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Modern Reform in Western Astrology

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Varieties of Reform in Modern Western Astrology

- **1.Theosophical**
 - 1a. New Age
 - 1b. Psychological
- **2.Scientific**
 - 2a. Astrology as a demonstrable discipline with its own rules
 - 2b. Astrology as a verifiable phenomenon, demonstrable according to controlled experiment

- **1.Theosophical**
- Concerned with preparation for the New Age
- 1a. New Age
- ‘Esoteric’: emphasises spiritual development as prerequisite for New Age; develops complex concepts of astrology and soul.
- Leading figures: Alan Leo, Dane Rudhyar; and many others.

- ## 1b. Psychological

- Seminal figure Dane Rudhyar: combines Theosophy (need to prepare for New Age) with depth psychology as the means by which spiritual preparation may be achieved.
- Rudhyar's astrology was based on two contradictory but, in his view, complimentary ideas
- Humanistic astrology: the human being, rather than the rules of astrological interpretation or is the centre of astrological attention
- Person-Centred astrology: as Humanistic astrology
- Transpersonal astrology: the individual is subordinate to the Transpersonal – i.e., the greater cosmos. In the Theosophical cosmos the individual, having evolved spiritually, then becomes ready to serve higher cosmic purposes.
- As with any other development in any area of culture, there are multiple strands of transmission, so other astrologers or Neoplatonic texts could be held to be significant.

- **2.Scientific**
- 2a. Astrology as a demonstrable discipline with its own rules:
- Normally, when astrology is defined as a science, it is scientific in this sense.
- From the late 18th century to the mid 20th there was a strong school of thought that astrology could be understood as a science in this sense. In the early 29th century such ideas were set up in opposition to Theosophical Astrology
- 2b. Astrology as a verifiable phenomenon, demonstrable according to controlled experiment. This is highly controversial.
- In the current polemics some astrologers agree with some sceptics that all results in this area are negative.
- It has been argued that the notion that astrology as divinatory is a defensive reaction to the universal negative results of scientific testing of astrology.
- The argument that all results are negative is not supported by the published evidence (this has no implications for the validity or otherwise of such work)

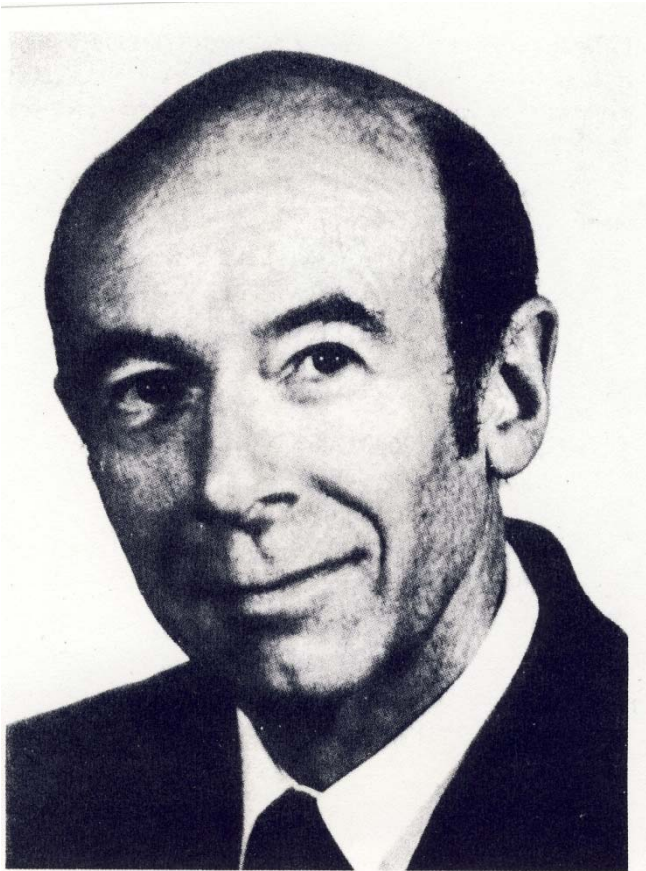
Notable examples of experimental testing of astrology

- The Carlson Research
- Carlson, Shawn, 'A Double-Blind Test of Astrology', *Nature*, Vol. 318, 5 December 1985.
- Very important amongst sceptics.
- Concluded that astrologers were unable to identify a personality profile in a birth chart
- The Mayo-Eysenck Research
- Jeff Mayo (astrologer) and Hans Eysenck (psychiatrist) initially showed that personality traits could be identified in a birth chart – then concluded the results were due to self-attribution.
- The Gauquelin Research

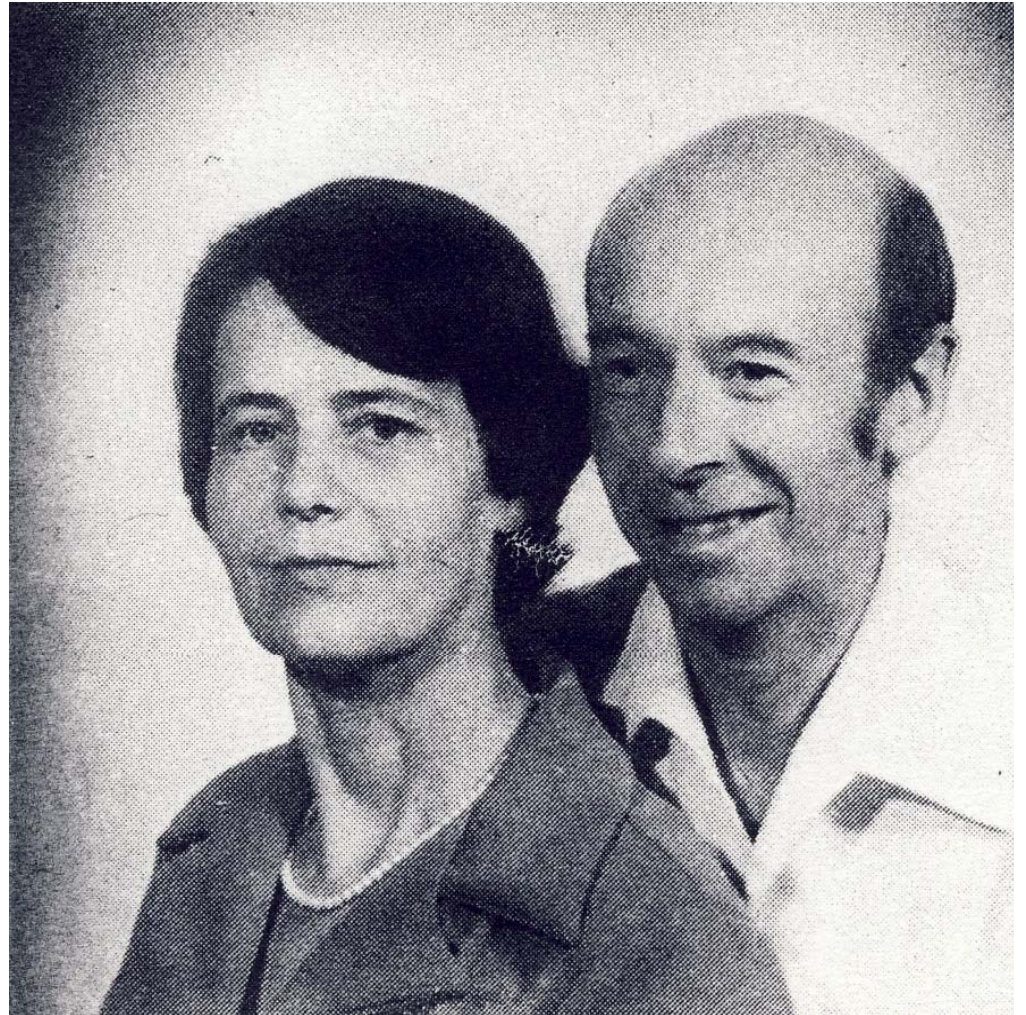
The Gauquelin Research

- Remains the most important example of 20th century research into astrology
- Has never been finally refuted
- Does not support traditional (or 'standard') claims into astrology
- Does support the Astrological Hypothesis
- (the 'Astrological Hypothesis' defined as the hypothesis that there are links between celestial bodies and events on earth.
- If this definition is too loose then we may refer to the 'Planetary Hypothesis' - the hypothesis that there are links between the planets and events on earth.
- Role of Francoise – underplayed.

Francoise and Michel Gauquelin



MICHEL GAUQUELIN 1928-1991



- French
- Statistician
- Began collecting data 1955
- Supposedly to disprove astrology
- Personally told people this was not the case
- Criticised conventional astrology
- Advocate of natural astrology
- Historically , part of tradition of astrological reform through collection of empirical data.

Context: Summary

- Natural Astrology – deals in influences, mechanisms, correlations, natural cycles, internal clocks, with no need for interpretation or participation (although these are not prohibited)
- Reform – reform programmes in astrology may be philosophical, magical, empirical.
- Controversy – should be seen as part of the ‘polemics’ on astrology dating back to Cicero and Carneades.
- Previous attempts at empirical reform: Assyria/Babylon 8th c BCE; Kepler et al 16th-17th c.
- Karl Ernst Krafft
- ‘Mars Effect’

- Role of Francoise – underplayed in Michel's life.
- Controversy – should be seen as part of the 'polemics' on astrology dating back to Cicero and Carneades.
- 'Mars Effect'

"Gauquelin foresees a new science of astrobiology,
which could explode the conglomeration of myth and
magic cluttering up modern astrology."—*Time* magazine

The Scientific Basis of Astrology

MYTH OR REALITY

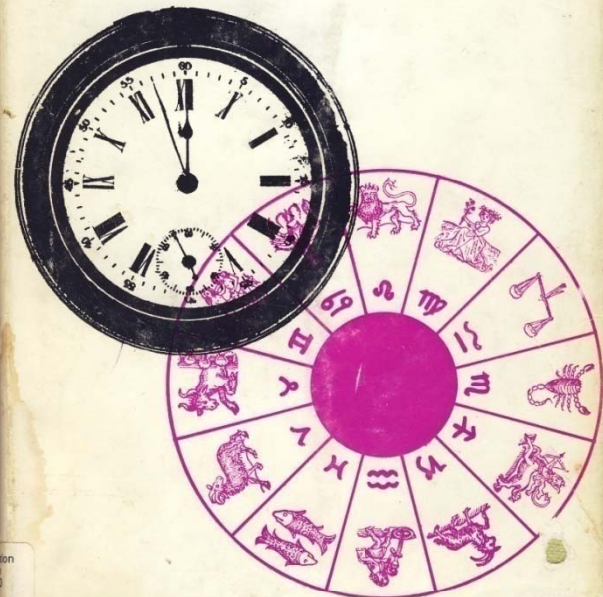
Michel Gauquelin

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Cosmic Clocks

rology to a modern science
Gauquelin



The Astrological Journal

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Michel Gauquelin

13th November 1928–20th May 1991

It is with great sadness that the astrological community received the news of Michel Gauquelin's death. As with the death of the A.A.'s founder John Addey in 1982, a whole era seems now to have ended; and we are left with a vacuum and a huge example to live up to. Dedication to impartial truth was Michel's lodestar: indefatigability and impeccable standards were his method. Together, ideal and method, along with the equally unremitting efforts of his first wife Françoise, produced an enormous fund of valuable data for astrological research as well as the now well-known phenomenon of the 'Mars effect' and Gauquelin sectors. Critics were relentless in their hostile questioning of his scientific methods and results, but this criticism he bravely and successfully endured. It can't have been easy living a professional life on the defensive and being shunned by the academic world to which he merited membership. Only a Scorpio (with Jupiter on the MC opposed Mercury) could have had the resilience that his life demanded. And those that knew him well were aware that in his heart of hearts he never doubted the truth of astrology, and that his goal was to unearth the gems of truth clothed in centuries of non-essential decoration. His single-minded brilliance as a researcher has irrevocably changed the face of astrology as well as the attitude of Orthodox science to our ancient science/art. Alas, the Scorpionic struggle may also have been the cause of his final sacrifice: optimism and pessimism about the future fought a constant battle within him. Michel will be missed by many, as a friend, as a fellow researcher, and as a beacon of light in the important work of healing the rift between science and astrology.

Under the auspices of the Urania Trust, the **Michel Gauquelin Research Fund** has already been established with pledged backing from both the Astrological Association and the Faculty of Astrological Studies. The purpose of this fund is to encourage astrological research at the highest level: in essence, to continue the work of Michel Gauquelin. It is vital that the momentum created by Michel is not lost, and all contributions will be gratefully received and put to good use. Donations should be made out to The Urania Trust and sent to the **Michel Gauquelin Research Fund, 396 Caledonian Road, London N1 1DN**. (*Details enclosed in this issue.*)

This issue contains tributes to Michel as well as an article of his own On, "The Gauquelin Findings: Their Significance for Astrologers" which was originally published in our June/July 1987 *Journal*. Further tributes and a complete bibliography of Michel's work will appear in the summer issue of *Correlation* due out shortly.

The Gauquelin Findings

- **1) Professional correlations with rising and culminating planets – Mars Effect**
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-
- **2) The ‘Character Trait Word Hypothesis’**
-
-
- **3) Planetary Heredity – the ‘Heredity Effect’**
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The Gauquelin Research 1

Professional correlations with rising and culminating planets

- 1) Professional correlations with rising and culminating planets
-
- Moon = Writers
-
- Jupiter = Politicians and Actors
-
- Saturn = Scientists
-
- Mars = Sports champions: 'The Mars Effect'
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- *Terms to remember:*
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- The Eminence Effect = positive results are only achieved for people who are eminent in their professions.
-
- Gauquelin Plus Zones = the four sectors of the diurnal cycle which show positive results.
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- Gauquelin Sectors = the twelve, eighteen or thirty-six divisions of the diurnal cycle which Gauquelin used instead of the houses.

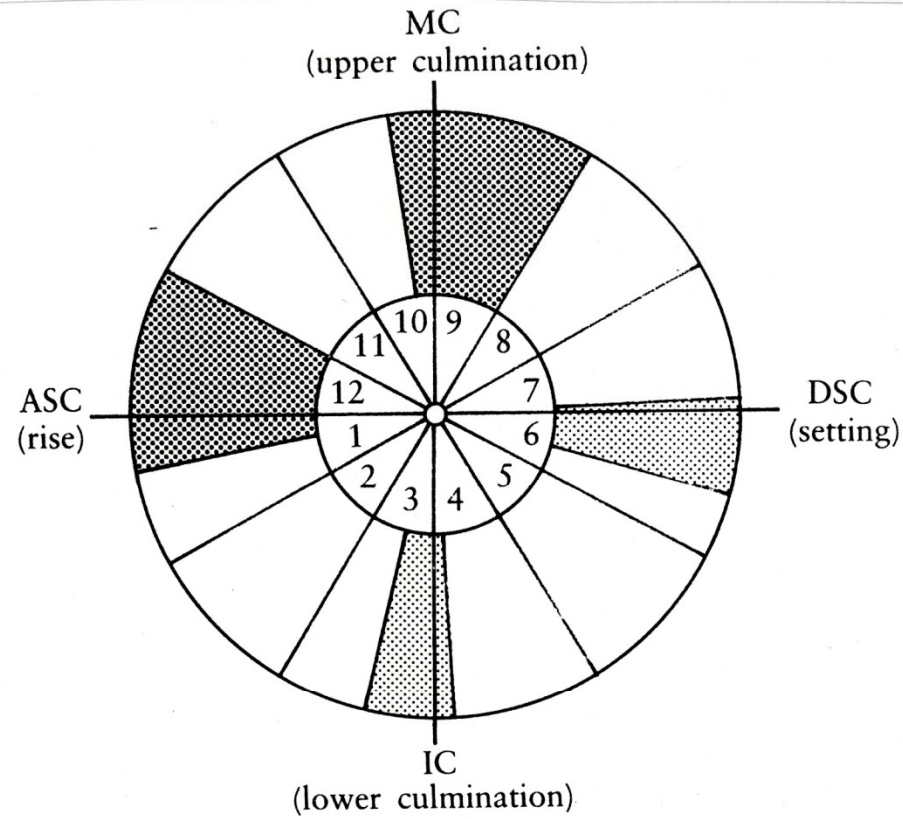


Figure 1: Gauquelin plus zones v. horoscope houses.

THE GAUQUELIN RESEARCH

Illustrating the diurnal position of Saturn in the horoscopes of 576 members of the Académie de Médecine through eighteen 'Gauquelin sectors'.

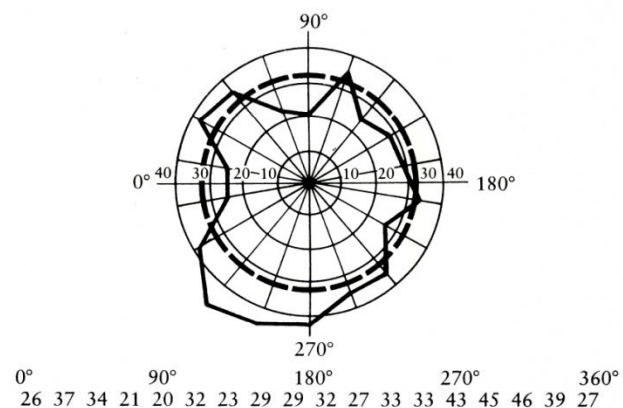
The First Positive Findings

55

SATURN IN THE ECLIPTIC
Positions grouped into 18 sectors

No. = 576

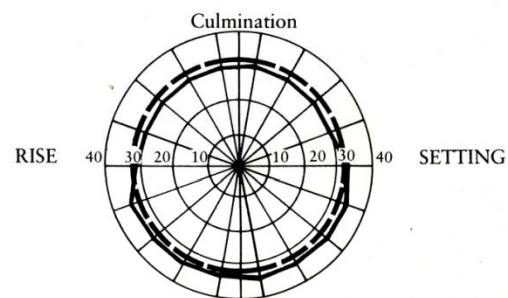
Mean = 32



THEORETICAL VALUES
arising for the 18 sectors
of the diurnal movement

No. = 576

Arith. mean = 32



Rise Culmin. Setting

32 30 30 30 30 30 30 30 30 32 34 34 34 34 34 34 34 34

Figure 5: Astronomic frequencies

FRANCE/ABROAD ILLUSTRATION

Together with France, this gives 1,485 sports champions, at whose birth Mars was noted 327 times instead of 253.4 at its rise and culmination. This difference has a probability of occurring by chance which is less than 1 in 5 million. Figure 20 illustrates this observation. It shows up the two strong points for births after Mars' rise and culmination.

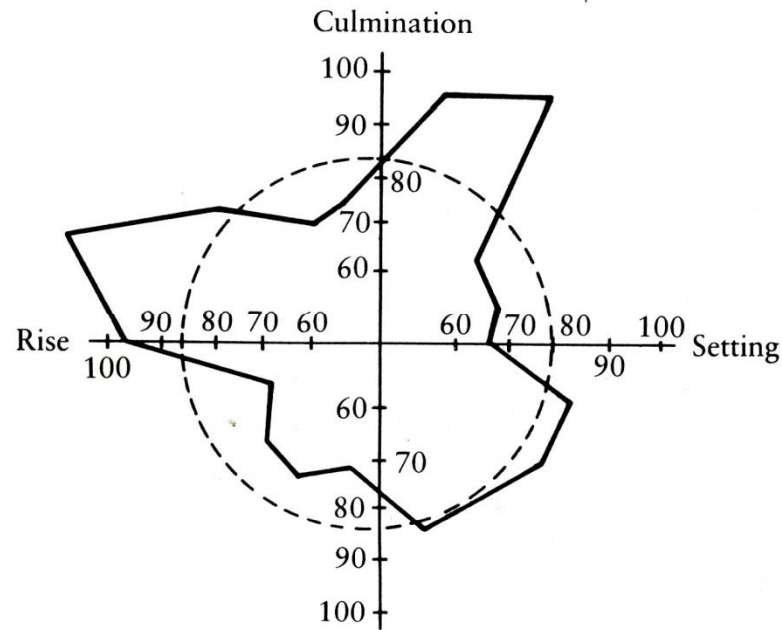


Figure 20: 1,485 Sports Champions: Mars

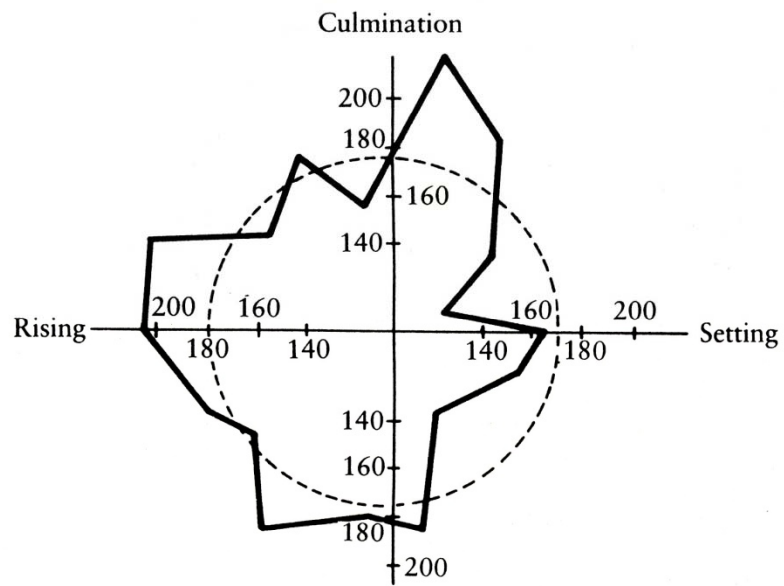


Figure 22: 3,142 Men of War: Mars

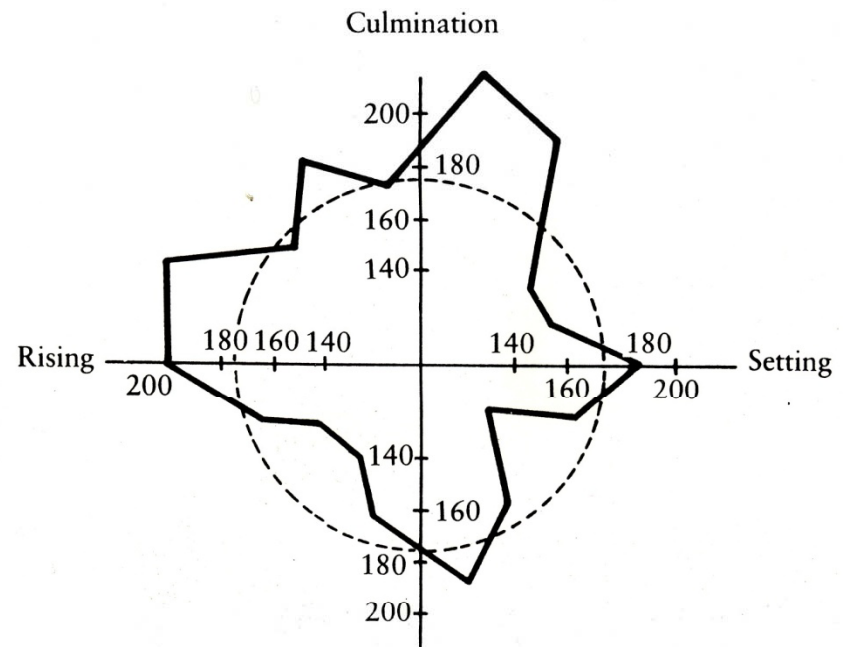


Figure 23: 3,142 Men of War: Jupiter

Total France/abroad

In column IV of Table 3, to give an indication and to have an idea of the overall value of all the experiments, I have given

Table 4: Synthesis of principal results

	SURPLUS	DEFICIT
MARS	Doctors Sportsmen Military men Company heads	Writers Painters Musicians
JUPITER	Military men Politicians Actors Journalists Playwrights	Scientists Doctors
SATURN	Scientists Doctors	Actors Painters Musicians (?) Journalists Writers
MOON	Politicians Writers	Sportsmen Military men (?)

Surplus: high frequency of positions for the planet in the rise and culmination zones

Deficit: small number of positions for the planet in the rise and culmination zones

The Gauquelin Research 2

- **'The Character Trait Word Hypothesis'**
- Summarise descriptions of eminent people in reference books.
- Compare these descriptions with planetary configurations at birth.

Subject	Trait	Raw Data
<i>Alioto</i>	irrepressible optimist tolerant lively old-fashioned elegant	irrepressible (CB 69) optimist tolerant approach for hippies lively old-fashioned political appeal dresses impeccably
<i>Armstrong</i>	pioneer zealous daring active pilot volunteer quick cool boyish-looking dry humor laconic quiet controlled intense cold rage easygoing	first man to set foot on the moon (CB 69) zealous boy scout daring always has a goal to work on test pilot volunteered to work for astronaut acting quickly coolly boyish-looking sense of humor so dry it sometimes escapes the listener laconic quiet tightly controlled intense temperament capable of cold rage easy to live with
Table 3: Data for a Character Trait Study		

The Gauquelin Research 3



The Heredity Effect: 1959-65 studied 30,000 parents and children

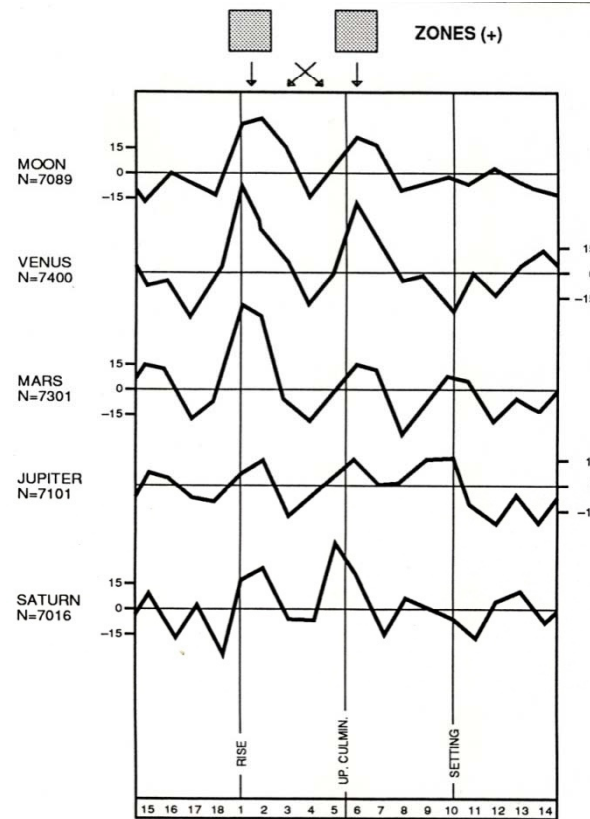


Figure 7: Planetary Heredity for the Moon and the Planets
(parent-child and child-parent combined)

Horizontal axis: planetary position in 18 sectors at birth

Vertical axis: observed versus expected frequency

Current status of findings

- Character trait hypothesis: undermined by problems of (1) repetition and copying in reference books and (2) selection bias
- Heredity effect: disappears with induced births – therefore difficult to replicate.
- Mars Effect – unresolved.

Mars Effect Controversy

- 1. Comite Para: Belgian sceptics, replicated Mars effect using different sample
- 2. Committee for the Scientific Claims of the Paranormal (CSICOP): replicated Mars Effect but manipulated figures in order to conceal results.
- 3. Suitbert Ertel, University of Gottingen – challenges Character Trait hypothesis but supports Mars Effect
- 4. Parental Tampering Hypothesis: Geoffrey Dean accepts Mars Effect statistics but claims effect due to selection of times of birth by French parents in 19th c.

Mars Effect Controversy

- Current position:
- Parental tampering hypothesis is the most recent published work in sceptical literature
- Ertel points out that if the PTH fails the Mars effect must be accepted.
- Implication for astrology: rebuts simple claim that astrology 'is' divination.
- Implication for astrology: (1) supports 'astrological hypothesis' (or 'planetary hypothesis') – that there is a relationship between human life and the planets but (2) does not support specific claims of judicial astrology.

Use by Astrologers

- Very rare.
- Charles Harvey used Gauquelin 'Plus Zones'.

Reference to past

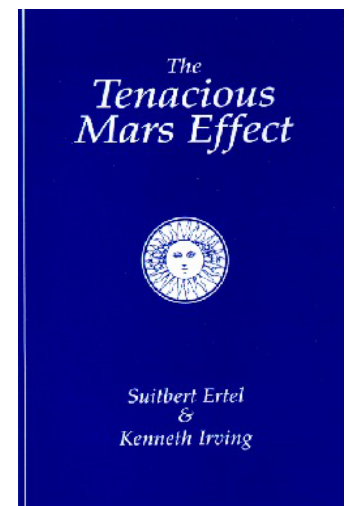
- Scientific research was popular with some of the advocates of a return to Medieval Astrology, such as Olivia Barclay, because they identified in it an argument for a rule-based astrology, without a strong intuitive content.
- Gauquelin referred to his own astrology in his last book as 'Neo-Copernican', identifying it as a deliberate counterpart of the Copernican rejection of medieval cosmology.

Concluding Thoughts

- What does the reception of the Gauquelin work both by astrologers and sceptics suggest about attitudes to scientific testing of astrology?
- If the Gauquelin data offer genuine statistical evidence of an ‘astrological effect’, what are the consequences for definitions of astrology as divination; and does it imply that some astrology is genuine and some not?

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