these doctrinal differences, astrology in most of its forms also represented a potential threat to the Church's traditional desire for control. In practical terms this usually meant clerical control over systems of human knowledge and power.²⁹ Theodor Griesinger, a 19th century historian and author of many books, points out that the Church had a virtual monopoly on education through its monastic orders, through its control of the earliest European universities, and especially later through the Jesuits who sought to become the educators of the royal houses in Europe during the Counter reformation, giving them considerable influence.³⁰

However, the degree of Church resistance to astrology was subject to change with almost every newly elected Pope, and gains and losses were made by either suppressing or allowing Hermetic ideas (which include astrology), whatever was more opportune. Attacks on astrology were often superficial, since the Church would have been hard pressed to mount a concerted intellectual attack when, as D.P. Walker argues in detail, astrology and magic always had their place in the life of the Church. Popes were either themselves steeped in astrology like Pope Sylvester II (999-1003), or sought its counsel quite regularly, e.g. Rodrigo Borgia, who became Alexander VI (1492-1503), and Leo X (1513-1521), to name just a few.³¹

²⁹ D.P. Walker, Spiritual and Demonic Magic from Ficino to Campanello (London: University of Notre Dame Press, 1975), See also Nick Campion, "St. Augustine on Astrology," Astrology Quarterly, Vol. 64, No. 3, Summer 1994, and Averil Cameron in Predicting the Future ed. Leo Howe and Alan Wain (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

³⁰ Theodor Griesinger, The Jesuits; A Complete History of their Open and Secret Proceedings from the Foundation of the Order to the Present Time. Trans. A.J. Scott, M.D. Third Edition (London: W.H. Allen & Co., 1892) p. 152ff.

³¹ Alfons Rosenberg, Zeichen am Himmel. Das Weltbild der Astrologie (Zürich: Verlag Max S. Metz Ag., 1949) pp. 76-81 (Bd.1, chapter on: Die Päpste und die Astrologie). Rosenberg outlines very clearly the deep involvement of the Church with astrology. Pope Leo X even established a Chair of astrology at the papal University in Rome; See also the Rev. Laurence L. Cassidi, "The Believing Christian as a Dedicated Astrologer," Astrology Quarterly, Vol. 64/3, Summer 1994, p. 3; Charles Carter "Astrology and the Catholic Church," Astrology, Vol. 19, No. 4, December 1945, p. 84-5. Carter here cites excerpts

References to astrology in the Old Testament are numerous and well-documented.³² An example is Job chapter 38, verses 31-3, where the voice of God admonishes Job out of a storm:

Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Ple-ia-des, or loose the bands of O-ri-on? Canst thou bring forth Maz'za-roth in his season? or canst thou guide Ärc-tu-rus with his sons? Knowest thou the ordinances of heaven? canst thou set the dominion thereof in the earth?

The New Testament account of the three "wise men" (or astrologers?) who were guided by a star to Bethlehem might also be mentioned in this connection.

None of these issues appear to have unduly disturbed the pre-Nicean Church Fathers. However, beginning with Augustine, the Latin Church became more critical. Later, the Inquisition went to great lengths to intimidate astrologers (mainly for "judicial" or personal astrology), condemning for example one astrologer by the name of Cecco d'Ascoli to death in Italy in 1327 for his views on astrology.³³ The fates of Galileo and Giordano Bruno, and the papal bull against astrology issued in 1631, may also be cited as prominent examples of this trend. Astrologers such as Marsilio Ficino, Cornelius Agrippa and John Dee³⁴ were able to practice and publish the occult science

from an article by the Rev. Francis J. Connell, professor of Moral Theology at the Catholic University of America, in which the latter is surprisingly favorable to astrology, also acknowledging its value to the long history of the Church.

³². See Rabbi J.C. Dobin, The Astrological Secrets of the Hebrew Sages to rule both Day and Night (Rochester, VT: Inner Traditions International Ltd., 1977); Karl Anderson, The Astrology of the Old Testament (Boston: K. Anderson, 1892); Zatelli 1991; Alfred Jeremias explores in great detail the usage of astrology in the Old Testament. Interesting in this respect is also the extensive bibliography of Charles West, The Zodiac Man in Medieval Medical Astrology (Boulder CO: University of Colorado, 1979); The Journal of Near Eastern Studies is also useful as a source of references on this topic.

³³. Simon Kemp, Medieval Psychology (New York: Greenwood Press, 1990) p. 8, Rosenberg (op. cit) reveals that Cecco was the doctor and astrologer of Pope John XXII who lived in exile in Avignon, and was also professor of mathematics and astrology at the University of Bologna. But he fell victim to the political tensions between the different factions in the Church.

³⁴. These prominent figures were philosophers and magicians as well as astrologers. Bruno himself was a

only because they had powerful patrons and exercised a certain self-censorship, especially in the case of Ficino. This spared them the fate of Bruno, who refused to compromise with the ecclesiastical authorities of the Inquisition, despite powerful backers working to save him.³⁵ Kepler too was indirectly intimidated, as the Inquisition tried to convict his mother.³⁶

Academic opinion on the attitude and role of the Church with respect to astrology has been mixed. Simon Kemp (a senior lecturer in New Zealand) tends to downplay the intolerance of the Church while acknowledging that: "The Church was the most important and powerful institution of the Middle Ages, and its influence covered almost every aspect of medieval life."³⁷ He concedes that it is difficult for us today to fully comprehend the Church's influence, but he nevertheless feels that, "the Church's attitude to the revival of learning and the development of new ideas is widely misinterpreted."³⁸ On the other hand he seems to ignore the obvious need for self-censorship within the ranks of astrologers. He admits though that others might interpret the Church's interest with regard to learning and education quite differently. Theodor Griesinger, on the other hand, sees a more selfish reason in the Church's interest in education, and attacks the Jesuits in particular. His view is also shared by the Church historian Paul F. Grendler, who states

charismatic leader, and Dee was also a scientist, as Peter J. French argues in John Dee, op. cit.

³⁵ "...Ficino was in serious despair. He had become so captivated, so exhilarated, by this new Platonic way of imagining that he found himself, like Pletho earlier, wanting to revive pagan religion. But how far could he go with such ideas before the Church authorities shut him up?" Marsilio Ficino: The Book of Life, p.viii, 1980.

³⁶ Leland L. Estes, "Good Witches, Wise men, Astrologers, and Scientists, William Perkins and the Limits of the European Witch-Hunts," in Hermeticism and the Renaissance, ed. Ingrid Merkel and Allen G. Debus (Washington: Folger Shakespeare Library, 1988).

³⁷ Kemp, Medieval Psychology, p. 6.

³⁸ Ibid. p. 6.

that: “the Counter Reformation—the joint effort of church and state—profoundly oppressed cinquecento Italian intellectual life.”³⁹

The evidence presented on both sides of this issue reveals that the position of the Church with respect to astrology has not been uniform. In addition to the changing attitudes of the Popes there were always liberal Catholic priests who practiced astrology (and magic), and this is still the case today, as we have already mentioned.

We should also keep in mind that the Renaissance was a highly unstable social and political period. Europe was starting to divide over religious matters, and the Turks and the Moors threatened to conquer Western Europe through Hungary and Spain. The Catholic Church too was having great difficulties. They had lost the opportunity for reconciliation with the Eastern Church at the Fifth Lateran Council held in Florence in 1439, favoring uniformity over unity. The Eastern Churches accordingly turned slowly away from the Roman Catholic Church with its exaggerated view of papal supremacy, though not without leaving the complete works of Plato behind, never before seen by most of the Roman clergy and not always welcome either. The reformation was also knocking at the door. Furthermore, the influx of Greek and Hermetic philosophy and occult wisdom (including astrology) gave rise to a more critical view of the Church, its doctrines and politics. Although Church politics with regard to these ideas was subject to frequent changes, Popes were generally more concerned about the arts and the good life than with their ecclesiastical duties. Thus one may argue that the generally more vulnerable position of the Church during the Renaissance

³⁹Paul F.Grendler, The Roman Inquisition and the Venetian Press, 1540-1605 (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1977) p.287.

allowed for a freedom of expression in philosophy and the occult as well as in the arts and architecture, that might not otherwise have occurred. And that a similar situation led to the revival of astrology again at the turn of this century.

Western astrology had always followed rules that had come down through the writings of Claudius Ptolemy (100-178 A.D.), who first refined them in his Tetrabiblos in the 2nd century A.D. In his defence of astrology Ptolemy used the arguments of Stoics such as Posidonius (135-50 B.C.) and Seneca (3-65 A.D.). In particular he made a distinction between a general ability to predict in astrology, e.g. the weather, natural catastrophes, wars etc. on the one hand, and casting horoscopes for individuals, called judicial, personal or natal astrology on the other. It was in judicial astrology however, that transcendental considerations enter into the discussion.⁴⁰

Ptolemy's astrological system is founded on a geocentric view (i.e. with the earth at the center) and the tropical zodiac (i.e. with the spring equinox starting at 0 degrees Aries).⁴¹ It still endures today despite the Copernican

⁴⁰Here is where the consideration of astrology as an art comes in, as emphasized by our four prominent representatives in chapter 8. Opponents of astrology during most of the last 2000 years have often accused astrology of 'fatalism'. For example, such transcendental considerations were not acceptable to opponents of the Stoics such as Carneades (219-126 B.C.). But the Stoics were not really fatalistic. "According to Posidonius—whose argument is preserved in the third chapter of Ptolemy's Tetrabiblos—prophecy is naturally welcome when the thing foreseen is pleasurable; when, on the other hand, the thing foreseen is painful, its prediction prepares the soul to bear misfortune with equanimity." (Theodor O. Wedel, The Mediaeval Attitude Toward Astrology, New York, Arcon Books, 1968, p.7). This view of prediction is very much in line with how most contemporary astrologers handle predictions. The really fatalistic approach to astrology is found in what has been described by Curry and Wedel as the more vulgar or popular type of astrology, which existed throughout the centuries side by side with the more learned philosophical type of astrology. The former type would claim a direct influence of the planets, where for example a certain planetary transit is made responsible for an accident. In such a case people would be told not to leave the house on a certain day because "something terrible would happen" etc. However an astrology based on the ancient philosophical traditions does not share such a 'fatalistic' view. Here the saying goes that "the stars incline but do not compel". And as the Stoic approach showed, it is finally our attitude which either makes something 'fatal' or turns it into an opportunity for growth, with which HPB would certainly agree. Today's mixture of ancient philosophy and modern psychology has turned astrology into a counselling method which is apparently in growing demand by those in need today.

⁴¹For further technical details on the differences between the tropical zodiac and the sidereal (which is

revolution and its later support through Kepler and Galileo that the sun was actually the center and all other planets, including the earth, were rotating around it.

Further influence came in the early Renaissance through an influx of Arabic literature via Spain and brought the ancient ideas back into the picture.

Ptolemy's Tetrabiblos was first translated into Latin from an Arabic text rather than from the original Greek. This happened because "the Arabs gave science a prominent place in their educational system...In the Muslim World the supreme goal of philosophy and science, like that of Hermetic wisdom, was to achieve religious understanding, or gnosis."⁴² Indeed Nailino asserts that the "astrology of the Latin Middle Ages from the beginning of the 12th to the end of the 15th century is really Arabic astrology."⁴³ He cites Greece, India and Iran as the sources for this Arabic astrology. In addition, Eugenio Garin emphasizes the importance of the Fifth Lateran Council, already mentioned as responsible for bringing a wealth of new material to the West.

One had above all a rediscovery of the Hellenistic age, when all types of Eastern influences had come together in Greek culture. Indeed, we see in this situation the singular encounter between the magical and astrological doctrines of the Latin Middle ages, whose ancient heritage had filtered down via the Islamic world, and the Hellenistic positions, which had been rediscovered in the Greek sources.⁴⁴

23.5 degrees earlier) see Ronnie Gale Dreyer, Indian Astrology: a Western Approach to the Ancient Hindu Art (Wellingborough, Northamptonshire: The Aquarian Press, 1990), and David Frawley, The Astrology of Seers. A Guide to Vedic (Hindu) Astrology (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1992).

⁴².William Eamon, Science and the Secrets of Nature, p.40.

⁴³.Carlo Alfonso Nallino, ERE, Vol. 12, p.93; See also. Antoine Faivre & Jacob Needleman: Modern Esoteric Spirituality (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1995), and Garin, Astrology in the Renaissance, chapters 1 and 2.

⁴⁴.Ibid, p. 57.

Ficino translated and absorbed this material and was supported in this by his patron, Cosimo di Medici. He later became head of what was called the *Platonic Academy* in Carreggi near Florence, where he worked to revive the *prisca theologia*, the ancient wisdom going back to Pythagoras. There he also translated the *Corpus Hermeticum* and Plotinus. Ficino is seen as the first astrologer who developed an astrology of the soul (psyche), and as the precursor of the psychological astrology of today. He was the type of philosopher astrologer who believed that 'the stars do incline but not compel'. However, Ficino and his younger friend Pico della Mirandola experienced the intimidating power of the Church on several occasions, and were thereby painfully "reminded of what an evangelical police state the Renaissance could be."⁴⁵

The invention of the printing press may also have heightened the resistance of the Church against astrology, since it opened up new ways for a more popular form of astrology to flourish in both Church and secular circles. Now tables of the daily motion of the planets could be more easily copied and distributed, increasing in precision as time went on. A detailed knowledge of astronomy was no longer a prerequisite for the practice of astrology, thereby making it more easily available to less knowledgeable people, including opportunists and charlatans. The philosophical-cosmological, 'non-fatalistic' type of astrology which believed in the freedom of the human soul, thus diminished and gave way to a more vulgar 'fatalistic' type of astrology.

⁴⁵Charles Boer (trans.), Marsilio Ficino: The Book of Life (Irving TX: Spring Publications, Inc., 1980) Introduction, p. x.

The attitude of the Church during the 19th century toward so called free thinkers with respect to religion, including other world religions and the occult, had not really changed. This is revealed in HPB's complaints throughout her works about the Church's hostile attitude to all esoteric and occult ideas or systems of knowledge, both Theosophical and astrological.⁴⁶ She later fell victim to a plot led by Christian missionaries in India who did not approve of her pro-Hindu attitude.

Astrology in this century has enjoyed greater and better public acceptance, and has become a popular tool for self-understanding. This is due in no small measure to the efforts of HPB and the later Theosophical Movement as well as to the influence of the psychological theories and discoveries of the Swiss psychoanalyst Carl G. Jung. These two sources may be regarded as the roots of the revival of astrology in the 20th century. While we will say little about the latter, we will progressively expand upon the former in the pages that follow. But first we offer a brief outline of the basic principles and methods followed by a majority of astrologers in the West today, plus a short description of the different branches of astrology.

2.4. The basic Principles of Astrology

A horoscope is a chart showing the planetary constellations in the zodiac at the date, place and exact time of the event in question. This calculated chart is the source document for all astrological statements, and links the planetary constellations to the course of a particular life, situation or event on earth. The link is made on the basis of the specific qualities and characteristics represented by the signs of the zodiac and the planets. Planets

⁴⁶See for example Blavatsky, Collective Writings XIV p.335ff and numerous places in The Secret Doctrine.

in Western astrology carry not only the names of the old Greek and Roman gods and goddesses, but also their symbolism. Thus Venus symbolizes, among other things, our idea of love, beauty, the arts, harmony, pleasure and indulgence; Mars symbolizes our basic drive to act, which may come out as aggression, competition, strife, war or constructive initiative. The roots of the meaning of the signs of the zodiac and their names (constellations of stars) go back to pre-historic times.⁴⁷

Signs and planets are complemented by a system of twelve so-called astrological 'houses' representing areas of life such as family, career, health, marriage and so on. Planets and house cusps (the dividing lines between houses) are linked through various so-called 'aspects,' based on specific degree-divisions of the circle (from an 'opposition' if two planets are located opposite each other at an angle of 180°, to various other possibilities moving progressively down to an angle of 30°). An elaborate system of inter-connectedness between these and other elements constitutes the basis for an interpretation. There are different levels of interpretation, 'exoteric,' considering only the particulars of the material conditions of life; psychological, pointing out the various emotional problems or capabilities and their expression; spiritual or 'esoteric,' which tries to explain the meaning and purpose of events in the course of life. Predictions on any of these levels give the timing or time span of present and future events. All in all it is a fairly complex system that requires long and intensive study, and has very little in common with the daily or weekly 'Sun-sign columns' presented in magazines and daily newspapers. A more detailed discussion of

⁴⁷. We will explain more about the origins of the zodiac in the first section of chapter 5.

the terms 'exoteric' and 'esoteric' will be conducted at the beginning of chapter 5.

Astrologers in the West tend to specialize in certain areas of astrology, and not every professional astrologer will agree to make predictions. But astrology has always, among other things, been considered a valuable tool in guiding difficult decisions, by those with experience or belief in its efficacy.⁴⁸ The birth chart may be seen as a symbolic formula defining an individual's fundamental nature, a cosmic puzzle which can be solved through the rules of astrology.

In antiquity, and roughly up to the period of the Renaissance, the horoscope was mostly displayed as a square, a form which is still used in India today. In Western astrology however, the circle or wheel slowly made its way as the favoured manner of display of the horoscope and has by now almost completely superseded the format of the square (see appendix B).

With regard to the planetary qualities, Saturn was accorded special attention at a very early date. This has been documented in a profound historical study, written, in part, by Klibansky et al. in the book, Saturn and Melancholy. This work reveals how the planets were originally associated with the ancient concept of the "Four Humours" which corresponded "it was held, to the cosmic elements and to the divisions of time; they controlled the whole existence of mankind, and, according to the manner in which they were combined, determined the character of the individual."⁴⁹

⁴⁸. For valuable introductions to the basics of astrology see Margaret E. Hone, The Modern Text Book of Astrology (London; L.N. Fowler & Co. Ltd., 1951); Ronald C. Davidson, Astrology: The Classic Guide to Understanding Your Horoscope (Sebastopol CA; CRCS Publications, 1963); and Alan Oken, Complete Astrology (Toronto, New York, London, Sydney: Bantam Books, Inc., 1973).

⁴⁹. Raymond Klibansky, Erwin Panofsky and Fritz Saxl, Saturn and Melancholy, p.3. C.G. Jung's four

The Italian historian Eugenio Garin for example, reminds us in a graphic account of the status astrology had enjoyed during the early Renaissance period in Italy (though only briefly). He wrote that in the Italian Renaissance astrology was applied in all fields, e.g. to religion, politics and official propaganda, medicine, and the other sciences. He said that astrology provided a philosophy of history and a conception of reality, including at times a fatalistic naturalism and an astral cult. He observed that astrology "... was all this and more."⁵⁰ This sort of standing in society was no more than a distant dream by the middle of the 19th century.

But astrology, as any other cumulative tradition, has passed through numerous changes during alternating periods of ascent and decline, and has shown remarkable recuperative powers throughout its long history. The reasons for this persistence no doubt have much to do with our eternal quest for who we are, and for an understanding of our place in the Universe. Modern astronomy with its inquiring missions to the Moon and the planets, and efforts to explore the Universe, serves as testimony of this eternal quest.

2.5 Branches of Astrology

It is generally believed that natural astrology preceded the development of other branches of astrology. But we now know that both major branches of astrology go back at least five thousand years, namely natural astrology, including farming, weather prediction, medicine, and judicial astrology, focussing on people and events. As time went on, however, this original division was expanded to what today includes the following major branches:

psychological types may well be based on this ancient concept.

⁵⁰Eugenio Garin, Astrology in the Renaissance, p.24.

1. Natural astrology—analyses planetary cycles with respect to their influence on weather conditions, agriculture, vegetation and navigation.
2. Medical astrology—reveals the ancient tradition of the correspondence of planets and signs to various parts and organs of the body.
3. Judicial or personal astrology—interprets the ‘influence’ of the planets on human character and the course of life.
4. Horary astrology—deals with answers to specific questions by calculating a horoscope for the exact time of the question.
5. Electional astrology—selects an auspicious time for the beginning of any important venture.
6. Mundane astrology—interprets the destiny of nations.
7. Business or financial astrology—links planetary cycles to economic indicators such as the stock market, the fortunes of companies etc.

All except modern business astrology go back at least 2000 years. After the discovery of the printing press natural astrology began circulating in Europe and North America in the more popular form of ‘almanacs,’ where guidance was given on the agricultural value of the phases of the moon etc. McGill Professor Emeritus Raymond Klibansky has shown how medicine and astrology were combined as far back as the ancient Greeks.⁵¹ Paracelsus later refined and expanded on this ancient knowledge.

“Like no one before him, he harmonized astrology and medicine in a philosophy of nature that is both typically Germanic and highly original, a philosophy that was to gain widespread acceptance ... Paracelsus transformed the medicine of his day... He was the great

⁵¹ Raymond Klibansky, Erwin Panofsky and Fritz Saxl, Saturn and Melancholy (Studies in the History of Natural Philosophy, Religion and Art. London: Thomas Nelson and Sons Ltd., 1964). Medical astrology also plays an important role in the works of Theophrastus Paracelsus and other medical practitioners such as Nicholas Culpepper.

occultist of modern times, in the most elevated and noble sense of the word.”⁵²

Judicial, Horary and Electional astrology have also been used in all major cultures throughout the world.

As mentioned earlier, these branches of astrology began by providing guidance almost exclusively to the rulers of a country and the nobility. But during the last five hundred years they have become a tool for guidance to increasing numbers of ordinary folk—often dispensed by not-so-well educated astrologers with a more questionable reputation for ‘fortune-telling.’ In India, for example, judicial astrology has been traditionally used to choose a suitable marriage partner by comparing the two horoscopes. Electional astrology may then be employed to choose the best date and time for the ceremony. In the same way auspicious times are often chosen by astrologers—both in the West and the East, for political and other purposes such as inaugurations, business ventures etc. The next two sections will briefly cover the vicissitudes of astrology during the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries in England and North America, the twin foci of our present study.

2.6. Recent Astrological History in Great Britain

This section is heavily indebted to the work of Patrick Curry and Keith Thomas. Curry’s thorough study (1989) focuses exclusively on the trials and tribulations of astrology in England during the period 1642 to 1800.⁵³ It

⁵²Encyclopedia of Religion, Vol. 11, “Occultism,” by Antoine Faivre, p. 37.

⁵³Patrick Curry, Prophecy and Power: Astrology in early modern England (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1989). His Ph.D. thesis served as the platform for this book. See also Keith Thomas, Religion and the Decline of Magic: studies in popular beliefs in sixteenth and seventeenth-century England (London: Penguin Books, 1971).

was a period in which astrology had still to contend with strong opposition from Protestant and Anglican Churches, both of which tried to block its growth and influence. Thus James I, for example, gave the Church the power of censorship over the contents of astrological almanacs. Curry himself refutes the wide-spread assumption about astrology's decline, demise or death during this time. His thesis is that although there was somewhat less public astrological activity, particularly during the 18th century, astrology was far from dead as is traditionally claimed. Keith Thomas' findings also support this conclusion. It would be more accurate to say that astrology suffered a decline in public acknowledgment and reputation.

The 17th century still hosted some very prominent astrologers, such as William Lilly (who predicted the London fire in 1666), John Gadbury, Nicholas Culpepper (an expert in medical astrology) and Elias Ashmole, who were all respectable members of society. They had the backing of the aristocratic elite and members of the gentry, and could thus safely ignore ecclesiastical disfavour. For many years they were even able to gather around forty of their astrologer/ astronomer friends for an annual 'Astrologers Feast'.⁵⁴ Their books are still published today and provide teaching material. Supporters of astrology among the upper classes such as Elias Ashmole, felt that a profound 'science' such as astrology should not be made accessible to everyone.⁵⁵ Gadbury too "regretted having exposed astrology to such public view, thus encouraging its use and abuse for

⁵⁴ Curry, Prophecy and Power, p. 40.

⁵⁵ Elias Ashmole for example, was a very close friend of Lilly. Members of the new parliament also sought out astrological advice. With regard to attacks by the Church, see Curry, *ibid.* p.105ff.

various ends. It was a mistake, he felt, to have divulged 'so many of Urania's secrets to common eyes'."⁵⁶

The fear of misuse may also have been behind the rejection of astrology by members of the later Royal Society, such as Ashmole. The fears expressed here by the above three prominent astrologers suggest that astrology was in fact practiced at two levels, a so called vulgar or popular level which was the preserve of charlatans and tricksters, and a more learned philosophical level.

Furthermore it was becoming more difficult to defend the traditional system of astrology in the face of all the new discoveries. The invention of the telescope, for example, revealed craters on the Moon; the Sun showed spots; Jupiter was seen to be orbited by four moons, and so on. The new cosmology which had the earth revolve around the sun, was progressively accepted by scientists and the educated laymen of the enlightenment, who thereafter rejected the old geocentric Ptolemaic system. However, this was not the case with most astrologers, who regarded astrology as working according to the symbolic law of correspondences rather than the physical law of causality.

Members of the Royal Society apparently also had to be cautious in their support of astrology, in order not to come into conflict with the Church and be openly ridiculed. Thus open support dwindled by the end of the 17th century and interest in astrology began to be kept more private. Astrology then "began a long and disastrous fall from favour", while continuing to survive in the background.⁵⁷

⁵⁶ Ibid, p. 39.

⁵⁷ Curry, A Confusion of Prophets: Victorian and Edwardian Astrology (London: Collins & Brown Limited, 1992) p. 10.

In the 18th century, however, astrology began increasingly to suffer from the effects of the Enlightenment period with its focus on the emerging rational and materialist sciences. The period therefore did not produce any major figures in astrology: rather, it now found itself attacked on two fronts, from the Church as well as from the emerging sciences. Furthermore, astrology also lacked the establishment protection it had previously enjoyed. Nevertheless astrology was still alive throughout this period. Astrological almanacs, such as the popular almanac published by the London physician Francis Moore, were widely distributed, and (with the Bible) were the staple of almost every household in England, on the Continent, and in North America. Bernard Capp has done valuable research on the history of these almanacs.⁵⁸ Besides Moore's popular almanac we find others with more technical information, including ephemerides, (which give the daily planetary motion), as well as new textbooks on astrology. Curry points out that these publications were obviously profitable since they were printed and sold solely on a commercial basis.

Curry also draws attention to what he calls the 'messy pluralism' of English astrology in the mid 17th century and later. Issues that divided astrologers at this time (and still do to this day) included the Ptolemaic geocentric astrology (the earth at the center) versus Kepler's heliocentric system (the sun at the center). Different house systems also gave rise to controversy, as did differences with regard to predictive methods.⁵⁹ There is evidence that

⁵⁸ Bernard Capp, English Almanacs 1500-1800: astrology and the popular press (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1979).

⁵⁹ See Mark Graubard, Astrology and Alchemy: two fossil sciences (New York: Philosophical Library, 1953). Astrology may appear to an outsider as a simple coherent system, but this is not so. The complexity of astrology, then and today, provides ample scope for controversy. See also article by Lee Lehman Ph.D., "Tiptoeing through the Method: An Historical Review of Empiricism in Astrology 1900-1991", in The Astrological Journal, Special History of Astrology Issue, Vol. 36, No.1, p.60-68.

many practitioners were poorly trained, or made frequent mistakes “which is only to be expected in so difficult or ‘many-sided an art’. This is a human frailty, not the fault of the science.” explains Graubard.⁶⁰ This factor too may have made astrology more vulnerable to outside attack. J.D. North provides a detailed study of the history of the technicalities of the horoscope in his book Horoscopes and History.

Curry also charges the new scientific elite with having appropriated astrological concepts for various purposes, thereby avoiding the stigma of astrology, and he is not the only one to suggest this. William Eamon a historian, presents a lot of evidence to make his case. However, he writes: “I do not mean to suggest that the Scientific Revolution was a “revolution from below.” But I do believe that any discussion of the “foundations” of the Scientific Revolution must consider a much broader base for it than historians of science have so far attempted.”⁶¹

From an overall perspective it appears that the upper classes started to bank on the development of ‘natural philosophy’, i.e. the new science, to answer their questions—not yet abandoning astrology, but keeping their interests private. In addition, a kind of popular or vulgar astrology had taken a firm hold among the working classes and rural population, fed by the common almanac. The ‘fatalistic’ type of astrology which always had its practitioners throughout the centuries, flourished even more in the 18th century. John Worsdale is an example of an astrologer who, according to Curry, favored rational Aristotelian principles and complex mathematical procedures by which he thought to predict every detail. He took great pride in forecasting

⁶⁰. Ibid, p.. 51.

⁶¹. William Eamon, Science and the Secrets of Nature p.14.

accurately his client's death (date and circumstances). To him this was proof of the accuracy of his method.

Key to the spread and development of a somewhat more intellectual and sophisticated astrology appears to have been the demands of the slowly emerging middle classes of merchants, clerks and other professional people, especially in the cities. They provided a market for publications which became a

mélange of horoscopic interpretation, occult philosophy, physiognomy, mesmerism and Nostradamus...a package that is immediately familiar to the modern reader from certain widely selling magazines today... a sign of the successful struggle, beginning in the 1790s, for greater intellectual independence by members of the middle classes.⁶²

Though readership was not huge it was large enough to make the continuation and expansion of this kind of publication profitable. In the later part of the century the astrologer Ebenezer Sibly again started to freely mix Newton with Paracelsus, Hermes Trismegistus and others. In this manner he sought to bring philosophy back into astrology.

Curry's work sheds also light on the history of astrology in 19th century England, a subject hitherto neglected by historians of the period.⁶³ A lack of proper education, integrity and professionalism among most of the astrological community of the 19th century was partly responsible for the fact that astrology was then at a particularly low ebb. However, the important development during the 19th century of the rise of the Spiritualist

⁶²Curry, Prophecy, and Power, p. 130.

⁶³Patrick Curry, Confusion of Prophets. Ellic Howe in his book Urania's Children provided some of the input for Curry's work, which remains our main source.

Movement helped indirectly to change the situation. This movement came about due to the rise of an ever more influential middle class, many of whom were becoming disenchanted with the message of the official Christian denominations, and began turning to Spiritualism, Eastern philosophy and astrology for answers. Four names stand out as exemplars of the astrology of this period: Robert Cross Smith, Richard James Morrison, Walter Gorn Old, and Alan Leo. All four have left their mark on the history of 20th century astrology, both by seeking a livelihood as astrological counsellors and by defending and enhancing its status. The first mentioned of these, Robert Cross Smith, subsequently took the name 'Raphael' and is basically known by this name. A long and ongoing tradition of publications has since unfolded under this pseudonym. After a few failed attempts to publish a monthly journal, he succeeded in 1826 with the publication of an annual periodical called The Prophetic Messenger. Its content was mainly astrological and contained "the innovation of astrological forecasts for every day of the coming year", articles and sometimes daring predictions together with the 'mélange' that had already proven successful.⁶⁴ It thus differed from Moore's almanac and drew a different audience, giving him instant success. Curry suggests that readership was drawn from the increasingly prosperous middle classes, since it satisfied their 'semi-erudite' curiosity. But Raphael's sensationalist mixture of magic and astrology was not appreciated by his astrological colleagues since: "...they already had their hands full in contending with the usual religious and scientific criticism..."⁶⁵ Raphael's career however was to be short; he died in 1832 at the age of only 36. The almanac continued under

⁶⁴.Ibid, p. 51.

⁶⁵.Ibid, p. 55. See also comments in W.H. Chaney, Chaney's Primer of Astrology and American Urania, (St. Louis MO: Magic Circle Publishing Co., 1890).

his name but the more recent issues were “a rather diminished publication compared to its innovative ancestor.”⁶⁶ Raphael's Ephemerides is still used and appreciated by astrologers to this day.

The second remarkable figure on the astrological stage was Richard James Morrison, who later took the pseudonym ‘Zadkiel’ to protect his identity. An early retiree from the Royal Navy, Zadkiel was soon to make a name for himself as an astrologer. In 1831 he launched an almanac modeled on that of Raphael, called The Herald of Astrology which soon also became a success. The publication of textbooks followed. He tried in vain throughout his life to get parliament to amend the Vagrancy Act under which astrologers could, and were in fact, convicted for fortune-telling.⁶⁷ He himself had never suffered on this account directly, since his was an up scale clientele and he had influential friends. But he became involved in a lawsuit on a related matter where he felt he had to defend his honor. While he did win by a hair it was a bitter-sweet victory. He retreated after this incident but continued to publish. His almanac continued under his name until 1931, following his death in 1874 at the age of 79.

Meanwhile, the T.S. had taken root in England and became a major force for the spread and development of astrology. Its teachings acquainted people with astrology in a new way and “there were to be sufficient to form the nucleus of a new and identifiable astrological movement...Astrology now achieved a spurious respectability by attaching itself to Theosophy's apron strings, at least as far as the Theosophical astrologers were concerned.”⁶⁸

⁶⁶.Ibid, p. 60.

⁶⁷.This law disappeared quietly as late as November 1989. (Curry, *ibid*, p.14).

⁶⁸.Ellic Howe, Urania's Children, p. 56.

One of these new Theosophical astrologers was Walter Gorn Old, born into a well to do family. He devoted himself to occult studies and astrology at an early age, and started corresponding with HPB in 1887 when he was just 23 years old. Shortly after having met her he was allowed to move into her London home (which was to be her last) and became part of her inner circle. After HPB's death in 1891 he was involved with the T.S. for a number of years. He also visited Adyar for an extended stay during this time, but became increasingly disenchanted with the direction the T.S. took under Besant, and subsequently withdrew.

Old began writing under the pseudonym 'Sepharial' and was very prolific, producing countless articles and over forty books, mainly on astrology. He also tried his hand unsuccessfully at the publication of a magazine. Astrology was his bread and butter and he applied his astrological skills to such down to earth matters as horse-racing and the stock-market. Many of his books are still in print and remain a regular feature on most astrologers' bookshelves. He was well acquainted with Eastern philosophy as well as with different occult disciplines. It was in fact Sepharial who introduced one of the most important Theosophical astrologers, namely Alan Leo, to the circle of Theosophists in London. Leo is, in fact, important enough as a Theosophical influence on astrology to warrant a section of his own (chapter 8). We will therefore not go into any detail about him here. The influence of Sepharial is still significant to contemporary astrology, and not least also for our thesis because of his close links with the T.S. However, his astrology tends to be of a more technical nature, and he did not show the Theosophical bent nor made a significant attempt to combine astrology with Theosophy, in

the way Leo has done.⁶⁹ Furthermore, biographical information on him is relatively sparse, pending the publication of a major study of his life and work now underway in England.⁷⁰ He died in 1929.

It is noteworthy that in his own short history of astrology Jim Tester lends support to Howe's observation on the influence of the T.S. to the extent that he attributes the revival of astrology to the spread of Eastern philosophy. (for which the T.S. was certainly the vehicle). Tester's analysis also supports the findings of Curry's study with regard to the role of the educated middle class in the revival of astrology.⁷¹

Until the T.S. became established in the second half of the 19th century the world of astrologers appears dominated on the one hand by a few strong individuals whose astrology was respected, and on the other by charlatans who preyed on the despair of gullible people. However, the T.S. provided a structure, a philosophy, a network of contacts and a place to meet, and soon a publishing house. It therefore became a focal point, an opportunity to gather like-minded astrologers, not just once a year as was the case with the exclusive gathering in Lilly's time, but rather more frequently.

⁶⁹ He is quoted by Howe (ibid, p. 65) as having written that 'the sooner we bring the science down from the clouds where the would-be esotericists have incontinently harried it, the sooner will it gain a proper recognition in the practical world'. However, he also wrote a book on Kabalistic Astrology.

⁷⁰ An astrologer in London (England), Kim Farnell, is currently preparing a biographical study on Sepharial, due for release sometime in 1998. This biography may bring new information, thus a full assessment of his role and importance with respect to our topic may therefore have to await this publication.

⁷¹ Jim Tester, A History of Western Astrology (New York: Ballantine Books, 1987). Tester agrees that astrology was deprived of its educated underpinnings, particularly in the 18th century and therefore declined. (p. 241). However, this educated support was regained through the membership attracted to the T.S.

2.7. Astrology in North America

Astrology was brought over by the early colonists but little systematic research has been done about astrological usage in those early days.⁷²

Gordon Melton, James R. Lewis and Capp are among modern scholars who can be credited with shedding light on the subject of astrology in North American culture during the last two centuries.⁷³ Nevertheless, it is fair to assume that the settlers took their liking for the almanac—with its guidelines for planting by the Moon and various other useful information, with them to the new continent. According to Capp, the almanac was the first book to be printed in North America in 1639 (see illustration in appendix C).⁷⁴ Melton mentions the creation of an astronomical observatory under the leadership of the Rosicrucian Johannes Kelpius in late 1600 in what is now Germantown, Pennsylvania.⁷⁵ The almanac soon improved and a more popular style developed, albeit with less daring predictions than its British progenitor. “It lacked the astrological depth of the English works, and never achieved their political, polemical or scientific significance.”⁷⁶ This may have been partly due to lack of expertise on the New Continent as well as to a somewhat different clientele. However, Herbert Leventhal reports that the basics of natural astrology continued to be taught at Harvard university until the late-

⁷² We do not consider here any notions of aboriginal astrology.

⁷³ Gordon Melton, “The Revival of Astrology in the United States.” In Religious Movements: Genesis, Exodus and Numbers, ed. Rodney Stark, (New York: Paragon House Publishers, 1985); Gordon Melton, New Age Encyclopedia (Detroit and New York: Gale Research Inc., First Edition 1990); Gordon Melton, Encyclopedia of American Religions (Detroit and New York: Gale Research Inc., Fifth Edition 1996); James R. Lewis, ed. The Beginnings of Astrology in America: astrology and the re-emergence of Cosmic Religion (New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1990). This latter publication is a compilation of works by early astrologers. For the usage of the almanac in New England, see George L. Kittredge, The Old Farmer and his Almanac: being some observations on life and manners in New England a hundred years ago (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press. Third Impression, 1920). Kittredge calls astrology, a “false science,” but conveys some interesting insights into this early period.

⁷⁴ Capp, English Almanacs, p. 275.

⁷⁵ Melton, Revival, p. 282.

⁷⁶ *Ibid*, p. 275.

eighteenth century, and that the “commonest work on medicine was the ancient Culpepper’s London Dispensatory, which lasted throughout the whole century.”⁷⁷

The loss of prestige and recognition suffered by astrology in England during the late 18th century was also felt in North America. However, during the latter half of the 19th century we see a rise in astrological and spiritualist activities, first evident along the East Coast, and reaching the rapidly developing West Coast by the turn of the century, particularly in California.

The first noteworthy astrologer, by all accounts, seems to have been Luke Broughton. He came from a family which had practiced astrology for generations (e.g. his father, a medical doctor, used astrology in his practice). Besides publishing a monthly magazine he also published a number of books on astrology. Broughton estimated that “in 1860 there were probably not more than 20 people in the U.S. who could cast a chart. At the turn of the century, however, there were thousands of amateur and professional astrologers”, who by 1880 were being attacked by ‘rationalist debunkers,’ and Broughton came to the defence of many of them.⁷⁸ The reputation and popularity of astrology in North America was by then no doubt enhanced by the founding of the Theosophical Society in 1875, astrology being part of its occult synthesis. At any event, there was clearly a rapid increase in astrological activity, in North America as well as in Europe, as the century drew to a close.

⁷⁷. Herbert Leventhal, In the Shadow of the Enlightenment: occultism and renaissance science in eighteenth century America (New York: New York University Press, 1976), p. 18, 27); See article “Nicholas Culpepper” by Neville Strachan in Astrology Vol. 60, No. 4, p.223.

⁷⁸. Melton, New Age Encyclopedia, 1990, p. 39.

According to Melton, three 'astrological religions,' as he calls them, were also founded around the turn of the century. Emma Harding Britten, one of the founding members of the T.S., is generally acknowledged to have inspired the founding of *The Church of Light* through her book, Art Magic, which discusses the ancient Egyptian roots of the Brotherhood. *The Church of Light* (which still exists today) has published many books on astrology written by its long standing president, Elbert Benjamin under the pseudonym C.C. Zain.⁷⁹ Benjamin also taught classes on astrology in the wider Los Angeles area and his books are still being published. He died in 1951. The two other groups mentioned by Melton were only short lived and need not detain us here.

However, another important astrological group emerged at this time, founded by Carl Louis von Grasshof, a student of Rudolf Steiner. Grasshof, who became widely known under the pseudonym, Max Heindel, "served as head of the Los Angeles Theosophical Lodge in 1904 and 1905."⁸⁰ Heindel finally broke away from the T.S. to found his own group, the *Rosicrucian Fellowship*, in 1909. His Fellowship became "a major force in the spread of astrology in the twentieth century."⁸¹ His wife was also an astrologer and supported his efforts. Heindel wrote several astrological books, most of them still in print. He also wrote a short summary of HPB's The Secret Doctrine which would add credence to the belief that he became more disenchanted with the post-HPB era of the T.S. He died in 1919. The Fellowship also publishes books of Tables of Houses and the Ephemerides.

⁷⁹ Benjamin was among the founding members of *The American Federation of Astrologers*. *The Church of Light* embraces the Hermetic philosophy, Pythagoras, Plato, and Neoplatonism. They distribute books on astrology and other occult issues for correspondence courses, but their books are also available in book stores.

⁸⁰ Melton, New Age Encyclopedia p. 40.

⁸¹ Melton, Encyclopedia of American Religions 1996, p. 720.

(tables of the daily motion of the planets and an essential tool for the astrologer) widely used in the astrological community in North America and Europe.

Evangeline Adams (1872-1932) was another important figure in the history of astrology in North America. She had studied astrology and Eastern Philosophy under Dr. J. Heber Smith, a medical professor at Boston University, who also introduced her to Eastern philosophy (he may also have had contact with the T.S.). Though never a Theosophist, Adams deepened her knowledge of Vedanta by studying further with Swami Vivekananda, a Hindu monk, after his impressive appearance at the World Parliament of Religion in Chicago in 1893. During her successful career as an astrologer in New York, prominent figures such as the singer Enrico Caruso, King Edward VII of Great Britain, and prominent stockbrokers were among her clientele. In 1914 she had to fight a well publicized lawsuit against her on a charge of fortune-telling. Through her own defence she won the case, "thus removing astrology from the legal category of fortune-telling."⁸² Adams was also a prominent lecturer and published a number of books and certainly helped to promote the cause of astrology. That she also had contact with other theosophically minded astrologers is indicated by the introduction to The Evangeline Adams Guide for 1933 written by Manly P. Hall.

Another important pioneer of astrology in North America was Llewellyn George (1876-1954). He was introduced to astrology through W. Henry Chaney, an accomplished astrologer.⁸³ In 1901, at a time when major

⁸² Melton, New Age Encyclopedia p. 39.

⁸³ Ibid. p. 40.

publishing companies did not publish astrology. he established the Llewellyn Publishing Company in Portland Oregon, as well as an astrological school. His publishing company is still operating successfully, specializing in Eastern philosophy and esoteric subjects. It was only in the 1920's that the more established publishers also started opening their doors to astrology.⁸⁴ Llewellyn and his friend Dr. Alton Z. Stevenson also made several attempts at creating an astrological society. These attempts, together with those of various other regional groups, led eventually to the successful formation of *The American Federation of Astrologers* (A.F.A.) in 1938. This organization has since become a major focus for astrological activities in North America. Its history and links to Theosophy will be described in more detail in chapter 7.2 of this thesis.

Temple Hungad, an astrologer and author, has praised both Llewellyn and Max Heindel in her 1931 book entitled A Brief History of Astrology as the two major authorities who "contributed to the real literature of astrology" in North America.⁸⁵ Heindel and Llewellyn are particularly important as examples of the link between the Theosophical Movement and the revival of astrology in the 20th century in North America. Both were Theosophists at one time or another and thus influenced in their work by Theosophical teachings among others.⁸⁶ Heindel's *Fellowship* is still operating and his books circulating among astrologers; and Llewellyn's influence on the spread of astrology through his books, lectures, and through the activities of his publishing company, has been most significant.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ In James R. Lewis (ed.), The Beginnings of Astrology in America, p. 9. Llewellyn himself wrote and published at least 6 books, including the popular A to Z Horoscope Maker & Delineator, and The Sky is the Limit.

⁸⁶ Llewellyn's membership has been confirmed through a search at the archives of the T.S. in Wheaton, Illinois.

Other prominent astrologers of this period were Grant Lewi (1902-1951), author of two very successful books which remain in print (Heaven Knows What, and Astrology for the Millions), and Manly Palmer Hall. Lewi contributed articles to one of the major astrological journals at the time. Hall was founder of the *Philosophical Research Society* (PRS) in Los Angeles, and authored numerous books on astrology and other esoteric and philosophical subjects. Volumes V and VI of the Collected Writings of Blavatsky were sponsored by the PRS under the auspices of Manly Palmer Hall, as well as a world-wide H.P. Blavatsky Writings Fund.⁸⁷ He maintained close links with Theosophy throughout his life.

We defer the two other important astrologers, namely Marc Edmund Jones, founder of the *Sabian Assembly*, and Dane Rudhyar, founder of so called *Humanistic Astrology* to chapter eight of this thesis. Various successful astrological magazines were also launched in the 1920's, which helped to promote astrology. American Astrology, launched in 1923 by Paul G. Clancy, had its ups and downs until the early 30's when it became widely successful, partly as a result of articles from the pen of Rudhyar. Clancy was determined to popularize astrology. Soon afterwards, Dell Horoscope was launched and edited by Grant Lewi. Both magazines had a significant impact on the spread of astrology in North America and still enjoy a wide readership today. The regular contributions of Jones as well as Rudhyar to both journals were important factors in increasing peoples' interest in astrological subjects.

Since the founding of the T.S., Eastern philosophy has taken root throughout North America. The arrival of Vivekananda and Dharmapala at

⁸⁷.See T.H., Vol. 3 No. 6, April 1991, p.169,

the first World Parliament of Religion, and their subsequent touring of North America, helped to spread this interest even more (particularly since they set up their own groups). Prominent astrologers began studying these teachings, as shown above, and this study served to lead them away from a more fatalistic way of interpreting a horoscope, away from exact prediction toward explaining future events as likely possibilities. This, coupled with the developments in psychology, prompted an increase as well as a shift in the use of judicial astrology as a tool toward self understanding.

In chapter eight we will give more detailed considerations to four important astrologers and their respective links with Theosophy by presenting their biographies together with their views on astrology, and an assessment of their impact on the revival of astrology in the 20th century in Great Britain and North America.

3. BRIEF HISTORY OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

This chapter offers a brief general overview of the history of the Theosophical Society, followed by a short description of the life and peculiar character of its founder and main driving force, Helena Petrovna Blavatsky.

3.1. General Overview

The second half of the nineteenth century was a time when many among the educated elites were becoming increasingly disenchanted with the doctrinal teachings of the Christian Churches, Catholic and Protestant alike. The rapid development of the natural sciences, manifesting largely in an Industrial Revolution, also brought substantial hardship to large parts of the population, therefore people started to look for answers elsewhere.

Darwin's evolutionary theories had also been a severe blow to minds still wedded to the Biblical vision of Man, but by the end of the century the public imagination had been captivated by the new scientific 'evolutionism' that promised unlimited 'material progress' for one and all. And the scientists themselves were full of confidence in their ability to solve whatever theoretical problems still remained. Thus all these factors challenged the established Christian belief system and posed a threat to the position it had held for centuries.

Transcendentalism with Ralph Waldo Emerson as one of its prominent spokes-persons, and the Spiritualist movement with its spirit communication, rapidly drew peoples' attention.¹ However, the Spiritualists

¹The rappings and knockings in Hydesville in the state of New York around 1848 mark the beginning of this movement. Marc Edmund Jones claims that Ralph Waldo Emerson too understood that "the heavens and history, alike, hold up a mirror to human nature." (Jones, Astrology: How and Why it

did not form a large coherent body, but rather gathered in small groups around a particular medium. As Michael Gomes suggests, the climate was now ripe for esoteric ideas to flourish, and the Theosophical Society, through its extensive network, could thus reach a far wider audience. He writes:

Spiritualism with its testimony to an after-life filled with unlimited progress was a timely response and captured the public imagination. But it lacked a spiritual philosophy that could explain the glaring inequalities of the time. This helped to make the Theosophical Society such a success with its imported message of reincarnation and karma, or as Blavatsky defined it, hope and responsibility.²

The subsequent history of the Theosophical Society is a colorful one, with dramatic ups and downs, important crises, intrigues, accusations, and controversial head-figures. There is: "such a multitude of personalities, such a tangle of impinging psychologies, each needing to be known and understood before we can even dimly discern why the Mahatmas permitted or hindered this or that development."³ These 'Mahatmas' or Spiritual Masters, introduced by HPB, and acting very much behind the scenes, play a major role in the history of the T.S., as will become evident in what follows, although no empirical evidence of their actual existence can be presented.⁴

Works, p.120).

².Michael Gomes, Theosophy in the Nineteenth Century. An Annotated Bibliography (New York: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1994), p.15.

³.Beatrice Hastings, Defence of Madame Blavatsky (Worthing, Sussex: The Hastings Press, 1937), p.20.

⁴.HPB.'s Masters were, according to her, living human beings who possessed higher knowledge than she did, and belonged to a secret universal Brotherhood. Her special teacher or guru was, according to her, a Master Morya. The subject of the Masters has remained controversial and confusing. Lately, two detailed studies on these Masters have been published by K. Paul Johnson, which seek to shed some light on this matter, but they have only succeeded in fuelling an intense debate. See K. Paul Johnson: The Masters Revealed: Madame Blavatsky and the Myth of the Great White Lodge (Albany: SUNY Press, 1994), and The Initiates of Theosophical Masters (Albany: SUNY Press, 1995).

However, there was a longing amongst those who joined the Society to accept its ideas and concepts, which may have been more difficult to ascertain back then than today, when we are confronted with a vast and even more colorful wave of religious or spiritual groups.

The two main founders of the T.S. were two very different personalities, a flamboyant Russian aristocrat by the name of Helena Petrovna Blavatsky and an ex-army man turned lawyer, Colonel Henry Steel Olcott (see photos in appendix D).⁵ Established in the Fall of 1875, this Society became not only a magnet for the disenchanted educated middle and upper middle class, but constituted the birth of a movement which was to have a lasting influence on Europe, North America, India and elsewhere. It also marked a turning point in HPB's turbulent life, as well as in Olcott's.

The founders, and HPB in particular, saw Theosophy as a link in a more or less unbroken chain of mystical and esoteric teachings, also named 'perennial philosophy,' or primordial or arcane tradition, going back to the early existence of mankind. HPB seeks to highlight the kinship of all sciences, and particularly those emerging at her time, with alchemy, astrology, Neoplatonism, Gnosticism and Hermeticism. The term 'Theosophy', chosen as the name for the society, is derived from the Greek 'theosophia'. 'Theos' is the Greek for God; 'sophia' means knowledge, doctrine, or Wisdom. The word 'sophos' means a sage. Thus, theosophia literally implies knowledge about divine matters (or 'the wisdom of God'). By extension, Theosophy also came to mean knowledge of the hidden mysteries of divinity or of creation. The term has clearly undergone a

⁵ There were others involved, including William Quan Judge, whose role in the later T.S. in America was to become crucial.

number of changes in usage down the centuries. Since the latter part of the 19th century however, it has become more and more associated with the eclectic philosophy of the Theosophical Movement.⁶

Olcott was fascinated by HPB's psychic abilities and personality when he first met her in 1874 at a spiritualist seance at Chittenden in the state of Vermont. She made a lasting impression on him, and the two soon shared an apartment in New York. It was never a love relationship but one entered into for the purpose of accomplishing a mission. The original intent of the founders was 'scientific' in the sense of investigating the mysteries of nature. This at least is the reason stated by Olcott in a later article on, "The Occult Sciences" in The Theosophist. He writes: "And as regards Science, there is a thousand times more that is Occult than familiar and easy to understand. The realization of this fact, both as a result of personal enquiry and of conversation with the learned, was one chief cause of the organization of the Theosophical Society."⁷

Later this idea was extended and further elaborated to form the three main objectives of the Society. They are:

- 1) To form a nucleus of the Universal Brotherhood of humanity without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour.
- 2) To encourage the study of comparative religion, philosophy and science.
- 3) To investigate unexplained laws of nature and the powers latent in man.

⁶Encyclopedia of Religion, "Theosophy," by Antoine Faivre, p. 465. James Santucci writes with regard to the term 'Theosophy' that: "Such studies have led me to the conclusion that the term 'Theosophy' connotes a broad semantic field that pervades a wide area of topics that includes cabala, gnosticism, esotericism, occultism, Hermeticism, and Hermetism. Of all these terms theosophy (theosophia) is the earliest term to appear in print." See Theosophical History (T.H.), Vol V, No..2, April 1994, pp. 36-7.

⁷H.S. Olcott, "The Occult Sciences," The Theosophist, Vol. I, August 1880 p.265.

These ideas transcended cultural and social borders in a way no other Society had previously attempted. Unlike the established religions, no firm set of beliefs were required to become a Theosophist, other than a commitment to the above principles. Thus one could remain a Catholic, a Buddhist, a Hindu, a Parsi, or an atheist for that matter, and still be a Theosophist.

During the early years of HPB's and Olcott's collaboration in New York, after the founding of the T.S., the focus of their attention was not yet as strongly on Hinduism or Buddhism as in her later work, but rather on Egyptian mysticism, Neoplatonism and the Hermetic tradition. HPB soon published her first esoteric work, Isis Unveiled in late 1877, with the help of Olcott and her so-called Masters. The Egyptian influence is reflected in the title.⁸ The book prompted a lot of controversy at the time. Critics alleged that it was nothing but a conglomerate of various philosophical, spiritual and occult ideas, prevalent at the time, which had already been published in some form or other. But despite the charges of plagiarism, the book soon became a popular success. Its synthesis of the various occult and mystical ideas was obviously just right for the time.⁹

Shortly thereafter, HPB and Olcott decided to leave for India, arriving in Bombay towards the end of 1878. Here they met the founder and members of the Arya Samaj, a religious Hindu reform movement founded in 1875 by Swami Dyananda Saraswati, one of the most radical and successful

⁸Dr. Alexander Wilder also contributed material.

⁹The notion of reincarnation was not fully introduced in Isis Unveiled. HPB later explains why this is so, saying: "At the time that work was written, re-incarnation was not believed in by any Spiritualists, either English or American, and what is said there of *re-incarnation* was directed against the French Spritists, whose theory is as unphilosophical and absurd as the Eastern teaching is logical and self-evident in its truth." (The Key to Theosophy, Theosophical University Press, Pasadena Cal., 1972), p.191.

reformers of the time. In the course of their stay they also met, and won for their cause, other influential people, Indian as well as British. Special mention here should be made of A.P. Sinnett, editor of The Pioneer, a leading Indian paper regarded as the mouthpiece of the Imperial government, and Allan O. Hume, a retired secretary of the British Government (and later instrumental as one of the founders of the Indian National Congress), both of whom eventually joined the T.S. They also succeeded in making contact with various other Indian leaders then engaged in joining forces against the British. After residing in Bombay for a few years, relations with Dyananda broke off, but promising new contacts were made and chapters of the T.S. opened in various parts of India. In 1880 HPB and Olcott were admitted to Sinhalese Therevada Buddhism in a ceremony in Sri Lanka (then Ceylon). Olcott would go on to revive Buddhism in Asia, especially in Sri Lanka. While visiting Madras, the two were persuaded by influential contacts and local members of the T.S. to stay, and in 1882 a large property was bought for the Society in Adyar, a suburb of Madras. It was soon to become the International Headquarters of the T.S. and is to this day. Here HPB and Olcott successfully launched a new magazine, The Theosophist, first published in October 1879. Circulation increased fairly rapidly, and in a few months the venture began turning a profit. The journal is still in existence today. During their stay in India, Judge, one of the founding members of the Society, became responsible for sustaining and expanding the T.S. in America. Contact was kept up through intensive correspondence.

For some years letters allegedly from the Masters to T.S. members had been 'precipitated', so it was claimed, through non-physical means. In 1884-5 an investigation into this phenomenon was undertaken by the British Society for

Psychical Research (SPR) who chose the young Mr. R. Hodgson for this mission. The famous Hodgson Report, published in 1886, had devastating results for HPB and the T.S., causing severe losses in membership and prestige. It also tarnished HPB's reputation as a trustworthy 'medium' (though she wasn't a medium in the usual sense) and as a spiritual leader. However, the opportunity to defend herself legally was not taken up, for reasons unclear to this day.¹⁰ However, at the centenary of this report in 1986, the SPR. issued a belated apology, saying:

I cannot exonerate the S.P.R. committee from blame for publishing this thoroughly bad report. They seem to have done little more than rubber-stamp Hodgson's opinionsHad she [HPB] been allowed the legal and expert help she begged for, both Hodgson and the Society for Psychical Research would have been in dire trouble.¹¹

It has been suggested in various places that HPB's outspoken criticism of the Catholic Church was a main reason why the affair around the Hodgson report became so damaging, because the missionaries were just waiting for a good opportunity to tarnish her reputation, and they paid the Colombs (the caretakers of HPB's household in Adyar India) very well for their cooperation.

HPB's relations with Olcott became strained as a result of this crisis as well as through the circumstances of her departure, because she felt that she did not get the support she needed from him to fight these accusations. They

¹⁰T. Subba Row, an early Indian member of the T.S. and their main reason for moving to Madras, had turned against HPB, and he "was on the committee that made it impossible for HPB to proceed legally against her opponents. This committee decided that HPB need not be protected by the T.S.; and that she should immediately be deported from India. Even later as things became smoother, Subba Row successfully argued with Olcott that she should not be allowed to travel back." See N.C. Ramanujachary, "T. Subba Row, 'The Secret Doctrine' and Madame H.P. Blavatsky," Theosophical History (T.H.), Vol. 2, No. 3, July 1987, p.99,

¹¹Michael Gomes, Theosophy in the Nineteenth Century, p.13.

apparently mutually blamed each other for the disaster the SPR report spelt for the T.S., i.e. loss of members, and mistrust by those remaining. Their relationship remained tense until HPB's death.

HPB left India for Europe in March 1885, never to return. She travelled back via Ceylon, Italy and Würzburg in Germany, where she wrote a large part of her major work, The Secret Doctrine. Later, she moved to Ostende in Belgium, still working hard despite considerable health problems. During these stays she was accompanied by a maid and the Countess C.

Wachtmeister, who later published her impressions of HPB during this period in her book, Reminiscences of H.P. Blavatsky and 'The Secret Doctrine.' The Countess also supported HPB further and came to stay with her in London. In May 1887 HPB, low in funds and in ill health, was invited to move to London by members of the London T.S. Dr. Archibald and Bertram Keightley invited her to their home until a more suitable, centrally located residence in London was found. Here she finished The Secret Doctrine, her major work, published in the Fall of 1888, with the dedicated help of various able Theosophists.¹² She also launched the magazine Lucifer in the same year, and founded the Esoteric Section as a close-knit group of her personal students, independent of the T.S. which was under the presidency of Olcott, so that she could be free to teach as she saw fit. This was seen by Olcott and others as an attempt by HPB to gain more control over T.S. affairs, since one author mentions that she:

¹²Blavatsky writes in her Preface to the S.D. that, "...this work is a partial statement of what she herself has been taught by more advanced students, supplemented, in a few details only, by the results of her own study and observation." The Secret Doctrine, Vol. I (Pasadena: Theosophical University Press, 1963) pp. vii-viii.

was disdainful of Olcott's presidential authority, and resentful for his diminished respect for her....When she created the Esoteric Section in 1888, Olcott's resistance was so great that he threatened to resign, something he would do again in 1890 to force HPB to relent in her demands.¹³

However, despite these problems and ill-health, HPB kept a tight schedule, and was able to complete a number of major works in the four years before her death in May 1891, including not only The Secret Doctrine but also The Key to Theosophy and The Voice of the Silence. And she also established the European Headquarters for the T.S. in London during this time. The publication of The Secret Doctrine drew many new admirers to HPB's London home, in particular W.B. Yeats, Oscar Wilde, and other prominent figures of the literary and artistic worlds. The metaphysical foundation of the T.S. also appealed largely to the men and women of the erudite professional middle class, "whose privileged access to the resources of the public sphere enabled them to exercise an influence far greater than their relatively small membership would suggest."¹⁴

Furthermore, the S.D. plus a number of articles on astrology later gathered in her Collective Writings, have since been a major source of philosophical inspiration for Western astrology, and drew a following of eminent astrologers and institutions who have been key to its revival today.

Annie Besant, a social reformer and freethinker, joined the T.S. in 1889 after reading The Secret Doctrine and meeting HPB. She soon became a daily guest at HPB's home in London. Besant's membership meant a lot to HPB.

¹³Johnson, Initiates, p. 6. See also HPB's letter to W.Q. Judge reproduced in Theosophical History, Vol. VI, No. 4, October 1996, p. 129.

¹⁴Joy Dixon, Gender, Politics, and Culture, p.ii.

since she was a well known public speaker who would draw many new members to the Society. She became head of the Esoteric Section shortly after HPB's death. Besant and other leading Theosophists also successfully represented the T.S. at the World Parliament of Religion in Chicago in 1893. As a result, new chapters of the T.S. in America were opened.

But a crisis was slowly developing with the attempt by Judge to elevate himself into the position formerly held by HPB, by claiming direct contact with the Masters through letters. After considerable wrangling, Besant and Olcott finally joined forces against Judge, and the whole episode ended in the separation of the American section in 1895, with Judge as president. After his death the following year, he was mysteriously replaced by Katherine Tingley, who soon closed down all the Lodges and moved the Society to Point Loma in California, where among other activities also a school was founded.¹⁵ But this section of the T.S. flourished only up until the mid 1940's. Instead of uniting the members of the Society it led to the formation of many small splinter groups (such as Halcyon, ULT, etc). This process was further accelerated by a decision of Olcott that:

Members who disagreed with her [Tingley's] policies were barred by Col. Olcott from rejoining the Adyar Theosophical Society, and were forced to form numerous splinter groups or drift into more liberal Christian denominations, leading American culture with Theosophical ideas through groups like New Thought and Unity.¹⁶

¹⁵.Anonymous, The Theosophical Movement 1875-1925: a History and a Survey (New York: E.P. Dutton & Company, 19??) p. 653ff.

¹⁶.Michael Gomes, Theosophy, p. 14.

Robert Crosbie who had first been loyal to Tingley, decided with a number of other dissatisfied members to form their own group, *The United Lodge of Theosophists*, in 1909. This group still exists today.

Meanwhile Olcott had put considerable efforts into restoring Buddhism in Sri Lanka. Furthermore, he put together a Platform of Fourteen Propositions on fundamental Buddhist principles of belief, through which he sought to unite Buddhist groups all over Asia. He travelled extensively for this purpose. By November 1891 he had all the signatures he thought to be important, and the Platform was officially inaugurated in Japan.¹⁷ Through his efforts the T.S. also had a significant influence on the creation of the Maha Bhodi Society through its protégé Anagarika Dharmapala, whom Olcott and HPB had met years ago in Sri Lanka and taken under their wings.¹⁸

New chapters of the T.S. had also been formed in Australia and New Zealand. Olcott was also responsible for the establishment of an impressive library of books and manuscripts collected on his travels, and which is now housed at the International Headquarters in Adyar. Its holdings include rare palm leaf manuscripts and Buddhist writings. In the fall of 1893 Annie Besant arrived in India where Olcott introduced her to the Indian Chapters during an extensive lecture tour. From then on she made frequent visits to Adyar and conducted lectures throughout India and Australia as well as Europe and America. She succeeded Olcott as president of the T.S. on the

¹⁷Col. Henry S. Olcott, Old Diary Leaves, Fourth Series (Adyar, Madras: Vasanta Press of the Theosophical Society, Third Edition 1975) p.415ff.

¹⁸See for further detail, Stephen Prothero, The White Buddhist: The Asian Odyssey of Henry Steel Olcott, 1996.

latter's death in 1907, a move which, she claimed, had been directed by the Masters. Besant held this post until her death in 1933.

Although the Society prospered under Besant, the era of her leadership is better remembered in India than in Europe or America, due to her involvement in social reforms in India, and to her strong political engagement for India's independence.¹⁹ Charles W. Leadbeater, a former English Clergyman (later Bishop of the Liberal Catholic Church), exerted considerable influence over Besant, despite his earlier expulsion from the T.S. for alleged sexual indecencies with young boys (similar charges against him were made again years later in Australia). Under her presidency Leadbeater was able to return to the Society and publish a considerable volume of books and articles. Since his influence over Besant was strong, he might therefore have shaped T.S. affairs more than may ever be known, without holding a prominent position. Leslie Price, the editor of the journal Theosophical History (T.H.) characterizes the situation as follows:

After HPB's death in 1891, Mrs. Besant and later Leadbeater became pre-eminent. Although they faithfully expounded the basics of the teaching in a series of Theosophical manuals they were soon in receipt of new material through clairvoyance, dealing with past lives, initiation, occult chemistry and other matters. The books reporting this, simpler and more accessible than the S.D. pushed it down Theosophical reading lists to the section 'for more advanced students'. Many did not advance that far.²⁰

¹⁹.Anonymous, The Theosophical Movement, 1875-1925. A reprint of various pamphlets, of Besant where she had dealt with the issue of faith, Christian as well as Theosophical, was issued in a new series by Garland Publishing in New York under the title: The Origins of Theosophy, ed. Gordon Melton, 1990; The same series also published a second volume entitled: Theosophy I. The inner Life of Theosophy, 1990, ed. James R. Lewis, which presents details of the Theosophical activities under Besant.

²⁰.Leslie Price, "Did 'The Secret Doctrine' Fail?" Theosophical History (T.H.) Vol. 2, No. 4, October

In 1908 Besant publicly announced the 'Coming of a World Teacher' in the form of J. Krishnamurti, whom Leadbeater, through his clairvoyance, had identified on the Madras Beach. To prepare for this 'Coming', *The Order of the Star of the East* was founded in 1911.

Meanwhile Rudolf Steiner had activated the German Section of the T.S. and soon became head of the Esoteric Section. However, he also quickly became disenchanted by what he called 'spiritualistic aberrations' within the Society. He called the proclamation of the World Teacher, an 'absurdity', and declared membership in the Order of the Star of the East incompatible with membership in the German section. He was finally expelled by Besant in 1913.²¹ This situation led to the formation of his own *Anthroposophical Society* which still prospers in Europe and North America.

Discontent among American Theosophists in the Los Angeles area led to another split. Alice Bailey, and her husband Foster Bailey, both members of the North American section of the T.S., decided after prolonged conflicts within the T.S., to go on their own. She claimed to be under the guidance of her own Tibetan Master, and in 1920 she and her husband decided to move to New York, and eventually founded the *Arcane School* and the Lucis Trust Publishing Company. They took many members of the Adyar T.S. with them to their new organization, which still flourishes today.

Around this time, world events such as World War I exerted their influence on peoples' lives the world over. Besant was no exception. She remained in India throughout the War, concentrating her efforts on educational reforms.

1987, p. 113.

²¹ Leslie Price, "The Loss of Rudolf Steiner," Theosophical History (T.H.) Vol. 4 No.1, January, 1992.

Her former political ambitions as a social reformer took her deeper into the arena of Indian politics, and in December 1917 she was the first woman to become President of the Indian National Congress.

The idea of the Coming of the World Teacher, which caused some older members to leave the Society, nevertheless generated a substantial rise in membership. However, the T.S. had a rude awakening in 1929 when Krishnamurti dissolved *The Order of the Star of the East*, and rejected the position ascribed to him. He left the Society about a year later, taking many of its members with him. He has since become known world-wide for his non-doctrinal thinking. The Society has since had a somewhat more tranquil existence. But despite all the ups and downs, and considerable inner conflicts, the T.S. was able to celebrate its 100th anniversary in 1975, and is still active in more than 60 countries.

Despite any criticism one may have against the T.S. Movement, one still has to acknowledge that what the T.S. Movement started was a new direction in many fields of human endeavour in both East and West, including religion, politics and social affairs, as well as astrology. "In the East, the Society played an important role in the movement for Indian independence and in the revival of Buddhism. In the West, it was a major force for the introduction of Asian religious philosophy and probably the most important non-traditional or occult group of the last century."²² Indeed, the Society was the first to introduce Eastern Philosophy to the West, even before the first World Parliament of Religion of 1893 in Chicago.

²² Bruce F. Campbell, "Ancient Wisdom revived" A History of the Theosophical Movement, (New York, University of California Press, 1980) p.1.

The following passage by Dane Rudhyar, one of our four eminent astrologers featured in greater detail in chapter 8, underlines this point, of how HPB and the T.S. Movement have affected the sensibilities of mainstream society.

H.P. Blavatsky has been vilified, and the Theosophical Movement of which she was the Source (a source, being a place through which water flows for external use by living entities) has had a very confused, twisted and often perverted career. Yet the effect of this Theosophical Movement, in all its forms, has had a tremendous, and often very little recognized influence upon the minds of fairly large groups of persons all over the world. Its basic implications - the existence of super-human beings who guide the evolution of the planet and of mankind, and who can and do establish contacts with truly individualized, steady and open individual human beings - runs counter to the exaggerated egocentric individualism of our times, as well as to the dogmatic beliefs and premises which limit the fields of modern scientific enquiry.²³

And in an interview given to The American Theosophist Rudhyar adds an important point: "We might say that in the 1890's, something started of which theosophy and other movements were the prelude."²⁴

3.2. Helena Petrovna Blavatsky

We will attempt here to shed some additional light on the life and character of HPB, since she is considered the soul or spirit of the T.S. Movement. "She was the one center of occult and mystic attraction, around which those

²³ Dane Rudhyar, 1972, Astrological Timing, p.144.

²⁴ Bill Quinn, "Interview with Dane Rudhyar," The American Theosophist, Vol. 65, No. 9, September 1977, p. 253.

lesser lights flitted as moths hover around a lighted lamp.”²⁵ She has been called the ‘spiritual leader’ of the T.S. in contrast to Olcott who was regarded as the ‘administrative leader.’ She was also a strong willed critic of the religious and worldly establishments, a ‘feminist’ long before this term was coined, and a powerful medium. These characteristics caused her a number of difficulties at a time when women did not even have the right to vote. A woman of her stature who dared question the established Churches and other traditional ways of thinking clearly posed a threat to those wishing to preserve the status quo.

In his Annotated Bibliography Michael Gomes lists around 600 works about HPB, and in her latest book Silvia Cranston mentions that “to date there have been eighteen book-length biographies in English of H.P. Blavatsky.”²⁶ But in spite of all the research about her she still remains something of an enigma—‘the Sphinx of the nineteenth century.’²⁷ We attempt here to draw some insights from the available literature, focussing on her character and on those events of her life and career that had a significant bearing on the development of her ideas, particularly her ideas on astrology as contained in The Secret Doctrine, her major work.

HPB showed startling psychic abilities from her early childhood and seems to have particularly enjoyed showing off her capabilities for producing psychic phenomena. Beatrice Hastings provides some interesting insights in

²⁵ Albert L. Rawson, “Mme Blavatsky A Theosophical Occult Apology,” Theosophical History (T.H.), Vol. 2, No. 6, April 1988. p. 216.

²⁶ Silvia Cranston, HPB: The Extraordinary Life and Influence of Helena Blavatsky, Founder of the Modern Theosophical Movement (New York: G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 1993) p. xx.

²⁷ Ibid. p. xxiii.

her account of a situation in India when HPB and Olcott visited Sinnett at his summer residence in Simla in 1880.

Sinnett begged HPB not to talk Theosophy or do any phenomena outside their inner circle. But she had come there, not to take a fashionable holiday, but just precisely to talk Theosophy and as she hoped, to attract the Anglo-Indian world to the Society through phenomena. No doubt, she took Sinnett's conventional timidity as an affront, not only to herself but to her beloved Masters. On any excuse, she stamped about all day in a succession of rages. Sinnett was in despair. However, Mrs. Colonel Gordon, a well-known and hardy spiritualist from Calcutta was at Simla, and eager to meet HPB, whose fame as a wonder-worker had long since spread around India. Government officials and their wives called. Dinners were given. Soon no fashionable dinner was considered complete without Madame Blavatsky. And the phenomena began. Airy bells rang out, raps were made to sound, apparently at will and wherever anyone desired to hear them. Simla murmured that she was helped by the Devil, but came to see and hear.²⁸

HPB's eagerness to impress and win people for her cause through her performances became cause for a lot of suspicion, controversy and intrigue within the Society, as well as around her. The situation culminated in the report of Richard Hodgson for the Society for Psychical Research in 1886 which undermined confidence in HPB personally and weakened for a short period the success of the Theosophical enterprise. However much the phenomena helped her and the Society to gain public attention in the initial stages, they finally came back to haunt her. A.L. Rawson has pointed to yet another level in explaining the complexity of this issue. He writes:

²⁸ Hastings, Defence, p. 13.

Perhaps madame sinned beyond forgiveness against Mahatmic mercy by indulging in vulgar spirit rappings for so many years, as reported by her sister. In those days she materialized a pipe, made music, rang bells a whole chime.... Ah the Brothers made her pay for her fun in after years when they promised so much both to Olcott and herself, and always denied them the precious power at the critical moment.²⁹

However, she had people puzzle not only over her phenomena but equally over her temper. "Calm as the Aboo Hool of Memphis one minute, and the next a tempest of passion finding vent in a torrent of words that scorched the ears of her listeners."³⁰ But in explaining some of the happenings around HPB, as well as her extreme mood swings, it seems that one has to distinguish between her aim to pursue her cause, or for that matter that of her Masters, and her character or persona. She herself and others in the T.S. appear to have made this distinction between the outer (tempestuous) and the inner (wiser) HPB. Some of the complexities of her character explored by Leslie Price seem at times to border on the mysterious. Many questions raised by the Society for Psychical Research in England, and by others elsewhere, have yet to be answered—hence the term 'Sphinx' to describe her.³¹

²⁹ Rawson, "Madame Blavatsky," p. 216.

³⁰ A.L. Rawson, *ibid.* p. 213. There are similar testimonies by other members e.g. Dr. A. Keightley. He recounts the following situation: "When she read it through I was subjected to what I have since learned is called epilation, for I was divested of my scalp hair by hair. Exactly why I did not know, nor was I told. But when the process was finished somebody 'upstairs' or 'within' accepted the article and was rather pleased with it being timely!" Quoted in Leslie Price, Madame Blavatsky Unveiled p. 24.

³¹ *Ibid.* Price provides an interesting, critical analysis of the Hodgson Report, gathering many valuable testimonies. Years earlier, HPB had hinted at an important step in her own development, saying: "between the Blavatsky of 1845-65 and the Blavatsky of the years 1865-82 there is an unbridgeable gulf." de Zirkoff (ed.), H.P. Blavatsky: Collected Writings 1874-1878 (Wheaton, Ill.: The Theosophical Press, Vol. I, 1966), p. xvi. See also A.P. Sinnett, Incidents in the Life of Madame Blavatsky (London: The Theosophical Publishing Society, 1913).

HPB was born into a Russian aristocratic family with all the privileges that this entailed. The family had long had an interest in mysticism and the occult and she started acquiring her knowledge of the subject early in life. Her father was a military man, but her grandfather had been administrator of Kalmuck affairs for a while. "When she was five years old, she was introduced to Tibetan Buddhism as practiced by the Kalmuck tribe of the Astrakhan steppes." ³² Her great-grandfather had been a prominent Rosicrucian and Freemason and had left an extensive library containing occult literature on astrology, alchemy, magic, masonic rituals etc. HPB admitted to having used this library at an early age to study various occult subjects. This library had a vast collection of occult literature, which no doubt included astrology since it contained the works of Cornelius Agrippa, Paracelsus and other prominent Renaissance occult authors who dealt with this subject.³³ This could well have been her first introduction to astrology, although this is not documented. HPB also seems to have been an ardent student of the works of Eliphas Levi, and may have acquired her knowledge of the Kabbalah from him. HPB may even have met him in Paris during one of her earlier visits, since he only died in 1875. She certainly refers to him throughout The Secret Doctrine. Her writings indicate that she was also familiar with the works of the mystic Emmanuel Swedenborg.

K. Paul Johnson somewhat sarcastically suggests that reading these books not only acquainted her with the world of secret Lodges such as those of Freemasonry and the Rosicrucians, but may also have stirred her imagination about mysterious adepts manipulating the occult undercurrents

³².K. Paul Johnson, The Masters revealed, p.19.

³³.Cranston, HPB, p. 41-43; Johnson, Initiates, p. 164ff.

of European politics.³⁴ In Prince Alexander Golitsyn she also found a family member with whom she could discuss her occult interests, since though leaning more toward Christian doctrines, he too was influenced by the same family tradition of occult and mystical teachings. Johnson believes it may have been Golitsyn who provided HPB with the address of the Egyptian magician Paulo Metamon.

Due to her mother's early death (HPB was then around the age of ten) and her father's long absences from home, because of his position in the military, Helena and her sister Vera were mostly brought up by their grandparents. At the age of 18 she was married to the considerably older Nikolai Blavatsky (who was around 40 at the time), but left him after a few weeks. She thereafter escaped the immediate influence of her family and became an adventure-traveller for the next twenty years, supposedly gaining occult insights from native magicians while travelling in the Caucasus and other places.³⁵ Historians are still trying to trace her steps through these earlier years since she appears to have deliberately misled people about her whereabouts. Her claims of having had contact with spiritual teachers during this time remain undocumented, although she did befriend a number of the leading occultists in Europe.³⁶

³⁴ K. Paul Johnson, The Masters revealed, p. 20. Johnson does not seem to share the official view of the T.S. about HPB's Masters. For a somewhat tongue-in-cheek but well written book about HPB, the T.S. and other major occult figures such as Gurdjieff and Krishnamurti see Peter Washington: Madame Blavatsky's Baboon (New York: Schocken Books, 1993).

³⁵ Blavatsky, Collected Writings Vol. 1.

³⁶ In Cairo she became acquainted with Paulos Metamon a Coptic magician (Rawson, "Madame Blavatsky," p. 210). She also had contact with Freemasons in Paris and London (H.J. Spierenburg, "Dr. Rudolf Steiner on Helena Petrovna Blavatsky," Theosophical History (T.H.), Vol. 1, No. 7, July 1986, p.162ff.

It was during travel with A.L. Rawson in the Middle East that she most likely met the highly unconventional Lady Hester Stanhope, an interesting woman who may even have been a model for HPB's own life at the time. An English noblewoman and student of Middle Eastern occult lore living in Lebanon, Lady Stanhope was well versed in astrology and other occult teachings.³⁷ HPB was certainly familiar with Lady Hester's life and achievements, because she is mentioned in Isis Unveiled.³⁸

HPB apparently also travelled to India around 1856 and again in 1869, and claimed to have entered Tibet (which may have just been Kashmir, also known as 'Little Tibet'). She never settled down in one place for very long, with the exception of her five-year stay in the United States (1873—1878) where she became a citizen. It was there that her life took a more decisive turn through her meeting with Olcott and the founding of the T.S. In this event she finally found her life's purpose, which she claimed had already been foretold to her by her Masters in her early twenties.³⁹ This is, in fact, why she had earlier tried to create an esoteric society in Egypt, which failed. Her instructions which she claims to have gotten from at least one of her Masters, were seemingly ambiguous, or she misinterpreted them at the time.

The knowledge that eventually went into HPB's writings was thus assembled over time from a variety of sources: from copious reading, a travel itinerary that took her to the most diverse environments, as well as

³⁷.Johnson, Initiates, p. 164ff.

³⁸.Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, Isis Unveiled. Revised and corrected by Boris de Zirkoff (Wheaton, Ill.: The Theosophical Press, 1972), p. 572.

³⁹.Silvia Cranston, *ibid*, p. 45ff. See also A.L. Rawson "Madame Blavatsky," p.208.

from her Masters. Her adventures journeys offered HPB ample opportunity for prolonged exposure to the 'occult science' of astrology, though it is not easy to identify her sources. There is nevertheless no doubt from her writings that her knowledge of the subject was fairly comprehensive.

The extensively researched biography by Silvia Cranston published in 1993, gives only three references to astrology and only one deals with HPB. Cranston includes a quote from a letter by HPB which she wrote to Prince Dondoukov, which further sheds light on where she acquired some of her knowledge. She writes: " ...I have lived with the whirling Dervishes, with the Druses of Mt. Lebanon, with the Bedouin Arabs and the Marabouts of Damascus...I learned necromancy and astrology, cristalgazing and spiritualism..."⁴⁰ A.L.Rawson, recalls that they also learned astrology from the magician Paulos Metamon whom they had met in Egypt.⁴¹ It would therefore seem that she deepened her earlier knowledge of astrology, which she most likely acquired in her great-grandfather's library, during her later travels in the Middle East.

The result at the end of her life was the successful publication of The Secret Doctrine, a compendium of occult wisdom which did not come from the divine inspiration of her Masters alone as she attests in the preface of The Secret Doctrine, but "is a partial statement of what she herself has been taught by more advanced students, supplemented, in a few details only, by the results of her own study and observation".⁴² She further adds that this occult wisdom "belongs neither to the Hindu, the Zororastrian, the

⁴⁰Cranston, HPB, p. 43.

⁴¹Johnson, The Masters Revealed, p. 31.

⁴²H.P. Blavatsky, The Secret Doctrine I, pp. vii-viii.

Chaldean, nor the Egyptian religion, neither to Buddhism, Islam, Judaism nor Christianity exclusively. The Secret Doctrine is the essence of all these.”⁴³

Astrology nevertheless played a relatively minor role in her public life. Her mission was to draw peoples’ attention to Theosophy by means of producing psychic phenomena, rather than to impress them with the relatively dry and demanding intellectuality of astrology. On the other hand, we know that the British astrologer Walter Gorn Old eventually moved into HPB’s home in London and was always on hand when advice on astrology was needed. It is reported, for example, that she asked him shortly before her death what the stars suggested about her prospects of surviving. When he tried to be vague she accused him of hiding the truth.⁴⁴ This episode suggests they may well have talked astrology on other occasions. He was by her bedside at her hour of death in May 1891.⁴⁵ Old later became famous under the nom de plume of Sepharial.

The subject of astrology as discussed in The Secret Doctrine and other writings will be explored in some detail in the next chapter.

⁴³Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, The Secret Doctrine (Pasadena: Theosophical University Press, 1963) Vol. I—Cosmogenesis, p. vii.

⁴⁴Kim Farnell, “That Terrible Iconoclast” ,a brief biography of “Sepharial”,(no date, but ca. 1990’s) unpublished paper.

⁴⁵Silvia Cranston, HPB, p. 408; Walter Gorn Old, “Teacher and Friend,” in: H.P.B. In Memory of Helena Petrovna Blavatsky by some of her Pupils (London: Theosophical Publishing Society, 1891) p. 38ff.

4. ASTROLOGY IN THE WRITINGS OF HPB

The discussion in what follows is not intended to identify whether HPB had a clear concept of astrology and what that might have been. This would prove an impossible task, since she never intended to set out an exposition of astrology. Rather, there are only bits and pieces of such a concept spread throughout her whole work. We seek instead to demonstrate that her acceptance and defence of astrology, and the major ideas of her eclectic philosophy, have had a profound influence, leading to a revival of astrology in the 20th century.

4.1. The Origins of Astrology according to HPB

Belief in astrology is deeply anchored in HPB's philosophical system. This is based upon her knowledge of its occult foundation and her convictions about the origins and spiritual significance of the Zodiac. In the first volume of The Secret Doctrine she claims that occult philosophy provides 'seven keys' to unlock the secrets of the Universe, the universal symbolism of astrology being one of them.¹ In a sweeping statement in the second volume of this same work she writes: "The history of this world since its formation and to its end is 'written in the stars', i.e. is recorded in the Zodiac and Universal Symbolism, whose keys are in the keeping of the Initiates."²

She goes on to explain that the origins of the Zodiac go back to Atlantian times. She claims that Atlantis, (which she accepts as a historical fact) is

¹. Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, The Secret Doctrine Vol. I (Pasadena: Theosophical University Press, 1963) p. 155.

².Ibid Vol. II, p. 457.

also the birthplace of the most knowledgeable of all astrologers, known by the Sanskrit-sounding name of *Asuramāya*, who, she writes, was also the greatest of astronomers and magicians. "The chronology and computations of the Brahmin initiates are based upon the Zodiacal records of India, and the works of the above mentioned astronomer and magician - *Asuramāya*."³ Astronomy and astrology were not distinguished in the distant past, the separation of the two disciplines only starting about 1500 A.D.⁴

HPB goes into elaborate calculations to prove that the findings of Hindu astronomers predate those of Greece.⁵ She attacks the scientists of her own day as being incompetent to judge the true origins and antiquity of the Zodiac. This took a lot of courage in the heyday of Christian missionaries in India, who tended to regard Indians as barbarians needing the light of Jesus and Western culture. Needless to say, her assertion that the Indians actually knew more about the workings of our cosmos, and were far better astronomers than those in the West, and that they might even have influenced our thinking on these matters, was not well received at the time.

India and Egypt were considered by HPB as sanctuaries where this ancient wisdom about the stars and their function in the universe was stored.

Traces of these beginnings, she points out, are recognizable in the days of our week. They bear the names of the planetary gods of the Chaldeans.

³ Ibid Vol. II, p. 49ff.

⁴ ERE, Vol. XII, p. 48

⁵ Blavatsky, Secret Doctrine I, pp 657-668. Winckler and Jeremias would certainly not have quarreled with her on this point. According to Peter Davidson, Blavatsky drew a good deal of her astrological/astronomical information from the *Surya Siddantha*, a Hindu astronomical work. See also Joscelyn Godwin, "The Hidden Hand, Part IV," Theosophical History Vol. 3, No. 5, January 1991, p. 139.

who, she claims, translated them from those of the Aryans. This issue is still debated among historical researchers. Jeremias appears to support HPB, at least regarding the single origin of the zodiac. He writes:

Whitney has shown in his work *Lunar Zodiac* that the twenty-eight houses of the moon of the Arabs, accepted in the Koran, Sura 10.5.36, 39 (*manazil al Kamar*, "moon harbours"), and the twenty-seven or twenty-eight of Vedic India (*naxatra*), and the twenty-eight lunar stages of the Chinese (hsin, i.e. "resting places"), in the introduction of which in the Shu-King is attributed to the mythical Emperor Yao), though modified by different characteristics, are yet all three traceable to a common origin in Babylonia by citing and quoting from a number of authorities.⁶

Winckler too writes that: "Babylonia is the motherland of astronomy, and of astrology, which in the Orient is inseparable from it."⁷ However, to trace the history of astrology over even the past 2000 years proves already extremely difficult as Tamsyn Barton points out in the introduction to her well researched book Ancient Astrology, let alone going back further.

By writing The Secret Doctrine the way she did, HPB hardly made this task easier. A portion of the book is, according to HPB, based on sources which were and still are not available to researchers. The stanzas of "The Book of Dzyan" on which it is based had long been considered figments of HPB's mind, but a recent study suggests they are Tibetan in origin.⁸

⁶ Alfred Jeremias, The Old Testament p.12. See also Sankar Balakrishna Dikshit, Bharatya Jyotish Shastra (History of Indian Astronomy) Part I, trans. R.V. Vaidya. (Government of India Press, Calcutta 1969), and Dr. Jean Filliozat, "Ancient Relations between Indian and foreign Astronomical Systems," The Journal of Oriental Research (Madras) Vol XXV, No. 1, January 1955.

⁷ Hugo Winckler, History of Babylonia p.143.

⁸ The Tibetologist David Reigle offers evidence that the Stanzas are part of occult Tibetan scriptures known by the name of Kanjur. (Cranston, HPB p.386ff.)

HPB's claim that Indian astrology developed earlier than Greek astrology has meanwhile been substantiated in the findings of both Indian and Western scholars.⁹ She further claims that the Chaldeans of Babylon got their astrological knowledge from the Indian Brahmins, going as far as to suggest that the Chaldeans were cognate with the Brahmins.¹⁰ This idea does not seem overly far fetched since Winckler and Jeremias both also hint in this direction.

Astrological knowledge in the form of detailed prescriptions for the setting of favorable dates for sacrificial rites, marriages etc. appearing in the ancient Vedic scriptures of India, suggests a fairly advanced knowledge of astronomy. Later, during the Vedanga period, the Jyotisha Shastra, one of the so called angas (or 'limbs') of the Veda, exhibits even more sophisticated astronomical knowledge and an elaborate astrological system.¹¹ What seems native to occidental astrology is the system of the zodiacal signs, which can be traced in the early history of the Chaldeans and Egyptians and may have derived from the system of the so called lunar mansions. In his analysis of the ancient Zodiac Jeremias writes that: "The science of the Zodiac can be traced in the records back to the age of Taurus, i.e. the period when at the spring equinox the sun entered the sign

⁹Dr. V.R.Pandit, "Origin and Growth of Jyotisha-Shastra," Journal of the University of Bombay, Vol.xxvi (New Series) Sept. 1957 p.73-123. See also Hugo Winckler and Alfred Jeremias, op cit.

¹⁰Blavatsky, Secret Doctrine II, p. 202.

¹¹According to Sankar Balakrishna Dikshit (op cit), the Vedic period may go back to 3000 B.C. or even further. Other scholars date the Vedic period from 2000-1100 B.C. See e.g. Simeon O. Hesanmi, "A Historical Study of the Concept of Dharma and its ethical Value in Hindu Religion," Asia Journal of Theology Vol. 4, No.. 2, Feb. 1990 p. 499-514. The Vedanga Period has supposedly lasted from approx. 1500 B.C. to 400 B.C. Western and Indian scholars tend to have different interpretations on this dating issue. Dikshit tries to trace this timing through the astronomical references made in the Hindu scriptures, which could offer a fairly accurate measure.

of Taurus.”¹² However, this system of twelve signs as we know them in the West today, appears much later in the Indian astrological systems - around 400 B.C. Cultural exchange through trade and wars may account for this, though further research in this area is needed as P.V.Kane has suggested.¹³

Alan Leo, a Theosophist/astrologer whom we will be discussing more fully in chapter 8, explains the two zodiacs by saying that the Western tropical zodiac, arbitrarily divided into 12 equal parts of 30 degrees, “derives its sole value from the fact that it is the path of the Sun—by far the largest and most important member of our system—as seen from the earth; but it is a zodiac for our earth only, whereas the constellations embrace the entire solar system.”¹⁴ By constellations he means the configurations of the stars which form the images that supposedly portray the given meanings of the signs e.g. the stars Castor and Polux are found in the constellation which is given the sign name of Gemini, and Regulus is part of the constellation which bears the sign name of Leo etc. These constellations may be larger or smaller than 30 degrees. Indian astronomy still uses the sidereal zodiac (the zodiac of the constellations) and the lunar mansions, making it possible to include the larger cycles of the fixed stars. Western astrology by contrast is based on the tropical zodiac of the signs—the seasonal

¹²Jeremias, Old Testament, p.13. Note that the precession of the Equinox through the whole Zodiac takes approximately 25,000 years. The current solstice point is supposed to be entering the sign of Aquarius. For further information on the origins of the Zodiac see Cyril Fagan, Astrological origins (St. Paul, Minn.: Llewellyn Publications, 1973).

¹³P.V.Kane, “The Problem of the Introduction of Rasis in Indian Astronomy and Astrology,” Bharatiya Vidya, Vol. IX 1948 pp. 310-316. (Reprinted from The Munshi Diamond Jubilee Commemoration Volume Part D).

¹⁴The Two Zodiacs, in Modern Astrology, Vol IX, June 1901, p.245

motion of the Sun, including the equinoxes and summer and winter solstices. But no documents exist to verify the true origins of all this.

Rudhyar subscribes to the view that the two zodiacs work astrologically at different levels: “for instance some astrologers have tried to prove that both the sidereal zodiac of constellations and the tropical zodiac of signs are valid, each referring to a certain aspect of life - but there is very little agreement in defining these levels.”¹⁵ In short, this is a continuing unresolved debate within the Western astrological community.

HPB's concerns go beyond these quarrels. She bemoans the loss of the true occult origins of astrology, maintaining that: “the key to ceremonial or ritualistic astrology, with the teraphim and the urim and thummim of Magic, is lost to Europe. Hence our century of Materialism shrugs it[sic] shoulders and sees in astrology - a pretender.”¹⁶ On the other hand she maintains that Western astrology has produced excellent results and should continue.¹⁷ She further states that we have lost the connection (that she saw) between astrology and the Jewish Kabbalah, which, she claims, was handed down to the Jews from the ancient Chaldeans.¹⁸ As an indication of this connection she mentions that: “Wherever twelve are mentioned, these are invariably the 12 signs of the zodiac (see appendix E).”¹⁹

¹⁵Dane Rudhyar, *Astrological Timing*, 1972 p.216.

¹⁶Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, H.P. Blavatsky: Collected Writings 1874-1878, Vol. xiv, p. 352.

¹⁷Blavatsky, Secret Doctrine III, p. 464.

¹⁸Blavatsky, Collected Writings Vol. III, p. 194.

¹⁹Blavatsky, Secret Doctrine I, p. 651.

4.2 'Esoteric' and 'Exoteric' Astrology

The terms 'esoteric' and 'exoteric' appear quite frequently in HPB's works, and in those of other Theosophists. In astrology they are usually used in distinguishing different approaches to judicial astrology. It is important therefore to understand the nature of these differences. Both terms may also be distinguished from 'occultism.' For example, Faivre distinguishes "occultism, as a group of practices...from esotericism, which is, roughly speaking, the theory that makes these practices possible."²⁰ He notes further that the term 'esotericism' is fairly new, being first used by the French occultist Eliphas Lévi in the early half of the 19th century. He also notes that the link between these esoteric currents and "the Catholic and Protestant churches has been and still is difficult." This has meant that these: "Esoteric currents cannot be defined without intellectual dishonesty as being by nature marginal vis-a-vis the churches."²¹ We have already noted this ecclesiastical hostility in the life and works of HPB, who was continuously at loggerheads with the Churches and its missionaries in introducing her new brand of esoteric spirituality to India and the West.

HPB herself does not keep to a neat distinction between practice and theory. Rather, she uses the term 'occultism' to describe an age-old (or 'perennial') body of hidden knowledge and practices related to the secret workings of man and the Universe. This collective body of knowledge and practice is drawn from a variety of sources, including Pythagorean philosophy (which, she believes, goes back to Babylon) as well as Hindu Vedanta and Tibetan Buddhism. We may say therefore that the noun

²⁰ Encyclopedia of Religion Vol. 11, "Occultism," by Antoine Faivre, p. 36.

²¹ Antoine Faivre and Jacob Needleman, Modern Esoteric Spirituality (New York: The Crossroad Publishing company, 1995) p. xii.

'occultism' is used by HPB as a generic concept for an all encompassing system of philosophy or cosmogony hidden from the uninitiated, the variants of which are qualified by adjectives such as 'occult,' 'esoteric,' or 'secret.' For example she writes: "Let them [practitioners of 'occultism'] first learn the true relation in which the Occult Sciences stand to Occultism, and the difference between the two...Meanwhile, let them learn that Occultism differs from Magic and other secret sciences as the glorious Sun from a rush-light".²² HPB refers to astrology as an 'occult science', and one of seven keys that can unlock this secret knowledge of 'occultism.'²³

The adjective 'esoteric' (often used interchangeably with 'occult' by HPB) likewise carries the connotation of secret knowledge of rules and practices, confined to a small group of so called initiates or adepts who are familiar with the higher spiritual or 'astral' levels of consciousness. By contrast, the adjective 'exoteric' is normally used to connote something physical, material or profane. The basic difference between 'esoteric' and 'exoteric' thus hinges on the belief, based on a purported experience or demonstration of, a higher world invisible to the average human eye.²⁴

In this context esoteric astrology is a body of (secret) knowledge and practice that explains the subtle planetary (or macrocosmic) connections with the mental, psychic and spiritual faculties of an individual or a collective (the microcosm). It is important to understand here that HPB is not talking about a direct influence of the physical planets but of their

²²H.P. Blavatsky, Studies in Occultism (Pasadena CA: Theosophical University Press, no date), p.12.

²³Alan Leo, How to Judge a Nativity (New York: The Astrologer's Library, 1911) p. v.

²⁴Blavatsky, Collective Writings II p. 149.

spiritual rulers—the ‘lords’ as subtle forces governing the workings of the planets. This idea, as Winckler suggests, was already held by the ancient Chaldeans.²⁵ Influences of the physical planets over the material side of life, including the manifestation of inner states as outer events, would then fall within the area of exoteric astrology. Of course modern astrology at least works with visible planets, although the whole connection, one may argue, still hinges on a belief in ‘the invisible.’ Note that HPB considers the astrology practiced during her life-time as a mixture between esoteric and exoteric astrology.²⁶

HPB is not always clear about these differences except, to reiterate, that in speaking of the planets, e.g. Jupiter or the Moon, she is invariably referring not to the actual planets, but to the hierarchy of spiritual rulers or ‘lords’, who serve as the active potencies behind them. She writes for example that: “All the mental, emotional, psychic and spiritual faculties are influenced by the occult properties of the scale of causes which emanate from the Hierarchies of the Spiritual Rulers of the Planets, and not by the Planets themselves.”²⁷ And she explains further in another passage, “Thus when Mercury is said to correspond to the right eye it does not mean that the objective planet has any influence on the right optic organ, but that both stand rather as corresponding mystically through Buddhi.”²⁸ There are apparently also differences in the way colors and metals, as well as the days of the week, are designated between the esoteric and exoteric astrological systems. She includes two tables of some of these

²⁵.Winckler, History of Babylonia p. 146ff.

²⁶.Blavatsky, Collective Writings XII, p. 537ff.

²⁷.Blavatsky, ibid p. 550. Further references may be found in C.W xiv, pp. 315-349.

²⁸.Blavatsky, ibid pp. 544ff.

correspondences, but they are not complete.²⁹ She also outlines differences between the two types of astrology with respect to rulership over the parts of the body. These and other distinctions also lead, of course, to different interpretations, for example with respect to inferences that may be made about an individual's past karma.

As already noted, HPB assumes that the astrologers of her day have, for the most part, lost the ancient knowledge of esoteric astrology. While conceding that Western astrology has done good work,³⁰ the comprehensive knowledge of the workings of the universe and the course of human life which esoteric astrology was formerly able to convey, is confined to only a few.³¹ What goes for the semi-esoteric version practiced in her day is what she calls 'Kabbalistic' astrology (to HPB the Kabbalah and astrology are closely linked), though we are left in the dark about what she actually means by this designation.

Alice Bailey, a former Theosophist, claims for her own extensive work to follow in the footsteps of HPB (she certainly often sounds like HPB). Bailey clearly states in her Esoteric Astrology that she is not dealing with ordinary astrology but with its esoteric variant, a complex and somewhat confusing system of 'seven rays' (also hinted at by HPB in various places) that interact with the zodiac.³² She views her contribution as the passage to

²⁹ Ibid p. 544 and p. 548. See also Ibid p. 38ff.

³⁰ Blavatsky, Secret Doctrine III, p. 464.

³¹ She writes: "Astrologers, of whom there are many among the Esotericists, are likely to be puzzled by some statements distinctly contradicting their teachings...For let it be distinctly known, nothing of that which is printed, broadcast, and available to every student in public libraries or museums, is really esoteric, but is either mixed with deliberate 'blinds,' or cannot be understood and studied with profit without a complete glossary of occult terms." Blavatsky, Collected Writings XII, p. 542. See also Blavatsky, "Astrology and Astrolatry," Secret Doctrine Vol.III.

³² Alice Bailey, A Treatise on the Seven Rays: Vol. III—Esoteric Astrology (New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1951) p. 27.

a new astrology, which “will be occupied with the charting of the life of the soul... the ruling esoteric planets, will gradually transform the exoteric form of the chart of the individual.”³³

Bailey’s books have recently given rise to a rapidly growing new movement of ‘Esoteric astrology’ (more about her will be included in chapter seven). Marcia Moore and Mark Douglas, two contemporary astrologers who have been inspired by Bailey, provide an interesting characterization of this approach to astrology. They write:

The point stressed by esoteric astrologers is that cosmic energies are more than subtle waves of impulses - they are inherently purposeful. For example, mental telepathy differs from radio transmission in that telepathic vibrations are selective and can ferret out the person to whom they are directed, excluding all others... Esoteric Astrology presents the picture of a universe composed not of solid material formations but of shifting streams of vibratory impulses coded to reach their intended targets.³⁴

Rudolf Steiner, a former Theosophist and commentator on esotericism and astrology, also acknowledged the value of astrology as an occult science and wrote about it in various publications. Further comments on his contribution will be given later in chapter seven.

And Rudhyar states in an interview with The American Theosophist that: “*The Secret Doctrine* is an occult type of astrology which deals with forces, with cosmic energies said to be related to certain stars—to cosmic

³³.Ibid p. 480.

³⁴.Marcia Moore and Mark Douglas, Astrology the Divine Science (York Harbor, Maine, The Arcana Publications, 1971), p. 719.

factors.”³⁵ But he tries to play down the significance of the two terms.

“Actually” Rudhyar says:

there is no such thing as ‘exoteric’ astrology or ‘esoteric’ astrology. There is an approach which is, in terms of an occult philosophy—an occult concept of the universe and the way things happen in the universe—and another which simply accepts traditional techniques (one might say ‘formulas’ or even recipes) which are to be memorized and which tell you what event can be expected on earth when certain things happen in the sky in terms of the ‘aspects’ between planets, etc.³⁶

For Rudhyar, it would seem, occult astrology simply forms part of the Theosophical philosophy with respect to the universe; it has no real bearing on the practice of the astrologer’s work today. Its significance is too far removed from the day to day problems of clients with which the average astrologer is confronted. On the other hand, knowledge of the meaning of the Outer Planets, of their cycles and cyclic conjunctions, and of their relation to even larger cycles, may help introduce another, more detached, perspective to our day-to-day problems if we are open to this kind of philosophy.³⁷

4.3. Astrology as Science.

Since astrology is regarded by HPB as an ‘occult science’ we might legitimately ask what notion of science are we talking about here? Is HPB’s notion of science valid in her time, and is it, or can it be valid today? In order to answer these questions we must first consider the notion of

³⁵Bill Quinn, “An Interview with Dane Rudhyar,” The American Theosophist, Vol. 65, No. 9, September 1977) p. 248.

³⁶Ibid, p. 249.

³⁷Ibid. 249ff. More on Rudhyar’s views on this issue will be presented in chapter 8, 5.

science current in HPB's time and today, and the mechanistic paradigm on which it was based.

The word 'science' says Barton "is derived from the Latin *scientia*, which like the Greek *philosophia* meant knowledge in general... It is only in this sense that science existed before scientists. The word 'scientist' came (from mixed parentage) into English not long before the middle of the nineteenth century, when the word 'science' began to take on a modern meaning."³⁸ The science of antiquity, as Barton points out, had a much stronger philosophical bent than that of today.³⁹ In HPB's time science was moving toward what was in effect a static vision of reality, assigning 'thingness' to what is essentially a continuous process. Alfred North Whitehead was later to call this tendency 'the fallacy of misplaced concreteness.' It was also a time of growing divergence between science and religion. This was seen as a danger to both, and not only by HPB and the Theosophists. The German philosopher Hermann Lotze, writing in 1885, had already warned that: "we can never look on indifferently when we see cognition undermining the foundations of faith, or faith calmly putting aside as a whole that which scientific zeal has built up in detail."⁴⁰ True, it was also the period of the formation of the Society for Psychical Research (SPR), as already noted in connection with their investigation of HPB's 'phenomena.' And prominent psychical researchers still held high offices in the Royal Society, despite some opposition to their work. But the gulf that we know today was already clearly in evidence. In a critical

³⁸ Tamsyn Barton, Ancient Astrology, p. xi-xii.

³⁹ Ibid, p. xiv. For Plutarch science still meant the investigation of the "secrets of nature." (W. Eamon, p. 351)

⁴⁰ Hermann Lotze: Microcosmos: an essay concerning man and his relation to the world trans. Elizabeth Hamilton and E.E. Constance Jones (Edinburgh: T & T. Clark, 1885) p.xi.

review of the science of this period Brian Appleyard observed that: "The scalpel had been taken to the stars and our souls were next on the operation table."⁴¹

The period was also marked by a growing trend towards professional specialization in the sciences (as indeed in other aspects of life). The danger here (as Whitehead also saw) was the risk of losing sight of the inter-connectedness of the whole.⁴² And Janet Oppenheim shows that there was in the late 19th and early 20th centuries no clear definition of science, and people of the time "thought about science from widely different perspectives."⁴³ This is a feature that remains with us still today. Freeman Dyson argues for example that: "There is no such thing as a unique scientific vision...Science is a mosaic of partial conflicting visions..."⁴⁴ And Appleyard adds to this view that scientists who insist that the general population believe their version of "how the world incontrovertibly is are asking for our faith in their subjective certainty of their own objectivity."⁴⁵ However, this is not to say that critics of the more reductionist view of science would automatically subscribe to the 'occult' formulations propounded by HPB.

In essence, the problem for HPB was that the empirical science of her time was based on a mechanistic and unidimensional vision of the universe and human nature, a view still current today with the possible exception of so-

⁴¹.Appleyard, Understanding the Present, p. 56

⁴².Alfred North Whitehead, Science and the Modern World (New York: The Free Press, 1967) p.196. He might today be even more critical, if he could witness today's detailed schemes of professional specialization and isolation.

⁴³.Janet Oppenheim, The Other World (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985) p. 391.

⁴⁴.Freeman Dyson, "The Scientist as a Rebel," in New York Review of Books, May 25, 1995, p. 31.

⁴⁵.Appleyard, Understanding the Present, p. 56.

called "post modern science." The founders of this science — Bacon, Descartes, Newton and their later followers, conceived of reality on the analogy of a machine (such as a clock). Although recent research also draws a picture of another Newton.⁴⁶ The so-called 'mechanistic paradigm' which had emerged, forms the shared set of beliefs or working premisses which, according to Thomas Kuhn, "for a time provide model problems and solutions to a community of practitioners" (in this case most practitioners of modern science).⁴⁷ It is the world-view within which science attempts to understand our universe with its phenomena, and it appears that there is always a significant correlation between the prevailing paradigm and the particular concept of science held at a given epoch. Winckler has already observed this phenomenon in connection with Babylonian astral religion:

It is, consequently, no accident which made the Babylonians the world's teachers in astronomy. This [the Babylonian] conception of the universe was astronomy, and out of it alone could an astronomy be developed, just as our conception of the universe also grew out of astronomy. In the stars, the Babylonian beheld the whole divine will, therefore, all earthly things must be images of the heavenly. For that which exists above as archetype must find its counter type here below. The organized state must conform exactly to the heavenly prototype.⁴⁸

⁴⁶ But let us concede here that Newton is somewhat inaccurately equated with this mechanistic view of science to the extent that only selected parts of his writings have been taken into consideration by modern scientists. Recent research has revealed the side of him that: "was alarmed at the atheistic implications of the revived corpuscularianism of their century, particularly of Cartesianism." See B.J.T. Dobbs, "Newton's Commentary on the *Emerald Tablet* of Hermes Trismegistus: Its Scientific and Theological Significance," in Hermeticism and the Renaissance ed. I. Merkel and A.G. Debus (Washington: Folger Shakespeare Library, London and Toronto: Associated University Presses, 1988) p. 186. That Newton was well versed in astrology is also apparent from this article, and also from other recent research on the occult (e.g. Curry).

⁴⁷ Thomas Kuhn (1962), The Structure of Scientific Revolutions p. x.

⁴⁸ Hugo Winckler, The History of Babylonia p 149. Alfred Jeremias writes in similar vein that: "The oldest records, as well as the whole civilization of the Euphrates valley, point to the existence of a

And the paradigms themselves would appear to arise from epistemologies, and the epistemologies from specific motivations which, in the case of modern science, was control over nature.⁴⁹ Of course the late 19th century science with which HPB was familiar had inherited an epistemology which had already proven itself remarkably successful in controlling nature, namely empiricism. The ideals of this empirical method were essentially those of objectivism, positivism, reductionism and determinism. The objectivist ideal was based on the Cartesian assumption that there is an objective universe that exists separate from the perspective of the observer. Likewise, positivism assumed that what is scientifically 'real' is only that which can be directly experienced through the physical senses (and their mechanical or electronic extensions). And reductionism assumed that complex systems could be explained by breaking them down into their essential components. Finally, determinism implied that the apparently purposeful behaviour of organisms is determined—or 'caused,' solely by the mechanical interaction of their parts. These epistemological assumptions led to the dismissal of all matters not falling within the scope of its method. Thus, the subjective aspects of human nature, including 'consciousness,' the soul (or 'spirit'), and various subjective states of feeling and emotion, tend to be viewed as epiphenomena of the brain, (which can be physically located through sufficient research) and free will (self-causation) as the product of wishful thinking.

scientific and at the same time religious system which was not confined only to the secret teaching of the temple, but by which the political organizations were formed, justice done, and property managed and protected." The Old Testament p. 3ff.

⁴⁹ See H. Smith Beyond the post-modern mind (New York: Crossroad, 1982). See also Glenn Perry, Stealing Fire from the Gods: myth and method in astrological research (San Rafael CA: The Association for Astrological Psychology, 1997).

On the other hand HPB's notion of science is that of an 'occult science' dealing with the whole of reality, including the 'hidden' or non-physical (or 'spiritual') and symbolic aspects of nature. She anticipated Whitehead in being opposed to a science which "disjoins the physical cause from the final end."⁵⁰ Her teleological view is closely related to that of the Hermetic tradition, which had re-emerged during the Renaissance in part through the efforts of Renaissance magi such as Marsilio Ficino (who translated the *Corpus Hermeticum*), Cornelius Agrippa, Giordano Bruno and John Dee. This clearly sets her at odds with the mechanistic paradigm of late 19th century science. Her view of nature (including human nature) was multidimensional and purposeful, based on a traditional occult paradigm holding that:

1. Everything in the universe is interconnected (in the Hermetic sense of the link between the Microcosm and Macrocosm);
2. Physical events have causes at unseen levels;
3. An eternal Law governs the universe at all levels, thus all is governed by intelligence or consciousness from within (The Vedic *ṛta* is an analogous concept);⁵¹
4. The universal process moves in cycles, which are an intrinsic part of the whole;
5. Humankind and the universe as a whole are slowly evolving to higher states of consciousness.⁵²

For want of a better term we may call this view the "holistic paradigm" of nature as opposed to the before-described "mechanistic paradigm" of

⁵⁰Whitehead, *Science and the Modern World* p.76.

⁵¹The sanskrit '*ṛta*' could be translated as: cosmic order, the law that imparts harmony to the cosmos in its moral as well as its physical aspects.

⁵²Shirley Nicholson, Director of the Krotana School of the Theosophical Society, Ojai, California, originally suggested the base for these five points.

modern science.⁵³ True science in this holistic view reaches beyond the narrow boundaries of physical causality and basic human sense perception. Indeed, HPB believed that mechanistic science is incapable of unlocking the secrets of the physical and human worlds without accommodating itself to such traditional occult teachings as astrology and alchemy. She says that “science has only one key—the key of matter—to open the mysteries of nature withal, while occult philosophy has seven keys and explains that which science fails to see”—astrology being one of these keys.⁵⁴ HPB also lamented the growing separation of science and religion.

This holistic view goes back to the philosophical traditions of ancient Greece and Egypt. Not only is the legacy of this tradition—based on the inter-connectedness of macrocosm and microcosm (‘as above, so below’), which is very much alive in HPB’s works; it also forms the background for her assertion that astrology is a ‘science.’ She argues that since astrology had always formed part of this tradition, it cannot—and should not, follow the rationalistic, materialistic paradigm of modern science. It follows a different holistic paradigm capable of answering the important questions of everyday life; those that modern science is ill-equipped to pose, let alone answer. This difference remains a major source of misunderstanding to this day, and may be illustrated by the words of a leading British astrologer.

This paradigm, that the universe is essentially a machine, whose laws and workings can be understood by detached observation and

⁵³ This holistic paradigm is re-emerging today in a somewhat different form with the development of so-called ‘postmodern’ science. A major goal of post-modernism is to construct a new world-view through a revision of long-held premisses and concepts. A recurrent theme is that ‘truth’ is a matter of perspective. See also G. Lakoff and M. Johnson Metaphors we live by (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1980) who point out that truth is always relative to a conceptual system that is defined in large part by metaphor. This is not to say that these modern critics would necessarily subscribe to pre-modern or ‘occult’ formulations such as those of HPB.

⁵⁴ Blavatsky, Secret Doctrine I, p. 155.

analysis. was invented sometime around the last half of the 17th century by people like Newton... taken as a set of rules, this paradigm has been outstandingly successful, in enabling us to understand and manipulate the material world. It has been so successful, in fact that we take it as being axiomatic and have come to believe that it represents the truth about the way the world actually is. It is completely ingrained into our habits of thoughts and feeling. Even those who dislike and oppose its implications are held within it.... Applying the quantitative, Newtonian techniques to astrological phenomena is mixing two opposing paradigms. It just does not make sense to think of astrology in terms of man separate from a mechanical universe. Quantitative research in this context is merely chasing its own tail since it is pursuing phenomena that it is specifically designed to exclude.⁵⁵

In modern terminology, astrology may be defined as astronomy symbolically interpreted or, as HPB herself expressed it: "Ancient wisdom added to the cold shell of astronomy the vivifying elements of its soul and spirit—Astrology."⁵⁶ In effect, astrology combines two different elements. It utilizes the principles and calculations of astronomy and its observable facts of the physical motions of the sun, moon, planets and stars, their orbital cycles and the courses they trace against the background zodiacal belt. But astrology then goes further to interpret these data symbolically according to an age-old system of symbolic correspondences.

This 'spiritual' side of astrology posits an isomorphism of psyche and cosmos—what happens 'out there' in the universe has meaning for life on this earth. In other words astrology takes the actual physical state of the heavens at a point in time, and relates this in a meaningful way to human

⁵⁵Roy Alexander, quoted in Stephen Arroyo The Practice and Profession of Astrology (Reno, Nevada: CRCS Publications, 1984) p. 60ff.

⁵⁶Blavatsky, Secret Doctrine I p. 645.

behavior and/or events on earth. By contrast, modern science must avoid this quest for meaning since, "it only provides definitions of operational structure so that, at the end, as at the beginning, the important questions" of meaning are left outside the scientific discourse.⁵⁷ Modern science, says Jacob Needleman, has lost the "spiritual and metaphysical impetus that shaped its beginnings, has abandoned modern humanity to a universe devoid of consciousness and purpose, and...modern man or woman has been driven to the individual self as the locus of healing and meaning."⁵⁸ While our own century has witnessed a transformation of the Newtonian deterministic physics—from Einsteinian 'relativity' to the 'uncertainty' of the quantum, just where this so-called 'postmodern science' is leading us in a philosophical sense is not yet clear.⁵⁹

Modern scholarship has highlighted two possible reasons why the 'natural philosophy' of the Renaissance broke with its occult roots to develop into the unidimensional, purely materialistic science of today. The first has already been discussed above. The Cartesian dichotomy between the objective world of 'extension' (res extensa) and the subjective world of 'mind' (res cogitans) had led by diverse paths to modern empiricism, which tended to disregard the latter in favour of the former. The second reason was the fierce opposition of the Catholic, and eventually Protestant,

⁵⁷Dr. Laurence L. Cassidy, quoted in Arroyo, Astrology, p.62. In the first part of the 19th century we still witness a close alliance between science and the occult, i.e. alchemy/chemistry or physics/astrology. See, for example, Godwin, The Hidden Hand, Webb, The Occult Establishment, Oppenheim, Other World.

⁵⁸Antoine Faivre and Jacob Needleman (ed.), Modern Esoteric Spirituality, p. xxiii.

⁵⁹In a recent television program on modern astronomy, "Mysteries of Deep Space," shown on the PBS network, April 24, 1997, one astronomer pointed out how close astronomy is once again approaching closely the religious quest.

Churches to what they considered the 'work of the devil.'⁶⁰ These two factors still cast long shadows on the social and intellectual status of astrology today.

HPB's notion of astrology on the other hand, rooted as it is in the holistic paradigm of the Hermetic tradition, meets all the requirements to be called a science within this tradition. It not only applies the laws of nature already familiar to 19th century science but also those hidden secret laws of nature that the scientists of her day would fain ignore, but which many astrologers had long researched.⁶¹ Firmicus Maternus defended astrology with similar arguments as far back as 200 A.D.⁶²

Clearly, as an 'occult science' based on a pre-modern holistic paradigm, the parameters of astrology can not be expected to conform to that of a mechanistic science. Frances Yates for one, believes that it is not appropriate or historically correct to impose modern measures of science or pseudo-science retrospectively on to scientific concepts of the past.⁶³ The astrophysicist Percy Seymour adds that arguments brought forward against astrology appear to be based largely on misconceptions of astrology, and may be rationalizations of pseudo-intellectual prejudices that may be

⁶⁰See D.P. Walker, Spiritual and Demonic magic from Ficino to Campanello, (London: University of Notre Dame Press 1975) and Frances Yates, The Rosicrucian Enlightenment (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1972).

⁶¹The correlation between periodic sun spot activity and commercial crises, for example, has long been researched by astrologers. See E. Douglas Fawcett, Lucifer, Vol IV, No. 20, April 1889, p.149-153. Science has since discovered some connection between 'above' and 'below,' for example, the recent news report that solar flare activity had been responsible for major disruption to satellite communications (as reported on the American CBS News at 7 o'clock, January 23, 1997).

⁶²Bram, Jean Rhys (trans), Ancient Astrology. Theory and Practice—Matheseos Libri VIII by Firmicus Maternus (Park Ridge, N.Y.: Noyes Press, 1975), p.12ff.

⁶³Frances Yates, Ideas and Ideals in the North European Renaissance: Collected Essays Vol. III (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1984). See also Janet Oppenheim The Other World, Part III.

accepted by some only because they reinforce their own beliefs.⁶⁴

Seymour's statement seems to be validated by an effort on part of the scientific community to discredit astrology publicly.

In the summer of 1975 the Humanist Association of the United States published a letter signed by 186 leading scientists (including several Nobel laureates) lamenting the growing American fascination with astrology. They called it a rampant irrationality. Apparently the effort did little to stem the tide, however. Two years later a Gallup poll reported that 30 million Americans admitted to "believing in astrology."⁶⁵

Much of this hostility is a very unscientific case of the triumph of prejudice over knowledge, since most scientists have never seriously studied astrology or tried to test the empirical status of astrology for themselves. In fact they have even tried to falsify astrological research data, as J. Lee Lehman and others in the astrological community have reported.⁶⁶

In sum, arguments about the validity of astrology as a 'science' depend largely on the context of the debate and the paradigms that provide the rules of the debate. HPB was wise enough to know that astrology had been repudiated not because it was disproved but because it had become unintelligible to those scientists caught within the arbitrary constraints of their own empirical method. She counters the objections of astronomers for example, by arguing that astronomy is the younger sister who attempts to

⁶⁴Dr. Percy Seymour, The Scientific Basis of Astrology (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1992).

⁶⁵Theodor Roszak, Why Astrology Endures, (San Francisco, Robert Briggs Associates, 1980), p.1

⁶⁶Priscilla Costello, "Close up with J. Lee Lehman" Ph.D ,interview in Above & Below, Issue 11, Fall 1988, p.10.

ignore her own roots by reducing astrology to the “position of the Cinderella in the household of Science.”⁶⁷ She further states:

Yet whether ancient or modern, both may be called exact sciences: for, if the astronomer of today draws his observations from mathematical calculations, the astrologer of old also based his prognostications upon no less acute and mathematically correct observations of the ever-recurring cycles. And, because the secret of this science is now being lost, does that give any warrant to say that it never existed...⁶⁸

The fact that modern science has been unable to identify the means by which astrology functions does not render it invalid (since the same might be said e.g. about the meridians of acupuncture).⁶⁹ HPB points to the connection of astrology and alchemy with the modern sciences of astronomy and chemistry and argues that, “as long as this truth is not recognized, Astronomy and Chemistry will continue to run in a vicious circle and will produce nothing beyond materiality.”⁷⁰ The occasional astronomer/astrophysicist (such as Percy Seymour) now appears willing to recognize the merit in these statements. Such views are also shared by Thomas Moore, a modern scholar and psychotherapist, who cynically remarks: “Only with the arrival of the science of astronomy, with its technology and mathematics, did the sky truly begin to recede from our intimate grasp,” leaving us to experience the heavens through the

⁶⁷Blavatsky, Collected Writings VI p. 347.

⁶⁸Blavatsky, Collected Writings II p. 419.

⁶⁹Eamon argues to this: “Even if I cannot explain why something exists in terms of necessary causal laws, if in this chancy world I can make it... so can it not be said I know it. W. Eamon, Science and the Secrets of Nature, p.360.

⁷⁰Blavatsky, Collected Writings VIII p. 79.

omniscient eye of the television screen beaming martian landscapes into our living rooms.⁷¹

HPB is of the opinion that astrology should complement astronomy as psychology complements physiology. The former deals with manifestations of consciousness and their relative meanings, the latter with manifestations of physical reality that are devoid of meaning. By its use of mathematical calculation astrology can explain what cause will produce what specific combination of effects, and may assist for example, in the 'choice' of a future incarnation (a cardinal principle of Theosophical belief). Thus, the planetary positions in the astrological chart of an individual born at a certain time, date and place, show "the aggregate result of the causes already produced."⁷²

HPB also informs us how she believes the planetary influence works, namely through the 'magnetic affinities' and attractions of the planetary bodies.⁷³ The individual is supposedly placed in a particular magnetic relation as a result of the accumulated karma of the past. On the other hand, the birth chart can only indicate the tendencies of the individual. The planetary influences merely predispose the individual to adopt a particular course of action (together with its inevitable karmic effects). She writes: "The stars do not cause our good or bad luck, but simply indicate the same."⁷⁴ In other words the stars do not determine our destiny, but rather

⁷¹ Thomas Moore, The Planets Within: the astrological Psychology of Marsilio Ficino (Great Barrington MA: Lindisfarne Press, 1990) p. 17.

⁷² Blavatsky, Collected Writings VI p. 229.

⁷³ Blavatsky, Secret Doctrine I p. 497ff.

⁷⁴ Blavatsky, Collected Works III p. 192.

point to a most probable future, just like the hands of the clock indicate the time.

However, to decipher the true meaning of astrology for a particular individual, she attaches the important proviso “that its interpreters must be equally infallible; and it is this condition, *sine qua non*, so very difficult of realization, that has always been the stumbling block to both”.⁷⁵ In effect, one should not conclude from the fact that not all astrologers are infallible that astrology itself is a flawed ‘science’. After all, neither is the science of medicine judged (or rejected) by the many imperfections of its practitioners. Though cast aside, and even ridiculed, by modern science over the past couple of centuries HPB foresaw the time when this “true science” will again triumph over the hostilities heaped upon it.

4.4. The Qualifications of the Astrologer

HPB lists 12 conditions that have to be fulfilled by the aspirant before being introduced to the ‘Occult or Divine Wisdom’.⁷⁶ Unfortunately, the average astrologer of her time was far from these ideals. In her opinion the astrologer should have a firm grounding in occultism to grasp the deeper meanings, and in particular should be a master of esoteric astrology in the manner of Blavatsky herself. But there are further conditions attached for those who aspire to her standards. She states: “A man must be a psychologist and a philosopher before he can become a perfect astrologer, and understand correctly the great Law of *Universal Sympathy*. Not only astrology but magnetism, theosophy and every occult science, especially

⁷⁵.Blavatsky, Isis Unveiled I p. 259.

⁷⁶.Blavatsky, Occult Wisdom pp. 4-7.

that of attraction and repulsion.”⁷⁷ Otherwise she considers him/her superficial.

She laments the fact that, for the most part, astrologers have lost this knowledge, are not well trained, and are often quacks.⁷⁸ Blavatsky’s ideal of the astrologer thus resembles the man of wisdom of the ancient world who has penetrated the deepest mysteries of mankind and of the universe. Her model of the astrologer was Asuramaya who stands at the very origins of astrological tradition which, she believed, go back even further than Babylon, Egypt and India to the (mythical?) Atlantis. She bemoans the fact that modern astrologers—other than those who are also qualified students of the occult, have lost the original understanding of the link between planetary cycles and the old cosmic cycles known to Hindu philosophy as yugas and manvantaras.⁷⁹

We may assume, however, that these high standards were not meant to discourage people from taking up such a difficult task, but rather to make them more humble in their practice. The old esoteric knowledge may have been lost but HPB still considers it a worthwhile discipline to practice. Chapter 8 will introduce four prominent astrologers, all of them Theosophists or closely affiliated to Theosophy, who have since worked to revitalize astrology and enhance its standing in modern society.

In conclusion we can say that while HPB’s notion of ‘science’ was not shared by the scientific community of her day, and would not be admitted

⁷⁷.Blavatsky, Collected Writings III p. 192.

⁷⁸.Blavatsky, Collected Writings XII p. 537. See also *ibid* Vol. IV, p. 302.

⁷⁹.Blavatsky, Collected Writings III p. 194. Manvantara, in the period or age of Manu (it comprises about 71 maha-yugas...). Sir M.Monier Williams:A Sanskrit English Dictionary.1984

by most scientists today, this is not to say that the underlying assumptions—the paradigm on which it is based, are no longer valid or ‘true.’ Post-modern science itself is even now groping its way towards a vision of reality with holistic and indeterministic features akin, in some respects, to those of the pre-modern ‘occult’ tradition to which she subscribed. Sylvia Cranston, citing a niece of Albert Einstein, has reported that the celebrated physicist always kept a copy of The Secret Doctrine on his desk. She also mentions a number of other physicists who were acquainted with HPB’s work.⁸⁰ HPB was of the opinion that astrology itself has all the marks of a true science, albeit an ‘occult science’ that marches to a different drummer than the mechanistic versions of her day. Unfortunately, her writings provide no clear outline of an astrological ‘system’, and reveal little of the lost knowledge that she bemoans. Neither do we know whether she ever practised astrology herself, or sought the guidance of astrologers (other than Sepharial’s shortly before her death).⁸¹ We are only left with her staunch defence of this ‘occult science’ before what she regarded as the tunnel vision of an arrogant scientific establishment.

⁸⁰ Cranston, HPB, p. xx. See also Cranston, “Science and the Secret Doctrine,” Quest Magazine Autumn 1993, p. 58.

⁸¹ As we will show in chapter seven, Judge and Olcott, her two main partners in the crusade for Theosophy, did regularly consult astrologers.

5. MAJOR THEOSOPHICAL IDEAS IN CONTEMPORARY ASTROLOGY

In this section we will outline four major sets of ideas that have worked their way into the world view of modern astrology. These include those of the macrocosm and the microcosm, of karma and reincarnation, of planetary cycles, and of the psychology of the soul. These concepts have been part of the eclectic teachings of the T.S. Movement (not new inventions of HPB or the T.S.), and were transmitted through their various activities as will be outlined in chapters 6-8.

We should mention here, that the above concepts were to some degree also transmitted through the psychological and occult works of C.G.Jung (who was not himself a Theosophist but was acquainted with Theosophy).¹ It is our task in this thesis however, to argue that the T.S. Movement as a whole has been a prime mover in channeling these ideas into more general acceptance among a majority of contemporary astrologers in Great Britain and North America.

We have already pointed out in chapter 2 how Hermetic, Platonic, and Neoplatonic ideas had been rediscovered during the period of the Renaissance, particularly in Italy. In 17th century England these ideas still circulated among the more prominent astrologers. However, as Curry states, in the 18th century until about the mid 19th century they had become dormant, and were replaced by a rather more popular or vulgar type of astrology with 'fatalistic' implications. The more learned cosmological—philosophical astrology rediscovered during the Renaissance, was no longer

¹ It is not our intention to dwell on these Jungian influences. However they must be mentioned in passing if only because of the attention given to them in contemporary astrological literature and practice.

in the public eye.² The Theosophical teachings of HPB and her followers brought back not just the memory of these ancient spiritual and occult theories but also the inspiration to study them anew. They did not invent or modify the above concepts.

5.1. The Theory of Macrocosm and Microcosm and Universal Sympathy

The Hermetic notion of the macrocosm and the microcosm sees the physical 'Whole' or a universal 'Consciousness' of some kind, as undividedly present in even the smallest particle, and the human soul as a reflection of the Divine. The 'little world' or the 'little man' is the larger Whole in miniature. This isomorphism of different elements and levels of existence results in a series of 'correspondences' and 'sympathies' between them. In the West this 'occult' conception was fully embraced by Neoplatonism and probably dates back—via Plato and the Pre-Socratics, to Babylonian times. Jeremias has observed for example that: "The Babylonian teaching is based, as may be seen from the former deductions, upon the idea of a pre-established harmony between a *celestial and a terrestrial image*. In it the part always corresponds to the whole."³ Jeremias also finds this same idea in the Chinese and Egyptian cosmogony. We might add also the example of India, where the notion of the 'Heavenly Man' as the source of Creation is found as far back as the Rig Veda,⁴ HPB

²Curry, Prophecy and Power: Astrology in Early Modern England. (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1989) p. 95ff.

³Jeremias, The Old Testament p. 52.

⁴In the so-called Purushasukta section of Rig Veda X. 90. 1-16.

also calls him 'Adam Kadmon,' symbol for the macrocosm,⁵ while the 'earthly Adam' symbolizes the microcosm (see appendix F).⁶

Eventually, this idea evolved into a vast network of such correspondences. One example of such correspondence (in the West at least) would be that between the signs of the zodiac and different parts of the human body. Thus Aries (the first sign) symbolizes the head—the following signs representing progressively lower parts of the body, down to Pisces (the 12th and last sign) symbolizing the feet (see appendix A). The inner organs of the body (liver, kidneys etc.) are also related to the zodiacal signs (and planets) in this manner, knowledge which was applied in ancient, medieval and Renaissance medical practice.⁷

These ideas of macro-microcosmic correspondence were rediscovered and resurrected in the writings of Renaissance magi (as Frances Yates calls them) such as Marsilio Ficino, Cornelius Agrippa and John Dee, and imbued astrology with new confidence and new insights for interpreting the complex symbolism of astrology.⁸ This idea of a law of correspondence or analogy constitutes the philosophical basis of astrology and provides a universal vision of life on this earth. According to the astrologer/

⁵ *Isis Unveiled*, 1976, p. 464, (see also 456ff).

⁶ *Ibid.* p. 276. Also in *The Secret Doctrine* Vol. I, p. 215 she writes: "the first Heavenly Man is the unmanifested Spirit of the Universe, and ought never be degraded into Microprosopus [Microcosm] — the lesser face of Countenance, the prototype of man on the terrestrial plane."

⁷ This is true even today for those who have studied this matter. However, the use of astrology in medicine has declined in the West since the 19th century.

⁸ "Project Hindsight" is a recent example of an attempt to recover lost or dormant astrological knowledge from the past. It is sponsored and undertaken by a number of contemporary astrologers (Robert Zoller, Robert Hand, Robert Schmidt and Ellen Black) to translate extant Latin and Greek astrological works, or texts related to astrology. A major goal is greater accuracy, made possible, they believe, because of their astrological background. See *Astrology Quarterly*, Vol. 64, No. 4 Autumn 1994, p. 4ff. See also *The Astrological Journal, Special History of Astrology Issue*, Vol. 36, No. 1, January/February 1994. The project has recently been shelved as a result of internal disagreements among the various collaborators.

psychotherapist Glenn Perry: “Correspondences were explained by the hermetic concept of ‘similars’ and ‘sympathies.’ Similars are those structures that agree in design though they may differ in magnitude. Sympathies are resonant bonds of vibratory frequencies that unite all similars.”⁹ Ficino also reminds us in the early part of the Renaissance, that the “sky within truly seems as vast as the sky without, and the planets are just as massive, mysterious and unearthly” not simply good or bad.¹⁰

It was primarily HPB who re-introduced and popularized these ideas through her Theosophical writings at the turn of the 20th century, and later other Theosophists followed. An example of her version of macro-microcosmic correspondence, as reported by Manly Palmer Hall, is that:

Man is a little world — a microcosm inside the great universe. Like a fetus, he is suspended, by all his three spirits, in the matrix of the macrocosm; and while his terrestrial body is in constant sympathy with its parent earth, his astral soul lives in unison with the sidereal anima mundi. He is in it, as it is in him.¹¹

How endemic to modern astrology these ideas have since become is indicated by the following passage from the well known contemporary British Jungian psychoanalyst/ astrologer and author of many successful books, Liz Greene. According to her, such ideas are:

...familiar to all astrologers who have studied the antecedents of their art, because it is based on the law of signatures or correspondences. You can find this same perspective in many astrological texts of the

⁹Glenn Perry, “The New Paradigm and Postmodern Astrology,” in Glenn Perry Essays on Psychological Astrology: Theory and Practice (San Rafael CA: The Association for Astrological Psychology, 1997) p. 2.

¹⁰Thomas Moore, The Planets Within, p. 126.

¹¹Manly Palmer Hall, The Secret Teachings of all Ages, Seventeenth Edition (Los Angeles: The Philosophical Research Society, Inc., 1971) p. LXXIII.

20th century, because the schools of Theosophy, Rudolf Steiner, Alice Bailey et al. have retained the old Hermetic vision of reality. So the principle of Mars, for example, is not only a planet; it is also found in the earth as iron, and in the human body as the adrenal glands, and in the psyche as the aggressive instinct, and so on. Saturn is not only a planet, but also lead in the earth, and as the human skeletal system, and the impulse for self-protection. The sun can be found not only in the heavens but as gold in the earth, and as the human heart, and as the capacity to love. The vision of a unified cosmos with interconnections via a finite number of archetypal lines was fundamental...to the old Hermetic Tradition of alchemy and astrology, as well as to Theosophy.¹²

C.G. Jung, a former disciple of Sigmund Freud, took particular interest in the religious and occult traditions of both West and East. He lists the Hermetic notion of macro-microcosmic correspondence—found in the astrology and alchemy of ‘magi’ such as Agrippa and Ficino, as a forerunner of his idea of ‘synchronicity.’¹³ Jung has therefore also been widely studied and referred to by modern astrologers.

5.2. Karma and Reincarnation

The Hindu notion of karma is typically described as the law of cause and effect operating in all spheres of human existence. Furthermore, this karmic law regards human existence itself as the result of activities performed in previous existences. Belief in reincarnation is thus an inevitable corollary of belief in karma. The soul may therefore evolve over many lives. The metaphor of the small stream joining the big river and ultimately the ocean

¹²Liz Greene and Howard Sasportas, Dynamics of the Unconscious Seminars in Psychological Astrology, Vol. 2, York Beach, Maine: Samuel Weiser, Inc., 1988) p. 260.

¹³Carl Gustav Jung, “Synchronicity: An Acausal Connecting Principle,” in The Collected Works of C.G. Jung Volume 8: The Structure and Dynamics of the Psyche Second Edition, trans. R.F.C. Hull. Bollingen Series XX (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1967), p. 485.

(symbolizing the final merging with the Whole which is also described as 'enlightenment'), is often cited in this context. Blavatsky and the early Theosophists drew extensively on these Hindu and Buddhist philosophical and religious ideas, though the actual sources with respect to Buddhism are not necessarily identified. "The Buddhism of H.P. Blavatsky clearly indicates that it deals with a system of Buddhist teachings which - as a whole - is not found in any of the many schools of Buddhism, though the conclusion is warranted that HPB's Buddhism shows a certain relationship to the Yogacharya School of Buddhism."¹⁴

HPB describes karma in a number of ways, but her basic notion is that: "Karma is the unerring law which adjusts effect to cause, on the physical mental and spiritual planes of being."¹⁵ Theosophists believe that the effects of all actions and thoughts, good or bad, will inevitably be experienced in some form, sooner or later in the soul's development.¹⁶ In other words, the present life of an individual (in terms of experiences, moods and thoughts) is the result of the actions, moods and thoughts of former lives. This gives a new twist to the traditional Christian idea of retribution, since through karma we are in effect punished not for our sins

¹⁴H.J. Spierenburg, The Buddhism of H.P. Blavatsky (San Diego: Point Loma Pub., 1991), p. vii.

¹⁵H.P. Blavatsky, The Key to Theosophy (Adyar, Madras: The Theosophical Publishing House, 1995) p. 139. See also Blavatsky, Secret Doctrine II, p. 305ff.

¹⁶HPB's formulations and useages of terms such as karma or soul may not necessarily correspond to those found in Hindu or Buddhist texts. This is not only because of differences in language, and the plethora of schools within both Hinduism and Buddhism, but also due to her own interpretations (or those of her 'masters'). The following quotes may make this clearer: "This is not orthodox *esoteric* Buddhism. But it comes very near to our esoteric philosophy of "Buddhism" (Wisdom religion) taught by our Lord secretly to the elect Arhats." (Collective Writings X, p. 175). At the end of a discussion on 'Jiva,' she also writes: "My own inference is that all the difficulty here lies in the words, but that the idea is one." (Collective Writings, IV, p. 536). With respect to the term 'soul,' she explains that: "every learned Buddhist believes in the individual or divine Ego....Neither Buddha nor Christ ever wrote anything themselves, but both spoke in allegories and used 'dark sayings,' as all Initiates did..." (Key to Theosophy, p. 58). And also, "... After allowing the soul, when escaped from the pangs of personal life, a sufficient, aye a hundredfold compensation, Karma, with its army of skandhas, waits at the threshold of Devachan." (The Key to Theosophy, p. 87).

but by them. Retribution for past wrongs becomes automatic and also more personal, as are rewards for past good deeds and thoughts.

Western astrology was just beginning to absorb these Eastern ideas of karma and reincarnation around the turn of the twentieth century, largely as a result of Blavatsky's eclectic philosophy and the Movement she initiated. This will become even more clear when we discuss the influence of such early Theosophist/ astrologers as Alan Leo, and Charles E.O. Carter. As a result, the horoscope is now commonly looked upon as showing the results of past lives and actions, and the role of the astrological counsellor is to interpret what this means for the present life of a particular individual. Titles of modern astrological textbooks, as well as articles in astrological magazines, suggest that a majority of astrologers today is familiar with these notions, and takes the view that our present life or incarnation is determined not by 'fate' or 'chance' but by our karma, expressed through the planetary constellations at the time of birth. ¹⁷

Furthermore, as presented in this thesis, these concepts were spread largely through the influence of the T.S. Movement, whether by members themselves, or by those affiliated or strongly influenced by the T.S. Movement. As a result, more and more astrologers in the West no longer look at karma in terms of 'good' or 'bad' but in terms of the necessary experiences that a developing soul must undergo in the interest of spiritual growth. The so-called obstacles or problems experienced by an individual in particular areas and times of life—symbolized in the horoscope by certain planetary positions and activated by the current movement of the

¹⁷Any current catalogue of astrology books will include titles with the words 'karma' and 'reincarnation.' Examples include: Stephen Arroyo, Astrology, Karma and Reincarnation; Mary Devlin, Astrology and Past lives; Martin Schulman, Karmic Astrology (4 vols...), to name just a few.

planets— are thus regarded as opportunities, or as necessary challenges to be faced to achieve personal growth.¹⁸ However, it is up to the individual to confront or avoid the challenge.

According to the law of karma the soul is given the choice to progress or regress along the path of spiritual evolution. To the familiar criticism that astrology is 'fatalistic' HPB therefore counters that "it is only because that (sic) mankind has ever shut its eyes to the great truth that man is himself his own saviour as his own destroyer. That he need not accuse Heaven and the gods, Fates and Providence, of the apparent injustice that reigns in the midst of humanity."¹⁹ Thus we should not blame the planets in our birth chart, but rather accept responsibility for a life which we ultimately have created through our own action. She elaborates further in an important statement that fatalism:

implies a blind course of some still blinder power, and man is a free agent during his stay on earth. He cannot escape his *ruling* Destiny, but he has the choice of two paths that lead him in that direction, and he can reach the goal of misery... Those who believe in *Karma* have to believe in *destiny*, which from birth to death, every man is weaving... When the last strand is woven, and man is seemingly enwrapped in the network of his own doing, then he finds himself completely under the empire of his *self-made* destiny.²⁰

Karma thus also carries a positive connotation, and throws the responsibility back onto us, challenges us. This perspective has shifted Western astrology away from its traditional popular simplistic 'fatalism'. A problem is no longer viewed in a 'fatal manner,' as something to which one

¹⁸For a good discussion of this topic see Doris Hebel, Celestial Psychology, Introduction.

¹⁹Blavatsky, Secret Doctrine I p. 644.

²⁰Ibid, p. 639.

must be resigned, but as the prospect of a spiritual gain in the future. This attitude puts a different tone or perspective to any discussion on the question of 'free will versus fate' with which the astrologer is faced.

The increasing complexity of modern society also makes accurate prediction even more difficult. To predict a client's vocational possibilities is far more difficult today, for example, than it was a hundred years ago, when prediction of a person's work was even possible without astrology, for the larger part of society because choices were very limited. Today however, career choices are numerous and changing rapidly as technology advances. This complexity goes beyond the scope of even the most experienced astrological practitioners.

On the other hand, a 'fatalistic', deterministic view still prevails for example amongst the majority of Hindu astrologers, and the great mass of the population at large. Instead of the interpretative analytical approach practiced in the West today the Indian variety is still predominantly predictive in character. This is perhaps less surprising than it might appear at first sight. Indian society is still organized along the rigid functional lines of caste, justified by age-old religious sanctions and myths going back to the Vedas. Lack of education among the masses also serves to perpetuate superstition and a ritualistic pattern of life, conditions that are easily exploited by unscrupulous religious professionals. Vivekananda already labelled the popular Hinduism a hundred years ago as a 'religion of the kitchen,' to express his disgust at those for whom when or what to eat, or with whom, had assumed greater importance than the moral and spiritual values of life.

The result is that in India today, astrologers who practice according to the high standards of the Vedanta (the most philosophical of the Hindu schools) and who seem to have a superior knowledge at their disposal than most Western astrologers can provide, are relatively few and far between. More common is the kind of popular 'fatalistic' type of astrology in which, for example, the accurate prediction of a person's date of death is a source of pride and the hallmark of an astrologer's success. This of course is the very antithesis of what HPB is seeking in the professionalism of the astrological practitioner. She rather stresses that, "in astrology the stars do not cause our good or bad luck, but simply indicate the same."²¹ In other words, the horoscope does not reflect a fixed pattern. Birth in her view is the beginning of a dynamic process which could lead, with (astrological) guidance and awareness, to a fulfilling life. This idea is now accepted even in the West by astrologers who do not subscribe to the notion of karma.

While this 'karmic' perspective has become particularly common in Western judiciary astrology (personal or 'natal' astrology), it also serves as a useful explanatory hypothesis for mundane astrology (the branch of astrology that looks at the charts of nations). According to this view, which HPB also holds, individuals with a particular karma to work out in a particular life-time would 'choose' an incarnation in an environment (in terms of family circumstances, country, culture etc.) that offers them the necessary conditions for their further spiritual unfoldment.²²

As a result of these streams of thought, the concepts of karma and reincarnation have had a pervasive and profound influence on Western

²¹.Blavatsky, Collective Writings III, p. 192.

²².Blavatsky, The Key to Theosophy, p. 140.

astrology today, even as practised by non-Theosophists. They provide what many astrologers believe is the most satisfying explanation of the causes for the troublesome events of life, and hence the meaning and purpose behind them. This may not only influence the attitude taken towards the event itself, but may also lead to a radical change in perspective, and a different perception of reality altogether. This is important to the extent that *our perception of reality* is what ultimately guides our emotions and actions (as modern psychology now believes).

5.3. Planetary Cycles

The meaning and function of planetary cycles is the third major concept which, though always a principal tenet of Western astrology in general, became renewed and deepened through the influence of Eastern philosophy via Theosophy. Blavatsky leaves no doubt about her belief in the influence of the stars and their respective spiritual rulers, and in the importance of their cyclic motions to events on earth. She writes for example, :

It is true, on the other hand, that the exoteric cycles of every nation have been correctly made to derive from, and depend on, the sidereal motions. The latter are inseparably blended with the destinies of nations and men. But in their purely physical sense, Europe knows of no other cycles than the astronomical, and makes its computations accordingly.²³

Her ideas in this direction encouraged especially Rudhyar and his followers to look into the matter in a different way. They sought to investigate how these cycles could track the life of an individual as well as the course of a nation, and lead to more profound interpretations than might otherwise have

²³.Blavatsky, Secret Doctrine I, p. 645.

been possible.²⁴ The notion that the sky with its planets and stars may indicate the destiny of nations as well as human beings, is not really new as the interpretations made for the monarchies of old have revealed. But the old Hermetic view is dismissed by reductionist science as the Swiss astrologer Alexander Ruperti (a student of Dane Rudhyar) has noted:

The great stumbling-block to acceptance of the astrologer's use of astronomical cycles to interpret what is happening on earth and in human nature is the fact that astrology uses the planets' cycles as well as the day, month and year cycles. Scientists cannot understand how it is possible to relate planets to events in human lives because, for them, the planetary 'cause' and the 'human event effect' do not belong to the same order of phenomena.²⁵

HPB must largely be credited for re-emphasising the importance of the cyclic nature of time based on these planetary influences. Again, she took these ideas in large part from Hindu cosmogony, which has long subscribed to an elaborate system of cosmic cycles of greater and lesser significance and duration. But neither was she averse to drawing on research undertaken in her time in support of her ideas on the matter. A case in point is the findings of a Dr. E. Zasse that she felt "proves that in the history of all the peoples and empires of the Old World, the cycles marking the millennium, the centennials as well as the minor ones of 50 and 10 years' duration, are the most important to bring in its rear some more some less marked event in the history of the nation swept over by these historical waves."²⁶ On a

²⁴ An interesting dissertation by Janice Paff-Santoro has been written which deals with this subject, since she relates Rudhyar's theories of planetary cycles and their importance to human life, to the psychological life-cycle theories of Erikson and Jung. An Exploration of the Correspondence... 1984.

²⁵ Alexander Ruperti, Cycles of Becoming: the planetary pattern of growth (Reno, Nevada: CRCS Publications, 1978) p. 3.

²⁶ Blavatsky, Collective Writings II, p. 424. The original article on Zasse appeared in The Theosophist of July 1880.

galactic level she believes the world is subject to the influence of the Hindu cycles known as yugas, mahayugas and manvantaras (infra-red space photography has recently revealed that our galaxy is actually moving in a spiral). The esoteric astrology of the ancients, as HPB sees it, could still provide the key to interpret the timing of these cycles.

The great conjunctions of the so called 'outer planets' (Uranus, Neptune, Pluto), as well as Jupiter and Saturn, are further sub-divisions of these larger cycles which have been observed throughout history. Today's interpretations are largely based upon such observations.²⁷

The influence of HPB's teachings thus resulted in a deeper understanding among astrologers of the so called, 'outer planets' (those beyond Saturn) which have much larger cycles than the 'personal planets'²⁸. Astrologers studying these teachings believed they were thereby enabled to better interpret the workings of the universe as it effects us. Dane Rudhyar was especially attuned to the galactic dimension of the cosmos and its potential for a kind of *transpersonal Astrology* which would expand the present concept of astrology. He writes for example:

If as students of astrology we attempt to discover the basic rhythm structuring the periodical transformations of human societies and civilization, which in turn reflect as well as concretize fundamental changes in the consciousness of the vanguard of mankind, we have to look for such a rhythm first of all in the periodical motions of the slower and most distant planets, Uranus, Neptune and Pluto. These

²⁷. See Dane Rudhyar, Astrological Timing: the transition to the New Age (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1969); Rudhyar, The Galactic Dimension of Astrology (New York: ASI Publishers, 1975); Steve Cozzi, Generations and the Outer Planets Cycles (Tempe AZ: American Federation of Astrologers, 1986); Sepharial, Transits and Planetary Periods (New York: Samuel Weiser, 1976).

²⁸. Uranus (discovered in 1781) has a cycle of 84 years; Neptune (discovered in 1846) has a cycle of 164 years and Pluto (discovered in 1930) has a cycle of approximately 248 years.

planets have been related in the preceding chapter to the crucial transformation of human living conditions and social-cultural values during the last centuries.²⁹

Rudhyar has undertaken extensive research on the cyclic influences of the outer planets; for example he relates the relatively rare conjunctions of Neptune and Pluto to the dawning of important turning points in history. Thus, he associates for example the most recent conjunction which occurred in 1891-92 "with the discovery of X-rays, radioactivity, the quantum, and Einstein's famous formula reducing matter to energy, and making of light the soul of space."³⁰

In addition to being harbingers of social change, the outer planetary cycles are also significant indicators of the archetypal contents of the individual psyche. As such they are the triggers to 'human cycles of unfoldment,' and testify to the correspondence between the human 'microcosm' and the 'galactic dimension' of the Universe (the 'macrocosm').³¹ In this sense, they represent forces manifesting within each individual on an instinctual or archetypal level, which may also give rise to the 'mass psychology' of collective movements. These forces manifest for example as trends in fashion, music, architecture, or the economy to name just a few. Liz Greene also notes in this context that the word 'generation' is used colloquially in a very loose manner. But a closer look suggests there is more to this term than a temporal category for a particular segment of the population.

²⁹ Rudhyar, Astrological Timing: the transition to the new age (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1969) p. 48.

³⁰ Rudhyar, The Galactic Dimension of Astrology, p. 116-137. Other astrologers have built upon his approach. See the series by Robert D. Doolard "The Pluto-Neptune—Cycles," in The Astrological Journal, January 1990 through February 1991.

³¹ Rudhyar, Occult preparation for a New Age, p. 111.

The age difference between an individual and his parents can vary enormously, because there are women who bear children at fifteen and men who father children at seventy. There is no clear biological demarcation for what constitutes a generation. But there is a clear line of basic attitudes which stamp a seven-year group who all have Uranus in a certain sign, and a fourteen-year group who all have Neptune in a certain sign, and an eighteen-to thirty-year group who all have Pluto in a certain sign. So you have a collective of people who all respond to a particular myth or pattern embodied by the outer planet.³²

The implication is that a generation defined by the sign position in the zodiac of the outer planets may open a new door for interpreting societal events that happen to one group or another. For example, response to a certain planetary position may manifest in a war fought by a particular group of people; or in a new law passed to drop drafting men of a certain age into the army, rather than another. Equally, a new school regimen may be introduced, or even a natural disaster may occur such as an earthquake, drought or flood, having a particular effect only on the lives of a certain group of people. These possible events are interpreted by the astrologer according to the symbolism of the signs and position of the planets.

In summary, Theosophists subscribe to the existence of a universal law of justice based on the perspective of a constantly-recurring cyclic time. In Hinduism this law is based on the Vedic 'rta' or cosmic order.³³ It is immanent in all creation and governs the universe and the Hindu cosmic cycles (from the larger kalpas, manvantaras, yugas etc. down to our

³²Liz Greene, The Outer Planets & their Cycles: the Astrology of the Collective (Reno, Nevada: CRCS Publications, 1983) pp. 13-14.

³³For further information on this see John McKenzie, Hindu Ethics (New Delhi: Oriental Books Reprint Corporation, Second Edition, 1971).

planetary cycles)³⁴. These ideas were adopted and adapted by HPB in The Secret Doctrine. Certain astrological groups since the turn of the century have incorporated these ideas into an astrological system with deeper meaning. Rudhyar, in particular, later conducted extensive investigations into the historical and personal influences of such cycles.³⁵

Theosophy and Western astrology have both acknowledged further subdivisions of our planetary system to reveal the cyclic influence of the so called 'personal planets'— Mars, Venus, Mercury, and the Moon. Of these, Mars has the longest cycle (roughly 1 3/4 years) and the Moon the shortest (28 days).³⁶ HPB for example, relates her *Seven Root Races* to the energies of different personal planets and planes of experience. The first Root Race was supposedly born under the influence of the Sun, the second under that of Jupiter, the third under Venus etc.³⁷

5.4. HPB's psychological Emphasis

The fourth major influence of Theosophy on the practice of astrology today is HPB's insistence on an alliance with psychology. She required the qualified astrologer to be not only a philosopher and occultist, but also a psychologist.³⁸ Of course HPB disagreed vehemently with the direction psychology was taking in her own time. "Soul, the Self, or Ego, is studied by modern psychology as inductively as a piece of decayed matter by a

³⁴.Mircea Eliade, Cosmos and History, 1959, Hindu cosmic cycles are explained in detail in the section of chapter 3 entitled: "Cosmic Cycles and History."

³⁵.His disciple Ruperti explains a cycle "as a structured sequence of phases in the development of some life process; most people think of a cycle simply as a repetitive eternal return to the same starting point. If a cycle is reduced to a closed circle of repetitive events, it cannot have the creative, evolutionary meaning..." See Ruperti, Cycles of Becoming, p. 2.

³⁶.See again Ruperti, Cycles of Becoming.

³⁷.Blavatsky, Secret Doctrine II p. 29.

³⁸.Blavatsky, Collected Writings III p. 192.

physicist.” she rails.³⁹ And she feared that great harm could arise as a result.

HPB's idea of psychology and psychotherapy was that of 'therapy for the soul' and derives, once again, from her interpretation of the philosophies of Advaita Vedanta and Buddhism. These philosophies deal in great detail with the mechanism of the human psyche. Their (Sanskrit) vocabulary of terms for mental states and functions is perhaps even more comprehensive than that of the Western psychology of our own day, and has since penetrated our own vocabulary to some degree.

Therapy for the soul, as spread by the T.S., was soon familiar to many people interested in the subject and was further explored through the work of the Society for Psychical Research (SPR) in England. Despite the damage done by the Hodgson Report, the SPR was closely affiliated with the T.S. from its beginning, and many of its prominent members were also members of the T.S. (or had been at one time or another).⁴⁰ In the second half of the 19th century and at the turn of the 20th century psychology still served as a link between science and religion. Prominent psychical researchers still held high offices e.g. in the Royal Society, despite some opposition to their research.

The emerging interest in the psyche during the course of the 19th century, and particularly the advancements made by Freud in the field of psychoanalysis, helped formulate and publicize these findings. HPB herself would no doubt have discarded Freud's definition of the unconscious as being based on physiology, since his:

³⁹.Blavatsky, Collected Writings VIII p. 333.

⁴⁰.See Janet Oppenheim, The Other World (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), Part II, 5.

narrow definition of the unconscious did not include telepathy, extra-sensory perception, and other such occult phenomena that would later be studied by transpersonal psychologists....Western psychology had established one of its fundamental concepts, the unconscious, by taking it out of context from the occult. Forgotten were the numerous manuscripts by theosophists, alchemists, rosicrucians, and mystics on this subject.⁴¹

However, Theosophy as well as Western astrology and psychology have since accepted the psychological theories of Carl G. Jung who expanded upon the ideas of Freud and endowed them with a deeper spiritual meaning. Articles on the psychology of Jung began appearing in the American Theosophist as early as 1945. Lectures on Jungian psychology and its relation to Theosophy are often given at Theosophical Lodges.⁴²

Theosophical teachings have not only been a major inspiration to the 'New Age' movement, as Melton has explored, it has also inspired various new forms of psychotherapy, such as Maslow's '*Humanistic Psychology*' or Assagioli's '*Psychosynthesis*', which would qualify to be called a 'therapy for the soul', and a means of spiritual development in the way HPB would have wished.⁴³

Since the turn of the century psychology has increasingly worked its way into astrology and is now one of its most formative influences. It has helped re-orient the goals of modern astrology and re-structure the methods of conveying astrological information to clients. Planets, aspects and signs of the Zodiac are no longer looked upon as good or bad (malefic or

⁴¹Carl Hurwitz, Toward the Development of a Theosophically based Psychotherapy p. 28.

⁴²Examples include: Charles A. Berst, "Theosophy and the Psychology of Jung," American Theosophy, Vol. 33, April, 1945, p. 80, and May 1945 p. 109. Laurence J. Bendit, "A Modern School of Gnosticism," American Theosophist Vol. 40, September 1952, p. 177..

⁴³Roberto Assagioli, was influenced by Alice Bailey.

benefic). Predicting death is no longer the preoccupation that it was back in the 19th century and before. This change in perspective is nowhere more evident than in the many books available in book stores today, advertising astrology as a tool for better self-understanding. The combination of psychology with this new brand of astrology has since become a very refined tool for character-analyses. Increasing numbers of psychologists are familiarizing themselves with astrology and benefitting both themselves, their practices and their clients.⁴⁴ Today, since astrology has once again become more fashionable, people may consult an astrologer out of general interest, curiosity or as a result of a birthday gift. However, most people seek out an astrologer only as a last resort, after having explored all other means (e.g. a marriage counselor, their bank manager, their colleagues etc.) of resolving their problems. But they may give more or less weight and significance to what the astrologer says, and may interpret what he says in quite different ways.

In sum, we have outlined the four major components of the Theosophical world view which have revitalized astrology in the 20th century and given it a new perspective. As incorporated into astrology today these main themes can be traced to the writings of HPB herself, which constitute the metaphysical bedrock of modern Theosophy as well as later Theosophists, i.e. Leadbeater, Besant or Judge.

We do not suggest that the T.S.Movement alone has been responsible for this rise of interest in astrology since the turn of the century. Psychology, in particular the psychotherapeutic theories of Carl G. Jung, R. Assagioli, A. Maslow and other humanistic and transpersonal psychologists, have also

⁴⁴See Bill Herbst, "Astrology and Psychotherapy," The Mountain Astrologer, April/ May 1991, p. 41.

significantly influenced the practice of astrology since World War II. These changes were further accelerated during in the 1960's and 70's. Our position however is that the impetus for many of the changes in the relationship between astrology and psychology owed much to the new philosophical thrust provided by the ideas of HPB. These ideas were transmitted to modern astrology through the Society she founded (see chapter 6-7), and the subsequent activities of prominent Theosophist/astrologers who followed her ideas, such as those we have selected as representatives of this revival of astrology for this thesis (see chapter 8).

We will now show in chapter 6 how the multi-faceted organization of the T.S.Movement and some of HPB's more prominent colleagues viewed astrology or helped to spread its ideas.

6. THEOSOPHICAL VIEWS AND ATTITUDES TOWARDS ASTROLOGY

Since astrology appeared in the writings of HPB as part of ancient lore it was more or less accepted by most prominent Theosophists (we will name a few), though not necessarily embraced wholeheartedly. The mixed opinions and prejudices about astrology which we find in the general population in the West (mostly among the adherents of a materialistic science)¹, also extended to the ranks of Theosophists, and has led to frequent tensions within the T.S., despite HPB's obvious endorsement of astrology.²

In the course of research on this subject, the present writer had discussions with a number of Theosophist/astrologers as well as non-astrologers. Most of them, but especially those involved in deeper studies of Theosophy—because of their work in Theosophical libraries or archives for example, exhibit a general acceptance and appreciation of astrology. But there is a tendency to be somewhat critical of what they call 'New Age astrologers', who seek only to market astrology.

Theosophists who were negative or ambivalent in their comments about astrology were usually among those who had had a negative experience with an astrologer in the past. Others had either not investigated it or had no knowledge of HPB's endorsement of astrology in The Secret Doctrine.

¹ Belief in astrology for the large group of Indian Theosophists is not in question since it is part of their ancient spiritual heritage.

² Nick Campion reminded participants of this problem in a lecture to the Theosophical History Conference in July 1995. Cf. Nick Campion, Astrology Quarterly, Vol. 65, No. 4, Autumn 1995, p. 6. He also remarked to the writer that certain Theosophists may have looked down on astrologers as 'Fortune Tellers.'

This ambivalence was no doubt what prompted a symposium held by members of the T.S. in London in 1912 on the question “Should Astrology be studied as an independent science, and kept apart from all Theosophical interpretations?”³ The presentations offer a representative sample of both sides of the debate, delineating the pros and cons of astrology within the T.S. The final resolution of this question at this symposium must have been in the affirmative, since it was shortly thereafter that an *Astrological Lodge* was created within the T.S. We will explore the history of this Lodge in chapter 7.

6.1. Astrology in Theosophical Journals

The founding of the London *Astrological Lodge* however did not settle the controversy in other parts of the Society, as indicated by articles in Theosophical magazines, including The Theosophist, the official magazine of the Adyar T.S. For example, in an article in the November 1939 issue of The Theosophist a Theosophist/astrologer complains that not enough attention is paid to astrology within the Theosophical teachings. To this the then president G.S.Arundale replied: “As a matter of fact there are very many astrologically-minded members of our Society, and there are Lodges which specifically concentrate upon the astrological aspect of Theosophy, as for example the St.Louis Lodge, U.S.A.”.(we return to the subject of this Lodge in chapter 7).

The Path, a magazine founded in America in the late 1880's under the leadership of W.Q. Judge, and later renamed The Theosophical Path, also became a forum for controversy and debate on the subject of astrology.

³.See Esoteric or Exoteric? A Symposium. Being Transaction No. 1 of The Astrological Society (London: L.N. Fowler & Co., 1912), p. 2.

Later, in the Fifties, an astrologer writing in the magazine Theosophia, laments that:

Many Theosophical students are opposed to the practice of astrology. One earnest member of a study group said to an advocate of the divine science, 'Wouldn't it be better to devote all your effort to Theosophy?... Thus cornered by his well-meaning friends and fellow students, the least of the *kasdim* answered, 'Astrology can be no more separated from Theosophy than can geometry, algebra or calculus be set aside as not being part of the body of mathematics.'⁴

This exchange of views lends support to Leslie Price's earlier observation that many Theosophists under the reign of Besant did not advance to a reading of HPB's writings. However, that this controversy is still alive today is indicated by a letter to The Quest magazine (a relatively recent magazine published by the American T.S.) of autumn 1993. Here Jane Evans, a Theosophist/ astrologer, writes: "To my way of thinking astrology *proved* the Theosophical precepts, lifting them out of the realm of belief or a system of abstract thought.... It isn't only certain scientists who are opposed to astrology (as Mr. Tarnas pointed out) but some leading Theosophists as well."⁵

But despite the fact that not all Theosophists of the past or present were as favourably disposed to astrology as was HPB, or were even antagonistic towards it, this has not prevented articles on astrology from being published in Theosophical journals, or books on astrology being printed and sold by the Theosophical Publishing Houses. In fact a computer searchable index to The Theosophist, (made possible through the efforts of

⁴E. Hoffmann Price, "Astrology a Key to Theosophy," Theosophia, Vol. XIII, No. 3, Winter 1956/57, p. 14,

⁵Jane Evans, The Quest, Autumn 1993, p. 5.

a dedicated Australian Theosophist).⁶ reveals that articles on astrology have appeared in it quite frequently since its inception in 1880. However a decline in the number of articles on this topic appears to have occurred since 1980.

The American Theosophist, the journal of the American T.S. affiliated with Adyar, has also featured many articles on astrology since it was first published in 1912. In fact the November 1978 issue of this magazine was devoted entirely to astrology, featuring articles by Rudhyar and Sepharial, among others.

Thus Theosophist/astrologers have continued to voice their ideas on astrology in the various Theosophical journals; and articles in these publications have certainly helped to bring astrology to the attention of their readers, and possibly also to their friends.

6.2. Astrology in the View of Prominent Theosophists

This section reviews some of the attitudes and opinions with regard to astrology of a number of the more prominent leaders of the Theosophical Movement in the past.

Their views are considered important to the extent that:

1. they were influential within the movement;
2. they were all authors of books, some of them being extremely prolific, and their books were also read beyond the Theosophical community;
3. they were leaders in their particular group of Theosophists and their point of views were taken seriously;

⁶Mr. Gladney Oakley (Morisset, New South Wales, Australia).

4. some of them even became founders of new groups, such as Steiner for *Anthroposophy*, or Bailey for the *Arcane School*. Thus the radius of their influence can be assumed to be extensive, particularly since most of their books are still in print.

C.H.Olcott

The ambivalence within the T.S. Movement with regard to astrology may perhaps be explained to some extent, if we consider the positions held by the two main founders of the T.S. On one hand we have HPB, a strong advocate of astrology on the evidence we have. On the other hand, we find Olcott, her closest ally, as being quite ambivalent but open minded about astrology, although convinced of the existence of psychic phenomena, many of which he had witnessed in HPB's presence. He had even been accused by HPB of having an 'ardent and gushing imagination' as she states in a letter to Franz Hartmann.⁷ In his Old Diary Leaves, Olcott describes having visited a place where a Brahmin in India had impressed him by reading astrologically from old palm leaves about his own past, and that of the T.S., as well as about the future. Then he discusses the issue of astrology:

The question, so often put me as to my belief in astrology, will naturally recur in this connection. I must answer it as I always have, that I have not yet had evidence enough to warrant my saying I either believe or disbelieve. Many facts in the experience of others, some in my own, go towards proving the truth of this alleged science, yet not enough for a cautious man to base thereon a positive belief. I am waiting, most ready to be convinced, yet determined not to say I am unless I have a good case to go with to the jury of sensible men. Who is to say that when I sat with that Telugu astrologer, he may not

⁷Johnson, The Masters Revealed p. 9.

have clairvoyantly read my history and traced out his sequel in my own mind or my aura?⁸

The prognostication about Olcott's death by this same Brahmin, as put at September, 9th, 1913, was obviously wrong, since Olcott died in February 1907. This incident, however, does not disprove astrology, but it shows the tendency among Indian astrologers to be more 'fatalistic' and often too bold in their forecasts, though he was correct with most other predictions. But Olcott believed in psychic phenomena and supernormal events and wanted to give astrology, Hindu and Western, a chance to prove itself. He felt confident that Sepharial, Alan Leo, and other London-based Theosophist/ astrologers, were fully equipped to defend astrology.⁹ While Sepharial was in Adyar, Olcott opened a 'Bureau of Astrological Research', where people could send in their questions to be answered at no charge by Sepharial and another Hindu astrologer.¹⁰ The project may have ended with Sepharial's return to London since no further mention of it is to be found.

Thus the matter was never resolved for the T.S. in any definitive way, and the ambivalence towards astrology, was to remain within the organization as already illustrated through the journals, will be further shown in the attitudes and opinions of other prominent leaders of the movement.

W.Q. Judge

W.Q. Judge, one of the founders of the T.S. and HPB's closest associate in North America during her final stay in London, acknowledges the importance of the doctrine of cycles to the whole Theosophical system in

⁸H. S. Olcott, Old Diary Leaves, Vol. 3, p. 251.

⁹H. S. Olcott, Old Diary Leaves, Vol. 5, p. 462.

¹⁰See announcement in The Theosophist, Vol. XIV, September, 1893, p. 749,

his book The Ocean of Theosophy. In chapter 14 he expounds upon his cyclic theory, pointing out that: "Affecting man especially are the spiritual, psychic, and moral cycles and out of these grow the national, racial, and individual cycles. Race and national cycles are both historical. The individual cycles are of reincarnation, of sensation, and of impression". He goes on to talk about the importance of the zodiac and its use by ancient peoples.

However, as time went on, Judge seems to have become more ambivalent about the astrology practiced in his time, siding with HPB that contemporary astrology had lost much of its original knowledge. He initially had very good experiences with astrology, as is evident from an article entitled "Astrology Verified," written in April 1882. He had consulted a medical practitioner who also practiced horary astrology. He writes:

I consulted him many times ... and cannot remember a case in which he made a wrong answer. His mind was peculiarly fitted to give a sound reply to any question astrologically put, and it was with sincere sorrow that I heard of his death...These experiences lead me to the conclusion that Horary Astrology is a correct mode of divination.... If Astrology will relieve one at any crisis from anxiety, is it not well to foster its pursuit and spread its fame?¹¹

Twelve years later however, in a short article of 1894 entitled "Dirful Prophecies," [sic], he denounces the prognostications of astrologers about mundane affairs. He writes:

They agree with H.P.B., who said that her eastern friends told her of coming cyclic changes now very near at hand. Beyond doubt there is

¹¹W.Q. Judge, "Astrology Verified," The Theosophist, April, 1882, p. 21ff.

some truth in all these sayings, although here and there astrologers definitely prognosticating are not supported by fact. ... Theosophists too often occupy themselves with these woful [sic] lookings into the future, to the detriment of their present work. They should try to discover the fine line of duty and endeavor, leaving the astrologers of today, who are more at sea than any other mystics, to con over a zodiac that is out of place and calculate with tables which delude.¹²

These two passages are somewhat contradictory. Judge never goes into detail about astrology after the manner of HPB but acknowledges its value for understanding the evolution of mankind and personal development, as reflected in his theory of cycles. He also appears to criticize the Ptolemaic system here (which uses the tropical rather than the sidereal zodiac) for being "out of place".

Dr. Franz Hartmann

Hartmann, head of the German branch of the T.S. for a short period who knew HPB quite well and who had also stayed at Adyar (India) in those early years, may have had his first experience with astrology there.¹³ He later became more intimately acquainted with astrology as noted in his book, Denkwürdige Erinnerungen, (1898). He read Agrippa (one of HPB's sources), and wrote on the practical applications of astrology in a book entitled The Principles of Astrological Geomancy (published in 1889). This subject also has recently returned to favour.¹⁴

¹²W.Q. Judge, "Dirful Prophecies," The Path March, 1894.

¹³In a letter to The Theosophist, Vol. XVI, No. 6, March, 1895, p. 400, Hartmann relates an experience with an Indian astrologer in Adyar.

¹⁴Geomancy is a form of divination through figures and shapes, originating in Arabia. Since the Renaissance it has also been used in connection with astrology. See Priscilla Schwei and Ralph Pestka, The Complete Book of Astrological Geomancy (St. Paul, Minn.: The Llewellyn New Times, 1990).

Alfred Percy Sinnett

Sinnett made the acquaintance of HPB and Olcott soon after their arrival in India, where he worked for the British Government. He witnessed countless performances of HPB's psychic powers, and their friendship had considerable impact on his life. He is cautious in his judgement about astrology. He talks of the 'astrological mystery' of being unable to explain how astrology works in producing accurate results, especially in horary astrology. He does not condemn contemporary astrology as a whole, but bemoans the fact that "we have lost touch with the finer details of the astrological art as practiced by the scientists of the ancient world" ¹⁵

Alan Leo

The Theosophist and astrologer Alan Leo is the key figure in the degree to which he was able to enrich astrology with Theosophical ideas. He is one of four astrologers whose life and impact are detailed in chapter 8. We include him briefly here since he found himself—as both a Theosophist and an astrologer, in the unenviable position of having to fend off the hostilities of those in either camp who disliked any thought of an integration or alliance between the two disciplines. On the one hand were those Theosophists who regarded astrology as popular fortune telling. They were either hostile to astrology or regarded the extant version as debased. On the other were astrologers hostile to the "Theosophical trend" of Leo, or fellow Theosophist/ astrologers bent on undermining Leo's efforts in this direction.

¹⁵ A.P. Sinnett, Nature's Mysteries and how Theosophy illumines them (London: The Theosophical Publishing Society, 1901) p. 66.

In defending his astrology against fellow Theosophists who looked on contemporary astrology as “debased,” Leo drew a sharp distinction between the vulgar forms of astrology practiced at the time and the revitalizing efforts of those like himself whom he calls *Theosophical astrologers*. He uses extensive quotations from The Secret Doctrine to argue that HPB herself made such a distinction, and freely admits that he is “very sensitive when I find Theosophists making the most of every opportunity to throw cold water on the efforts made by astrological students to work *within* the Theosophical movement.”¹⁶ Furthermore, he complains that:

It will, I am sure, surprise many Theosophists to know that I have suffered more at their hands from misunderstanding than I have from those who know nothing whatever of Theosophy; and more especially from those Theosophists who think that Theosophy is an exclusive study consisting of holiness and devotion only.¹⁷

However, Leo was also criticized by his fellow astrologers. Non-Theosophical astrologers were against him, “for interpreting Astrology in terms of Theosophy, giving it thereby a wider meaning than certain of its exponents are prepared to consider justifiable.”¹⁸ But he also had to contend with opposition from Theosophist/ astrologers. Thus he complains that: “some of the ‘Theosophical’ astrologers themselves have deliberately added to the burden, and some day it may be necessary to name those who have not only done everything possible to prevent the work from becoming publicly known, but have also gone out of their way to try and ruin it.”¹⁹

¹⁶ Alan Leo, “Astrology and the Occult Arts,” Modern Astrology, Vol. XI, No. 2, March 1914, p. 116.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 116.

¹⁸ Ralph Shirley, “Modern Astrology,” Modern Astrology (Leo Memorial Number), Vol. XIV, December 1917, p. 355.

¹⁹ Alan Leo, “The Theosophical Trend,” Modern Astrology, Vol. VII, No. 5, May 1910, p. 178.

New ideas in any field provoke resistance and resentment from those whose interests or beliefs are threatened by them. And the field of astrology is no exception. since there are: "...doubtless many to whom Astrology makes its appeal quite apart from any general solution of the problem of life, and by these the idea that Mr. Leo associated it with a school of thought with which they had no sympathy was perhaps not unnaturally resented".²⁰

Alice A. Bailey

Alice A. Bailey was a long time Theosophist who founded her own spiritual organizations, the *Arcane School*, the Lucis Trust and the Lucis Publishing Company. She probably became acquainted with astrology through the writings of HPB whom she always held in high esteem despite her and her husband's quarrels with the politics of the T.S. in the post -HPB era and their distancing from it (although she still remained nominally a Theosophist for a considerable time). In 1951 she published a book entitled Esoteric Astrology, which has since inspired a variety of astrologers.²¹ For example Alan Oken, a popular contemporary astrologer, wrote Soul centered Astrology, a book which weaves in a number of Bailey's ideas (such as the theory of the Seven Rays). But less known astrological writers have also turned to her for inspiration.²² In fact, her books on esoteric philosophy and astrology have inspired a considerable and growing following for what has since come to be known as *Esoteric Astrology*.

²⁰.Shirley, "Modern Astrology," p. 356.

²¹.Bailey claims that most of her books are channeled, some through the same masters that HPB claimed contact with. In fact, she does not consider most of her books to be her own creations, and never claimed to know much about astrology.

²².See for example Stephen D. Pugh, The Astrological Key to the Secret Doctrine (Montreal: Immedia, 1994). Pugh is a Montréal author who relies heavily on Bailey. Also see Robert R. Leichtman, M.D. Japikse and Carl Japikse, Forces of the Zodiac: companion of the Soul (Ariel Press, 1985).

Their mouthpiece is the The Journal of Esoteric Psychology which regularly carries articles related to Bailey and esoteric astrology.

During frequent lecture tours to Ascona, Switzerland in the 1920's and early 30's, Bailey also met and influenced Roberto Assagioli, the founder of *Psychosynthesis* (a form of psychotherapy). He, in turn, influenced the founders of the popular Swiss Astrological School of Bruno and Louise Huber.²³ Their books are currently popular in both Europe and North America.

Rudolf Steiner

Rudolf Steiner was a former German Theosophist who left the T.S. to create the *Anthroposophical Society*. This organization also appears to have opened peoples' minds to astrological issues. *Anthroposophy* incorporates the Theosophical teachings with a strong admixture of Christianity and Rosicrucianism.²⁴ The Society has a substantial membership with branches the world over, and is famous for its alternative Waldorf School system (*Waldorf Schulen*). Steiner was extremely prolific and several of his books elaborate on the qualities of the planets, the meaning of the zodiac, and the spiritual hierarchies of planetary rulership.²⁵

²³ Sir John R. Sinclair: The Alice Bailey Inheritance (Turnstone Press: Thorsons Publishing Group, 1984).

²⁴ Max Heindel, an early disciple of Rudolf Steiner, later founded his own *Rosicrucian Fellowship* in California. The *Fellowship* had a strong emphasis on Astrology and thus became an additional force behind the spread of astrology in North America.

²⁵ Cf. Rudolf Steiner, The Spiritual Hierarchies and their Reflection in the Physical World, Zodiac, Planets, Cosmos, based on lectures held in 1909 (New York: Anthroposophic Press, 1970); Steiner, Occult Signs & Symbols, four lectures given in Stuttgart, September 13-16, 1907. (New York: Anthroposophic Press, 1972); Steiner, Man in the Light of Occultism, Theosophy and Philosophy, ten lectures given in Oslo, June 1912 (London & New York: Rudolf Steiner Publishing Co., 1945).

While Steiner did not write on personal astrology it can be assumed that he accepted it, since he included Theosophical theories about the nature of astronomy/ astrology in his writings. Further support for his acceptance of astrology is lent through the high esteem in which he held the poet Johann Wolfgang von Goethe throughout his life. Goethe's familiarity and belief in astrology must have been known to him since he wrote his doctoral thesis on the famous German writer.²⁶ He went as far as to name the main Anthroposophical center in Dornach, Switzerland, the *Goetheanum*.

A small anecdotal example of how astrology has spread through the writings of Steiner and the Anthroposophical Society, which may not be so atypical, may be mentioned in this connection. The present writer's husband learned of astrology in his youth through an uncle who was an Anthroposophist. His son became also an Anthroposophist and inherited his father's knowledge of astrology. He served for a time as manager of *Watkins Bookstore*, a major esoteric bookstore in London that, in former times, used to be frequented by HPB herself.

Annie Besant

Besant's work as president of the T.S. was focussed more on social, spiritual and organizational issues. It cannot therefore be said that astrology took up much of her attention. As her mentor, HPB nevertheless impressed upon her that the course of cosmic, terrestrial and human evolution was controlled and guided by planetary forces.

²⁶ See Emil Saenger, Goethe und das Weltbild der Astrologie (Berlin: R. von Decker's Verlag, G. Schenck, 1932).

The following passage from her book, Evolution and Occultism will illustrate the extent to which she follows HPB's ideas on the subject of astrology. She writes:

Let us look for a moment on the rough plan of the whole. Let me put as though it were a great drama written by a divine pen. ...ideas written, as it were, in the heaven; for it is suggested in very ancient thought that what we call the signs of the zodiac have a definite connection with the course of human affairs. Of that, in the broad outline, there is no doubt in the minds of any who penetrated somewhat the veil. The importance of these starry influences cannot be over-estimated; for inasmuch as human beings are related in the composition of their physical and other subtler bodies to the worlds among which they move in space, there must be magnetic relations existing between them and the system of which they form a part, and at certain epoches in the history of evolution there will be one or another dominating influence present in the atmosphere in which men think and act, and they can no more escape that influence than their bodies can escape the influence of the far-of sun...²⁷

In her work The Inner Government of the World; she attributes astrology to the Venetian Master, Head of the Third Ray "to know the exact time to do or not to do things."²⁸ Besant thus did acknowledge the value and validity of astrology and, according to testimony from older Theosophists at Adyar, sought out astrological advice before taking difficult decisions. She even made an effort to study Hindu astrology under the influence of the famous British astrologer Alan Leo, but found it too casuistic and mystifying.²⁹

²⁷ Annie Besant, Evolution and Occultism, Vol. 3 in the series Essays and Addresses (London: The Theosophical Publishing Society, 1913) p. 241.

²⁸ Josephine Ransom (comp.), A short History of the Theosophical Society (Adyar [Madras]: Theosophical Publishing House, 1938) p. 51.

²⁹ See Bepin Behari, Fundamentals of Vedic Astrology (Salt Lake City: Passage Press, 1992), p. 22.

C.W.Leadbeater

Leadbeater was a long standing Theosophist who later became Besant's close associate, and exerted considerable influence over her (to the disenchantment of many Theosophists). He was considered the "Power behind the throne."³⁰ Santucci argues that Leadbeater may actually have introduced more individuals "into the world of the occult through his numerous books than any other writer on this subject."³¹ His many books are published through the Theosophical Publishing House. In many of Leadbeater's writings he was supposedly guided by his psychic vision, some of it more clear than others.

Astrological references are scarce in his writings though as the following passage suggests, his views on the subject are basically positive, but cautious. He writes:

The more we contemplate the matter the less does it seem rational or possible to suppose that the planets can affect the earth or its inhabitants to any appreciable extent; yet the fact remains that a theory based upon this apparent impossibility often works out accurately. Perhaps the explanation may be found along the line that just as the movement of the hands of a clock shows the passage of time, though it does not cause it, so the motions of the planets indicate the prevalence of certain influences, but are in no way responsible for them.³²

Thus he agrees with HPB in that the stars do not cause our good or bad luck, but simply indicate the same. His conviction with respect to astrology

³⁰Anonymous, The Theosophical Movement 1875-1925 (New York: E. P. Dutton & Company, c1925), p. 686.

³¹James Santucci, Theosophy and the Theosophical Society (London: Theosophical History Centre, 1985) p. 9.

³²C.W. Leadbeater, The Hidden Side of Things (Wheaton, IL: Theosophical Publishing House, 1962) p. 301.

also follows the line of the old saying that the wise man rules his stars, the fool obeys them.³³

Katherine Tingley

Tingley followed W.Q. Judge as leader of the Point Loma Group. She seems to have been somewhat antagonistic toward astrology and other occult disciplines, even though she herself came to power by displaying her psychic powers.³⁴

Dr. Gottfried de Purucker

Purucker succeeded Katherine Tingley at Point Loma. He was as prolific as Leadbeater and had his many ideas published via a Theosophical Publishing Company. He respects ancient astrology, regarding it as a great and noble science and part of the ancient Mysteries. But his view on modern astrology is more critical. He sees in it only a mere shadow of its ancient glory ³⁵

³³.Ibid, p. 235.

³⁴.Emmett A. Greenwalt, California Utopia, Point Loma: 1897-1942 (Berkeley: University of California Press, Second Revised Edition, 1978) pp. 55 and 78.

³⁵.G.de Purucker, Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy (Covina CA: Theosophical University Press, 1947), p. 487; See also his Occult Glossary (Pasadena CA: Theosophical University Press, 1972), p. 10.

7. ASTROLOGY AND THE THEOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT

We pass now from the different views on astrology by prominent Theosophists to an examination of how astrology was spread through the activities of the Theosophical Movement in North America at the grass-roots level. This will be demonstrated by our findings about the astrological activities of the individual Lodges, many of which have offered courses on astrology and have taught the wider public for decades.

7.1. Astrology in American Theosophical Lodges

Information about astrology in American Theosophical Lodges was gleaned from a careful review of the monthly column, "News from the Lodges", which has run for many years in The American Theosophist (hereafter A.T.) together with its forerunner The Theosophical Messenger (hereafter T.M.). These long-standing journals have been the official mouthpiece of the major American section of the Theosophical Society (Adyar) since 1912.

The most important Lodge from the point of view of its sponsorship of astrology has been, and continues to be, the Theosophical Lodge of St. Louis, Missouri, which has undergone various changes in its long history. It received its original charter in September 1882, signed by Olcott and HPB, and recently celebrated its 115th anniversary. In 1910 it was recognized as a German-speaking branch. An astrological school was first established at this Lodge by Charles E. Luntz, a business man, in 1924. He went on to become president of the Lodge in 1926. He had to defend its astrological activities against the fears of other Theosophists that astrology would take time away from the serious study of Theosophy. However, he

experienced that these classes attracted outsiders to Theosophy, and argued in a 1932 article that: “ Some of our best members and most earnest workers came via the Astrology route.”¹ The Lodge was in its eighth year of astrological classes at the time. He also reveals that astrology was correlated with Theosophy in Lodge classes, providing deeper insight into astrology than would otherwise have been possible.

By his own account Mr. Luntz was responsible for helping to set up similar schools in other Lodges of the American section of the Adyar T.S. During his long presidency (he only died in 1971) Luntz thus inspired astrological activities, lectures and classes in many North American Theosophical Lodges. He also edited a journal called Ancient Wisdom, issued by the Lodge, which frequently presented astrological articles contributed by him and other Theosophists. In addition, he wrote and published books on astrology such as The Occult Interpretation of the Bible, and Vocational Guidance by Astrology (still published by Llewellyn Publishing Company). We therefore thought it curious when a recent review of the history of the St Louis Lodge came out with no mention of these extensive astrological activities.² This prompted us to question the Lodge about this matter. The reply from the Lodge was very interesting. While discussing our letter in a meeting, Mr. Trauernicht, the author of the study, told that Luntz had at first “planned to give a lecture debunking astrology, but after investigating this subject, never gave the lecture- the rest is history.”³ His conversion

¹Charles E. Luntz, “The Place of Astrology in a Theosophical Lodge,” The Theosophical Messenger, Vol. XX, No. 12, December 1932, p. 274.

²See The American Theosophist, Vol. 82, No. 3, March 1994, p. 21.

³Letter from Marilyn J. Smith, Treasurer/Secretary of the T.S. of St. Louis, dated September 4, 1997.

held fast for the rest of his life. However, they did not give an explanation why the astrological activities were not mentioned.

A recent Bulletin issued by this Lodge reveals that astrology classes are still being conducted on a regular basis. The current president, Mr. Kenneth Heskett, has since informed us that the Lodge member currently in charge of these classes (a Mrs. Ruth Williams), also provides regular astrological counselling on a local radio station.

In addition to the St.Louis Lodge - the most long standing sponsor of astrological activities in the American section of the T.S., our further enquiries identified a total of twenty nine Lodges at various locations in the U.S. and Canada that have provided astrological instruction, mainly during the years between the two World Wars. Details are listed in appendix G (with references to A.T. and T.M. as the case may be). It should be borne in mind however, that this list can, at best, provide only a partial account of astrological instruction within T.S. Lodges. This is because the information given is largely restricted: 1). to Lodges affiliated to the American Section of the Adyar T.S., and 2). to classes held mainly in the period between the two World Wars.

While we did come across a number of later references these are sporadic, and clearly incomplete (even in the inter-war time period). Reporting on Lodge activities was never compulsory, and the subject chosen was always a function of the whims and interests of the editors themselves (whose personal attitude to astrology could well have varied considerably, as already indicated).

Reliable data on astrological instruction within the other two main T.S. groups is much more difficult to come by. While a similar review of Theosophical journals published by the *T.S. (Pasadena)*, and by the *United Lodge* might well have added to our findings, constraints of time and travel costs precluded this.

On the other hand the anecdotal evidence gained through discussion with librarians and also with a number of long-standing members of these groups, leaves the impression that while public astrological activities are no longer pursued in these groups, this was not always the case in the past. In any event, many members do have a knowledge of astrology.

We were also informed that a Mrs. K. Robinson, a well known member of the Theosophical Society in Toronto, had been active in teaching astrology to members and the public for free over a period of about forty years.⁴ Other examples of such anecdotal evidence were also heard.

While not conclusive, the above evidence does reveal that astrological classes, including lectures on astrology sponsored by the T.S., have been held by T.S. groups all over North America at least since the early 1920's. Such activities were normally attended by T.S. members and non-members alike (since certain Lodge activities were, and still are, open to the general public), suggesting that large numbers of Theosophists and non-Theosophists were introduced to astrology in the context of the traditional Theosophical teachings, particularly as regards the notions of karma and reincarnation and the Hermetic idea of 'as above so below', which play such a large part in both Theosophical and current astrological thinking.

⁴We are grateful to Mr. Robin Armstrong, a long-standing member of the astrological community in Toronto, for this information.

Thus, we can conclude that the Theosophical Lodges, as the local presence of the T.S. Movement throughout the United States and Canada, have substantially contributed to the spread of astrological knowledge to a considerable body of people for at least three quarters of a century. Indeed, Rudhyar was himself introduced to astrology at Krotana through such Lodge activities.

This spread of Theosophical influence into the domain of astrology is further evidenced in the establishment of America's oldest and most prestigious astrological associations, as will be outlined in the following section.

7.2. Theosophy and the American Federation of Astrologers

Our earlier research into the history of astrology in North America left us with the impression that the oldest and most prestigious astrological group, *The American Federation of Astrologers* (AFA) might have counted many Theosophists among its founders or early members. Further credence to this impression was given by Doris Chase Doane, a long standing member and current president of the AFA. Asked whether Theosophists were prominent among the founding members of the AFA, she immediately exclaimed: "Oh, quite a number of them!" Her response encouraged us to seek the necessary factual evidence to confirm this perception. A roster of founding members was eventually found in the book: A Fifty Year History of the AFA, supplemented by a 1946 AFA Yearbook that 'materialized' during a chance visit to a second-hand bookshop in Los Angeles.⁵

⁵Edna C. Edmundson, A Fifty-Year History of the American Federation of Astrologers, Inc (Tempe AZ: The American Federation of Astrologers, 1990). See also the 1946 Yearbook of the American Federation of Astrologers.

We acknowledge with gratitude the co-operation of the three major groups of the Theosophical Movement who were willing to share their membership archive information with us for the purpose of this section of our study.

Thus, our findings reveal many prominent Theosophists among the early founding members of the AFA, including such astrological worthies as Llewellyn George, Marc Edmund Jones, Charles E.O. Carter and Robert de Luce. Two of these names have already been mentioned in our section on the history of astrology in North America.

A speech by G.J. McCormack in 1943 shows that the founders of the AFA recognized the importance of the English pioneers and their efforts in the cause of astrology in America. Singling out Raphael, Zadkiel, Leo, Sepharial and other British astrologers, he says: "All the aforementioned were instrumental in paving the pathway to making today's American public astrologically conscious."⁶

The overall number of T.S. members who were also members of the AFA in the year of its founding and shortly thereafter is quite substantial. The records of the archives of the Adyar and Pasadena T.S. organizations in the United States show (to date) that a third of the initial membership were Theosophists. However it was pointed out that this information is not complete since all records prior to 1912 have been lost.⁷ Thus there may well have been an even greater representation. Furthermore, an older

⁶Reported in the Silver Anniversary Issue of the AFA Bulletin, May 1938-1963. p. 1.

⁷Upon request for this information, Kirby Van Mater of the T.S. Pasadena, gave me a letter in February 1997 indicating the membership of 2 persons being members at their Society, and later (July 11th) confirmed 2 additional members. In the same way I received 2 letters from the archives of the T.S. (Adyar) Headquarters in Wheaton (March 7th and May the 27th 1997), indicating 14 more members of the T.S. who also were members of the AFA.

member from the *United Lodge* of Theosophists recognized about seven additional members of the AFA list as most likely members of their Lodge, but we were not able to formally confirm this since the archives appear to be in disarray and scattered throughout North America.⁸ It is thus conceivable that as much as half or more of the founding members of the AFA were Theosophists. We also found a number of Theosophists among the early Board members, ten of whom had been honoured with an 'Honorary life membership.'⁹ We also discovered that the wife of the president of the AFA in 1946 was a Theosophist (and he was most likely also a member of the United Lodge). We can also confirm that two Vice-presidents of the AFA in the 1940's were Theosophists. There are no doubt other cross connections which may be no longer traceable.

The early founders of the AFA were very enthusiastic and, in retrospect, somewhat overly optimistic regarding the future of astrology. They believed that astrology would soon gain the recognition of society as a science, provided the appropriate research could be undertaken.¹⁰ This optimism is also evident in the original name of the organization which, at the founding in 1938, was the *American Federation of Scientific Astrologers*. Its present name was adopted shortly after the war in 1945.¹¹

The AFA also saw its role as defender of astrological principles, and came to the rescue of its members in legal defence. They even established a special Legal Fund to assist astrologers in occasional law suits. Llewellyn

⁸.This information was obtained by Dr. Caren Elin (co-author of books with S.Cranston)

⁹.Edmundson, *Fifty-year History*, p. 20.

¹⁰.See Keye Lloyd (1946 President of the AFA), "Address to the 1946 convention," *1946 Yearbook of the American Federation of Astrologers*, p. 3.

¹¹.Edmundson, *Fifty-year History*, p. 27.

George apparently made a very generous donation to this Fund. The organization also introduced an ethical code for the practice of astrology, and later (in the 1960's) worked out an examination scheme, in the form of a set of tests to raise standards for the practice of astrology.

The organization eventually began publishing the works of its own members. Today however, the extensive AFA catalogue also includes books published by other organizations, and will accept the writings of non-members upon approval by their editing department. The AFA had affiliations with regional and other astrological groups from the beginning, some of them being Theosophical in origin. These "organizations were a tremendous asset to the Federation"; they hosted conventions and educational gatherings, and made financial contributions to the AFA.¹² In the early years there were around 17 affiliated organizations; in the 60's and 70's the number almost doubled.¹³ One of them was The Church of Light with Elbert Benjamine and his wife, both of whom were members of the AFA themselves.

The AFA held, and still holds, annual conventions as an occasion to welcome knowledgeable speakers as well as other astrologers. Over the years however, a number of members became disgruntled and formed a new organization under the name *The Association for Astrological Networking*.¹⁴ But apparently other splinter-groups developed as well.¹⁵

¹².Ibid, p. 27.

¹³.Ibid, p. 27 and p. 79.

¹⁴.The reasons for members leaving the AFA were manifold. Some were no doubt personal. However comments heard from former members point to disagreement with the management of the organization, or with the way it had changed over time.

¹⁵.See Astrology Now, The world of Astrology in the 1990's, produced by AFAN, The Association for Astrological Networking.

7.3. The Astrological Lodge of the T.S. in London England

The Theosophical Lodges, spearheaded by the St. Louis (Missouri) Lodge with its active president Charles Luntz, certainly helped to spread astrology in North America. However their role and influence, as far as we can tell on present evidence, may not quite compare in importance with that of *The Astrological Lodge of The Theosophical Society* in London, England, whose history we outline in this section. A prime reason is that neither in St. Louis nor elsewhere in North America do we have the formation of an Astrological Lodge as such within the T.S., astrological activities being rather part of the overall activities of the T.S.

The T.S. took root in England a few years after its inception in 1875 in New York. London became a rather special kind of T.S. center, being about half way between America and India; HPB and Olcott made frequent visits there while staying mainly in India. London also grew in importance with the concentration of Theosophical activities around HPB after she had established her home there in the last four years of her life.

As suggested in chapter 2, a number of astrologers also began to recognize the value of HPB's Theosophical wisdom. Alan Leo joined the T.S. soon after his introduction to HPB through Sepharial, and his passion for her teachings eventually spilled over into his astrology. He had already had some success as an astrologer by this time. And The Astrologer's Magazine that he launched with a friend in 1890 at the age of 30, turned out, over the years, to be the most successful astrological magazine in England. However, these astrological activities and those of his friends remained officially separate from those of the T.S. until the First World War.

a.) Lodge History

The idea to form an Astrological Lodge within the Theosophical Society was finally broached by Alan Leo and his wife in 1915, and in November of that year a charter was granted by the T.S. to that effect. Leo intuitively realized that a close link between astrology and Theosophy would be very fruitful for both disciplines. The purpose of the Lodge was thus to pursue the study of astrology from a Theosophical viewpoint. It was also expected to provide a forum by which to educate Theosophists who wanted to learn about astrology. This same idea guided Mr. Luntz years later in his efforts in St. Louis Missouri.

Since Leo did not wish to head the organization, his wife assumed the role of president, with himself as vice-president and treasurer. After several meetings the name was finalized as the *Astrological Lodge of the Theosophical Society (A.L.T.S.)*.

The early meetings consisted mostly of lectures on Theosophy, and Leo himself was alone in providing astrological input. Prominent Theosophists such as A.P. Sinnett also gave lectures at the Lodge.¹⁶ Unfortunately, Leo was not to see the fruits of his labour. He died suddenly two years after the founding, and David Freedman, also a founding member, carried the banner despite the odds of the war.

After the war, Charles E.O. Carter, another founding member, returned from active duty and he and Freedman slowly took things in hand. Carter reminisced on this period in the first issue of Astrology in 1926 : "When I

¹⁶This information derives from unpublished minutes of Meetings of the then called 'Middlesex Lodge' between July 13th and September 20th 1915 in London.. These documents were obtained from Patrick Curry in London.

returned from the war in autumn of 1919, after Alan Leo's death. I found most of the activities which he had fostered were in a process of decline. Indeed many of his most intimate associates seemed to have lost interest in his work after his decease."¹⁷

In 1922 Carter took over the presidency from Mrs. Leo (following her reluctant resignation) and revitalized the Lodge.¹⁸ Under his 30-year presidency the Lodge developed steadily into a respected institution. However, the purely Theosophical emphasis in the Lodge was gradually reduced over the period. New members urged more lectures on astrology, arguing that the Lodge had been set up specifically to educate its members in astrology, and that the T.S. had various other Lodges dealing with solely Theosophical issues.¹⁹ In 1923 the Lodge also established a unique ritual, performed twice a year at the annual solstices. The full content was known only to members who participated or attended its performance, but it had to do with some form of representation of the planets.²⁰

Attendance at Lodge meetings increased in 1924 and Carter was able to accommodate this heightened public interest by renting the very fine and spacious hall of the Art Workers' Guild. During the course of 1926-27 it was decided to transcribe the lectures and keep them in a library established

¹⁷ Charles E.O. Carter, "The Nativity of the Editor," Astrology (First Number), December 1926, p. 5.

¹⁸ "In this agitation, quite peaceful of course, "The Now [New] Party" went against the wishes of Mrs. Leo...who was unable ... and was out of touch with the temper of members." M. Rhodes, "The Lodge Map and its Progressions," Lecture delivered to the A.L.T.S. in London, January 13th 1930, p.6. Mrs. Leo finally resigned on January the 2nd 1921 (see *ibid* p.7.).

¹⁹ Lecture delivered by Mrs. Rhodes to the Astrological Lodge, January 13th 1930, London. It is a kind of summary of Lodge history up to that time.

²⁰ Annabella Kitson, "The Lodge Ritual," Astrology, Vol. 65, No. 3, 1995, p. 57. The spirit of the Lodge at the time is well summed up by Alexander Ruperti: "The Astrological Lodge was a branch of the Theosophical Society, and most of the astrologers there were Theosophically oriented. They came into the room in long robes and talked about their masters and all sorts of things." Lynn Bell, "A Conversation with Alexander Ruperti on Astrology's Place in the World," The Mountain Astrologer, No. 76, Dec./Jan. 1997/98.

by the Lodge. The support of all the Lodge members also enabled Carter to launch the journal “Astrology” as a quarterly magazine in 1926. This journal is still published today and has become a widely read, international magazine with a professional reputation.

Membership continued to grow steadily, and by 1930 the Lodge counted 140 members. Initially, membership in the Lodge also required membership of the T.S., but this requirement was quietly discontinued in the 1930's. More and more astrologers became what was known as ‘associate members’, which meant they did not have the right to an elected office. Over time however the balance shifted and the Lodge held more ‘associate members’ than ‘full members’, hence emphasis shifted further away from Theosophy.

Meetings were only monthly during the Second World War, and these were held at the headquarters of the T.S. The Lodge returned to the hall of the Artworkers’ Guild after the war ended. The Lodge has since alternated between these two locations, and in September of 1994 moved once again back to the headquarters of the T.S.²¹ Differences in the privileges of the two categories of membership, as well as different ideas on astrology and on how to run the affairs of the Lodge, led finally to a kind of mini rebellion. And in 1948 the Lodge gave birth to a teaching institution known as the *Faculty of Astrological Studies*. The idea was to offer a more formal education in astrology having different levels and exams leading to a Diploma. Courses were offered on site as well as by correspondence. The

²¹.As announced in a leaflet in the summer 1994 issue of Astrology.

Faculty has in a sense become the successful realization of Alan Leo's earlier attempt in founding the short-lived Astrological Institute in 1910.²²

Charles Carter was obviously sympathetic to this idea and supported this new enterprise in many ways. It is often affectionally called the 'child of the Lodge.'²³ Carter accepted the position of Principal for the the first few years, but stepped down in 1954 to be succeeded by Margaret Hone. The Faculty then proceeded to sever its formal links with the Lodge because of differences of opinion; however, close informal links continue to this day. In 1956 the locally-held courses were closed for lack of students to cover the costs, but the correspondence courses continued unabated. Margaret Hone had become the backbone of the enterprise with her widely read The Modern Textbook of Astrology specifically written for these courses. She remained Principle until 1969. Several thousand students, young and old from over eighty countries have been educated in this manner by the Faculty; and the training process continues to this day.²⁴

In 1958 a further split occurred when various members of the Lodge formed *The Astrological Association* (A.A.). In revealing the complexities behind this move John Addey writes that:

...the Lodge had for very many years been the backbone of English Astrology, but after the second world war there was a feeling abroad that the interest in astrology was outgrowing the theosophical cradle in which, since its modern revival, it had been nurtured so

²² This idea has continued to float among the astrological community ever since, as already noted with the AFA's idea of holding exams in North America. Voiced in the 1940's the idea in that case only came to fruition in the 1960's.

²³ Lindsay Radarmacher, "Charles Carter and the Faculty," Astrology, Vol. 1, No. 1, Spring 1987, p. 26.

²⁴ Jeff Mayo, "The Faculty of Astrological Studies," Journal of Astrological Studies, No. 1, Fall 1970, pp. 9-12.

successfully, and that the time had come when....a new and independent organization with a foundation as broad and universal as astrology itself, was needed.²⁵

This feeling was of course felt more particularly within the British astrological community. The Association also launched a new magazine, "The Astrological Journal", which has since also achieved an international reputation and continues to be published. All three co-founders had previously held positions as vice-presidents of the Lodge, and had also *retained their membership within the Lodge*. Charles Carter looked with favour on the way this second child of the Lodge had struck out from its parental home. The Association took great pride in astrological research and has assembled an excellent library over the years.

However, despite the formation of this new Lodge offspring, all was not well with the old A.L.T.S. itself. Years of discontent among 'associate members'—i.e. non-Theosophical astrologers who did not have full rights as the T.S. members, and much legal wrangling with the T.S., led in 1982 to a split, with an agreement, "that the existing body representing the co-operative unity of Theosophists and non-Theosophical astrologers, be named: the *Astrological Lodge of London* (ALL.)."²⁶ This left the rump of the old united A.L.T.S with Full members only and a new ALL consisting of Full and 'associate members'. In the words of the Lodge president at the time: "The spiritual mantle of the Theosophical Society was removed from the wider body of the Lodge. However, by virtue of the 'Spirit and Work' decision, the transmission from the Lodge's origin through to its current

²⁵ John Addey, "The Astrological Association," Journal of Astrological Studies, No. 1, Fall 1970, p. 13.

²⁶ Geoffrey Cornelius, "The Astrological Lodge from Alan Leo to the present Day," Astrology, Vol. 60, No. 1, January 1986, p. 41.

form is guaranteed by the newly defined ALTS, so long as the ALL embodies cooperation.”²⁷ But this co-operation was not to be, nor could it under the circumstances.

The years from 1982 until 1994 were apparently full of personal and legal wranglings among the membership of both groups, as well as with the T.S. However, due in part to insufficient membership and attendant quarrels the T.S. finally “withdrew the ALTS charter, leaving the ALL as the only inheritor of Alan Leo’s founding mission.”²⁸ According to personal testimony, it had been a difficult time for all involved and everybody now seems to be happy that all is behind them. But although the ALL was officially separated from the T.S. in 1994, it is ironic that it started having its meetings at the T.S. headquarters once again that very same year. Nick Campion puts it this way: “Indeed, since the inexorable demise of the ALTS it is now once again the sole representative of Alan Leo’s original, safe in the arms of its Theosophical parent. Yet, unlike 1980, when it was still the awkward adolescent to the TS’s stern parent, now it is the TS’s equal, an independent educational charity.”²⁹

But this is not the end of the long saga of the Lodge. In 1983 Geoffrey Cornelius created a third split by founding his own group called *The Company of Astrologers*. The Company still operates successfully today. However the latest chapter in the history of the Lodge was written by the A.A. with the establishment of the *Urania Trust* in London. This initiative was apparently made possible in part, by a substantial private endowment

²⁷ Ibid, p. 42.

²⁸ Nick Campion, “Return to Gloucester Place,” *Astrology Quarterly*, Vol. 64, No.4, Autumn 1994, p. 2.

²⁹ Nick Campion, “The Lodge is Eighty,” *Astrology Quarterly*, Vol. 65, No. 3, Summer 1995, p. 1.

given to the A.A. for the purpose of establishing an astrological study center. The Urania Trust was to open in 1989; however things were delayed into the next year. It currently provides a permanent home for an impressive astrological library with accessibility to students as never before. It is also an active study center with lectures, workshops and classes.

One other important British astrological organization should be mentioned here since traditionally, astrology in Britain had lagged behind the U.S. (Dane Rudhyar) in associating itself with developments in depth psychology. However this has changed to some degree through the influence of the internationally known *Centre for Psychological Astrology* founded by Liz Greene, a Jungian psychoanalyst and astrologer. While this Centre was not launched by anyone directly associated with the Lodge (as far as the present writer is aware), it is noteworthy that Liz Greene was a graduate of the Faculty, and one of the leading members of the A.A. is now Co-Director of this Centre.³⁰ It is certainly a center of which HPB would have approved in that, as we have mentioned elsewhere, she also wished the astrologer to be a psychologist.

b.) Analysis

From the material accessible to the present writer, it would seem that the formation of the Lodge within the secure, legal framework of the T.S. was both a blessing and curse. On the one hand, it passed the weight of the tradition of the T.S. to the Lodge, possibly enhancing its standing as an institution, and also imbued its members with a sense of pride. Secondly, the link with the T.S. also made the Lodge more respectable in the eyes of

³⁰Astrology Quarterly, Vol. 62 No. 3, Summer 1992, p. 2.

the wider public. This is important for the growth of astrology, since astrology was met with more suspicion in Europe after the second World War. Thirdly it made it legally more difficult to dissolve or change the constitution of the Lodge at the whim of any of its members. The fact that it was officially one of the Lodges of the T.S. apparently also carried with it certain implications of support which could not easily be ignored.

Finally, it is evident that the Lodge in fact provided a training ground for its members on how to run such an organization. Apparently the members who split off to found their own group had all previously held elected positions within the Lodge thus gaining experience.³¹ All of this helped, in part, to preserve the Lodge (at least until 1984) and allow it to take roots and grow branches.

On the other hand, these benefits could not halt the growing dissatisfaction among the 'associate membership', who challenged 'full members' about inequality of status and other philosophical issues, a battle which led to the inexorable demise of the original Lodge.

But these problems are not that surprising when viewed in retrospect. We have already explained that despite HPB's own knowledge and convictions about astrology in relation to Theosophy, many of her followers did not fully share her views. The Symposium held at the T.S. in 1912, among others, is early testimony of the tension between astrology and Theosophy in the minds of its members.

³¹. "And we too in the Association must account ourselves descendents in the same line, as we are happy to do, in the sense that most of those who have been concerned in starting the Association owe a great deal of their astrological education to the Lodge or Faculty." (John M. Addey, The Astrological Journal, December 1961, p. 6)

Of course this does not invalidate the value of Alan Leo's legacy, which has been acknowledged by many astrologers. Ellen McCaffery for example writes: "Through Alan Leo's work, and that of his friends and followers, a very definite revival of interest took place".³²

In sum, what emerges from the above survey is that the original Lodge has given rise to four different astrological institutions, all of which are now independent though still interlinked, since member in one organization invariably retains membership in one or two of the others. They also participate in each others' meetings and lectures etc. and thus promote a regular exchange of ideas. Through their efforts, they have established high standards in astrological education, which has also assisted in building a more secure reputation for astrology. While the initial Theosophical impetus has been diluted by related philosophical teachings or, as in the case of the A.A., by a slight technical bent, these institutions have created an atmosphere of respect for astrology, and have encouraged and attracted numerous professionals in Britain and abroad. Finally, from the number of advertisements in British astrological journals, it would seem that this has also led to London becoming the preferred location for the establishment of several other astrological centers dealing with the various branches of astrology (see examples in appendix H).³³

³²Ellen McCaffrey, Astrology: its History and Influence in the Western World (New York: Samuel Weiser, Inc., 1970) p. 350. More on this issue in the following chapter.

8. BRIEF BIOGRAPHICAL HISTORY AND ANALYSIS OF FOUR LEADING ASTROLOGERS

- 8.1. Alan Leo (founded the London Lodge in 1915)*
- 8.2. C.E.O Carter (President of the London Lodge in 1922)*
- 8.3. Marc Edmund Jones (founded the Sabian Assembly)*
- 8.4. Dane Rudhyar (founded Humanistic Astrology)*

Selections of four astrologers as representative of the influence of the Theosophical teachings on the revival of astrology in the 20th century were undertaken on the basis of the following criteria:

- 1. They were either members of a Theosophical Society, or had close connections with the Theosophical Movement;
- 2. They showed evidence of Theosophical influence in their astrological writings;
- 3. They were prominent in their field and had a large following;
- 4. They lived and worked either in Great Britain or North America.

These criteria may be questioned by some as arbitrary. But they are offered as the most appropriate and complete for the information available at this time. We do not claim that this list could not be improved upon or extended. It is nevertheless a start in the right direction to serve as a spur for further research.

The aim was to select four undisputed reputable, prominent astrologers. We were also looking for a balance in our selection for the two regional areas of focus for this thesis. Thus we sought to give equal weight to both England and North America. Alan Leo and C.E.O. Carter are the most fitting examples in the case of England. The choice for North America proved somewhat more difficult since one or two other astrologers might well have qualified. Marc Edmund Jones and Dane Rudhyar were finally

selected on the strength of the close link between the two (as will become apparent in what follows), as well as of their widespread popularity in the astrological community.

Each of the following sections starts with a brief biography, followed by an appraisal and a description of the particular person's approach to astrology. The latter two sections rely somewhat extensively on quotations, since this seems the most convenient and convincing way to present the necessary evidence.

8.1. Alan Leo

a). Biography

William Frederick Allen was born on August 7, 1860 as the first son of a couple in the North of England. His father had served on active duty in India for several years, a country the son would later visit twice and whose philosophy would influence him greatly. After becoming more fully acquainted with astrology around 1888 he changed his name to Alan Leo since a majority of his planets were positioned in the zodiacal sign of Leo. He did not enjoy a happy childhood. The marriage of his parents was not good and they separated when he was about 10 years old. His mother was somewhat of a religious fanatic and a member of a Protestant sect. Her religious convictions are also believed to have been the cause of the marriage break up. Leo was thus burdened from an early age with household duties as well as having to take care of his younger siblings. However, at the age of nine, while standing upon the heights of Edinburgh Castle and looking over Carlton Hill, Leo " had an internal vision which

liberated my soul from a bondage that had hitherto held it.”¹ At the age of 15 he was proud of being able to support his mother through his own work.

Leo had always been a very religious person in his own way. However, life seemed too complex to him to fit the frame of a narrow creed such as his mother’s, although he did not doubt the existence of a God or Higher being at this time. But his ideas about it were still vague. The sky with its stars and planets fascinated him from an early age and he read books on astronomy. He also has been always interested in people and their differences. In his teens, he came face to face with extreme poverty while working at odd jobs in the slums of London. This experience made him think almost continually about “the terrible inequalities of the human race together with other problems of life.”²

At the age of 17 Leo found the first profound answers to this inner quest while listening to a discussion between his mother and “a gentleman of the same religion who had just returned from India; in which the theory of reincarnation was mentioned. I told my mother that it was the most reasonable hypothesis I had yet heard.”³ Leo accepted the theory of reincarnation immediately as the most sensible answer to the inequalities he had observed in life.

Leo’s first contact with astrology was in his early twenties, when working as manager of two grocery stores in Manchester. He fell ill and on the recommendation of a friend, visited a herbalist for some medical advice.

¹ Alan Leo, Esoteric Astrology: a study in human nature. Vol. VII in “Astrology for All” Series (New Delhi: Sagar Publications, 1970) p. vi.

² Ibid, p. vi.

³ Ibid, p. vi.

This herbalist (a Dr. Richardson), used to base his diagnosis on his patient's horoscope. After studying Leo's chart, the old man trusted him and agreed to introduce him to astrology. Leo was immediately attracted to the subject and from then on became deeply absorbed in the study of astrology, weaving the idea of reincarnation into it. Dr. Richardson also briefly introduced Leo to Theosophical ideas, although with no formal link to the Theosophical Society at that time. But Leo then "subscribed to *Theosophical Siftings*, and other books published by the Society."⁴ In 1889 Sepharial introduced him to HPB and Leo soon joined the T.S. The Theosophical teachings also introduced him even deeper to the idea of karma. This, Leo felt, answered more of his questions about life's inequalities, and he also started to apply this idea to astrology.

Leo eventually met Olcott and Judge, and later Besant. These contacts further deepened his commitment to the Theosophical cause. In a speech many years later he expressed how much astrology had really meant to him personally. He says:

It has given me the key to unlock my nature, and understand it as nothing else could have done, and has been to me a great blessing. Everything I have touched in this life in connection with Astrology has been a blessing, for there are connected with it great and mighty Beings who do a vast amount of good.⁵

For several years he successfully held a job as a traveling salesman selling sewing machines for a large London based Company. In July 1890, at the

⁴. Bessie Leo et al, The Life and Work of Alan Leo: Theosophist-Astrologer-Mason (London: Modern Astrology Office, 1919) p. 40, (hereafter L.W.A.L.).

⁵. See Presidential Address to The Astrological Society, London England, May 28th, 1910. (Unpublished paper from the T.S. archives in Adyar (Madras) India, obtained from Patrick Curry in London).

age of 30, he and his friend F.W. Lacey (who had also joined the T.S.) published The Astrologer's Magazine, which, over the years, turned out to be the most successful astrological magazine in England.⁶ The magazine gave Leo the opportunity to outline his ideas of astrology to the public. Leo also had a good business sense, and while traveling throughout the country on business he contacted and "secured the services of most of the leading astrologers, with the exception of Mr. A.J. Pearce (the modern Zadkiel)," who became a fierce critic of Leo's type of astrology.⁷ Leo also persuaded the well known occultist John Thomas, who wrote under the pen name 'Charubel,' to contribute articles to the magazine. Besides Zadkiel's continued criticism of Leo's magazine in his Almanac, it also received a critical review from the *Daily News* in August 1890, which actually served to give more publicity to the magazine.

To attract subscribers to their new journal the two entrepreneurs offered a free calculation and brief delineation of a horoscope for those who subscribed to the journal for one year. This brought 1500 subscribers in the first year as well as lots of work for Leo and Lacey.⁸ The magazine led to many contacts and invitations, and Leo's job as a traveling salesman gave him the opportunity not only to stay in contact with various astrologers throughout England, but also to deliver free lectures on astrology at the request of many of the subscribers. This proved to be the beginning of a career as a lecturer on astrology.

⁶ Sepharial had just started a magazine of his own two or three months earlier called *Fate and Fortune*, but it folded after only a few issues. He thereafter supported Leo's and Lacey's magazine with articles. (See F.W. Lacey in L.W.A.I., p. 39). However a certain envy of their success seems to have lingered (see Leo Memorial Number of Modern Astrology, December 1917 p. 361ff).

⁷ L.W.A.I., p. 42.

⁸ It was Lacey who normally did the delineation of the astrological charts after Leo had worked out the calculations. (L.W.A.I. p. 59ff).

Contacts through the journal eventually extended to Germany, the Netherlands and France as well as to North America. It also featured the occasional article about Hindu horoscopes, prompted by Sepharial's visit to India.

Leo's partner, Lacey, handed over full responsibility for the journal to Leo in 1894 when personal demands on his time made it impossible to keep up the heavy work load of the previous few years (he eventually also left the T.S.). About this time Leo met his future wife, who had sent in a request for a free horoscope and was eager to meet the man who had commented so accurately on it. It was also around this time that people began sending in money for more detailed interpretations. This was later to grow into a full fledged business.

In the summer of 1895 the magazine was expanded and renamed Modern Astrology, with Leo as the sole editor. It enjoyed a long career that continued until 1940.⁹ According to Nick Campion it was the first serious astrological magazine to survive more than one or two years.¹⁰ However, Leo's goal was not only to 'purify' and popularize astrology but also to give it a definitive Theosophical bent.¹¹

Leo's emotional life had a turn for the better in September of 1895 when he married his wife Bessie Leo. They were well suited to each other because she shared his interest in Theosophy and had become member of the T.S..

⁹His magazine Modern Astrology continued into the 1940's under the editorship of Bessie Leo and Vivian E. Robson, a Theosophist and author of several books on astrology.

¹⁰Nick Campion, "Alan Leo: père de l'astrologie Anglaise du XX^e siècle," in Patrick Curry, Nick Campion & Jacques Halbronn, La vie astrologique il y a cent ans: d'Alan Leo à Charles Barlet Paris: Éditions La Grande Conjunction, 1992) p. 20. See also L.W.A.L., p. 44.

¹¹Alan Leo, "The Purification of Astrology," Lucifer, Vol. XIV, No. 80, April 15, 1894, p. 163-4.

though also having occult interests of her own. She had studied palmistry and phrenology and had also learned astrology under Leo's supervision. She supported her husband's work and took an active part in many of his enterprises. The following year they both went on a tour around Great Britain to gather like minded astrologers to form an Astrological Society.

Leo went on to found six Astrological Societies, all of them having a relatively short lifespan. Most of them lasted less than a year.¹² He and his wife were also involved in the foundation of a Masonic Lodge, by the name of *Hermes Lodge* and were initiated into Co-Masonry like many other Theosophists (HPB, Olcott, Sinnett, etc.). However the Leo's seventh and final effort succeeded in 1915 in creating the *The Astrological Lodge of the Theosophical Society*, the history of which we outlined in section 7.3. Leo also toured all over Britain giving astrological lectures at Theosophical Lodges in addition to those given at the invitation of subscribers of his magazine. In "this way he became well known in many theosophical and astrological centers, and did useful work in both connections."¹³

Leo was regarded not only as an excellent astrologer but also as a good businessman. Soon after the renaming of the magazine Modern Astrology, he went into business, charging one shilling for a test horoscope. The work load increased rapidly and in 1899 he had a number of people working for him in his London office. By then he had left his previous employment and turned to astrology as a full-time professional. He

decided to employ people to assist him and began to recruit a small staff: two or three astrologers to do the mathematical calculations

¹²Campion, "Alan Leo: père de l'astrologie Anglaise du XX^e siècle," p. 17. See also L.W.A.L., p. 139.

¹³L.W.A.L., p. 100.

and as many clerks to write out the delineations, which he mostly dictated himself, and to attend to the clerical work connected with his now multifarious astrological activities. These included his periodical, book-publishing, correspondence courses and an astrological society. By 1903 he was employing no fewer than nine people, not counting his wife Bessie who played an active part in running the business.¹⁴

Never before had an astrological business flourished like this. He also opened offices in New York and Paris, although the New York office closed in 1903.¹⁵ The magazine was distributed internationally, a situation which had also never occurred in the past. This all signified the start of a new era for astrology. "Within three years of the inception of the Test Horoscope scheme Leo & Co. had mailed 20,000 of these primitive horoscopes."¹⁶ These prefabricated horoscopes were a forerunner of our modern astrological columns in magazines and the first example of the popularizing of astrology. Unfortunately he soon came to regret his pioneering work, since it led to abuse of his method by charlatans who advertised in a similar manner, asked for more money, and produced less accurate information. This finally led him to stop the production of Test Horoscopes. To this effect he remarks in his presidential address at the Astrological Society in May 1910: "because there are coming up a great number of people who are nothing short of quacks and charlatans, who do impose upon people to-day to a very great extent; and of course Astrology suffers in consequence."¹⁷

¹⁴Ellic Howe, Urania's Children: the strange world of the astrologers (London: William Kimber, 1967), p. 62.

¹⁵Ibid, p. 63.

¹⁶Ibid, p. 62.

¹⁷See Presidential Address May 28th, 1910, p. 2.

His aim, throughout his career as an astrologer, was to raise the level of knowledge about astrology, and to elevate its standing in society. Thus in a letter to a critic he emphasizes that: "During the past five years I and my colleagues have worked hard in the face of ignorant ridicule to purify astrology, and, what is more, have but recently enlightened the Indian astrologers of a system of predicting long lost to them."¹⁸ But he mentions elsewhere in his writings that he also profited a great deal from discussions with Indian astrologers.

Since the magazine Modern Astrology was circulated internationally it also provided a forum for many fruitful and sometimes heated discussions over issues of Theosophy as well as astrology. However, Leo soon turned more toward the writing and publication of books and manuals. His first book, entitled Astrology for All, and was intended for the curious inquirer who was not yet serious about astrology. His second book entitled Casting the Horoscope, was an introduction for the serious student, with lots of mathematics. However, "Leo purposefully brought the subject within reach of any lower middle-class lady with sufficient intelligence to master a few elementary arithmetical calculations and copy the seemingly appropriate 'cook-book' interpretation from one or other of his works."¹⁹ He published seven major volumes in all, among them The Art of Synthesis and Esoteric Astrology which was his last major work (they were all translated into German soon after publication). According to Bessie Leo he further published about 30 smaller books or manuals. His major works have been reprinted many times and are all still in print today. Bessie Leo also wrote

¹⁸.Alan Leo letter to Lucifer, Vol. XIV, No. 80, April 1894, p.163ff.

¹⁹.Howe, Urania's Children, p. 64.

articles for the magazine, some of which were later published in book-form (as Astrological Essays (in 1909).

Leo had to fight three lawsuits. The first in 1909 pertaining to his wife's inheritance (which they won) opened his eyes to a world he had ignored in his enthusiasm for astrology. It was there that he experienced:

the insinuations of the plaintiff's Counsel...and the apparent bias and prejudice of the Judge he [Leo] wrote: "I must confess my amazement. It seems to me manifestly unfair..." However knowledgeable about the spiritual and even business worlds he may have been, Leo was still remarkably naive about the world of social and cultural power...", as well as the history of persecution of astrologers in England.²⁰

After this somewhat traumatic experience the Leos made their first trip with Annie Besant to India and to the Adyar Headquarters of the T.S., and in 1911 made a second trip to India.

In the second law suit in 1914 Leo was accused of 'Fortune Telling' similar to the accusations made against Evangeline Adams in New York in the same year. However Leo did not win the case (as Adams did); the outcome was inconclusive leaving both parties dissatisfied.²¹ In July 1917 he was again brought to court and fined twenty five pounds. ²²

All these experiences made Leo even more determined to educate people better about astrology, and also to anchor astrology firmly to the framework of the Theosophical teachings. In 1910-1912 "Leo established

²⁰Patrick Curry, A Confusion of Prophets: Victorian and Edwardian Astrology (London: Collins & Brown Limited, 1992), p. 141.

²¹Ibid, p. 145ff.

²²Marcia Moore and Mark Douglas, Astrology, The Divine Science, p. 647.

the *Astrological Institute*, the only one of its kind, for the proper promulgation and teaching of Astrology and allied truths.”²³ This institute lasted beyond his death, but was only partially successful. He also introduced correspondence courses for those who could not come to meetings. This initiative showed Leo’s farsightedness with respect to what was needed to improve astrology’s standing in society. This was a novel development at the time. But it took many more years for his idea to really come to fruition with the establishment of the *Faculty of Astrological Studies* in 1948, an offspring of the Lodge he had founded (the Faculty successfully started to teach correspondence courses which still continue to this day).

The first steps to form the Astrological Lodge were taken by Leo and his wife and a small group of friends in the summer of 1915, and in November of the same year the charter was granted by the T.S. Leo thus laid the foundations of what proved to become a most valuable astrological institution, one which eventually served to revitalize astrology even beyond the boundaries of Britain. The Lodge (as mentioned earlier) is still active after celebrating its 80th birthday in 1995.

Chastened and possibly depressed by his last Court experience Leo tried to develop an astrology with less emphasis on prediction and more on Theosophy and psychology. However his own destiny cut these efforts short. He died unexpectedly of a stroke in the arms of his wife in August 1917.

²³L.W.A.I., p. 169.

However, the legacy of his astrological work is still very much alive today through his books and the work of the Lodge which he founded.

b.) Appraisals by Others

This short section offers a selection of appraisals of Alan Leo's work given by his co-workers, readers and other sources.

As Howe quite aptly puts it, Alan Leo was "this century's first major astrological publicist and, furthermore, the first astrologer of all time to practice his art on a large and well-organized professional scale"²⁴

The extent of his enterprise, with offices in various countries, is unique and impressive even by today's standards. Leo's aim was to educate the broader public about astrology, its methods and its practical results, by reaching out to a large audience through his Test-Horoscopes. "A number of students of the present day [in 1917] have in fact dated their first acquaintance with astrology from the receipt of one of these test horoscopes..."²⁵

Leo was highly esteemed by his students and co-workers who bemoaned his loss saying that: "Alan Leo was more than an astrologer. He was a powerful intellectual and moral force, and his death at a comparatively early age leaves a gap which it will be impossible to fill." They emphasize that:

While a practical astrologer using his art in a scientific way to improve the material conditions of all who sought such assistance, yet, strangely enough, he practically stood alone among professional

²⁴Howe, Urania's Children, p. 56ff.

²⁵MA (Memorial Number) Vol. XIV (New Series), No. 12, December 1917, p. 355.

artists as one who never lost sight of the spiritual aspect of Astrology.²⁶

And another explains that:

I never grasped the wonderful occult truths of Astrology until I heard Alan Leo explain them in talks we had during part of a winter we all spent together at Cannes...Taught as Mr. Leo taught it, Astrology now seems to me to be one of the best possible guides to right living.²⁷

Working for Alan Leo seems to have been viewed as more of a privilege than a chore.

Without his presence to act as a centre some of them-myself among the number-would certainly not have accomplished so much work as they did. ...Because of this, although other astrologers have done useful work, no one has accomplished quite what he did, and now that he has gone no one is able to fill quite the same place.²⁸

The following eulogies written by students are taken from the Memorial Number of Modern Astrology, published shortly after Leo's death.

Another characteristic was his capacity for work, which was remarkable, and for getting the best out of others. Many people were associated with him, and who were pleased that he should act as a centre for their united activities.

In this respect and in his ability to influence, mould or "manage" a considerable number of people, he seems to me to bear some resemblance to Col. H.S. Olcott, although on a smaller scale.

²⁶ L.W.A.L. p. 155 and p. 161.

²⁷ Mrs Campbell Praed, "Alan Leo: An Appreciation," Occult Review, Vol. XXVI, December 1917, p. 343.

²⁸ L.W.A.L. p. 122.

No one ever worked with Mr. Leo who was not the gainer from a spiritual standpoint. His method was to develop the initiative of his co-workers.²⁹

French author Jacques Halbronn concludes from his analysis of Leo's impact on astrology in France that Leo with his influence on astrology can be viewed as "la tête d'un véritable Empire qui couvre tous les pays anglophones (Inde, Australie, États Unis), la France, les Pays Bas."³⁰ Halbronn also views both Leo and his wife as pioneers in the renaissance of 'Esoteric Astrology' and of higher education in astrology. The author and astrologer Ellen McCafferey agrees, saying that: "Through Alan Leo's work, and that of his friends and followers, a very definite revival of interest took place, with ever-widening circles of devotees, among them some of the best brains in the country."³¹

Charles Carter, the astrologer who followed in the footsteps of Leo, remembers that in the days of Alan Leo: "British Astrology stood high in the world; indeed he was almost the Master-Astrologer of his age, not only in Great Britain, but throughout the civilized world. I am not so happy about the position of British Astrology nowadays; the moral earnestness that made Leo great seems less in evidence today."³²

Many pages could be devoted to similar testimonials and memoria from the four corners of the earth. This overwhelming response was not out of

²⁹ M.A. (Leo Memorial Number), Vol. XIV (New Series), No. 12, December 1917, p. 369 and p. 375.

³⁰ Jacques Halbronn: "La France Astrologique à l'heure d'Alan Leo," in :La Vie Astrologique il y a cent ans, p. 149.

³¹ Ellen McCaffery, Astrology: its history and influence in the Western World (New York: Samuel Weiser, Inc., 1970) p. 350.

³² Charles E.O. Carter speaking at an Alan Leo lecture delivered at the Harrogate Convention in 1937. See Astrology, Vol. 61, No. 1, Spring 1987, p. 18. He also had further praise for Leo's work in the same lecture.

courtesy but rather out of a wish to honor a man who had not only enriched their personal lives and was dear to them, but who had also succeeded in building and managing a large and influential enterprise which has left indelible traces on the astrology of today.

c.) Alan Leo's Theosophical Astrology

Let us state at once that it is not our intent to undertake a general analysis of Leo's astrology, or indeed that of the other astrologers who follow. Rather, our purpose here is simply to highlight the Theosophical influence found in their astrology.

When Leo joined the T.S. it was not to remain an ordinary member. He soon became part of the inner circle, and Theosophy was very much part of his life—hence also of his approach to astrology. “He could not think of Theosophy as complete without the great science of Astrology, but equally he could not imagine Astrology, one of the great Ways to God, without Theosophy.”³³

This led Leo to forge a new path in astrology, unique at the time in combining the spiritual teachings of Theosophy with the traditional assumptions and technical practices of the old astrology. *In effect, he created a new Theosophical version of astrology which has served as a model for the study of astrology ever since.* He not only acquainted many people with astrology, he also “brought, through Astrology, many hundreds everywhere to a knowledge of Theosophy...”.³⁴ This section seeks to illustrate this development by presenting those features of Leo's astrology

³³MA (Memorial Number), Vol. XIV, No. 12, December 1917, p. 357.

³⁴Ibid, p. 357.

which provide the distinctly Theosophical influence, whether proceeding directly from the astrological ideas of HPB herself, or more indirectly from his own long-standing association with the T.S. and its teachings.

This influence may be viewed in terms of four major sets of ideas which can be identified in this respect. These are: first, the issue of 'esoteric' versus 'exoteric' astrology; second, the issue of planetary rulership; third, the significance given to the qualifications of the astrologer; fourth, the notion of karma and reincarnation and fifth, the issue of the role of psychology in astrology.

In drawing a distinction between esoteric and exoteric astrology Leo followed closely upon the ideas of HPB. The following passage provides an indication of his understanding of HPB's message. He writes:

Esoteric Astrology teaches the Immanence of God, and seeks to discover through the positions of the heavenly bodies the changes in Nature we know as the laws of God. It recognizes the important part these divine Intelligences must play in the destiny of Man, for they are his celestial prototypes... Herein lies the main difference between Astrology *esoteric* and *exoteric*; the former is concerned with man's actions from within, and with the power to harmonize himself with Nature's laws, and the latter with man's impulses prompted by the attractions that are without: for Esoteric Astrology shows the possibilities latent within all mankind, of unification with the Divine Will...³⁵

Or as he refers to HPB's statement 'Yes! our destiny is written in the stars.' Leo further illustrates the differences between the two types of astrology, 'esoteric' and 'exoteric', as follows.

³⁵ MA., Vol. IX, No. 7, July 1912, p. 276.

Esoteric Astrology deals with the abstract cause, the philosophy and the inner or more subtle point of view; whilst Exoteric astrology is content with the effect, the practice and the concrete or outer expression, preferring the tangible and evident to the speculative and theoretical....We may define Esoteric Astrology as that side of the subject which views all stellar phenomena from the standpoint of unity; whilst Exoteric Astrology begins its study from the side of diversity and separateness. The Esoteric Astrologer looks upon the whole expression of life as proceeding from one central and primal source, and therefore seeks to understand the subject from the point of view of the One flowing forth to the many.³⁶

And Charles Moore, a student and admirer of Leo's work, writes:

Indeed, his various books furnish abundant testimony of his endeavours to give a superior philosophical and religious interpretation to the mundane branches of the astral science, so that this exoteric aspect may be rightly placed as secondary to the esoteric, using the former as a bridge whereby the materially-minded may be drawn..."³⁷

These ideas show definite parallels to statements made by HPB on the same subject, as outlined earlier.

Leo also shares HPB's ideas with regard to her conviction that magnetism plays a significant role in astrology. In his presidential address at The Astrological Society in May 1910 he also mimics HPB in remarking: "You may not be aware of it, but the first essential of esoteric Astrology is a knowledge of magnetism."

Leo also accepts HPB's notion of planetary rulership. He writes:

³⁶.Alan Leo, Esoteric Astrology, p. xiii.

³⁷L.W.A.L p. 161ff.

The physical planets have no direct “influence” upon humanity, but the Lords, angels, or Spirits of the planets, as they are sometimes called, do affect all things existing upon our globe. We may safely consider the physical planets as the dense bodies, or vehicles, of the Planetary Spirits, who in turn are under, or within higher influences.³⁸

By ‘influence’ he means different vibratory states which supposedly permeate the universe. He also introduces the Vedantic concept of the three *gunas* (*tamas*, *rajas* and *sattva*) in this context, seeking to put the qualities of these *gunas* in Western terms by assigning *tamas* to ‘slavery,’ *rajas* to ‘service,’ and *sattva* to ‘mastery’; He also refers the *tamas* quality astrologically to the planet Saturn, in the sense of inertia and resistance.

Leo also held high standards with respect to the professional qualities of the astrologer, similar to those of HPB. In his presidential address he illustrates his ideas by quoting at length from the writings of a friend, a medical doctor in Norwich, who had elaborated 12 criteria essential to the competent astrologer. Reading from this long list he finally arrives at the one quality or characteristic which can never be achieved by training or education alone, even the best: “The astrologer’s invincible criterion is instinctive knowledge or intuition of truth; and which, not preceded by perceptible meditations, is genius.”³⁹

And he expresses the vision of his ideal by saying: “If the 20,000 students of Astrology added to their study some knowledge of the ideas of Theosophy, the most pronounced of which are those concerning Karma and

³⁸ M.A., Vol. IX, No. 2, February, 1912, p. 49.

³⁹ Alan Leo, Presidential Address given at the First Annual General Meeting of the Astrological Society, May 28, 1910, p. 2.

Reincarnation, the band who believe in brotherhood would be just doubled in size.”⁴⁰

Leo counters critics of the ‘Theosophical trend’ of astrology presented in his magazine by saying:

The “theosophical trend” consists of nothing more nor less than a belief in REINCARNATION, and a knowledge of the laws of fate or KARMA. There is no particular reason for calling it theosophical even, except for the fact that theosophists hold these ideas, which are common to the Eastern races as a fundamental part of their philosophy.⁴¹

Leo also advanced HPB’s ideas with respect to the importance of psychology in the practice of astrology. While he “did not use the language of philosophy, and I never heard him call himself a psychologist, but no one has better understood our mortal combination of Emotion, Reason and Will, or set it out so plainly before us.”⁴²

In the Art of Synthesis Leo outlined the relation between the universe and the human being in three major categories within which he sees a role for astrology. “Firstly, there is the Self, which is always hidden behind the veil of matter...”. He relates this Self to *consciousness*. “Secondly, there is the Not-self, which, from the point of view of any man, is the rest of the universe, everything animate and inanimate that is not himself.” He relates this Not-self to *the outer world*. “Thirdly, there is the Relation between

⁴⁰M.A., Vol. VIII, No. 7, July 1911, p. 275.

⁴¹M.A., Vol. VII, No. 5, May 1910, p. 178.

⁴²M.A. (Memorial Number), Vol. XIV, No. 12, December 1917, p. 378.

Self and Not-self; and this is represented concretely by the body in which the man is functioning.”⁴³

Each of these categories has great complexity according to him, and can be classified in various ways within the field of astrology through the planets and the signs of the zodiac.

In his opinion:

The second and third of these groups have received an undue share of attention from astrologers in the past, the first having been confined to ordinary descriptions of character. It is only in recent times that the importance of the astrology of the Self with its varying powers and states of consciousness has been recognized and attempts been made to develop it.⁴⁴

Leo popularized the phrase that “Character is Destiny”, and if such is the case,

il est alors nécessaire de faire du caractère le foyer et le point de départ de l’interprétation astrologique. C’est ainsi que naquit l’astrologie de la psyché ou astrologie psychologique dont l’interprétation ne souligne plus des questions du type longévité, richesse ou nombre d’enfants mais plutôt le pattern inherent à la personnalité. L’étude de l’astrologie psychologique fut cependant loin de constituer le but final de Léo.⁴⁵

Leo’s final goal was rather to combine psychology with the important Theosophical notions of karma and reincarnation. In other words he sought

⁴³Alan Leo, The Art of Synthesis (London: L.N. Fowler & Co. Ltd., Ninth Edition 1970), p. 11. Leo’s definition of the Self is that: “Under Self we include the varying types of character, disposition, temperament, and states of consciousness innumerable; all characteristic of planets and signs and their combinations.” (Ibid p. 11).

⁴⁴Ibid, p. 12.

⁴⁵Nick Campion, “Alan Leo: père de l’Astrologie Anglaise du XX^e Siècle,” in: La Vie Astrologique il y a cent ans, p. 27.

an astrology that incorporated spiritual (i.e. Theosophical) as well as psychological aspects.

8.2. Charles E.O. Carter

Charles Carter did not bring any new Theosophical ideas to astrology in the manner of Alan Leo. While Leo was the creator, Carter became the able custodian of Leo's legacy in his role as long-standing president of the body Leo founded in 1915, the *Astrological Lodge of the Theosophical Society*. In holding this position for almost 32 years, and differing with Leo in certain respects, Carter was nevertheless responsible for maintaining the Theosophical connection with astrology. John Addey (the founder and first president of the A.A.) has aptly described Carter's role in the following terms:

In the field of astrology and in relation to the institutions connected with his name he was not primarily an *initiator* (the magazine *Astrology* was his only 'creation' in this sense): he was, rather, the solid ground upon which others stood to do their initiating. Similarly, although endowed with considerable originality of thought he made relatively few innovations in astrological doctrine, but brought, instead, a greater unity, clarity and depth to existing concepts. ⁴⁶

Carter's role was thus quite different from that of the ground-breaking Leo, acting rather as the sustainer of the innovations he inherited, stabilizing and expanding on them. Unfortunately there is no extant source of biographical information on Carter as in the case of Alan Leo. We therefore have to rely mainly on articles or notes written by him, or about him by members of the

⁴⁶The Astrological Journal Vol. XI, No. 1, 1968/69, p. 2.

Lodge and others in various journals, as well as on the available verbal testimony of those still living who were formerly close to him.

a.) Biography

Charles E.O. Carter was born on January 31st, 1887 at Parkstone, in Dorset, England. He was the youngest of the four sons of William and Eliza Carter. His father was somewhat of an adventurer, having sought to make his fortune in America and Australia before finally settling once again in England where he became a newspaper proprietor and editor. He apparently took a great interest in political affairs and is said to have supported Annie Besant when she was prosecuted for an article on population control (which was considered 'obscene' at the time).⁴⁷

Carter's preparatory school education took place in England. However, the greater part of his secondary education was carried out in Germany, his father being impressed by the German education system. There Carter learned Greek, Latin, French and some Italian in addition to German. He early on took a keen interest in classical mythology and poetry, which he retained throughout his life. Between 1907 and 1910 he took an external degree in Logic, as well as in Law from London University. He did serve for a short time as a barrister (possibly around 1911) although he hints in a 1926 article that he did much better financially "in building and estate development".⁴⁸ His real estate gains and also those from successful betting on horse racing, made him financially independent later in life.

⁴⁷ Zach Matthews, The Carter Memorial Lecture, at the Astrological Lodge, 1979 (Audio Tape). A member of the A.L.T.S. gave the tape to me in 1989. Zach Matthews was contacted but could not provide me with his written script.

⁴⁸ Carter, Astrology, First issue, December 1926, p. 6.

He first came across astrology as a member of the Vegetarian Society during his student days in London. He writes about this incident: "I happened to see an advertisement of the late Alan Leo respecting shilling horoscopes, and this kindled a flame of enthusiasm for astrology that never died down."⁴⁹

In 1913 Carter married his life-long companion Gwendolyn Phyllis Pollock. She shared his interest in astrology throughout her life and continued to support his efforts in this respect.

Carter and David Freedman were among the few people present at the founding of *The Astrological Lodge of the Theosophical Society* in 1915, and never lost contact with the Lodge from then on. However Carter's enthusiasm for astrology was briefly interrupted when he joined the British Army in the First World War, serving as a Captain in the Royal Artillery from 1916 until he returned to London in 1919. The following year saw him in service once again for a short period, this time with the occupation forces in Cologne (possibly because of his knowledge of German).

In the meantime Freedman and a small band of supporters had been struggling to keep the Lodge going. In describing his impressions Carter writes: "When I returned from the war in the autumn of 1919, after Alan Leo's death, I found most of the activities which had been fostered were in a process of decline."⁵⁰

Carter's first priority, with the support of Freedman, was in devoting his full attention to reviving the Lodge. Bessie Leo remained president but was

⁴⁹Ibid, p. 5.

⁵⁰Ibid, p. 5.

eventually outmaneuvered and succeeded by Carter in January 1922. By then membership had increased substantially, and Mrs. Rhodes states in a lecture delivered in 1930: "not only has the Lodge benefited and increased by our president's constant and faithful service, but the whole cause of Astrology has advanced as well."⁵¹ Carter achieved this surge in membership during the early years of his presidency at the Lodge by arranging a greater number of astrological lectures in proportion to the Theosophical ones. This attracted new members whose primary interest was astrology.

Carter also wanted a better home for the organization and finally succeeded in housing the Lodge meetings in the respectable Hall of the Art Worker's Guild on Queen Square. To this he remarked: "... the first time for many a long century, I think, that astrology has been housed in fitting surroundings, at least in Europe."⁵²

It is not quite clear when Carter joined the London T.S. though this could have been as early as 1915 when he assisted with the founding of the Lodge. He would definitively have joined by 1922 since only T.S. members could hold official positions in the Lodge.⁵³

Besides his many articles for astrological magazines, Carter soon started writing books on astrology. He published several valuable books on various facets of astrology during his lifetime. His first publication was An

⁵¹.Ibid. p. 8.

⁵².Ibid. p. 5.

⁵³ T.S. membership listings have been and often still are carried out by volunteers, and are thus not always as complete as one might hope. However, he has been confirmed as a member of the T.S. through records in the archives of the T.S. in Wheaton. The same problem arises in the case of obituary notices. Thus no obituary was found for Carter in the issues of the London T.S. bulletin following his death in October 1968.

Encyclopaedia of Psychological Astrology, published in 1924 by the Theosophical Publishing House in London. The book reflects the growing interest for psychology within the astrological community and also contains information on medical astrology, a special interest of Carter. It has been on the AFA book-list until quite recently.

In 1925 he published his second book, The Principles of Astrology, also through the London T.S. It is still in print. In 1928 he wrote the Zodiac and the Soul, which contains his philosophical views with respect to astrology, many of which are in the range of Theosophical teachings. It is also still widely read.

Carter also launched two magazines (the first was Uranus) in the years after assuming the presidency of the Lodge, since he and Bessie Leo did not see eye to eye on many matters.⁵⁴ But he also wanted an official journal for the Lodge that would be independent of Alan Leo's Modern Astrology, then edited by Bessie Leo. The first issue of Astrology (the Astrologers' Quarterly) was finally launched in December 1926, and the journal—affectionately called 'Quarterly,' has been successful ever since. Later it was renamed Astrology Quarterly. It has since provided a reputable international forum for intelligent discussions on all aspects of astrology.

The idea of a Faculty of Astrology as an educational institution was originally brought forward by one of the members of the Lodge. But it was Carter's support for this idea which led to its foundation in 1948. He gave

⁵⁴ Carter describes Bessie as "a queer old body if there ever was one...she had a great talent for what I would describe as inept interference." Carter, "Reminiscences of Alan Leo," Astrology, Vol. 39, No. 4, December 1965, p. 121.

it his personal and financial backing, the latter by funds left in his care for the advancement of astrology. It was he who suggested that the Astrological Lodge of the Theosophical Society should sponsor the venture, naming [him] the first Principal and giving him power to choose his officers and set the organization in motion.⁵⁵

He also compiled the Faculty's Code of Ethics which may well have served as the model for the Ethical Code of the AFA in North America.

Carter stepped down as president of the Lodge in November 1952, but remained principal of the Faculty until 1954.⁵⁶ Upon resigning from the presidency he was given a small camera in recognition of his services. In November 1959 he resigned from the editorship of Astrology but remained Patron of the A.A. Again there was a little ceremony: this time he received the gift of a tape recorder.

Mr. Freedman recalled his early association with Mr. Carter and mentioned the part played by Alan Leo in those days in establishing a high standard of astrological journalism in the magazine "Modern Astrology". The Lodge Quarterly was the natural successor to "Modern Astrology" and Mr. Carter had only faithfully upheld and sustained the standards set by Alan Leo over the years but he had also enabled readers of the magazine to enjoy the fruits of his own astrological wisdom.⁵⁷

According to an editorial written by Ronald C. Davison (editor of Astrology at that time, and later president of the Lodge), Mrs. Carter died in late 1962. Davison characterizes her as having a "gentle and unassuming personality. Although she rarely spoke at meetings she was devoted to the

⁵⁵ John Addey, The Astrological Journal Vol. XI, No. 1, 1968/69 p. 5.

⁵⁶ Astrology, Vol.33, No...4,p.56f, Dec.1953, also John Addey, The Astrological Journal December, 1961.

⁵⁷ Astrology, Vol. 33, No. 4, December 1959 p. 102.

Lodge and its ideals and was a regular attender. In a way she typified the kind of member who is not only the backbone of our Lodge but of all groups...".⁵⁸

As time went on, and more and more non-Theosophist members joined the Lodge it became difficult to balance the resulting tensions of the two bodies (see section 7.3). The following observation by Carter might well be an oblique criticism of the T.S. organization itself: "However, those organizations that make a great parade of secrecy have as a rule but little that is genuinely esoteric in their possession, and often their assumption of the mysterious is but a bait to attract the foolish..."⁵⁹ Of course the organization suffered serious losses in membership and reputation after the rejection, by Krishnamurti, of his role as Messiah for the T.S. Carter was later to make a rather more direct astrological indictment of the long standing former president of the T.S., explaining that: "Dr. Besant was of course an extreme case, because of the Uranus oppositions. However brilliant she was, her Saturn was weak in Pisces in the 12th and therefore her hold on 'hard facts' was but a slippery one."⁶⁰

On the other hand Carter was not confrontational by nature but a reserved and rather private individual who tended to be evasive about his own views on controversial issues, whether on matters of astrology or Theosophy. This evasiveness is apparent in his manner of expressing that:

It will be out of place to try to explain my personal philosophy, and many who read this will already possess their own. A generally

⁵⁸ Astrology Vol 36, No. 4, December 1962 p. 1.

⁵⁹ Carter, Astrology, Vol. 23, No. 2, June 1949 p. 6.

⁶⁰ Carter, Astrology Vol. 33 No. 4, December 1959 p. 111.

acceptable conception is necessary, for particular beliefs only attract certain types. Thus many find Reincarnation a consoling doctrine; but others regard it as the very reverse.⁶¹

It was no doubt exactly because of Carter's evasiveness, or let us call it 'diplomatic attitude', toward such matters, that he was able to keep a delicate balance in the Lodge for such a long time, not only between different viewpoints among astrologers within the Lodge, but more importantly between the Lodge (as an astrological entity) and members of the T.S. who were antagonistic towards the Lodge in its astrological function (a problem discussed earlier). He was apparently assisted in his efforts by a Miss Rigg, an early member of the Lodge.⁶²

Carter also formed a small group with close friends, known as the '*Universal Order*,' though not restricted to astrologers it would seem. Membership was by invitation only and meetings were held monthly, apparently at his home. A number of prominent figures of the Lodge, Faculty and A.A. were part of this group although otherwise nothing is publicly known about this exclusive circle.⁶³

Carter apparently suffered from claustrophobia which restricted his travels by train or air. With the exception of travel during his youth and World War I, and a visit to Jamaica in 1914, his movements consisted mainly in covering the short distance between London and his Dorset home and local travel in England. Not that this had any effect on his international reputation for his contributions to astrology. His contacts with astrologers

⁶¹Carter, The Astrological Aspects (Romford, Essex U.K.: L.N. Fowler & Co. Ltd., 14th Edition, 1977) p. 15.

⁶²M. Rhodes, "The Lodge Map and its Progressions", p. 10.

⁶³Douglas Burn, Astrology Vol. 61, No. 1, Spring 1987 p. 7ff.

in North America were seemingly numerous and already are revealed by the advertisement of an American lady astrologer and Theosophist in the first issue of Astrology in 1926. Her name also appears with his in one of the early yearbooks of the AFA though it is not clear what role, if any, Carter may have played in the foundation of this important U.S. organization. However we have it from one of its members that he also corresponded with Mr. Ernest Grant, who was one of the prime movers in the foundation of the AFA.⁶⁴

Many years later Carter definitely became “one of the founders of the International Society for Astrological Research, accepting the position of Honorary Vice-President at the time of incorporation. His collaboration in the first months of ISAR’s existence has been invaluable.”⁶⁵

Carter dedicated his whole life to the cause of astrology through his work at the Lodge, the journal Astrology, as well as through his support for the institutional offspring of the Lodge. Nothing expresses his life long commitment and dedication more than the following statement that: “Astrology remains what it has been for just short of fifty years—an unflinching interest and consolation, in the study of which I have invariably found refuge from the worries and distractions that must sometimes occur in the best of lives.”⁶⁶

Charles Carter died on the 4th of October 1968 as a result of complications arising from a stroke he had suffered shortly before.

⁶⁴He did for example send in a paper to be read at the 1946 AFA Convention.

⁶⁵Kosmos (Newsletter of the ISAR), Vol. 1 No. 3, November 1968 p. 3.

⁶⁶Carter, Astrology, Vol. 33, No. 4, December 1959 p. 105.

b.) Appraisals by Others

The life and legacy of Charles E.O. Carter has inspired numerous testimonials of his contributions to astrology in Great Britain and North America over the years. That he is still held in high esteem internationally is clear not only from the fact that sales of his books continue unabated but also in the memorials to his life that have been written by his many students, associates and admirers. In the words of one admirer: "Mr. Carter has done a great job by taking the torch from Alan Leo and continuing the work of the Lodge all these many years. He knew someone had to do it and he was the one."⁶⁷ John Addey, the president of the A.A., in a speech honoring Carter's 75th birthday, went as far as to call Carter the 'pivot' upon which all the astrological activities, particularly in Britain turned, revitalizing the interest in astrology.⁶⁸

A later obituary suggests that, in his role as president of the Lodge, Carter was "directly involved in every important step taken during the dramatic renaissance of serious astrological activity in twentieth century Britain."⁶⁹ Margaret Hone, a successful author in her own right who had succeeded Carter as principal of the Faculty, and who had worked closely with him in the Lodge, adds:

Through his careful and scholarly writings, and his Libran chairmanship of the Astrological Lodge of London, the Headquarters of Astrology in Great Britain, the 'Royal Art' has flourished in this

⁶⁷ The Astrological Journal Vol. XI, No. 1, 1968/69 p. 7.

⁶⁸ The Astrological Journal, December 1961, p. 6.

⁶⁹ Kosmos (Newsletter of the ISAR), Vol. 1, No. 3, November 1968, p. 3.

century, has been purged of many of its superstitions and has gained the respect of all who give time to its study.⁷⁰

At the suggestion of John Addey, the A.A. and the Lodge decided to dedicate a Carter Memorial Lecture, held once a year at the A.A. and the Lodge in his honor.⁷¹ The Faculty had earlier established a Carter Scholarship:

Each year the Principal-Emeritus, Charles E.O. Carter gives an award to whichever student, having taken the Junior Course, gains highest marks in the examination for the Certificate. The award covers the cost of fees for the Senior Course and the entrance fee for the Diploma examination.⁷²

Carter offered support to all the new enterprises created by former members of the Lodge who were, more often than not, no longer close to the T.S. This raises some question about his own relations with the T.S. However, his reticence on all matters of a personal or philosophical nature, does not yield enough information to do any more than speculate on these matters. John Addey nevertheless emphasizes that: "Carter affirmed from the outset his belief in the need for an independent Astrological Association and has been a most staunch and generous Patron."⁷³

Carter also showed considerable skill in homeopathy and his knowledge of pets made him especially dear to many of his close friends.⁷⁴ He is revered around the world, for his books but also the correspondence courses of the Faculty in which he had a hand. As a student explains: "Mr.

⁷⁰Kosmos (Newsletter of the ISAR), Vol. 1 No. 3, November 1968, p. 5.

⁷¹Astrology, Vol. 42, No. 4, December 1968 p. 107.

⁷²Astrology, Vol. 38, No. 4, December 1964 p. 132.

⁷³The Astrological Journal, December 1961 p. 6.

⁷⁴Ibid., p. 2.

Carter was well known throughout the world, though many of us never knew him except through his many good deeds which will be long remembered.⁷⁵ Many of his students and associates also felt after his death that they “have all lost a ‘father’ and guiding spirit.”⁷⁶

c.) Carter’s Ideas about Astrology

As already indicated, Carter was not an initiator but structured the existing situation and provided the “solid ground on which others stood to do their initiating.”⁷⁷

Carter did not agree with all of Leo’s ideas, especially those contained in Leo’s book Esoteric Astrology, which Carter strongly criticized in his later years.⁷⁸ He may have felt that Leo had fallen under the influence of the second generation of Theosophists under Besant, of whom he did not think very highly, as already reported. However, both Carter and Leo had to tread a fine line among the Theosophists. We may recall here how much Leo himself had suffered at their hands. Without him acknowledging it directly, the more philosophical elements in Carter’s writing however, does reflect his Theosophical bent, as for example when he writes about astrology being part of the Arcane Tradition which

...has appeared in many forms at different periods and in different countries, and, whilst ever inwardly the same, its outward presentations have varied. A modern European may feel drawn towards the wisdom as it appeared in ancient Egypt, or in the Upanishads, or in the Greek or Chaldean Mysteries. All these are

⁷⁵The Astrological Journal, Vol.XI, No. 1, 1968/69,p.6

⁷⁶Ibid, p. 6.

⁷⁷Ibid, p. 2.

⁷⁸In Search Vol. 2, No .2, 1974 p. 10ff.

temporal and local expressions of what is essentially beyond time and space, the *Philosophia Perennis*, as Aldous Huxley calls it.⁷⁹

Carter was a prominent astrologer and Theosophist and seems to have assimilated most of the tenets of Theosophy which Leo had reintroduced to astrology. He most certainly feels that the astrologer has to look beyond the material side of life to get “a right understanding of the Arcane Tradition... must look to find an adequate background for his astrological thought, whilst attempts to ingratiate ourselves with the physicist will merely lead to humiliating rebuffs.”⁸⁰

The following passage from the same article shows a somewhat vague definition of ‘esoteric’. He writes:

...esoteric has acquired another common meaning, namely something that belongs to a greater or less degree to a certain attitude of mind and tradition, which exists all over the world, differing in outward form but always marked by an essential similarity of view-point so that, for example, a student of the Kabbalah, an Indian yogi, a Chinese Taoist, a Tibetan disciple of the Mahayana, an alchemist or a gnostic would all understand one another. On the other hand, a modern scientist would lump them all together as ignorant beings who had not yet out-grown the notions of the Dark Ages.⁸¹

The implication here too is that astrologers should not try to adjust their practice to the current standards of science. This position certainly agrees with the way HPB felt about this subject.

⁷⁹Carter, “Astrology and Esotericism,” *Astrology*, Vol. 23, No. 2, June 1949 p. 13.

⁸⁰*Ibid*, p. 13.

⁸¹*Ibid*, p. 6.

He also believes in a close relation between some form of Kabbalah (or a spiritual system of numbers based on Pythagoras) and astrology since this would provide:

a key, to secrets after which many astrologers have sought but which lie outside the scope of a book such as this and are of such a nature that the present writer will certainly never commit them to print, lest they be put to unworthy uses by those who have not earned a title to this knowledge.⁸²

He is also in agreement with HPB, and goes on to emphasize, like her, the need for secrecy with respect to certain occult knowledge.

According to Carter's friends, and statements made in his own writings, he was attracted to Neoplatonism and also Taoism, though he also acknowledged key notions of Hindu philosophy. He mentions for example, that the Bhagavad Gita and the three *gunas* (*tamas*, *rajas*, and *sattva*) point to the "numerous values of astrology, that it provides objective proofs of profound archetypal ideas."⁸³

His acceptance of the notion of karma and reincarnation, (major tenets of Leo's 'Theosophical astrology') are also evident, particularly in chapter V of The Zodiac and the Soul.

And, since the body is useful to it [soul] in its quest for self-gnosis, this attachment is perfectly right, except when the soul forgets itself, identifies itself with the body... Thus it becomes attached to worldly objects both in the way of hate and love... Between its lives on earth

⁸² Charles E.O. Carter, The Zodiac and The Soul (London: The Theosophical Publishing House, 1983) p. 78.

⁸³ Ibid, p. 12.

the soul probably returns to a condition more similar to its own nature... ⁸⁴

This critique of self-forgetfulness and attachment to worldly objects also exhibits a close affinity with the Hinduism (Vedanta philosophy) as accepted in Theosophical teachings.

He also embraced the Hermetic notion of the microcosm and the macrocosm, as expressed e.g. in the 'law of correspondences', and felt that: "belief in the chaotic and haphazard government of the Universe is hardly possible to the astrologer, and from a perception of the unfailing *physical* order of things we can venture to have faith in a corresponding *moral* order."⁸⁵

Carter was also quite critical of certain modern trends in astrology. As noted above, he does not feel that astrology should attempt to accommodate modern science, and he also finds fault with new trends towards statistical, technical or empirical attempts to validate astrology. In his view, for example:

Doctors and psychologists are beginning to use astrology, not as a result of rigid tests, but simply because they find that it serves a useful purpose in their clinical work. This is a welcome development, but it must be borne in mind that for the most part the people are empiricists, not philosophers, and therefore they cannot help us in our present quest. They only know what we already know, that Astrology "works."⁸⁶

⁸⁴ Ibid, p. 78.

⁸⁵ M.A. Vol. XIX (New Series), No. 4, April 1922 p. 112.

⁸⁶ Carter, op cit Astrology, Vol. 23, No. 2, June 1949 p. 9.

Furthermore he does not feel that the truth of astrology lies in the details since, in his experience, horoscopes: "are not sharply defined photographs: sometimes they are badly out of focus and blurred..." In addition:

I would assert that we should go too far were we to claim that the horoscope shows everything in precision... [It is not a] magical script, in which all is set down and fixed to the smallest detail...It is much more reasonable to say, with Ptolemy, that the astrologer can but speak in general terms: only God knows details. ⁸⁷

The problem is that: "On every hand, in Astrological circles, one hears the constant cry for proof - proof in the form of endless collections of physical data..."⁸⁸

Carter also has an opinion on the qualities of the astrologer which is very much in line with that of Leo and HPB. He continues in the same article: "...there are very few modern students of Astrology who are able to regard themselves as spiritual beings, and obviously, while this is so, we can scarcely expect them to consider even the possibilities of spiritual principles working from within." And he not only attacks the public who tend to judge astrology superficially, but also the astrologers who bow down to such public pressure. He says:

True Astrology is a most important branch of one of the greatest of all sciences - that of the Human Soul. How sad, then, that many

⁸⁷ Carter, The Alan Leo Memorial lecture, 1937, reprinted in Astrology, Vol. 61, No. 1, Spring 1987 p. 16 and 17. This is echoed by Ronald Davison, a student of Carter, who writes with respect on this problem: "Although astrological truth is demonstrable, man needs a rational explanation for its validity but because the real basis of astrology lies outside 'time' and 'space' in the sense that we comprehend them it is almost impossible to provide such explanation in terms that will appeal to the materialistic minded. Astrology deals not only with the nature of things but with their latent possibilities, which are located in a dimension not apparent to our five senses." Ronald C. Davison, Astrology, The Classic Guide to understanding your Horoscope (Sebastopol CA: CRCS Publications, 1987) p. 7.

⁸⁸ Carter, Uranus Vol. II, No. 2, October 1924 p. 62.

approach her, in their ignorance, with the old, old cry: "Prophecy unto us!" and think that a correct forecast of some public event is more important than the knowledge which allows us to penetrate far beneath the obvious and the superficial, to the very heart of man.⁸⁹

We may conclude this review of his ideas with his optimistic call to the astrological community: "I have more hopes of winning acceptance from philosophers than from scientists. Nevertheless the battle shall be won - and the sooner, the better for human enlightenment."⁹⁰

8.3. Marc Edmund Jones

The significance of Marc Edmund Jones for our hypothesis stems from the fact that he is highly regarded in North America as an astrologer and philosopher as well as a Theosophist. He became familiar with, and was influenced by, Theosophical teachings early in life. He had a high regard for HPB and Theosophy, to which he refers on numerous occasions, and is of the opinion that: "Perhaps the most important work in modern Western occultism is the *Secret Doctrine* by Helena Petrovna Blavatsky."⁹¹

He is distinct however, in the Christian bent of his Theosophy, which also spills over into his astrology. This may have attracted people to astrology who otherwise might have rejected it. He was influenced in this unconventional Christian approach toward astrology and philosophy in

⁸⁹ Alan Leo Memorial Lecture 1937, p. 18.

⁹⁰ Carter, Kosmos (Journal of the ISAR), Vol. 1, No. 3, November 1968, p. 5.

⁹¹ Marc E. Jones, The Sabian Manual: a ritual for living (Stanwood, Wash.: Sabian Publishing Society, 1957) p. 52. However, Jones does fault HPB for giving out too much information about the Masters, (which even she herself later bemoans). He writes: "Thus it was probably a mistake to give out much if anything at all about the Masters of Wisdom, since the average person could not have and never can have any means for knowing whether he is making touch with a real one...Hence every charlatan since has peddled his truths on an authority which is accepted in general but beyond checking...." Stan Carnarius, Marc Edmund Jones Perspectives & Selections (Internal publication of the Sabian Assembly, 1984) p. 55,

general by his early commitment to the Presbyterian faith, as well as by the Christian Theosophist James M. Pryce, author of The Apocalypse Unsealed, a symbolic interpretation of the Book of Revelations. We might also mention here his attraction to the writings of Ibn Gabriol, an 11th century Jewish philosopher and Kabbalist who lived in Spain. Alfred Jacob, a friend and student of Jones and member of the *Sabian Assembly* (a group Jones created together with his students) translated one of his works called, The Fountain of Life under the encouragement and guidance of Jones.

There is a sketchy biography of Jones compiled from diary notes by Stan Carnarius, a short "Photo Essay" by Diana Roche posted on the Internet as well as other unofficial biographical material furnished by members of the *Sabian Assembly* that were kindly made available to us at their 1997 Annual Conference near Philadelphia. Other information derives from his books, and an article published on the occasion of his 90th birthday.

a.) Biography

Mark Edmund Jones was born on October the 1st 1888 in St. Louis, Missouri, as the first child of his parents. A sister was born nine years later. In his early childhood his parents moved to Chicago where he grew up. Although his mother was Protestant and his father Catholic, neither seems to have been orthodox in their belief. Jones remembers there being a consensus "that we, my sister (Helen) and I were to be permitted to find our own way. There was no religion in the family."⁹² He also remembers that his father read a lot. There was apparently some Theosophical influence in his childhood, as well as Christian Scientism through their immediate

⁹²Jonas R. Mather, The Sabian Way: a compilation of the Philosophy of Dr. Marc Edmund Jones (Levittown, Penn.: Limited pre-publication edition, 1997), condensation of chapter "The Man," p. 2.

neighbors.⁹³ A visit to the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago which was held in 1893 (the same year as the World's Parliament of Religion), made a lasting impression on the five year old boy and spurred his interest for detail and perfectionism. These traits revealed themselves later at John Dewey's experimental high school in Chicago when he planed away the surface of a board in an attempt to get it just right.⁹⁴

At the age of 16 he made a lifelong Christian commitment at a Presbyterian church near his home. There he organized a preparatory Bible class for boys his own age. Later he became involved in the Christian Endeavor movement and eventually practiced as a pastor in California for a time. He dropped out of high school when he was about 18 years old to go into business. His father had some connections with the Pullman Company so Jones worked there in the railroad yards for a short period, before moving to the Western Electric Company. Income was low and he sought other ways to make some extra money. Jones soon discovered a talent for writing and started writing screen scenarios, the first of which was sold in 1912 for \$20. This marked the beginning of a 10-year long career in writing scenarios and fiction.

He came to know of astrology one evening in 1913 when friends took him to the wife of another friend who used to arrange open evenings where she gave short but pointed horoscope readings for those who came. The

⁹³M.E. Jones, The Sabian Manuel: a ritual for living (Stanwood, Wash.: Sabian Publishing Society, 1957) p. 23.

⁹⁴Diana E. Roche, "A Photo Essay of the Life and Work of Dr. Marc Edmund Jones," (Sabian Society Web Page: <http://www.voicenet.com/~droche/mej.html>) p. 2.

experience was sufficiently intriguing for him to buy himself some books on the subject.⁹⁵

He also started to become more successful in writing scenarios at this time, selling a total of 39 in 1914. The following year he traveled to Bermuda with a film company. He sold 18 scenarios and became "Scenario Editor for Equitable Motion Picture Corp."⁹⁶ However, he realized there was little legal protection for screen writers after one of his scripts was stolen. This prompted him and some other writer friends to found what later became the *Screen Writers Guild of America*.

According to a close associate of Jones (whom we met at the Sabian Assembly Conference in July 1997), his work for the film industry netted him an astrological consultation with Ronald Reagan, then a movie actor. Reagan apparently also sought consultations from Jones during his early years as Governor before becoming President of the United States.

After his mother died in 1914 Jones pursued his studies in astrology and philosophy even more intensely. "On October 17, 1914 his experience of what occultists usually describe as a 'Master' in the flesh led to his working contacts with Theosophy and then in train with New Thought, Spiritualism and an ever-widening world of transcendental literature and activities."⁹⁷ This meeting with a 'Master' a couple of weeks after his 26th birthday resulted in a lifelong association with Theosophical groups such as the *Rosicrucian Fellowship* of Max Heindel (a former Theosophist) in

⁹⁵ *Phenomena*, Vol. 2.5, Sept/Oct. 1978 p. 20.

⁹⁶ Diana Roche, "A Photo Essay," p. 2.

⁹⁷ M.E. Jones, *The Sabian Manuel: a ritual for living* (Stanwood, Washington: Sabian Publishing Society, 1957) p. 21.

California, which he joined the following year. He soon taught classes there as well.⁹⁸ His diary notes suggest that he must have kept in touch with HPB's Masters over a long period of time.⁹⁹

But Jones' activities were interrupted by army service in World War I when he was drafted into the army and became editor of the camp paper. After attending Officers Training School he was honorably discharged at the end of 1919. He immediately went back to writing scenarios, but after discovering that well known novels were in more popular demand he switched to writing science fiction, mystery stories etc.

Jones was to become an extremely prolific writer in his long life, producing a total of 73 film scenarios, 46 scenarios, 46 pieces of published short fiction, 45 articles on astrology, and 17 books in the astrological and occult field, in addition to numerous study lessons for the *Sabian Assembly*.¹⁰⁰

Jones went on to live an extremely busy and eventful life, and was without a steady home after High school until about 1955 when friends presented him with a house in Stanwood (near Seattle) in the state of Washington.

"Aside from his pastorate and his early jobs after leaving high school, Marc Edmund Jones never held a regular job, but earned his living as a free-lance writer and counselor."¹⁰¹ He first traveled on business but was later almost constantly on the road between giving lectures, particularly on astrology, studying and writing. This left him without a safety net for his

⁹⁸.Diana Roche, "A Photo Essay," p. 3.

⁹⁹.Carnarius, Marc Edmund Jones, p. 46ff.

¹⁰⁰.Jonas R. Mather, The Sabian Way, p. 2.

¹⁰¹.Carnarius, Marc Edmund Jones p. 6.

old age, though this did not seem to bother him or even be necessary, since he kept active throughout his long life.

In December 1922 Jones began teaching weekly classes at the Judson Tower in New York, at which he sought a 'new way' of structuring astrology. A year later he was back again in California where he met Manly Palmer Hall. The two men struck up an instant rapport and Jones soon resumed his classes at Manly Palmer Hall's *Church of the People* in Los Angeles. October 1923 is the date Jones marks as the birth of the *Sabian Assembly*, a group which still continues to preserve and expand his work (as will be explained later in this section).

He went through a brief marriage in 1917, but it was while teaching in California in 1923 that he met his life long companion, Priscilla Kennedy Chandler. She was already in pursuit of her own spiritual interests, and was also knowledgeable in astrology. They got married in 1926. She strongly supported her husband in his work, accompanied him on his lecture tours, and was a critical help in editing his writing. She died in 1976 after serious health problems involving a number of operations. 1923 was also the year he met Elsie Wheeler, a psychic and student with whom he worked intensively. One day in 1925 he went with her to Balboa Park in San Diego, and she psychically produced the now famous *Sabian Symbols* under his guidance.¹⁰²

Jones was somewhat of a loner even as a child as he himself admits, and was often caught up in his own world. He soon realized that this could be a handicap in dealing with others in the pursuit of common goals.

¹⁰².Diana Roche, "A Photo Essay," p. 5ff.

My whole work in developing the occult and astrological principles started out as individual and at the beginning I never thought of it as anything else. But I found it couldn't be that way. I enjoyed the freedom of my own original way of thinking until I discovered the hard way that it was a handicap in communication. So I had to take the time out for formalizing the self-educating process, to get the equipment I needed. So that involved a very great deal of work with other people... a range of minds and a range of perspectives... ¹⁰³

It was through ties with Jennie E. Bollenbacher, a Theosophist (who incidentally was also among the early members of the AFA), during a series of conferences at the Theosophical community at Halcyon, California in the 1930's, that Jones finally joined the Adyar T.S. of the Columbus Lodge in Ohio, and remained a member throughout his life.¹⁰⁴ In reading The Secret Doctrine he found that the ideas formulated "by Blavatsky and those of the invisible fellowship on whom she draws is a monumental achievement by any standards of judgment"¹⁰⁵. But he believed that the clearest simplification of her work, which he regarded as essentially mathematical, "is unquestionably the *Rosicrucian Cosmo-Conception* by Max Heindel."¹⁰⁶

Jones attempts to integrate and reconcile HPB's eclectic philosophy with his own early commitment to Christianity spurred his interest for further study. "In 1932, he began a three-year program for the Bachelor of Divinity degree at the San Francisco Theological Seminary at San Anselmo."¹⁰⁷ He had already been ordained before finishing his degree in 1935, and served

¹⁰³ Carnarius, Marc Edmund Jones, p. 52.

¹⁰⁴ M.E. Jones, Sabian Manuel, p. 23.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid. p.53.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid. p. 53.

¹⁰⁷ Stan Carnarius, Marc Edmund Jones, p. 6.

as a Pastor in Esparto, California until 1938. He then moved back to New York to study at Columbia University where he graduated with a Ph.D in philosophy in 1948 (his thesis topic was on George Sylvester Morris). In 1957 he lectured at a workshop in Mexico in company with the well known authors, D.T. Suzuki and Erich Fromm.

“He continued to serve in a ministerial capacity when requested to do so until 1963, when he severed his ties with the regular orthodox church.”¹⁰⁸ By this time he was 75 years old and had suffered severe health problems. However, he continued writing and was also soon back on lecture tours to various conferences etc. At 90 he published his final book, The Counseling Manual in Astrology. Despite occasional health set backs, he continued a busy schedule of writing and lecturing up to his death from a fall in February 1980.

Through his many lecture tours, together with his books and articles on astrology, Jones became a prominent name in astrological circles in North America. He once described his ten year friendship with Paul Clancy, the proprietor of American Astrology, (which played an important part in the spread of astrology at the time), as “a happy, rewarding and at times adventuresome experience.”¹⁰⁹

Jones was an original thinker and injected a number of new insights into astrology, such as the Sabian Symbols and the interpretation of planetary patterns. He was also among the founding members of the *American Federation of Astrologers*. His impact on North American astrology and occult philosophy has been profound. The existence of the *Sabian Assembly*

¹⁰⁸ Ibid. p. 6.

¹⁰⁹ M. E. Jones, Astrology: How and Why it Works (Baltimore: Penguin Books, Inc., 1971) p. ix.

as an active body of members dedicated to furthering and applying Jones' ideas into practice, is itself testimony of his continuing influence on 20th century astrology and occult philosophy at this time.

b.) Appraisals by Others

In an interview for the magazine Phenomena on the occasion of his 90th birthday, Jones is introduced as: "One of the best known authorities in modern astrology."¹¹⁰ And an article published in honor of the centennial of his birth states that:

By his efforts—and the work of others—the state of disarray in which astrology found itself at the start of the twentieth century was brought to greater order as the result of his work with rational systems. Because of this he stands out as one of the giants of astrological thought in this century. He helped prepare astrology to meet the times ahead and thus contributed greatly to the oncoming of the whole New Age that is presently upon us...In the 1930's and 40's Jones produced many articles for astrology magazines and published a series of textbooks often at the insistence of his students. These ten volumes were pivotal in the overall development of modern astrology and are basic tools in the field.¹¹¹

And the writer goes on to acknowledge Jones' personal qualities by remarking:

In astrology, one may gain recognition as an outstanding speaker (communications, public relations), as a counselor (psychology, therapy technique), or as an organizer (group dynamics, administration). The list of possible ways to shine goes on and on. Mark Edmund Jones was highly skilled in each of these areas.¹¹²

¹¹⁰ Phenomena, Vol. 2.5, September/October 1978, p. 19.

¹¹¹ Gavin Kent McClung, "Astrology's Centennial Salute to Pioneer Marc Edmund Jones," Horoscope, November 1988, p. 34.

¹¹² Ibid., p. 31ff.

An internal publication of the *Sabian Assembly* comments that the impact of Marc Edmund Jones on astrology “has been to pull astrology in the direction of responsible psychological counseling. Without fortunetelling, the astrologer can help the client see the major variables in the life and situation and understand better how they interact so the power of action remains with the client.”¹¹³

His books have had a considerable impact on the perspective and practice of many professional astrologers, Dane Rudhyar among them, as well as on beginners in the field, regardless of their philosophical or religious backgrounds. Most of Jones’ books are still in print; two of them are published by the T.S. Publishing House and others are distributed internationally by the AFA and other distributors. Another key factor in his continued influence is the *Sabian Assembly*, described briefly in what follows.

c.) The Sabian Assembly

What is the *Sabian Assembly* ? It is essentially a group of dedicated students that tries to understand the roots and sources of Jones’ philosophy, religion and science. It is neither a cult, nor a religion. Anyone can join the *Sabian Assembly* who is interested enough to study its astrological or philosophical ideas. A considerable number of its members are also members of the T.S., but even non-Theosophical members are to a large degree familiar with the works of HPB and other Theosophists. The *Assembly* holds an Annual Summer Conference for its members and a required annual membership meeting for the Publishing Society (which is incorporated).

¹¹³ Camarius, Marc Edmund Jones, p. 11.

During Jones' life time the *Assembly* counted almost 300 members, but this has steadily declined since his death and the deaths of a number of his followers. The term Sabian was adopted gradually. Jones had "employed the term originally in his Key Truth of Occult Philosophy...1925 (later republished as Occult Truth), to identify the fifth Atlantian subrace...Its adoption as a name for the work, then fairly well in progress, was a curiously casual contribution of the students in the California classes."¹¹⁴

It was astrology that provided the original focus of the *Assembly*, but as time went on this base was extended to other areas of knowledge. We were informed that about half the present membership take an interest in both astrology and the 'Sabian philosophy:' the remainder are primarily there for the philosophy. As a result attention has been:

directed to the bible, to the world's philosophers...studies of Plato... Aristotle and Plotinus for further development of Platonic insights, to New Thought...the cabala as redeveloped for modern life on the basis of Ibn Gabriol's contribution, to symbolism in its ageless roots, to Theosophy and Spiritualism for their impact on recent times, and to the occult traditions of the East and West.¹¹⁵

Jones put together a suggested reading list for all members of the *Assembly* which contains as essential literature, HPB's Secret Doctrine, the Enneads of Plotinus, The Apocalypse Unsealed, by James M. Pryce, In Tune with the Infinite by Ralph Waldo Trine, Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures by Mary Baker Eddy, and an eclectic mixture of other Theosophical and Christian works.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁴M.E. Jones, Sabian Manual p. 19.

¹¹⁵*Ibid*, p. 44.

¹¹⁶*Ibid*, p. 54ff.

The *Assembly* includes a range of rituals designed to guide the student through a hierarchy of grades of knowledge. A few of these, such as the full moon ceremony, are in part described in the Sabian Manual, others are reserved for members only as they evolve in their studies. Jones had become acquainted with various ritual practices during his early affiliations with groups such as Max Heindel's *Rosicrucian Fellowship*, Manly Palmer Hall's *Church of the People*, and Freemasonry, as well as with the T.S.

Jones had observed the infighting and resulting divisions within the Theosophical Movement, and this left him wary of establishing an organization along hierarchical lines. He describes how: "In Theosophical circles I began to encounter a vast complex of unconscious charlatanry, and I realized that while primarily I was trying to clarify astrology, I had along with it an infinitely more difficult job of clarifying the more general popular occult. As a result I have established the Sabian Assembly..."¹¹⁷

The most important principle of the Sabian project has therefore "always been to avoid at all costs setting up a central headquarters with corresponding staff. The work of maintaining and issuing lesson materials continues now, as then in the hands of dedicated volunteers."¹¹⁸ This leads Gavin Kent McClung to believe that Jones' main contribution to astrology may lie in this organizational direction, "for he was deeply concerned with eradicating the intellectual temptation of control over others which abuse of the true astrological tenets may sometimes invite."¹¹⁹

¹¹⁷ Carnarius, Marc Edmund Jones, p. 56.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

¹¹⁹ McClung, "Astrology's Centennial Salute," p. 34ff.

d.) Jones Sabian Astrology

In spite of his Christian commitment at an early age, it is evident that Jones was drawn more and more into occult thinking as exemplified in the traditions of Theosophy, Neoplatonism and the Kaballah, as time went on. He himself admits as much when he writes that: "The whole body of principles, assumptions and facts on which the Sabian activities are based is designated as the OCCULT TRADITION."¹²⁰ The fact that Jones also had his own experiences with HPB's Masters links him even closer to their ideas. How these Theosophical sources have permeated Jones' ideas about astrology are briefly indicated in what follows. Mention will also be made of his own original contribution to astrology.

Jones acknowledges the influence of Alan Leo "and his attempt in England to use Theosophical principles for the greater dignification of the stellar art" in his foreword to The Essentials of Astrological Analysis.¹²¹ In his Sabian Lecture Lessons (which he wrote in the early 1930's) he outlines brief sketches of 10 different approaches to astrology, giving descriptive labels to each such as Pythagorean, Temple, Arabic, Symbolical, Theosophical, Hermetic, Hegelian, etc., all of which are part of his total system of "Sabian Astrology." Canarius points out that: "A specific mark of Sabian astrology is a complete lack of discussion of so-called 'malefics' or 'benefics' in a horoscope. The major impact of MEJ's [Marc Edmund Jones'] astrology has been to correct the age-old notion that the power is in the stars, that your chart creates your destiny."¹²² This change to a more

¹²⁰ M.E. Jones, Sabian Manuel, p. 14.

¹²¹ M.E. Jones, Essentials of Astrological Analysis (New York: Sabian Publishing Society, 1960) p. vii.

¹²² Canarius, Marc Edmund Jones, p. 11.

person-centered astrology, initiated originally by Leo, has since become a key tenet of 20th century astrology. What Jones calls Theosophical astrology in this system “is directed to the culture of a real skill in the delineation of character, one which eventually will render the astrologer wholly independent of the conventional wheel...The contrast here with all other astrology is that the physical elements of life are pushed into a secondary position.”¹²³

The distinction Jones makes between these various approaches to astrology is somewhat arbitrary,¹²⁴ and the texts themselves were never edited, but the Sabian astrological system as a whole emphasizes a number of ideas we have previously had occasion to link with Theosophy, such as karma and reincarnation, a psychological orientation, the Hermetic concept of macrocosm and microcosm, and the idea that astrology is a science. The Christian emphasis is also much in evidence. It is, of course, not always apparent just where he derived his ideas, whether directly from his readings of The Secret Doctrine and other Theosophical works (such as Pryse’s Theosophical interpretation of the Book of Revelation already mentioned), through other occult readings, or indeed directly from his ‘Master’ (whom he never identifies by name). We can only discuss his use of the ideas themselves.

The most obvious evidence of Theosophical influence is the incorporation of the traditional Hindu concepts of karma and reincarnation into his astrology at all levels. The Theosophical source for these notions is suggested by his use of other Sanskrit terms commonly found on the pages

¹²³ Jones, Theosophical Astrology (unpublished lecture lesson for Sabian students, 1932) p. 3.

¹²⁴ For example he declares that; “Sagittarius becomes the foundation of the whole of Theosophical Astrology.” Theosophical Astrology p. 9.

of The Secret Doctrine such as 'avatar' (world savior), 'chela' (student), 'laya center' (potentiality of consciousness), etc. He writes for example, that: "Capricorn seen in its plane of experience is therefore to be known as the power of sustainment: cosmic inheritance in the sense of 'overcoming karma' or uncovering the real heredity of each man."¹²⁵ The concept is also mentioned in other Lecture Lessons and in the more philosophically oriented books such as his Occult Philosophy (where there is an extensive glossary of terms). In addition, he associates the seven chakras of Hindu kundalini to seven signs of the zodiac in his Lecture Lessons on Theosophical Astrology, linking them to the nervous system.¹²⁶

Jones naturally emphasizes the psychological aspects of interpretation somewhat more than did HPB, having witnessed the rapid developments that had taken place in this new discipline since her day. For him: "Astrology is a psychological method for charting or measuring experience. It operates through an analysis of character, and a deduction of the probable consequences of a particular individual's situation under a given set of relations."¹²⁷ Jones also agrees with Leo's observation that 'Character is destiny':

because, while the circumstances in which a given personality is found are responsible for the distribution of its special traits across its own private ground of experience, its particular capacities are the basis of its functioning in its own unique fashion. Characteristics

¹²⁵ Theosophical Astrology, p. 22. Further indications of his acceptance of the notions of karma and reincarnation can be found in the The Sabian Symbols (p. 227), The Sabian Manual (p. 66ff), as well as in Astrology: How and Why (p. 244).

¹²⁶ M.E. Jones, Lecture Lessons: Theosophical Astrology, p. 22. A similar reference is found in Astrology: How and Why, p. 242.

¹²⁷ Jones, How and Why, p. 33.

give a personal implication to every event in existence, and this fact is the origin of zodiacal meaning.¹²⁸

The Hermetic concept of the microcosm/macrocosm also permeates Jones' works. He describes it as

the intimacy of relation between the cosmos in its vast reaches and the little spark of life working out its destiny on the surface of the earth—as predicted through the whole development of horoscopic techniques—is known to philosophers as the microcosmic-macrocosmic doctrine. Man is seen as the little world, or as a complete if miniature replica of the total....¹²⁹

“From 1924 to 1943 Jones composed an extensive commentary on the bible in the form of the weekly lessons used by the Sabian Assembly.”¹³⁰ He was inspired in this enterprise by his Bible studies, by the study of occultism through the Kaballah, by the Theosophist James Pryse's The Apocalypse Unsealed, as well as by HPB's Secret Doctrine.¹³¹ Jones finds important analogies and correspondences between biblical events and some of the basic tenets of astrology. The dichotomies of Genesis he says, for example, “begin with a distinction between heaven and earth...between light and darkness... What is immediately at hand is earth, and what is distant or outside ordinary experience is heaven.”¹³² This distinction corresponds to the basic division of the horoscope into an upper and lower hemisphere, in that: “Man may divide up his universe in everyday living, but he cannot cancel out the relationship of any one part of it with every other part. The

¹²⁸ Ibid, p. 129.

¹²⁹ Jones, Sabian Symbols, p. 23.

¹³⁰ Camarius, Marc Edmund Jones, p. 7.

¹³¹ Ibid, p. 8.

¹³² Jones, How and Why, p. 4.

whole remains total or complete. The conscious anchorage of astrology in this one all-important fact is the principal secret of its effectiveness at its best.”¹³³ And he goes on to say:

The magic of hemispheres, as astrologically established, lies in the illimitability of their capacity to symbolize things. There is not only a basic set given to character at birth, but also a continuous reconstruction of personality throughout life...and .. Here is where horoscopy can help man to become the director of his fate in a very true sense.¹³⁴

He also agrees with HPB in relating the 12 tribes of the Jewish faith to the 12 signs of the Zodiac. The twelve apostles are also viewed by both of them as another metaphor for the 12 signs of the zodiac.¹³⁵

In a chapter entitled “Rhythm and Reality” Jones also makes reference to the importance of the cyclic motion of the universe, giving it an interesting non-fatalistic aspect, by saying that: “The continual recurrence of phenomena in the heavens, the rhythmic reality of the ages in the firmament, are a prophecy of man in his immortal reality. The subtle assurance here transforms risk into freedom, while chance takes a new form of choice.”¹³⁶

Jones also embraces HPB’s notion of astrology as a science, albeit a very special one. He writes: “Let him realize that the successful physician requires not only the knowledge of the medicine proper but also anatomy, chemistry and basic instruction in many seemingly unrelated subjects, and

¹³³ Ibid, p. 8ff.

¹³⁴ Ibid, p. 11.

¹³⁵ Ibid, p. 157, and Blavatsky, Secret Doctrine I, p. 649ff.

¹³⁶ Jones, How and Why, p. 15ff.

that astrology as a science has far greater prerequisites than any other known to man.”¹³⁷

Jones also follows HPB in being very concerned about the qualifications of those who would practice astrology, and is quite critical of the trends he observes.

...because astrology, in a curious way, is a more refined instrument of analysis than any possible common tongue used for its description. The principal source of difficulty, when an effort is made to approach astrology critically, but from the outside and without an adequate preparation through an actual experience with its intellectual mechanism, is that there are an unending host of distinctions which are very sharp in horoscopic analysis, but definitely hazy when expressed in any simple form of words.¹³⁸

Thus the intellectual preparation of, and the approach adopted by, the astrologer becomes very important, and Jones bemoans the fact that: “Often the work has seemed to be all astrology, and then it has appeared that astrology is altogether the poor relation of the whole, and in disgrace because of the intellectual uncouthness of its advocates.”¹³⁹ He complains that too many astrologers who “want to soak it all up in class, take it all in notes and get their mind full of it, simply have intellectual constipation. They can’t function.”¹⁴⁰ His point is that there is more to astrology than just the basic facts; it is also an art, and not everyone is an artist.

Jones is also somewhat critical of those in today’s astrological community who seek to prove the validity of astrology through statistical analysis.

¹³⁷ Jones, Theosophical Astrology, p. 4.

¹³⁸ Ibid, p. ix.

¹³⁹ Camarius, Marc Edmund Jones, p. 84.

¹⁴⁰ Phenomena, Vol. 2.5, September/October 1978, p. 20.

such as the attempts along these lines by Michel Gauquelin.¹⁴¹ He remarks in an interview given at his 90th birthday that:

We're coming to the point where you are going to have a choice in astrology and the choice is whether you're going to consider the astrologer a mechanic or an artist. Now we are swinging to the mechanical...If we understand what statistics are for, that's a horse of a different colour. In it's proper place it's priceless.¹⁴²

Jones has also contributed at least two major innovations to the astrology of the 20th century, the *Sabian Symbols* and the *Seven Types. of Planetary Patterns*. The first can be related to his Theosophical background and its insights; the second is definitely the product of his own creative imagination, and has been much valued by astrologers if the many reprints of his books may be accepted as a criterion. The *Sabian Symbols*—developed with and through the psychic capacity of his student Elsie Wheeler, assign a symbol to each of the 360 degrees of the Zodiac. As an example, the symbol for 30 degrees Taurus is: “A peacock parading on an ancient lawn.” The interpretation of this symbol is explained more fully in several lines of text, and reminds one of the divinatory method followed by the I Ching. These symbols have been tested over time and have proved themselves quite useful in horoscope interpretation. While Jones was not the first to symbolize the degrees of the Zodiac his symbols, first popularized by Rudhyar, have since come into widespread use in the astrological community.¹⁴³ The popularity of the symbols finally led Jones

¹⁴¹ Michel Gauquelin is author of a large number of books reporting on his statistical research into the validity of astrology. See for example *The Cosmic Clocks* (London: Palladin, 1973); *Cosmic Influences on Human Behaviour* (New York: ASI, 1978); and “Neo-astrology: forty years of research,” in *The Future of Astrology*, ed. A.T. Mann (London and Sydney: Unwin Hyman, 1987), among others.

¹⁴² *Phenomena*, Vol. 2.5, September/October 1978, p. 20.

¹⁴³ The first to introduce such symbols was a contemporary of Alan Leo called John Thomas. They were published under the pen-name ‘Charubel’ in Leo’s *Modern Astrology*. Thomas seems to have

to publish them with his own original comments in his book, The Sabian Symbols of Astrology in 1953.

Jones' enrichment of astrology with his *Seven Types of Planetary Patterns* has also been widely appreciated and adopted by the astrological community. By looking at the distribution of planets around the horoscope wheel he observed seven basic patterns that he found could be related to seven psychological types. "The division of all people into seven basic types is purely psychological screening. The people made distinct from each other by some clarification may be quite alike by some other, but this way of sorting has an effective psychological result that is hard to match in terms of actual problems solved."¹⁴⁴ Just as the distribution of planets in the four elements gives a basic indication of a person's temperament, so Jones discovered that the pattern planets form have an additional significance, providing an "accurate preliminary classification." For example, someone whose planets are almost evenly distributed throughout the wheel is *The Splash Type*, while someone with a cluster of planets in one particular area, would be *The Bundle Type* etc. A specific interpretation is associated with each of these patterns. As one of the innovations in astrology introduced since the turn of the century it is used "for recognizing the whole-factors in a chart before attempting any analysis

leaned more toward the fatalistic occultism of the *Golden Dawn*. There were probably others before him and they may have originated in Arabic astrology. Jones himself had originally published his Symbols in a booklet in 1931, but distribution must have been low. The breakthrough came with Rudhyar's publication of them in 1936, and again with the release of Astrological Mandala in 1976 (incorporating his extended comments).

¹⁴⁴ Jones, The Guide to Horoscope Interpretation (Wheaton, Illinois: The Theosophical Publishing House, 1982) p. viii.

in detail.”¹⁴⁵ Jones nevertheless also cautions the novice in astrology not to oversimplify matters with such methods.

8.4. Dane Rudhyar

The legacy of Dane Rudhyar, our ‘youngest’ representative of the Theosophical influence, has greatly enriched the principles and practices of twentieth century astrology in the Western World. He rose to prominence during the sixties and seventies when he became something of a ‘renaissance man,’ to the disaffected youth of the time. Apart from his work as philosopher and astrologer he was also recognized in more artistic circles as a musician, painter and poet. While his enduring passion was music it is his career as a writer and lecturer on astrology for which he is most remembered today. His numerous books and articles on this subject are probably even more widely read now than they were during his lifetime (he died in 1985). While his significance for our purposes is related more specifically to his role as a conduit for Theosophical ideas, he was also the first to incorporate the depth psychological ideas of the Swiss psychologist C.G. Jung into astrology. His astrological impact has thus been twofold. Theosophical and psychological, though it is the Theosophical influence that will concern us more particularly in what follows.

His case is unusual to the extent that, though closely linked to the Theosophical Movement for most of his life, he is the only one of our four prominent exemplars who was never an actual member of any Theosophical Society or group. On the other hand he has written more

¹⁴⁵.Ibid, p. 2.

about HPB and the purposes of the T.S. than any of the three representative astrologers we have already introduced. His work shows a progressive development from the earlier psychological writings of his *Humanistic Astrology* towards what he called *Transpersonal Astrology*—an attempt to harness astrology as a vehicle for transcending personal ego boundaries. *Transpersonal Astrology* is essentially a more philosophical application of Theosophical ideas to extend the common or ‘exoteric’ mode of astrological interpretation towards what HPB would undoubtedly have regarded as ‘esoteric’ astrology.

a.) Biography

While Rudhyar did write an autobiography in his later years this was reportedly rejected by a publisher as being ‘too personal.’ It has since remained with his surviving (fourth) wife, who no doubt feels the same way, since it has yet to see the light of day.¹⁴⁶ What follows has therefore been culled from whatever personal statements are to be found in his books, from various biographical and memorial articles that have appeared in journals or on the internet, and from personal contact and discussion with Dr. Michael Meyer, a devoted longtime student of Rudhyar.

Rudhyar was born on March 23, 1895 in Paris, France. His father was the proprietor of a small factory manufacturing architectural materials and ornamentation. Both parents were Roman Catholics. The family name was Chennevière but this he exchanged for Rudhyar around 1917

¹⁴⁶Barbara Somerfield, “To Dane Rudhyar: In Memoriam,” in *To Sow*, Vol. 3, No. 2, 1995, p. 12.

while on a visit to North America (linking 'Rudhyar' to the Indian God 'Rudra'). He had a serious kidney operation at the age of 13 the aftermath of which affected his health for the rest of his life. On the other hand this did help him avoid being drafted into the army during the First World War, "actually saving his life as the regiment he would have joined was completely wiped out."¹⁴⁷ During his lengthy stay in the hospital he became very introspective, and had experiences which made him realize that: "Time is cyclic, and the Law of Cycles controls all civilization as well as all existence."¹⁴⁸ This was years before he became acquainted with the teachings of HPB. He was a studious youth and had already passed his baccalauréat by the age of 16. But after his father died in 1911 Rudhyar always had a struggle to make a living. After a short attempt to study Law, he wrote his first book on the musician Claude Debussy, which was published in 1913. As a musician Rudhyar was largely self-taught, starting on the piano as a young child and composing by the age of 17. His mother also had an appreciation for music and no doubt supported her son's efforts in this direction. The publication of his first book probably gave him some recognition in the leading artistic circles of Paris in which he was wont to mingle. He reportedly also worked for a short period for the famous sculptor Rodin. "His interest in music, and especially Oriental music, is what first brought Rudhyar to the United States, in 1917. The occasion was a gala performance of his symphonic work at

¹⁴⁷ James Shere, Dane Rudhyar 1895—: a brief factual biography with a listing of his works, (Berkeley, California, International Committee for Humanistic Astrology, 1972) p. 3.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid*, p. 3.

the New York Metropolitan Opera.”¹⁴⁹ It was shortly thereafter, while visiting some musician friends in Toronto and Montreal over a period of some months, that he was first introduced to Theosophy.

However, it was in 1920 while staying near the then headquarters of the T.S. at Krotona (Ojai) in California that he became more acquainted with Theosophy and also astrology. After befriending a “Dutch woman Mrs. Van Vliet who was deeply interested in music (Wagner especially), theosophy and astrology, Rudhyar decided to investigate astrology and learn its techniques—classes being provided free.”¹⁵⁰ It was also at Krotona that he met Alice Bailey who later offered to publish his first book on astrology. He also met there the Indian Theosophist Mr. B.P. Wadia who left shortly thereafter to join the *United Lodge of Theosophists*.¹⁵¹ Rudhyar’s discussions with Wadia apparently made a great impression, leading him to study Isis Unveiled and The Secret Doctrine, where he found his early ideas about cyclic time greatly expanded and clarified. He later wrote how both these works of HPB: “had meant so much to the development of my historical sense and my deeper mind.”¹⁵²

His former interest in oriental music was now combined with an interest in Hindu philosophy; astrology became more of a side interest. He earned a meager living at this time mainly through writing

¹⁴⁹.Dane Rudhyar, My Stand on Astrology (Palo Alto, California: The Seed Center, 1972) p. 5.

¹⁵⁰.Shere, Dane Rudhyar 1895—; p. 6.

¹⁵¹.Ibid, p. 6. B.P. Wadia was actually sent by Annie Besant to investigate problems at Headquarters. However the 1920 convention created a split in the T.S. when Alice Bailey left Krotona with her husband to create her own school. Mr. Wadia himself stayed in North America but joined the *United Lodge of Theosophy*, founded as a result of a previous split in 1909 by Robert Crosbie and other members of the Adyar T.S.

¹⁵².Rudhyar, My Stand on Astrology, p. 9.

articles on art and the occasional contract to compose music, though as early as 1928 he admits to having done charts professionally.¹⁵³

A key year in his astrological career was 1930 when, in California, he met Jones through his first wife (whom he married the same year). They soon moved back to New York where he received the mimeographed material on astrology which Jones had been distributing to the members of his *Sabian Assembly*. He found Jones' philosophical approach to astrology very intriguing, and this inspired a renewed interest in the subject, though he did not join the group or followed the classes. His continued association with the Adyar T.S. is evidenced by an advertisement to offer 'Astrological Readings' by Dane Rudhyar in Los Angeles, which appeared in the The Theosophical Messenger of May 1932.

Rudhyar was generally reluctant to join established organizations such as the Theosophical Society, the *Sabian Assembly*, or the *Arcane School* of Alice Bailey, being very much an individualist with definite ideas of his own. He rather preferred to stay independent and develop his own philosophy and approach to astrology. He did, however, become a member of the AFA where he received a standing ovation on several occasions during his participation in a number of their conventions.¹⁵⁴ This more active involvement with astrology had the unfortunate effect of alienating a few of his influential musician friends, who were already at odds with him over his style of music. Opportunities in music as a source of income dried up as a result and

¹⁵³.Ibid, p. 7.

¹⁵⁴.Shere, Dane Rudhyar 1895—, p. 16ff.

were replaced by increased writing on astrology. This work was apparently well received. It was while staying with a Theosophical couple in New Mexico in 1933 that he became acquainted with the depth psychology of C.G. Jung, which he felt, ideally complemented the serious approach to astrology promoted by Jones.¹⁵⁵ This prospect not only captured his interest, but led to his association with Paul Clancy, editor of the fledgling American Astrology magazine:

Later that same year [1933], I finally met Paul Clancy in New York. He had already printed some lectures I had given in Boston in 1930-31, and he gave me *carte blanche* to write anything along these lines for publication in his magazine. At that time, Clancy was eager to combine 'popular astrology' with the type of 'psychological astrology' I was beginning to expound. For several years, Grant Lewi wrote most of the 'forecasts' and I many of the remaining pages of the magazine.¹⁵⁶

The combination in Rudhyar's approach to astrology of Theosophical philosophy and depth-psychology made the magazine more successful than ever and, "in 1934 a big distributor was able to place "American Astrology" on many newsstands, and its phenomenal growth began...Clancy asked for more articles and Rudhyar began to write two or three long articles monthly for the magazine."¹⁵⁷ This, in turn, led to his renewed contact with Alice Bailey. On reading some of Rudhyar's articles and liking them, she encouraged him to publish a number of them as a book, which she offered to publish through her Lucis Trust Publishing house. The result was Rudhyar's first and most

¹⁵⁵ Rudhyar, "Foreword," in Marcia Moore and Mark Douglas, The Divine Science p. xii.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid, p. xii.

¹⁵⁷ Shere, Dane Rudhyar 1895—, p. 10. He also wrote subsequently for Horoscope magazine.

famous work The Astrology of Personality, which remains a bestseller to this day. This book also contained a short form of the Sabian Symbols made possible through the generous agreement of Jones. Although Leyla Rael, Rudhyar's fourth wife, later remarked somewhat sarcastically that: "if it weren't for Rudhyar's request to publish the Sabian Symbols in Astrology of the Personality, the index cards containing these valuable, intriguing (and sometimes maddeningly cryptic) revelations might have lain indefinitely in Marc Jones's safe deposit box."¹⁵⁸ Rudhyar obviously had the right intuition, since these symbols became very popular, and as already mentioned, Jones finally published them himself in the 1950's.

Rudhyar's life-style was somewhat similar to that of Jones: no steady job and much moving about. However Rudhyar's personal life seems to have been rather more turbulent than that of his former mentor. Rudhyar married a total of four women and attempted to pursue a variety of artistic careers—music, painting and poetry. He was talented and interested in many subjects. His main interest, as we have already had occasion to mention, was playing and composing music. He returned to music again and again during the course of his life, composing various pieces with occasional success, but his style was clearly too avant-garde for the times, preventing him from making it a career and a livelihood. It therefore fell to astrology to become his real career. Ironically, it was only with his growing popularity and success as an astrologer, which started in the late 50's, that his musical compositions slowly became more accepted.

¹⁵⁸The Astrological Journal, Vol. 27, No. 2, Spring 1985, p. 77.

His first marriage broke off around 1942 and around 1945 he married Eya Fechin, daughter of the famous Russian painter Nicolai Fechin. It was during the period of this marriage that he himself also became known as a painter.¹⁵⁹ His new wife began studying in New York with Dr. Jacob Moreno, founder of Psycho-drama. She was highly capable and ambitious, and finally took a position as head of a department of Psychodrama in Iowa (also for financial reasons). There she fell in love with an assistant and asked Rudhyar for a divorce in 1954. Rudhyar thereafter went through another difficult period and finally moved to California where he lived for a while in "relative isolation in a small Hollywood apartment".¹⁶⁰ He nevertheless continued to write articles and give lectures.

In 1958 he was invited to Switzerland by an elderly lady who wished to support his astrological approach. This European visit started a new chapter in Rudhyar's life. He gave lectures and made new friends and students there, as well as in France, The Netherlands and England. At a lecture in the Netherlands he met a publisher who offered to publish one of his books at a time when he was having difficulties publishing in the United States. This soon became a fruitful relationship which promoted Rudhyar's fortunes in Europe. He was twice received as a guest of honor in England, where he gave lectures at the *Astrological Lodge of the Theosophical Society*. He returned to Europe several

¹⁵⁹ The following newspaper art review gives some idea of his success in this field: "It is seldom that an artist brings to his paintings as unusual a background of creative activity as Dane Rudhyar. A noted composer, author, philosopher, he has already reached a focal point in his first attempts with a plastic medium. The result is an important expression of life experience which is universally symbolic yet fully conscious of inner self." (Marie Ewing in the *New Mexico Examiner*, October 2, 1938). The passage is quoted in: Alfred Morang, Dane Rudhyar: Pioneer in Creative Synthesis (New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1939) p. 24.

¹⁶⁰ Human Dimensions, Vol. 4, No. 3, 1975?, p. 6.

times between 1958 and the summer of 1963, visiting the same places and deepening his contacts. Alexander Ruperti, an older student of his whom he met at this time, continues to promote his ideas in Europe to this day. "Ruperti has organized over a dozen groups in France, Spain and Switzerland which study the works of Rudhyar..." ¹⁶¹

Rudhyar returned to the United States in the summer of 1963 where, in early 1964, he married his third wife Tana, a Canadian. This marriage lasted approximately 10 years during which he was highly productive and well supported by his wife, with a number of his books being published in the Netherlands. To provide additional backing for his efforts Rudhyar established the *International Committee for a Humanistic Astrology* in 1969 "to focus the attention upon a humanistic in-depth approach to this ancient, yet ever-changing method of attunement to the rhythmic order of the universe," though on a 'non-organizational' basis.¹⁶² This initiative however, did not survive and his memory is kept alive today largely through the work of dedicated students such as Ruperti in Europe and others in North America, as well as by his publishers. Rudhyar also maintained good relations with leaders of the Esalen Institute in California (a well-known Institute for Psychotherapy) and was often invited to give lectures there. M. Meyer has reported that on one occasion in the 70's Rudhyar reflected that a particular invitation to the Esalen Institute to talk on HPB's Secret Doctrine, was an optimistic portend for the

¹⁶¹ Jeff Jawer, "Rudhyar," in A Tribute to Dane Rudhyar (The Hague: Stichting 'Astro-Kring,' 1995) p. 13. Ruperti, who had previously studied under Alice Bailey and Charles Carter, subsequently fully endorsed Rudhyar's approach.

¹⁶² Dane Rudhyar, "International Committee for a Humanistic Astrology," Kosmos, Vol. 2 No. 5, May 1969, p. 10. His experiences with the T.S. may have had a deterrent effect, as was the case with Jones.

future.¹⁶³ He had been cautious about mentioning Theosophy in his earlier lectures.

Rudhyar was never quite sure whether he was understood by his various audiences, remarking on one occasion: "I very often had cause to wonder how much my so appreciative and obviously very moved readers understood of what I had tried to state."¹⁶⁴ And his friend in Holland in whom he confided his suspicion, admitted that: "In Holland most people just don't understand Rudhyar's work at all and find it difficult to read and I am afraid that we are as a nation too crudely honest and just say so if we think that way."¹⁶⁵ This is no doubt the reason why many of his later more philosophical books have not had the same measure of success as his first. His book The Planetarization of Consciousness for example is almost pure philosophy. Rudhyar wrote between 30 and 40 books and booklets during his life time, not all of them focused on astrology.

Around 1976 Rudhyar married Leyla Rael, his fourth and final wife, and he continued to write and lecture until his death in 1985.

b.) Appraisals

Though Rudhyar's *International Committee for Humanistic Astrology* did not survive, his legacy in the field of astrology and his standing in the astrological community will long be remembered. We can offer here only a brief selection of opinion on how much Rudhyar's efforts

¹⁶³ Michael Meyer, "Rudhyar: Friend, Exemplar and Sage," A Tribute to Dane Rudhyar, p. 33.

¹⁶⁴ Joyce Hoen, "Rudhyar and the Meaning of his Astrology," A Tribute to Rudhyar, p. 4-5.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 5.

have been appreciated and appropriated by those who came in contact with him, either personally or through his books.

In the foreword to his book Horary Astrology Jones himself acknowledges the initiative of his student Dane Rudhyar,

who early took an interest in the mimeographed materials and who insisted upon giving credit in print to the whole research project and thereby unwittingly destroyed the anonymity that the author has felt would better serve the purposes in view. It is thanks to Rudhyar primarily, who through the years has remained a friend in his own maturing as the philosopher as well as the artist, that the astrological materials conveniently labeled Sabian in their totality were brought to the attention of the general astrological public.¹⁶⁶

Jones also commented enthusiastically on Rudhyar's first book The Astrology of Personality published in 1936, saying that: "Here is pioneer work of a fine and convincing order, blazing the way into totally unexplored forests of the human mind...a primary exposition in a unique and really scientific approach to the nature of symbolism; a book that no symbolist of discernment can afford to neglect."¹⁶⁷ Paul Clancy, proprietor of American Astrology went even further, enthusiastically acclaiming the book as "the greatest step forward in Astrology since the time of Ptolemy. It represents the birth of a new epoch."¹⁶⁸ This first book did indeed break new ground, in rather the same way as Leo's books had done in his time. Astrology of the

¹⁶⁶ Marc Edmund Jones, Horary Astrology (Berkeley & London: Shambhala Publications, Inc., 1975) p. 8.

¹⁶⁷ Alfred Morang, Dane Rudhyar: Pioneer in Creative Synthesis (New York: Lucis Publishing Company, 1939) p. 27.

¹⁶⁸ Paul Clancy, The Astrological Journal, Vol. 27, No. 2, Spring 1985, p.77.

Personality was not written as a text-book but was a new interpretation of “ ‘Astrological Concepts and Ideals in Terms of Contemporary Psychology and Philosophy.’ He is more concerned with establishing the rationale of astrological techniques than with demonstrating the techniques themselves.”¹⁶⁹

A later student of Rudhyar’s works apparently also feels that “Rudhyar transformed astrology’s landscape and inspired us to go to the highest in ourselves rather than remain trapped in our ancient world-view.”¹⁷⁰

Alexander Rupert, a close associate and long time student of the Theosophical orientation in astrology as well as an author in his own right, remarks: “I have been in contact with him [Rudhyar] since the publication of ‘ASTROLOGY OF THE PERSONALITY’ in 1936. He has enriched my life and my understanding immensely.”¹⁷¹ In Rupert’s opinion “Rudhyar used astrology as a vehicle to reach the greatest number of people, just as Blavatsky used spiritualism to do the same thing. His message is not astrological in itself....The aim of astrological counseling became that of revealing meaning, rather than predicting events.”¹⁷²

And Rudhyar’s last wife may well be right in stating that: “virtually no astrologer practicing today is unaffected by Rudhyar’s work. Ideas

¹⁶⁹. Ronald C. Davison, review of Astrology of Personality, in Astrology, Vol. 38, No. 1, 1964, p. 29.

¹⁷⁰. Jeff Jawer. “Rudhyar,” A Tribute to Dane Rudhyar. (The Hague: Stichting ‘Astro-Kring,’ 1995).

¹⁷¹. Alexander Rupert. “A Seed-Man for the new Era.” A Tribute to Dane Rudhyar.

¹⁷². Rupert, *ibid*.

which he was the first to formulate (and often the only one to develop fully, consistently, and coherently) have been 'in the air' for nearly half a century, during which time he wrote and lectured prolifically."¹⁷³

The widely read and influential astrologer and author Stephen Arroyo, who corresponded with Rudhyar while with CRCS Publications (a publishing house), is one of a number of contemporary astrologers who have followed Rudhyar's psychological approach to astrology. As Jeff Jawer states: "The writings of Stephen Arroyo, to give one example, are full of Rudhyar's understanding of the relationship between soul and psychology. In fact the whole of modern psychological astrology owes a debt to Rudhyar."¹⁷⁴

We conclude with an appraisal of Rudhyar as a composer, to provide both a measure of the scope of his talents and a pithy summary of his multifaceted character:

No composer who ever lived in Los Angeles has ever excited the interest, curiosity and fear that D. Rudhyar has called into being among our cognoscenti. The reason is obvious: Rudhyar is erudite, full of talent, fearless and uncompromising....In his knowledge and sincerity, his strength and his industry, he is the musical peer of many celebrities who have gained real support and attention in our country.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷³ Leyla Rael, "Happy Birthday, Rudhyar and Thanks," The Astrological Journal, Vol. 27, No. 2, Spring 1985, p. 77.

¹⁷⁴ Jeff Jawer, "Rudhyar."

¹⁷⁵ Jose Rodriguez writing in the Los Angeles Record, 1922, Quoted in Alfred Morang, Dane Rudhyar: Pioneer in Creative Synthesis, p. 24.

c.) Rudhyar's Astrology

Rudhyar's astrology is permeated with HPB's ideas as presented in her major works, for which he has such high praise. He even devoted one whole book in his later life (1975), Occult Preparation for a New Age, to HPB's life story and her teachings, and explains his ideas of time, the theory of cycles and transpersonal living within the frame of Theosophical teachings. Furthermore, in his book The Planetarization of Consciousness, he discusses some of the main Theosophical principles, such as karma and reincarnation in detail.

Rudhyar went through several stages in his astrological development (which may have corresponded, in part, with his own personal development) until he first arrived at his concept of *Humanistic Astrology* which he later hoped would be replaced by a *Transpersonal Astrology*. For Rudhyar, the validity of astrology is found in the practical application of its metaphysical framework, and this framework owed much to Theosophy. However he felt that the "ordinary astrologer is unaware of, or uninterested in such a metaphysical foundation..."¹⁷⁶ In other words, the major purpose of astrology for him, "is not to predict events in terms of statistical probability, but to bring to confused, eager, often distraught persons a message of order, of "form," of the meaning of individual life and individual struggles in the process of self-actualization."¹⁷⁷ Marcia Moore and Mark Douglas provide a good summary of Rudhyar's main

¹⁷⁶ Rudhyar, The Sun is also a Star: the Galactic Dimension of Astrology (New York: Dutton & Co. Inc., 1975) p. 154.

¹⁷⁷ Rudhyar, The Astrology of the Personality, Third Edition (New York: Doubleday Paperback, 1970), p. xv.

principles, particularly his philosophy of holism which he adapted from General Smuts' Holism and Evolution.

According to Rudhyar, the solar system is roughly analogous to a vast clock, with many hands which revolve at different speeds. Each hand measures a particular kind of cycle, but is an indicator, not an instigator of events. Rudhyar expounds his theories in the context of a philosophy of holism which posits that the structure in space and time of large wholes is related to the structural development of lesser wholes (in individual group, or event). He insists that astrology is not a study of direct influences exerted by celestial bodies upon earth-grown entities, but is a technique for understanding the arrangement and unfoldment of the creative functions which exist in every organized system of activities. Rudhyar also develops the gnostic concept that an Eon is a cosmic being and that all cycles have an inherent life of their own. ¹⁷⁸

These principles tie in with his Theosophical convictions and thus become extremely important to his own work. However, Rudhyar regards his so called *Humanistic Astrology* only as a stepping stone to what he calls *Transpersonal Astrology*, founded on the principle of 'galacticity'. By this he means that the astrologer should have a clearer concept of the nature of man, his destiny and purpose or meaning in life. That Rudhyar's vision of astrology might seem quite futuristic to some people is not surprising in light, for example, of the following statements:

The zodiacal concept should therefore be reinterpreted, even if at present for practical reasons, the astrologer cannot dispense

¹⁷⁸ Marcia Moore and Mark Douglas, Astrology the Divine Science (York Harbor, Maine: Arcane Publications, 1971) p. 712. The symbol of the clock seems to be a favorite among Theosophists. Marcia Moore has also been a close friend of Rudhyar, occasionally organizing lectures for him in Boston.

with it. It is a basic frame of reference; ...it would lose much of its importance in a truly "person-centered" type of astrology in which three-dimensional "birth globe"[s] would replace our present two-dimensional birth charts. Here again a careful distinction between what we rather ambiguously call today the zodiac and a general division of any cycle into twelve phases, each of which has a characteristic meaning, is imperative.¹⁷⁹

The theory of planetary cycles is a major cornerstone of his philosophy, running through almost all his books like the proverbial Ariadne's thread. In sum, he sees human consciousness developing in cycles, though in a spiral rather than a circle. His vision of human 'galactization' is akin to, and probably influenced by, similar Theosophical ideas of human potential. He writes:

All that a consideration of the potentiality of "galactization" of human consciousness adds to the picture is a new and repolarized interpretation of the meaning to be attributed to (1) the Sun; (2) the trans-Saturnian planets, Uranus, Neptune and Pluto; and (3) the stars.¹⁸⁰

Rudhyar emphasizes the role of the 'outer planets' as doorways to the Cosmos which lead us on the path towards this 'galactic' consciousness, meaning a more global or universal vision that transcends our narrow ego-centered attitude.¹⁸¹ This is pure Theosophy only in different terms.¹⁸²

¹⁷⁹Rudhyar, The Sun is also a Star, p. 180.

¹⁸⁰Ibid. p. 182.

¹⁸¹Ibid. p. 33-38.

¹⁸²Economists now talk of a 'global economy' in which individuals are affected more than ever before by events taking place elsewhere on the globe. This has already promoted a more 'global consciousness' among forward-thinking politicians and business leaders, though it has not yet filtered down to the man in the street. However, this 'global consciousness' is still a far cry from Rudhyar's idea of 'galactic consciousness'.

Rudhyar thinks that there is unfortunately, as yet, insufficient knowledge to practice such a galactic, transpersonal type of astrology, and his own ideas may not easily be accepted at present.¹⁸³ However, he is the eternal optimist and quite content to await the judgment of history.

When Uranus, Neptune and Pluto have done their work, the boundaries of the heliocosm—the protective but isolating outer layers of the disciples aura—have become translucent. Galactic light can pour through them without any resistance. The chemical energies of “life” have been transmuted into the nuclear forces of “spirit”. Man though still “in” the world, is no longer “of” the world.¹⁸⁴

It is because of our ignorance alone, he continues

that people may say that the very concept of galacticity is premature. But so are all social utopias and philosophical-ethical dreams! They announce and attempt to formulate in broad terms what sooner or later must come. By imprinting the ideal upon the consciousness of human beings and small groups or communities, these dreams make possible the seemingly impossible. They gradually permeate and transform the personal practices.¹⁸⁵

In an interview Rudhyar gave to the American Theosophist he again expresses his optimism for the future by reference to the Hindu notion:

that with the death of an Avatar—a Divine Manifestation in whatever form it takes place—a new cycle begins, because then

¹⁸³ Rudhyar, The Sun is also a Star, p. 191.

¹⁸⁴ Rudhyar, The Sun is also a Star, p. 43.

¹⁸⁵ Rudhyar, The Sun is also a Star, p. 181.

the energy which was impersonated or locked in that being becomes released. Jesus said, "I must die so that the Holy Ghost can pervade you." Blavatsky died in 1891. Baha'u'llah died in 1892; the people who started the Communist movement died in 1883 and 1895. ¹⁸⁶

In addition to his strong philosophical leanings, Rudhyar also enriched astrology with two new technical practices. He invented a method of forecasting by a sort of 'directional technique', which he called 'the point of self'. It is like "a symbolic clockwork hand that moves through the houses and over the natal angles and planets once every twenty-eight years, seven years per quadrant regardless of the number of zodiacal degrees between horizon and meridian." ¹⁸⁷ This may also have been an attempt to neutralize some of the problems surrounding the debate about the validity of the various house systems.

His second contribution was another method of progressing the horoscope, the Luration Cycle. Meyer comments on this in the following terms:

But what most impressed me about "The Luration Cycle" was its theosophical foundation. Not that Rudhyar quoted Blavatsky's "Secret Doctrine" or that he drew attention to the theosophical basis of his approach to astrology, he didn't. ...Rudhyar's description of the structure of the luration cycle—with its involutory hemicycles and its 8 soli-lunar phases—was rooted in the theosophical worldview.... ¹⁸⁸

¹⁸⁶ Bill Quinn, "An Interview with Dane Rudhyar," The American Theosophist, Vol. 65, No. 9, September 1977, p. 253.

¹⁸⁷ Leyla Rael, "Happy Birthday, Rudhyar and Thanks," p. 79.

¹⁸⁸ Michael Meyer, "Rudhyar: Friend, Exemplar and Sage," A Tribute to Dane Rudhyar.

In his first book Rudhyar also drew attention again to the sub-aspects, such as semi-sextiles, septiles, quintiles etc. which had previously been neglected, and endowed them with new roles and meaning.

With respect to the status of astrology as a science, Rudhyar is of the opinion that:

... astrology can be considered, broadly speaking, a 'science.' A science is a method of gaining a knowledge of what is around us, and of predicting what is going to happen when various factors in our environment act upon each other — for instance, when certain chemicals combine to produce accurately foreseeable reactions. Such knowledge, if it has proven reliable in a large number of carefully identified and measured instances, can be called 'scientific' whatever the method to gain the knowledge has been.¹⁸⁹

This issue is further explored by Rudhyar in the interview with The American Theosophist, where he points to the metaphysical underpinning of astrology by saying:

When one is dealing with the occult type of astrology one has to presuppose a number of things which are, to some extent, implied in theosophy, yet which are not necessarily connected with the original teachings of theosophy. However, it might be said that one of the basic ways in which astrology and the validity of astrology has been explained is by the doctrine of correspondence and the so-called Hermetic principle of 'As above, so below.'¹⁹⁰

Because Rudhyar favors a different, more philosophical and 'transcendent' approach to astrology, as discussed above, he tends to

¹⁸⁹.Rudhyar, Person centered Astrology (Lakemount, GA: CSA Press, 1971) p. 7.

¹⁹⁰.Bill Quinn, "An Interview with Dane Rudhyar," p. 248.

be wary of the purely quantitative approach favored by certain astrologers, such as M. Gauquelin.

The strictly scientific approach is perfectly legitimate. It satisfies the analytical mind and may lead to many valuable conclusions, provided it is intelligently applied and does not violate the inherent characteristics of astrology. There are, however, many pitfalls in such an approach. Since it is analytical rather than holistic, it deals with events rather than with whole persons. It singles out specific illnesses or specific careers as entities in themselves. This in turn implies a dualistic, either-or, yes-or-no approach which is the very opposite of the holistic viewpoint.¹⁹¹

Rudhyar makes his point even clearer when he remarks that Humanistic astrology is "an astrology aiming at the fulfillment of the individual person. It is not meant to appeal to intellectual curiosity or even to the so-called scientific mentally engrossed by quantitative statistical research."¹⁹² During talks and lectures to his mainly younger audiences in the 60's and 70's Rudhyar realized that the 'scientific' analytical approach could never respond to their needs. Rudhyar is certainly in agreement with HPB that an astrologer should also be a psychologist, and even a seer. In this way "he can help the person to get a more objective picture of the possibilities inherent in his life-situation."¹⁹³ His book, An Astrological Study of Psychological Complexes and Emotional Problems (1966) also offers

¹⁹¹ Dane Rudhyar, "Foreword," in Marcia Moore and Mark Douglas, The Divine Science, p. xiii.

¹⁹² Dane Rudhyar, "International Committee for a Humanistic Astrology," Kosmos, Vol. 2 No. 5, May 1969, p. 11.

¹⁹³ Bill Quinn, "An Interview with Dane Rudhyar," p. 251.

ample evidence of the importance Rudhyar gives to the contribution of astrology to psychological counseling: in his opinion the psychologist

cannot see the entire life of the person with a whole view, whereas the astrologer has before him an abstract picture of the whole life in its *seed potentiality*....In other words the psychologist has *existential* knowledge but doesn't know anything about *archetypal* knowledge; and I must add that what Jung calls 'archetypes' is something entirely different from what I speak of as archetype ¹⁹⁴.

It is not our task here to explore his differences with Jung in respect to the definition of 'archetypes.' Suffice it to say that Rudhyar adopted and adapted many ideas and concepts coming out of the psychological ideas and vocabulary of various contemporary theorists, including Jung, Ira Progoff, Maslow and Assagioli, all of which he sees as advocating purposive approaches to human development.

Rudhyar also agrees with the moral relativism of HPB and Theosophy, and indeed with Vedantic notions, when he states that:

we cannot say that any event is good or bad; only whether or not it served the purpose of the life or dharma of the person. In a certain sense, traumatic events always do serve the purpose of the dharma, but the individual may not be able to see that it is so. He may be so completely shocked and depressed by the event that he simply is not able to use it constructively. ¹⁹⁵.

This agreement also extends to the rejection of the old astrological 'fatalism' in favor of the more modern consensus, originally sponsored by HPB, that, "the stars impel; they do not compel."

¹⁹⁴.Ibid, p 250.

¹⁹⁵.Ibid, p. 250.

8.5 Summary and brief Analysis of our four Astrologers

The order in which we have discussed our four prominent Theosophically-oriented astrologers in this thesis is first of all an order dictated by their age and position in the history of astrology. We want to briefly recall here the dates of their life-span, since these periods have been vital to their creative influence in the field of astrology.

A. Leo 1860—1917; C. E.O. Carter 1887—1968;

M.E. Jones 1888—1980; D. Rudhyar 1895—1985

Looking at these dates, what becomes immediately obvious, is the fact that the two British representatives both antedate their North American colleagues. This serves to highlight the historical precedence and importance of the British heritage with respect to astrology in North America, to which Mr. G.J. McCormack also drew attention in a 1943 speech to the Annual Convention of the AFA (as mentioned earlier). Jones also acknowledges that “the lean on Alan Leo, and his attempt in England to use Theosophical principles for the greater dignification of the stellar art” set examples for the treatment and practice of astrology in North America.¹⁹⁶

The appraisals included for each of our representatives, however incomplete, demonstrate their impact not only on the local astrological community but also internationally. In the section describing their specific brand of astrology we offered evidence of the penetrating influence of Theosophical teachings, derived from their affiliations with various Theosophical groups and their readings of HPB’s major works as well as

¹⁹⁶ Jones, The Essentials of Astrological Analysis, p. vii.

other important Theosophical literature (e.g. The Mahatma Letters). In addition we mentioned the original contributions made by these representatives to the field of astrology.

A. Leo

The testimony and appraisals given to Leo's work clearly show that: "Alan Leo was the forerunner of a new breed of astrologers who were to regard astrology not only as a predictive science but as a way of finding meaning and significance in life. To him, the zodiac was the evolutionary pathway of the soul"¹⁹⁷

Jones also acknowledges Leo's role as the forerunner of modern astrology, saying: "his fourteen manuals (London 1901-12) his dictionary and other books and pamphlets, completely revolutionized astrological literature."

Jones also mentions Vivian E. Robson (a Theosophist, and author of many books and subsequent editor of Modern Astrology), and Charles E.O.

Carter in the same context as important and competent writers in astrology.¹⁹⁸

Rudhyar also acknowledges the pivotal role of Leo and his work in introducing Theosophical ideas into modern astrology saying:

Alan Leo, a devoted student of the modified theosophy that grew from the teachings of leaders who succeeded Madame Blavatsky, but personalized her original instructions, has been the most influential person in directing modern astrology towards the condition of a spiritual science. While accepting the basis of Ptolemaic astrology,

¹⁹⁷ Marcia Moore and Mark Douglas, Astrology the Divine Science, p. 649.

¹⁹⁸ Jones, Astrology: How and Why, p. 344.

he strove to lift the whole structure of astrological thought by linking it to his understanding of Hindu philosophy.¹⁹⁹

Rudhyar here fails to acknowledge that Leo still knew HPB personally, though Leo may have been somewhat influenced by his wife who was apparently quite devoted to Besant and her entourage. However, the statements of both Jones and Rudhyar emphasize (as many others have also done) the importance of Leo with respect to the revival of astrology, as well as the significant changes he has brought to the field of astrology in general, particularly his introduction of Theosophical teachings.

Unfortunately, Leo's short life prevented him from developing his ideas even further. We can therefore only speculate what a person of his capabilities might have achieved had he lived as long as Carter, Jones or Rudhyar. Leo did not witness the discovery of Pluto, as did the others, and we do not know how this would have affected his astrological views. Furthermore, the development of psychology was still in its infancy at the time of his death in 1917. Thus he was never exposed to the psychological theories available to Carter, Jones or Rudhyar.

He died at the relatively young age of 57, much earlier than any of his three colleagues. But despite his short life, Leo is clearly regarded as the pioneer of 20th century astrology. He not only gave astrology a philosophical foundation drawn from his Theosophical convictions (lost since the Renaissance), he also put it on a commercial footing by popularizing it as none other had done before.²⁰⁰ Thus he gave astrology a new level of public and commercial feasibility and respectability, an example that was quickly

¹⁹⁹.Rudhyar, "Whence,Why and Whither", in The Future of Astrology, ed by A.T. Mann, p. 7.

²⁰⁰.Leo, who witnessed only the beginning of the commercialization of astrology, was critical of some of its trends.

copied by others, mostly though to the detriment of astrology. However, Leo's main interest was to anchor astrology firmly to the Theosophical teachings of HPB. Thus he left a heritage which served as an example, and also a stepping stone, for those who followed him and improved upon it, such as Carter, Jones, and Rudhyar who made successful use of the grounds Leo had prepared.

C.E.O. Carter

Carter's significance to the revival and improvement of 20th century astrology lies mainly in his long and successful presidency of the A.L.T.S. in London and the founding of the journal Astrology which, from small beginnings, has since become a respectable international journal. Carter had a talent for keeping a delicate balance between the Astrological Lodge and the T.S. organization. However, he also reaffirms in his writings a close connection between astrology and the four major Theosophical teachings described in chapter 5.

Under Carter's administrative leadership the Lodge became an important stabilizing factor for the development of astrology in Britain and abroad. He kept the focus on astrology (in this he followed Leo's aim) and succeeded in creating an atmosphere conducive to the training of a number of respected and capable astrologers who later went on to found their own organizations. This served to broaden the scope of astrology and extended its reach far beyond the borders of Britain. This new breed of astrologers has since made many valuable contributions to astrology in the form of books, articles and lectures.

In this manner the Lodge became a cradle for important new offspring in the form of both ideas and institutions. For example Leo's idea of an educational institution for astrology was successfully realized by Carter many years later through his support for the creation of the *Faculty of Astrology*. This institution is still active in educating astrologers world-wide. Also still active is the internationally recognized *Astrological Association*, another offspring, which has created an astrological study center, a Library and a successful journal. And a third major offspring, the *Company of Astrologers*, is also still playing a major role in the development and dissemination of astrology today. All three of these important bodies owe their origins to Carter and the Lodge he headed for so many years. In training and development the Lodge has thus provided a degree of stability and respectability that has not been seen since astrology was banned from the universities.

In sum, the credit for the London Lodge's survival and extraordinary impact on modern astrology in this century, must go to Carter and his loyal band of helpers in the inter-war years and after (these developments were outlined in section 7.3).

It is apparent that Carter corresponded with a number of Theosophist/astrologers in the United States and Canada, in part as a member of the AFA. However, there seems to be no evidence of any correspondence between Carter and Jones, who were contemporaries, both members of the AFA and fellow Theosophists. ²⁰¹

²⁰¹ However, this is not surprising since aside from material in *Astrology* and *The Astrological Journal*, biographical information on Carter is difficult to come by. Carter must also have met Rudhyar during the latter's visits to the Lodge in 1958 and 1962-3. Whatever privately-held information there may be on this has not yet been made available.

M.E.Jones

The role of Jones in 20th century astrology was quite different from that of Carter. The two apparently never met, since neither of them traveled abroad (though Jones traveled extensively throughout the United States). Though also a contemporary of Rudhyar, Jones was never really interested in depth psychology either. He restricted himself—as Carter also did, to what Rudhyar called the ‘old-fashioned kind of psychology.’²⁰²

However, Jones and Rudhyar were predominantly philosophically oriented in their astrology since both were steeped in Theosophy, and the universal dimension of astrology appealed to them. In his ‘Sabian Astrology’ and his work practice Jones combined his Christian faith with Theosophy. This to most Christians, but especially to traditional theologians seems rather contradictory (after all the Church tried to discredit HPB, as mentioned in chapter 3-4). Jones however, discovered a deep connection between the two, probably as a result of his readings of Christian Theosophists like James Pryse. This synthesis enabled him to reach out to many people who otherwise might never have considered Theosophy, let alone astrology. He also reached large audiences, since he was on the lecture circuit for most of his life throughout North America.

Although there are more parallels between Jones and Rudhyar than with either Carter or Leo there are also significant differences, as pointed out in the respective biographical sections. But Rudhyar, who was inspired by Jones, also acknowledges Jones importance to contemporary astrology, saying that: “Marc Edmund Jones has brought astrology to the level of a most abstract system of knowledge pervaded by relativism and deeply

²⁰² Barbara Somerfield, “An Interview with Dane Rudhyar on His 89th Birthday”, p. 13.

embedded in intellectual speculation, though also most keenly effective in a regenerated 'horary' system."²⁰³

D. Rudhyar

Rudhyar is the youngest and most unorthodox of the four astrologers we have introduced, being something of a 'New Age' figure even before this became recognized as a 'movement'. He felt more at home amongst the crowd of young 'hippies' who followed him in the 60's and 70's than among contemporaries such as Carter or Jones.

Rudhyar always had a strong inclination toward philosophy and astrology, but he remained an artist at heart, and favored composing and playing music. Though it was Jones who inspired Rudhyar's interest in astrology, he reveals that he "wasn't taken with the approaches of Alan Leo or Max Heindel. There were a couple of other groups, too, like C.C. Zain's Brotherhood of Light... astrology was not considered a profession in those groups... In some cases you were not supposed to receive money for a reading."²⁰⁴ The above statement on Leo appears a trifle unfair given that Leo was the first astrologer to successfully commercialize astrology. Rudhyar's memory at 89 years of age may be responsible for this "faux pas", since we have him praising Leo in another passage, mentioned previously. And after all, his own mentor Jones had learned from Leo.

Apart from Theosophy, Rudhyar's major contributions to astrology were twofold. The first was his interest in the outer planetary cycles, their historical relevance, and their relation to the universal cycles. His second contribution was to introduce Jungian depth-psychology to astrology. Since

²⁰³ Rudhyar, "Whence, Why and Whither", p. 8.

²⁰⁴ Ibid. p.13.

Rudhyar is the youngest of our four astrologers, it is in part his age which helped him focus on these new developments. He has therefore also written more than any of the others on these subjects. For example Leo never had a chance to explore the periodicity of great conjunctions such as those of Pluto/Uranus or Pluto/Neptune, and their historical significance. And even during Carter's main productive life, research into the meanings of Pluto had not yet reached the developments attained in the 1970's and the 1980's.²⁰⁵ It was only after Carter's death that the astrological implications of Pluto were more fully understood and incorporated into the astrological literature. And since Jones did not occupy himself much with either area of astrology (cycles or depth-psychology) it was left to Rudhyar to explore them.

Rudhyar believed we were at the threshold of a 'New Age' that involved a radical change in consciousness since today,

an extraordinary amount of confusion prevails not only in astrology, but in psychology, medicine and nearly all intellectual pursuits, the arts included. This is so because we are living through a transitional period. We still cling emotionally and often fearfully, to the past and to egosaving devices... ²⁰⁶

In conclusion, though each of the above astrologers made his own unique contribution to the revival and enrichment of astrology, they also have a number of ideas in common.

In the first place, all were united in their goal to elevate the status of astrology and bring it back to the level of respectability they believed it

²⁰⁵ There was still discussion about the sign rulership of Pluto in the 1960's as indicated in: "Pluto in the Nativity (discussion of a Lodge Forum)," Astrology, Vol. 38, No. 4, p 145ff.

²⁰⁶ Rudhyar, My Stand on Astrology, p. 19.

deserved in an age which had uncovered so many mysteries, and had penetrated further into the universe as never before. In addition, they all ideally required that the astrologer be a combination of philosopher and psychologist, and that the true practice of astrology be considered a form of art.²⁰⁷ These considerations are important in that they emphasize the faculties of perception, intuition and clairvoyance as being essential endowments of a 'good' astrologer.

It is also interesting to note that all four were quite critical toward a purely empirical or statistical approach to astrology, or towards any attempt to standardize astrology to make it acceptable to modern science (although Leo did not experience this trend to the same extent as did the others). All these views are in line with HPB's attitude to professionalism in astrology, as already described.

Finally, we note that they were all apparently somewhat critical of the T.S. organization in the later post-HPB-era, and show little interest in the writings of other prominent figures in the movement such as Besant, Judge, Sinnett, de Purucker or Leadbeater. Their attraction to Theosophy was primarily linked to the writings of HPB, since it was there that they found inspiration and support for their astrology. This is not surprising since, as indicated more particularly in the first two sections of chapter 6, the post-HPB-era of T.S. leaders was not much concerned with astrology—hence our own focus here on the writings of HPB.

We might also mention that Leo and Rudhyar traveled to different countries and spread their influence personally. Leo for instance had offices in

²⁰⁷ Even Roger Bacon considered astrology as a science and an art and a most powerful indeed. (W.Eamon, p.49).

France, the Netherlands, New York (United States) and India. Rudhyar gathered students around him in North America as well as in Switzerland, France, the Netherlands and England. While Jones traveled extensively throughout North America, he somewhat surprisingly never ventured to Europe. Carter never visited North America though he apparently had intensive correspondence with a number of astrologers living there.

All four were also highly prolific and left an abundance of books, most of which are still available in print and are read and appreciated by a large world-wide readership.

Finally, all their activities have focused on improving astrological counseling, which leads us to conclude with the following words of Leyla Rael, (Rudhyar's last wife).

Today, even the most event-oriented astrologer (a term Rudhyar himself coined in contrast to his person-centred approach) *counsels* clients— that is to say, points out the client's responsibility, indeed purpose in life, to grow and learn from whatever happens, however dire or sublime. This in itself marks a departure from traditional astrological practice.²⁰⁸

²⁰⁸ Leyla Rael, The Astrological Journal, p. 77.

9. CONCLUSION

Western astrology undoubtedly experienced a decline with the onset of the Enlightenment. During the 19th century it had reached a particularly low ebb. A lack of integrity and professionalism among most of the astrological community was partly responsible. However, this situation started to change at the turn of the century and astrology has since experienced an impressive comeback. The purpose of this thesis has been to illustrate the part played by the T.S. Movement in initiating and furthering this process of revival.

The accumulated evidence suggests that the T.S. Movement provided the impetus for this revival at two distinct levels, theoretical and practical. On the theoretical level it was a major factor in reintroducing Western astrology to its own occult roots in Hermeticism and Neoplatonism, and in injecting certain 'Eastern' features derived from its own affiliations in the Indian subcontinent (a major repository of the Ancient Wisdom according to HPB). This more philosophical influence is exemplified by the increasing acceptance and attention given by contemporary astrology to four major themes, microcosm/macrocosm, karma/reincarnation, planetary cycles, and the emphasis of HPB and the later T.S.Movement on a 'psychology of the soul.'¹ On the more practical level we have shown that astrology has benefitted to a marked extent : a) from the astrological activities undertaken by the many Theosophical Lodges spread throughout North America and Great Britain, and; b) through the Theosophical backgrounds of prominent astrologers, four of whom we selected to

¹.HPB also thought of this psychology as being essential to astrology, and her ideas were relatively close to Jungian depth psychology, and to Maslow's Humanistic psychology.

illustrate the profound influence of their lives and work on modern astrology. Both levels are closely interconnected and equally important.

In developing our argument we continuously encountered the following questions. Why was astrology in need of revival? And to what might be attributed the hostility, and even outright repression, that has punctuated its history? While a satisfactory answer would have taken us well beyond the scope of this present enquiry, we do wish, however, to sum up our thoughts on these issues, albeit clarifying them only to the extent they appear relevant to our topic. We showed how astrology was an important ingredient in the cultural life of society in the past, having been practiced at the courts of emperors and Popes, and accepted by much of the nobility. This practice does not appear to have changed with the passage of time. Astrological counsel is still sought after by leaders of countries throughout the world, though this is kept hidden from public scrutiny as much as possible in modern Western society. Astrology has certainly lost the high standing in society it enjoyed in the past (e.g. in Antiquity and in the Renaissance).

Our own enquiry suggests a twofold reason for the mixed reception of this age-old practice that, while officially frowned upon, is nevertheless still with us today. In the first place we mentioned the Church. Our discussion served to highlight the arguments made by the Catholic Church, for example in defending 'Free Will' against the alleged 'fatalism' of astrology. This was the extension of an argument originally mounted against the Stoics by 'pagan' philosophers, and was later used against the Renaissance astrologers. The second reason is the rise of modern scientific

materialism which denies the reality of realms beyond the reach of the five senses.

However, astrology was never completely banned, and this, we think, can be attributed in part to the parallel existence of two levels of astrology, a more learned or philosophical type and a vulgar or 'popular' variety. The learned or philosophical type of astrology as practiced by the priest class in ancient times was still being practiced in later centuries by learned astronomers/astrologers such as Kepler and Galileo. It was also taught at the major European universities for centuries, and even at Harvard and Yale in the United States until the mid 18th century (mainly in the medical field). The vulgar type on the other hand was usually practiced for the common people by unschooled professionals, or by charlatans who often mixed different esoteric means. It is also this more vulgar, superficial, type of astrology, encountered today in popular newspapers and magazines, which is largely responsible, we believe, for once again giving astrology a bad reputation, and for the persistent reluctance on the part of the academic community to undertake serious studies on the subject.

The Theosophical teachings of HPB helped revive an ailing astrology, shorn of its ancient philosophy, which had slowly faded away during the 18th and 19th centuries.² HPB herself demanded a high professional

²However, there were and still are well educated astrologers—for example John Worsdale in England, who was highly skilled in mathematics and well read. He may even have been clairvoyant, yet his interpretation of astrology was fatalistic (Curry, 1989, p132ff). Worsdale's test of accuracy was to predict a person's death (a practice still very much alive in India today). However, modern Western practice has shifted the emphasis towards counselling, and how best to deal with a difficult situation, as well as predicting as accurately as possible the beginning and end of a difficult period, mentioning the type of potential event. Unless an astrologer can tap into the chain of a person's past lives through clairvoyance (concealed in what Edgar Cayce, a famous American medium and Theosophist called the "akashic records," to which HPB hints in the *S.D.*), the astrologer can only mention a certain range of possibilities; not a specific event. Exceptions are possible if the astrologer has a detailed knowledge of the person's life. Then inferences can be made on the basis of past events, based on Leo's dictum that: "character is destiny".

standard for the astrologer and also made a distinction between what she called 'quacks' who merely dabble in astrology in an attempt to impress others, and the earnest student of astrology.

Although HPB stated that the key to the 'true esoteric astrology' was lost, she still thought of the astrology of her time as valuable. She might be even more pleased with the astrology practiced by many astrologers in the West today given the 'Theosophical trend' introduced by Theosophist/astrologers such as Leo, Carter, Jones and Rudhyar who applied HPB's teachings to astrology. Faivre, a modern authority on esotericism, has since attributed the practice of an esoteric astrology to Leo and Rudhyar.³

That we experience a new 'renaissance' of astrology was also observed in a recent article in Life Magazine, providing the results of a survey stating that:

It turns out that astrology is experiencing its biggest boom in 400 years. According to a recent poll, just 20 percent of Americans are flat-out nonbelievers; 48 percent say astrology is probably or definitely valid...Twenty years ago there were an estimated 1000 professional astrologers in the United States; today there are something like 5000. In 1968, when Linda Goodman's *Sun Signs* became the first astrological best-seller, the annual market for astrology books was around five million. Today, it is closer to 20 million. Netnicks can surf thousands of Web sites...⁴

This figure of 5000 must include only those professional astrologers in the United States who actually earn their full livelihood from the practice of

³Faivre, Access to Western Esotericism, p. 95. He may not be as familiar with the other two we mention.

⁴Kenneth Miller, "Star Struck: a journey to the new frontiers of the zodiac," Life Magazine, July 1997, p. 40. An earlier article on the subject was written in the September 26, 1969 issue by Anne Bayer, entitled: "Astrology for Devotees and Doubters".

astrology, because Broughton a hundred years ago, had observed that even though there were only 20 professionals in 1860, there were already many thousands of astrologers (or would be astrologers) at the turn of the century.⁵ Today, tens of thousands more practice astrology on a part-time basis, in conjunction with psychology or otherwise. We know from reliable sources for example, that we have around 300 practicing astrologers in the wider Montréal area alone. However, only a handful are able to support themselves fully through astrology.

And while we do not assume, or claim here, that all practicing astrologers subscribe to the four major concepts introduced by Theosophy, a survey on astrologers in North America mentioned by Ronald Davison, a former student of Carter, showed that: "... about seventy-five percent of astrologers believed in Karma, a universal law best summed up as—'As you sow, so shall you reap.' The same proportion also accepted the idea of Reincarnation."⁶ We do not have similar figures for the situation in Great Britain, although the anecdotal evidence suggests that the situation there is likely to be similar. The impact of depth psychology on astrology, judged by the amount and quality of literature, is equally impressive.

A suitable topic for a future research project might include a social survey and analysis of the reasons why people consult astrologers today, the ways in which they tend to integrate the results of their consultations into their daily lives, and the effects this might have on the wider society. Algeo certainly seems to have captured the general impact of Theosophical ideas thus far quite well by saying that they were once exceptional but "are now

⁵.Gordon Melton, New Age Encyclopedia 1990, p. 39.

⁶.Ronald Davison, Astrology, The Classical Guide to Understanding your Horoscope, (Sebastopol California, CRCS Publications, 1987) p.12.

commonplace in contemporary thought.”⁷ And most informed observers today would agree with his claim that Theosophy has become an integral part of the *Zeitgeist*—the ‘spirit of the times.’

⁷John Algeo, “Theosophy and the Zeitgeist,” The American Theosophist, Vol.75, No.10, November 1987, p. 322f.

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APPENDICES

- Appendix A: Zodiacal Man with each sign depicting a cosmic, terrestrial and organic function;
- Appendix B: Different examples of horoscope designs through the centuries;
- Appendix C: Examples of cover pages from two old Almanacs;
- Appendix D: Portrait of H.P. Blavatsky (above) and with Olcott (below);
- Appendix E: Engraving showing the Latin, Greek and Egyptian versions of the zodiac
- Appendix F: The Faces of Hermes Trismegistus;
- Appendix G: Astrology Classes in Theosophical Lodges (Listing);
- Appendix H: Three examples of advertisements in the Astrology Quarterly, Vol. 67, No. 3.

APPENDIX A

**Zodiacal Man with each sign
depicting a cosmic, terrestrial and organic function**

१. १००० ॥ १००० ॥ १००० ॥
 २. १००० ॥ १००० ॥ १००० ॥
 ३. १००० ॥ १००० ॥ १००० ॥

7. **ଜିନିଷ** : ଆମେଣ ଡିଅର
 ଫର ଗିଫ୍ ମଧ୍ୟ ମାରି ଚାନ୍ତି
 ଫର ଗ୍ରାମିନ ଡିଅର ଡିଅର : -

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7-1 Son
D'Amor

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THE
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NEW
YORK

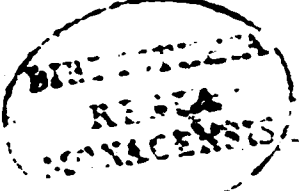
[illegible]

AMERICAN SOCIETY OF MECHANICAL ENGINEERS
 345 E. 57th St., New York, N.Y. 10022-4170
 Tel: 212/512-2000, Fax: 212/512-2099
 E-mail: info@asme.org

1960

The
 Army
 of the
 East

1998



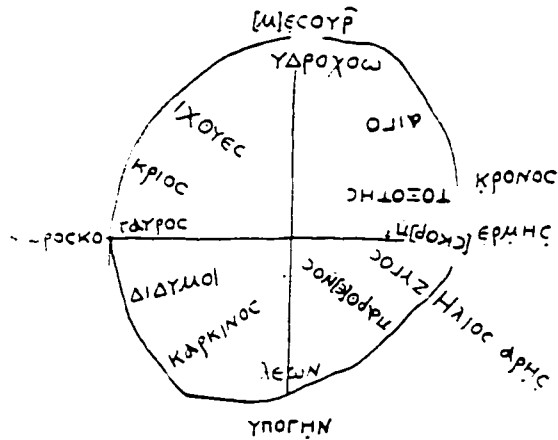
(Zodiacal man, from MS., Germany.
14C., Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Munich.)

The great celestial man with his body made up of the zodiac was a synthesis of working principles, each sign depicting a cosmic, terrestrial and organic function. Events above were matched by response below, although not always in the most obvious way. Thus Mars in his positive sign, Aries, might give one man a head wound, or impel another to impulse; on a larger scale it could initiate a daring commercial enterprise, or precipitate a war. Everyone was part of Adam, and he was a reflection of the heavenly man.

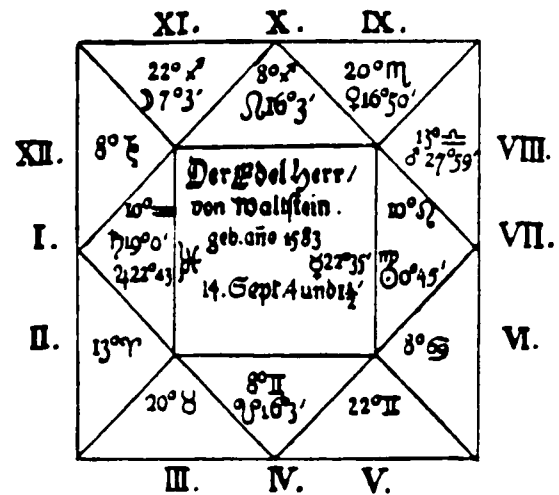
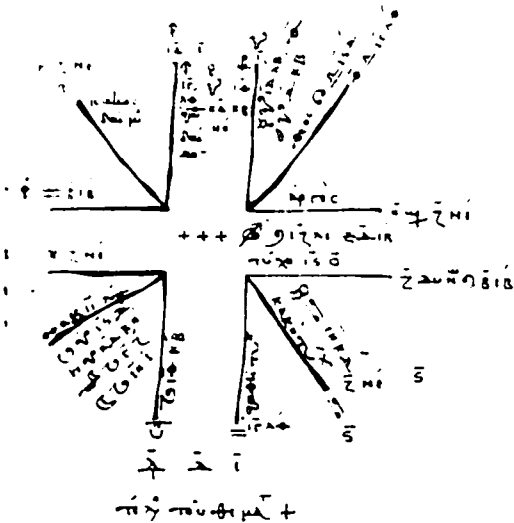
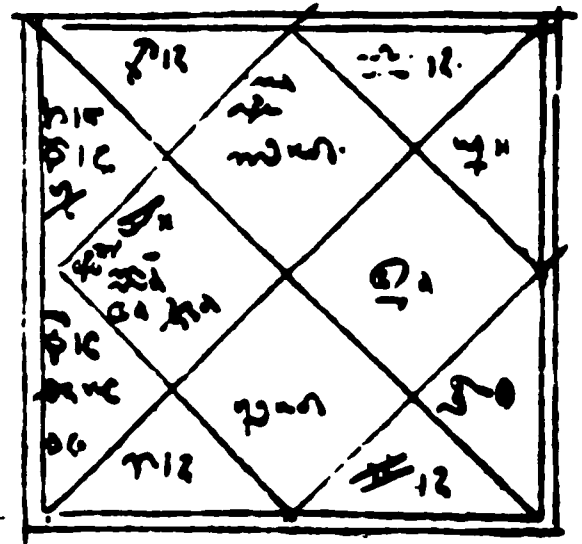
APPENDIX B

Different examples of
horoscope designs through the centuries

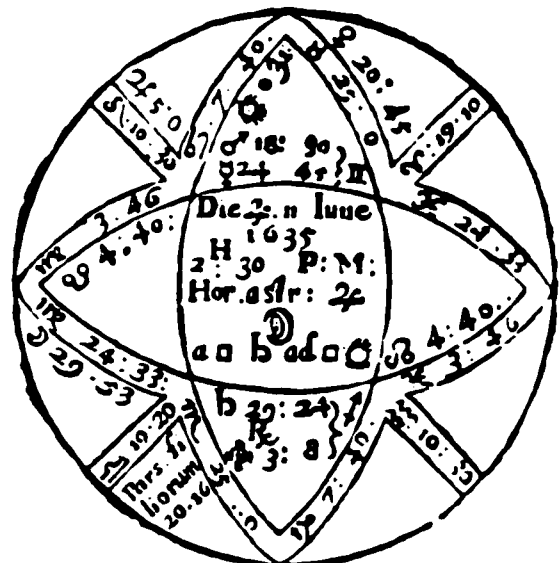
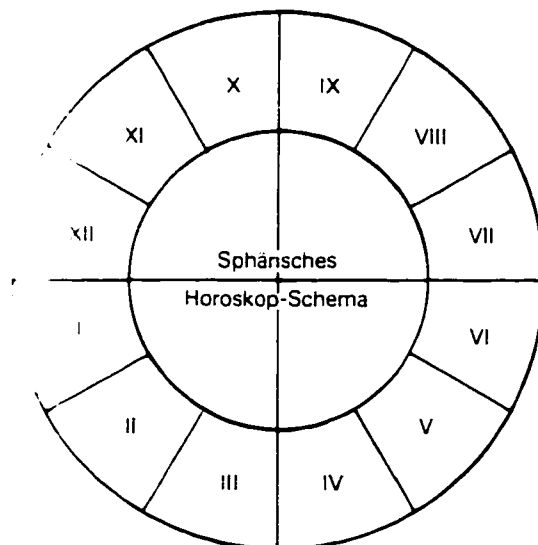
Beispiele sind die beiden griechischen Horoskope, das Horoskopschema Kaiser Hadrians und das Wallensteins (nach O. Neugebauer und F. H. Cramer).



ἡμεῖς τὴν ἐν δὲ ἀνατολῇ τοῦ τοῦ καὶ ἐφ' ἡμέρας
καὶ τὴν ἐν τῇ μεσημέρῳ ἐφ' ἡμέρας καὶ τὴν ἐν τῇ μεσημέρῳ
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In der modernen Astrologie werden überwiegend die kreisförmigen Horoskopschemata benutzt, wobei auch „vermittelnde“, ovalförmige Schemata benutzt werden.



APPENDIX C

Examples of
cover pages from two old Almanacs

SHAKESPEARE ASSOCIATION
FACSIMILES No. 8

THE SHAKESPEARE ASSOCIATION FACSIMILES

A series of rare texts illustrating life and thought in Shakespeare's England, under the general editorship of Dr. G. B. Harrison.

1931-2

- (1) *A Dialogue Concerning Witches and Witchcraftes.* By GEORGE GIFFORD. 1593. With an Introduction by BEATRICE WHITE.
- (2) *Skialetheia; or a shadow of Truth in Certaine Epigrams and Sayres.* By EVERARD GUILPIN. 1598. With an Introduction by G. B. HARRISON.
- (3) *A Health to the Gentlemanly Profession of Serving-Men.* By I.M. 1598. With an Introduction by A. V. JUDGES.
- (4) *Vicissitudo Rerum.* By JOHN NORDEN. 1600. With an Introduction by D. C. COLLINS.

1932-3

- (5) *A Short Treatise of Hunting.* By SIR THOMAS COCKAINE. 1591. With an Introduction by W. R. HALLIDAY.
- (6) *Paradoxes of Defence.* By GEORGE SILVER. 1599. With an Introduction by J. DOVER WILSON.
- (7) *Present Remedies against the Plague, etc.* With an Introduction by W. P. BARRETT.

1934-5

- (8) *An Almanack and Prognostication for the year 1598.* Made by THOMAS BUCKMINSTER. With an Introduction by EUSTACE F. BOSANQUET.
- (9) *The Battle of Nieuport.* 1600. Two News Pamphlets and a Ballad, with an Introduction on News in Elizabethan England by D. C. COLLINS.
- (10) *The Life and Death of Gamaliel Ratsey, and Ratsey's Ghost.* With an Introduction by S. H. ATKINS.

An Almanack and Prognostication for the Year 1598

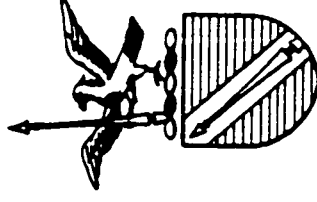
MADE BY

THOMAS BUCKMINSTER

1598

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

EUSTACE F. BOSANQUET



Published for

THE SHAKESPEARE ASSOCIATION

by

Humphrey Milford, Oxford University Press
Amen House, Warwick Square, E.C.

1935

THE BRITISH ALMANAC

OF

THE SOCIETY FOR THE DIFFUSION OF USEFUL
KNOWLEDGE,

FOR THE YEAR

1834.

SIR GEORGE WILLIAMS UNIVERSITY
LIBRARY

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LONDON:

CHARLES KNIGHT, 22, LUDGATE-STREET,
AND 13, PALL-MALL EAST.

Price Two Shillings and Sixpence, stitched in a wrapper.

WM. CLOWES, PRINTER, DUKES-STREET, LAMBDETH.

APPENDIX D

**Portrait of H.P. Blavatsky (above)
and with Olcott (below)**



1. Madame Blavatsky



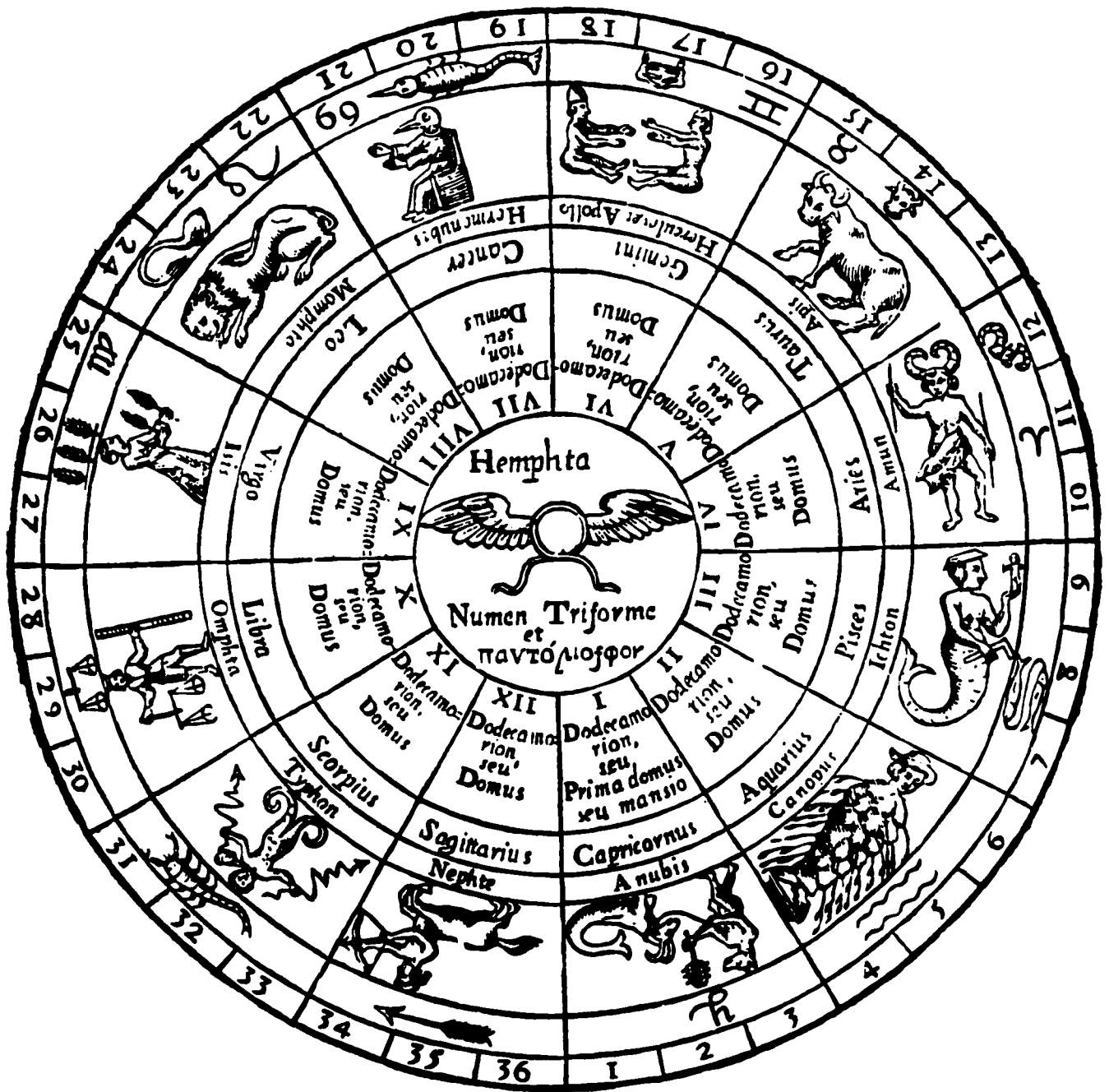
2. Maloney and Jack, the chums

HPB and Olcott

APPENDIX E

Engraving showing

Latin, Greek and Egyptian Versions of the Zodiac



14 In this seventeenth-century engraving the blending of cultures is seen in the Latin, Greek and Egyptian versions of the zodiac. This process occurred throughout astrology's development, each phase adding its own findings and understanding (as with the thirty-six decans round the edge of the diagram), until the study became so complex that it was a full-time profession. This gave rise to the best and worst practitioners. In Rome, for example, emperors would consult their Chaldeans, as astrologers were called, on policy, while having to drive out the charlatans who defrauded their more gullible subjects. (Hieroglyphic plan of the ancient zodiac, from A. Kircher's *Oedipus Aegyptiacus*, 1653.)

APPENDIX F

The Faces of Hermes Trismegistus

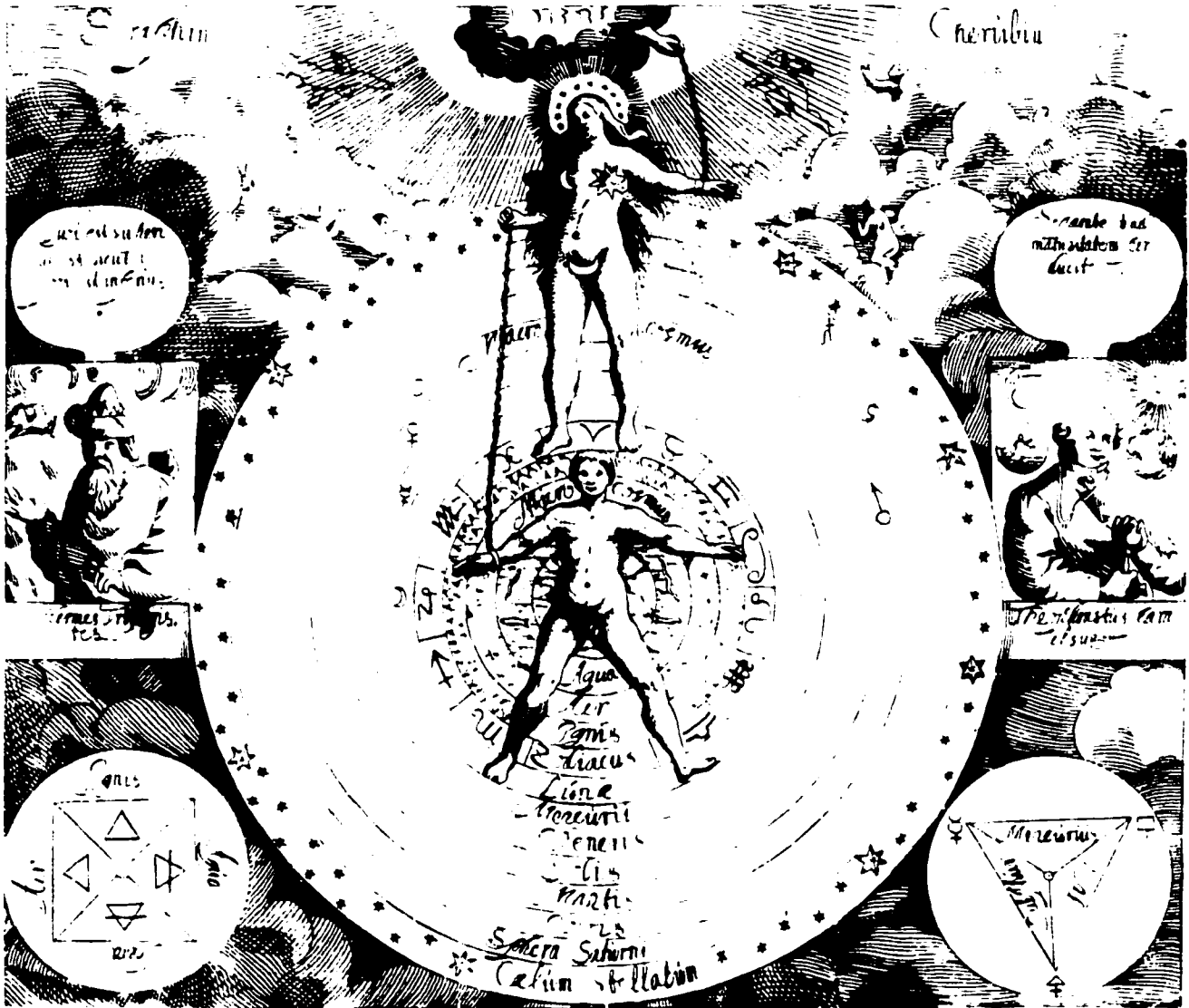


Plate 33. Tobias Schütze, *Harmonia macrocosmi cum microcosmo*, Frankfurt, 1654. Based on Croll (see Plate 17) and on illustrations of the *Utriusque cosmi historia* (1617) of Robert Fludd.



Plate 12A and 12B. Painting on a column of the Salone Sistina (Vatican Library). The series of column-paintings in that room is attributed to Luca Horfei (1587) and represents the "inventors" of scripts and alphabets. Here, Mercurius Thoth is the inventor of the Egyptian ("Mercurius Thoyt Aegyptiis sacras litteras conscripsit"). Above Hermes, an Egyptian alphabet. Professor Frans A. Janssen kindly called my attention to this document.

APPENDIX G

Astrology Classes in Theosophical Lodges (Listing)

Appendix G

Astrology Classes in Theosophical Lodges

Indianapolis Lodge - Astrology classes, sponsored by Ch. Luntz (T.M., Vol.XVI, No.7, p.150, December, 1928).

Buffalo Lodge, Astrology classes sponsored by Ch. Luntz (T.M., Vol. XVI, No.7, p.150, December 1928).

Minneapolis Lodge, Astrology classes sponsored by Ch.Luntz (T.M. Vol.XVII, No.1, p.7, January, 1929).

Central Lodge, New York city, held Astrology classes sponsored by Ch.Luntz (T.M. Vol.XVII, No.4.6, p.136, 1929).

Atlanta Lodge, (T.M. Vol. XVII, No.6, p.136,1929).

Annie Besant Lodge, San Diego, (T.M. Vol XX, No.3, p.68; A.T.Vol. XXII, No.7, p.16).

Besant Lodge, Boston, classes conducted by Isabelle Hickey (she published a few valuable books) (A.T. Vol.XXX, No.5 p.113, May, 1942; Vol.XXXI, p.115, May, 1943).

Besant Lodge, Seattle, (A.T. Vol.XXII, No.12, p.280, December, 1934).

Birmingham Lodge, (T.M. Vol.XVIII, No.5, p.102, May, 1930).

Minneapolis Lodge, (T.M., Vol.XVII, No. 1, p.7, January, 1929).

Peoria Lodge, (T.M. Vol.XX, No.3, p.67, March, 1932).

Washington D.C. Lodge, (T.M. Vol.XX, No.2, p.40, February, 1932, No.5, p.114, May, 1932; A.T. Vol.XXX, No.11, November, 1942).

Pasadena Lodge, (T.M. Vol.XIX, No.10, p.522, October, 1931).

Headquarter Staff, (T.M. Vol.XIX, No.3, p.359, March, 1931).

Indianapolis Lodge, (T.M. Vol.XVI, No.12, p.150, December, 1928).

New Orleans Lodge, (A.T. Vol.XXVIII, No.7, p.163, July 1940).

Kansas City Lodge, "Astrological Clinic", (A.T. Vol.XXVII, No.7, p.235, July,1939).

Maryland Lodge, Baltimore, (A.T. Vol.XXIII, No.7, p.162, July, 1935).

Hartford-Capitol Lodge, (A.T. Vol. XXIII, No.6,p.137, June,1935).

Ojai Valley Oaka Lodge, (A.T. Vol.XXII, p.90, April,1934).

San Francisco Lodge, (A.T. Vol.XXI, No.12, p.284, 1933).

Crescent Bay Lodge, Santa Monica, (A.T. Vol.XXI, No.7, p.185, July, 1933).

St. Paul Lodge, (T.M., Vol. XX, No.12, p.283, December, 1932).

Chicago Lodge, activities in astrology were reported to be very successful, (A.T., Vol.51, No.4, p.7, April, 1963 p.74, also Vol. 65, Nr. 9, September, 1977).

Long Beach Lodge: public lectures were given in November,1962, containing: "Cycles of Things to come (Astrologically speaking)", by Dr. Lowell Paul Wadle; and "Astro-Psychology as related to Theosophy", by Walter Haeg. Questions and answer sessions on astrology as well as lectures were frequently held under the guidance of Mr. W. Haeg, (A.T.,Vol 51, No.1,p.16, January, 1963).

Besant Lodge in Hollywood. Questions and answer sessions on astrology as well as lectures were frequently held under the guidance of Mr. W.Haeg (A.T.,Vol.51,No.2, February, 1963, A.T. Vol. 65, Nr.9, September, 1977).

Vancouver Lodge, (T.M. Supplement, Vol IV, No.8, p.16f, August, 1916).

The T.S. of Baltimore, lectures on astrology (A.T., Vol.66 , p.162, June, 1978).

Phoenix Arizona, San Mateo Study Center, Series of lectures on esoteric subjects including astrology (A.T.,Vol.66, p.164, June, 1978).

APPENDIX H

Three examples of Advertisements
in the Astrology Quarterly, Vol. 67, No. 3.



(Registered Educational Charity)

Fourteenth History of Astrology Seminar

Saturday, 1st November 1997 at 10.00 a.m. to 5.30 p.m. (Doors open for coffee at 9.30 a.m.)
50 Gloucester Place, London W1 (nearest Underground stations: Marble Arch & Baker Street)

Nick Campion

Rudolf Hess's flight to Scotland was on 10 May 1941, under the long awaited alignment of planets in Taurus and Scorpio; his aim, to make peace between Britain and Germany. The latest evidence suggests astrologers in both countries had lured him over.

Silke Ackermann

Astrology and Scientific Instruments. Dr Ackermann curates the instruments in the British Museum.

Coffee 11.20

Tomas Gazis

Our contributor from Athens concludes his discussion of Byzantine astrology, begun last year.

Panel Session

Notes from the panel; questions from the floor.

Lunch 1.00 to 2.00

Judith Kolbas

Solar Supremacy or Royal Iconography in 12th and 13th c. Middle Ages. Dr Kolbas, expert on Central Asiatic coins, sees over-enthusiastic identification of astrological symbolism as a disservice to our understanding of the period.

Annabella Kitson

Lilly's 'Mock Suns' and 'World's Catastrophe' Collection (1647) in readers, then and now, with their own means of political prediction.

Tea 3.20

Caroline Gerard

The Lauriston Horoscope: at Lauriston Castle, Edinburgh, the horoscope carved in stone. What can this tell us about Scottish the period?

Panel Session

Some astrological artefacts from India and the European Renaissance History of the History Seminar - astrologically handled by Mike. A brief astrological entertainment.

The Panel includes Nick Campion, Bernard Eccles, Mike Edwards, Annabella Kitson and David

Select Reading List. History of Astrology - books by our speakers

History and Astrology: Clot and Urania Confer. Ed. Kitson, based on talks given at these seminars, contributor Appleby, Nick Campion, Prudence Jones, Patrick Curry, Annabella Kitson, et al. Mnemosyne Press, Midheaven Books, 396 Caledonian Road, London N1 1DN. The Great Year Nick Campion, Arkana. A Confusion of Prophets, Patrick Curry Christian Astrology Regulus Company.

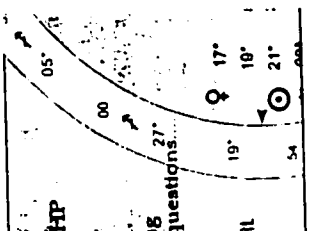
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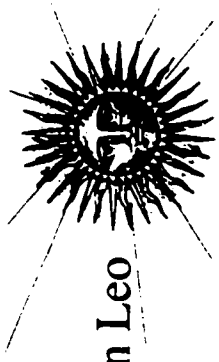


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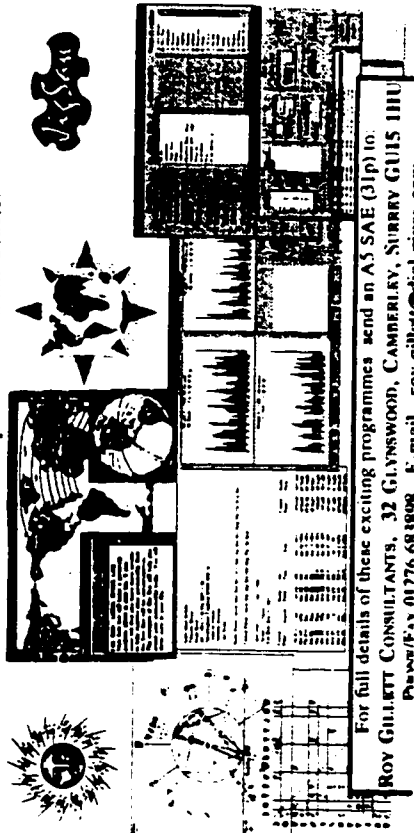
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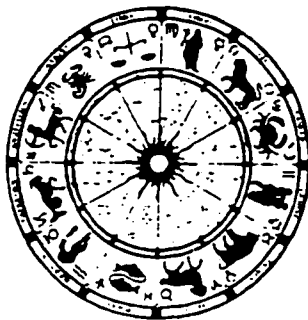
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