

***Concerning My
Involvement with Astrology***
by Dane Rudhyar

One of the main concerns of human society, ancient or modern, is, by an incessant collective effort, to expand the field in which we are able to perceive existence as ordered and predictable and by so doing to reduce as much as possible the realm in which "chance," unpredictability, the irrational and the traumatic can take place. This collective effort is at the root of all we call culture, religion, science, civilization; but the first known attempt to discover a consistent and dependable order in existence produced the earliest and most basic forms of what is today called astrology. As such, astrology can truly be said to be the "mother of all sciences" and the original core of all culture and religions.

The revival of interest in astrology in our 20th century can be interpreted in its deepest sense as being a "return" to the primordial "Mother-Image" from which all other attempts at discovering order and predictability in nature were derived. Why such a return? Simply because the Euro-American derivation from the archaic roots which has constituted our culture for at least 15 centuries, and actually since the days of Aristotle, has proven undependable: 15 or 25 centuries of humanity's collective efforts at attaining an internal (psychic) as well as external (social) security have led to an insecurity deeper than ever, to the hydrogen bomb and the dreadful products needed for waging chemical and electronic warfare. When modern men and women turn again to astrology, they are in a sense calling upon the archaic Mother-Image of universal order, the sky, asking her to reveal more dependable patterns of order and techniques of prediction, in a new way and for a new kind of mind. In this, astrology is not essentially different from either science or religion, and all three essentially are based on faith.

It may not seem strange to associate religion and astrology with faith, but it may indeed seem untoward to link faith with science. Our modern mentality is pervaded by glamour and psychological illusions concerning science, because we are still reacting against and compensating for centuries of religious dogmatism. All attempts to ascertain an absolutely reliable type of existential order and thereby to find security — and modern science is the most successful — are based on the faith that existence displays a basic and consistent order. Whether it be existence at the level of atomic processes, in the earth's biosphere or the Andromeda galaxy, science believes that this order can be demonstrated unchallengeably as an evident truth, at least to any mind trained in a specific manner. All sciences are also based on the belief that, once the principles and structural manifestations of order ("natural laws") are known, human beings will be able, individually and collectively, to reach a state of ever-increasing security.

Behind the much-publicized "search for truth," what is really at stake is the urge to satisfy humanity's need for order and security more effectively. Yet today our science-worshipping society and the products of its child, technology, increasingly are unable to provide this sense of order and security. They have led mankind to an unprecedented fear of total extinction and suicidal overpopulation. No wonder then that distraught members of an equally chaotic society increasingly turn to ancient concepts of order and security. They are moved by the semi-conscious and confused realization that perhaps mankind might be "saved" by returning to some of these ancient concepts and by appealing once more to the Mother-Image of universal order once embodied in astrology — especially in China, India or Babylonia.

When I began to work toward reformulating astrology and integrating it with broadly theosophical, metaphysical concepts, the depth-psychology of C.G. Jung, the philosophy of Holism of Jan Smuts, and the most inclusive, transformative visions of 20th-century thinkers and philosophers of science, however, I did not envision my work to be of the nature **only** of a return to an archaic, seemingly more secure past. More importantly I saw a transformed astrology as a door into a future realm of understanding order and feeling secure. Even (and perhaps especially) early in my work, evidence of concerns regarding the unattractive and psychologically unsound aspects of a popular approach to astrology were evident. Later on I was no more sympathetic to attempts to make astrology "respectable"

by using scientific methods, especially statistics, to justify its validity. But I accepted the opportunity to use astrology as a vehicle for conveying to a broader public the larger scope of what I considered my work of destiny. I accepted having to write for popular magazine as, both, a way to solve a pressing financial problem and as an inevitable consequence of my particular "fate" and personal relationship to present-day society. I tried to **use** the channels of communication which this "fate" insisted I could not refuse — to use them in order to convey to a large public a type of attitude to life of conceptual integrity and even of poetic and spiritual inspiration which would reveal to whoever was open and ready the creative impulse for personal and social transformation to which my whole life is geared. This is the inevitable destiny of the Promethean and prophetic mind: it has to meet the people it seeks to awaken and mobilize on the ground where they stand. It has to use whatever instrumentality circumstances make available. What counts is this availability, not an intangible, holier-than-thou purity. What would make one's attitude unethical at the intellectual level is not the fact that one accepts social compromise, but the far more serious possibility that one might lose sight of one's true goal and become afraid for one's personal security — thus, not the danger of losing intellectual face, but the danger of losing spiritual faith.

Most essentially stated, my ultimate aim in reformulating astrology has not been to help people using or studying astrology feel secure by **avoiding** the unpredictable and traumatic. It has been to transform the search for a static kind of security by avoidance into a search for a dynamic kind of security that can be achieved only through **understanding** the place and meaning of the cathartic and transformative in human life.

In order to do this and in order to help astrologers not take for granted the exclusive validity of traditional formulas and aims, I have repeatedly asked the question, "What is astrology **for**?" Rather than trying to simplify astrology (as so many others, including Marc Jones, have done). I have tried to reveal its immense spiritual and psychological implications by linking it with the most profound philosophical issues (e.g., To **what** does a birth-chart really refer? What really does a person mean when he or she says 'I'? What really is the meaning of adversity and crisis in a human life?) — and this in the most popular kind of magazines reaching approximately a quarter of a million people a month (combined circulation) for over 30 years. I have stressed the symbolic nature of astrology rather than a materialistic, "scientific" approach to it, and I have tried to show the deleterious psychological effects of applying statistical probabilities to astrological guidance. I have tried to develop an approach to astrological symbolism that is, both, internally self-consistent and inclusive and flexible enough to encompass new discoveries in the field of astronomy and new formulations in the philosophy of science. I have stressed, at a time when no other astrologer took the matter into consideration, the profound implications of the astrologer's psychological responsibility to the client. And I have tried to evoke a sense of my deepest attitude to astrology by defining the opposites: person-centered vs. event-oriented astrology; an astrology of understanding and meaning vs. an astrology of information and "knowledge," an astrology pervaded by the Yin-spirit typified by the illumined openness and acceptance of the figure of the Chinese sage vs. a Yang-motivated astrology of mastery and conquest over circumstances typified by today's technocrat.

As with everything else I have done, I have tried to show that astrology indeed can be a valuable tool, but only a tool — and not a tool to be wielded solely and violently by the ego to force what is accomplished with it to conform to preconceived desires or traditional norms. In today's era of worldwide transition and **potential** transformation, astrology can, indeed must, operate as a tool through which the creative and transfiguring spirit can operate in the world and in the lives of men and women. It should be a channel translucent to the light of meaning, for meaning alone is what can transform chaos into order.