

THE FOUR PILLARS OF WISDOM

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I have on occasion been asked, “Do you preach about astrology?” The answer is both ‘never’ and ‘always’.

I believe that astrology is essentially one evidence of an all encompassing philosophy of existence. This philosophy rests upon several fundamental tenets that are able to hold together all experience in a satisfying pattern of understanding and meaning. Astrological practice itself in this sense parallels to the idea of the sacramental, in that it is the outward expression of these inner or underlying foundations.

As an Anglican clergyman I have never preached about astrology in the sense that I have from the pulpit publicly advocated its practice. However my exposition of the teachings of Jesus is almost invariably coloured by the great themes of personal integrity, of one’s relationship to creation and other people, of the unfolding purposes of life, and the need to find the wholeness in one’s own nature. These I am quite sure were also Jesus’ own understandings of the world in which he lived, and which are as fundamental in his own teachings as they are in the astrological concept.

The essay itself had its origins in an unpublished manuscript (and which is certainly destined to remain that way) which in part contrasted the way in which the world will be perceived by an astrologer - with an emphasis upon relationship and unity - and by our present western culture with its emphasis upon division and separateness. An invitation to present an address to a Jungian Society provided an opportunity for me to talk about astrology in a philosophical way, and to draw together some of these basic tenets which will mould one’s understanding of personal experience, should one embrace such an astrological view of the world.



In 1952 Carl Jung - together with his friend and physicist W. Pauli - published a book of two monographs entitled *The Interpretation of Nature and the Psyche*.

In his own essay Jung sets out a concept which he terms “Synchronicity”, and which he advances as a necessary corollary to the usually accepted idea of causality. He wrote, “I have picked on the term Synchronicity to designate a hypothetical factor equal in rank to causality as a principle of explanation”. He saw this principle as acausal in nature, and made evident by meaningful sets of co-incidental events.

His investigation of synchronicity led him firstly to an examination of the oriental prognostication technique of the *I Ching*, and then later to astrology. “The meaningful co-incidence we are looking for”, he wrote, “is immediately apparent in astrology, since the astronomical data that are said by astrologers to correspond to

individual traits of character; and from the remotest times that various planets, zodiacal signs, and aspects have all had meanings that serve as a basis for character study or for an interpretation of a given situation”.

The essay then contains a quite extensive study of the relationship of the Sun, Moon, Ascendant, and Descendant in the horoscopes of 180 married couples. Jung concluded that from a statistical comparison of the charts “there is sufficient ground for assuming a synchronistic phenomenon”. Others however have questioned the significance of his results.

However I believe that the importance of Jung’s essay lies not in any possible significant statistical result, but rather that he felt compelled to look seriously at astrology in the first place. He recognised that it was more than an ancient predictive technique, but that it represented a systematic way of examining both the world and human experience.

In his essay Jung clearly stated that he believed that the view of the world espoused by scientific causality is inadequate for handling the diversity of our experience, and that something beyond this is required. So it was that he developed his concept of an acausal principle, and examined astrology as one possible evidence of this.

Speaking of the 20th century he wrote, “One of the most problematical and momentous centuries the world has ever known separates us from that still medievalistic age when the philosophising mind believed it could make assertions beyond what could be empirically proved. It was an age of large views, which did not cry halt and think that the limits of nature had been reached just where the scientific road-builders had come to a temporary stop”.

It is about that kind of understanding of things that I would now like to consider for a little while, for I think that at its heart, astrology is really another way of looking at the world: an alternative to that held by Jung’s “scientific road-builders”.

The advocates of astrology today are often anxious to remind their critics that the great founding fathers of the western scientific tradition were themselves practising astrologers; Kepler and Galilei being two notable examples. Astrology’s detractors however may counter this by suggesting that while these persons were pioneers of the scientific method, yet each was still in many ways a prisoner of his age. Thus their astrology was clothing carried over from a previous era, its falseness yet to be fully recognised.

In one sense at least I believe the critic to be right. Had Galilei lived 50 or more years later I think that it is unlikely that he would have practised astrology. Not because something had happened to astrology, but because something had happened to society itself.

The fall of astrology and the rise of western science was not the result of conflict between two opposing concepts in which one was the victor, but rather because both events were themselves the product of something else that was happening in society. That “something else” was a move in the philosophical basis of western culture.

The 17th century in Europe saw a gradual moving away from an understanding of the world which was explained principally in terms of unity and relationship, to one which elevated the concepts of individuality and separateness. This began initially with the growth of national aspirations, and with the establishment of clearly defined cultures and boundaries. Wars were fought over lines drawn on a map, and people who lived but a few miles apart now found themselves as aliens to each other.

In religion too not only did this philosophy of separation lead to the growth of denominationalism - with its strictly defined statements of faith - but also to the "modern" Christian missionary movement.

In earlier centuries missionary activity had been a broadly based religious, political, economic, and cultural activity. Now it became an outworking of a theology of separateness. In this the heathen stood outside the Church's fold, and the real task of the Christian was to convert the heathen mind to the true faith and to remove all possible vestiges of an unacceptable culture.

In science the new philosophy was the conceptual justification for a method which encouraged parts to be studied independently of the whole. Perfect spheres moved on frictionless surfaces: a leaf was examined apart from the tree: and the branch was distilled to determine its basic chemical composition. Of course it has been a process which has been enormously effective and successful within its proper limits. Certainly for the first 200 years it delivered unimagined treasures.

Against such a background a discipline which demanded the concept of the unity and inter-relatedness of people and things could expect little popular support. It was simply going in the wrong direction. If you were about to lay a charge of grape-shot into the guy who lived across the river, then you needed to be reasonably convinced that he was a very different person from yourself. The divisions, the boundaries, the separations needed to be hard, clear, and firm.

You see, I think that astrology is really two quite different things.

On the one hand it is a set of techniques used to obtain certain information about people's intrinsic natures, and possibly about the events which may await them in the future and their probable reaction to these. On the other hand it is an effectual image of a philosophy of the universe. It is a sign, an icon, a parable of what everything is about. It is astrology in this second garb that I want to try to consider for a while.

For the sake of having a title for this essay, I have chosen that of "The Four Pillars of Wisdom", which while it sounds a bit pretentious is intended to suggest that it was upon such a philosophical understanding of nature that the most stable and long-lasting civilisations that our world has witnessed were based. Indeed - if I may be allowed to mix metaphors - to draw a long bow with tongue in cheek; one may propose a sociological rule which holds that the stability of a civilisation is directly proportional to the strength of its astrological practice.

As a professional religious person, I will also now and then attempt to contrast the implications of these pillars with some of the attitudes that have come to us through the last 300 years or so of our Judeo-Christian society.

I would like to suggest that the four pillars upon which a satisfying understanding of experience can rest - and of which astrology is one reflection - are those that we may call Relationship, Change, Individuality, and Symbolism. I also feel that the renewed interest in astrology which has occurred in the last 40 or so years has largely been due to a rediscovery of these concepts by many people in our society, rather than to any general or widespread belief that astrological theory or practice actually “works”.

So the first of our astrological pillars is Relationship.

Even the most casual observer of astrology will soon perceive that the aim of its techniques is to bring to light differing relationships which exist between the planets as observed from particular locations on earth at particular times.

Astrological techniques assume that relationship is the rule of nature. The universe is one thing, and therefore each part of it must be in relationship to every other part in some way. Astrology draws our attention to one of the most spectacular of these sets of relationships in nature: those that bind “heaven” and “earth”.

However, such a grand concept cannot be limited to one set of experiences only. There is no way of telling (for example) if a particular horoscope is that of the birth of a human being, of a dog, of a ship, or of a nation. All are in some way “born” into the world. As Jung wrote elsewhere, “Whatever is born or done in this moment of time, has the qualities of this moment of time”. Thus astrology demands not only “vertical” sets of relationships (between the planets and terrestrial events) but also “horizontal” ones. Everything is bound to everything else, because all things are born of time. This binding together finds perhaps its highest symbol in the relationships delineated by the astrologer.

However in this all pervading mesh of inter-relationships, the human participants may experience in a self conscious way this sense of belonging.

Let us take the very unsophisticated example of two people who share a common birth date. One may say in conversation, “My birthday is on the 6th of February”. The other may make one of two responses. The non-astrological one will simply be, “Oh, what a co-incidence. So is mine”. The other perhaps will be, “So is mine. We are both Aquarians”.

Now this second response implies far more than the first. It is a statement about sharing. A sharing of things which astrologically are held to be innate in the nature of these two persons. It is an admission of understood weaknesses, as well as of strengths. It is as well a statement of belonging.

To belong is perhaps the greatest of all human needs, and the cruelest punishments are those which isolate the offender from the rest of his or her society: whether the punishment be solitary confinement, excommunication, or being “sent to Coventry” in the workplace. Each is a way of saying, “You no longer belong”.

It can be argued that one of the underlying reasons for the rebirth of astrological interest in our society is associated with this ability to engender in people this feeling

of belonging. In this acknowledgment of an astrological relationship between our two imagined people, there is a concept of a "belongingness" which stems not from social structures or from adherence to a religious or national or political creed, but from the heart of nature itself. It is a "belongingness" which is a part of the way that the world is put together, and springs from the stuff of creation.

However it is also quickly apparent that these "natural" relationships may extend beyond those who fortuitously happen to share - if not a common birth date - at least a common birth sun-sign.

Let us assume that the response to the statement, "My birthday is the 6th of February", was, "Mine is in October".

In this case one reasonable response would simply be, "Oh!"

On the other hand the other response could be, "Ah, so you are probably a Libran". Now this again is a statement of relationship, yet of a quite different order from our first example.

While it is certainly again a statement of "belongingness", it is also a declaration that such a "belongingness" encompasses a range of natures, attitudes, and circumstances far different from those which we ourselves (being Aquarians) know and experience. Those with whom I may hold only little in common are still within the framework. Those in whose life nature may have expressed herself far differently from the way that she did in mine, still belong. There are no strangers.

Obviously this second kind of "belongingness" ought to create in us a deep sense of tolerance. To accept the astrological concept at even a superficial level demands the recognition of a range of human expression - some of which may be quite opposed to my own points of view - as legitimate and belonging by natural law within the proper boundaries human experience.

Astrologically orientated societies ought therefore to be tolerant societies; and it does not seem to be unfair to make the observation that in our own western Christian culture, as astrology declined so intolerance grew. If astrology is taken seriously, then it will require that firstly we allow as proper that fact that there will be those who will disagree with - and even find abhorrent - some of our most cherished beliefs and ideas. This is the way that nature operates, and such individuals - just as much as ourselves - truly belong.

It is also important to remember that this "belongingness" (as we have called it) properly extends beyond the human condition. Astrologers cast "horoscopes" not "anthroscopes". All things have their origins in time, and the astrological concept speaks equally well of relationships not only in human affairs, but in "inter-family" matters as well. Thus it follows that the astrologically orientated person or society will be by nature sensitive towards the whole of nature. For with it he or she holds an intrinsic and unbreakable relationship; no matter whether it be its human, animal, botanical, or geological forms .

Again it does not seem to be improper to suggest that in our society the decline of astrology was paralleled by a growing indifference towards nature. It is hard (for example) to imagine a 19th or 20th century Christian poet penning a modern equivalent of St. Francis' "Hymn to the Sun".

Praise to thee my Lord for all thy creatures:
Above all Brother Sun
Who brings us day and lends us his light.
Praise to thee my Lord for Sister Moon and Stars,
Which thou hast set in the heavens
Clear, precious, and fair.
Praise to thee my Lord for Brother Wind,
For air and cloud, for calm and all weather,
By which thou supportest life in all thy creatures.

Indeed present day Christian theology has been almost totally silent with regard to the world of nature. It is essentially a people centred religion, and once the fact of God's creation has been established in the first two chapters of the Bible, any meaningful reference to those marvellous and often intelligent creatures with whom we share this planet will largely be sought in vain in the scriptures.

One may in fact suspect that a future Moon colony will provide an almost ideal environment for the practice of the Christian religion, as the inconvenience of other life forms can be entirely ignored. On a lifeless world, most traditional Christian theology and practice would suffer not the slightest diminution.

Such an attitude is contrary to the basic assumptions of the astrological concept; as it is also apparently unsatisfactory to many people in our society today. The attraction which astrology obvious exercises may in part lie in its ability to re-awaken feelings of relationship and belonging in a society which for so long has lived in separation and division.

My second pillar I have called (not very happily), Change.

This involves our understanding of time, since the measurement of time is a part of our perception of the essence of change. There are however two very different ways in which time itself may be understood, and the conceptual difference between these involves quite far-reaching consequences. These two concepts may be called Linear and Cyclic time.

If one is talking about the age of a person or the age of the universe, then one is thinking about time in its Linear sense. This images time as a kind of straight line, beginning at A and ending at Z. For a person A and Z correspond respectively to his or her physical birth and death: for the universe to an initial Big Bang and a final ultimate Black Hole.

Time in this sense is simply a measurement along the line from A, but in which the final point Z must remain unknown and unknowable until it is actually reached.

Now this is essentially the concept of time held by the Judeo-Christian tradition. Thus the Christian dating system represents not only a convenient starting point for

the numbering of years, but also the point of intervention by God into the affairs of mankind through the act of redemption. It is the starting point of salvation history; the final point being the unknowable time of the Second Coming.

Against this Linear concept of time measurement stands the Cyclic one. Instead of viewing time as a straight line it is now seen as a circle; and time is measured as the distance from a constantly recurring station on the circle. This concept was of course quite common to us in the age of pre-digital clocks. Here time was described either in terms of something “past” an hour, or something “to” an hour. In this last case time is not seen as a measurement from a past event, but as that which remains of an acknowledged cycle to be completed.

Perhaps more importantly, Cyclic time is “natural” in a way that Linear time is not. Linear time always depends upon the selection of some more or less arbitrary starting point. Cyclic time rests upon precise and observable natural stations.

The ancient astronomer marking the start of the year at the vernal equinox, seems to me to be performing a more rational and natural function than the Lord Mayor waiting to wish the assembled crowd a “Happy New Year” when the town hall clock strikes midnight on 31st December - unfortunately (in Australia at least) forgetting that Summer Time is being observed and so anticipating the new year by one hour!

There is however another important aspect which differentiates the two concepts. This is that events in Linear time are irregular and unpredictable, while those in cyclic time are both regular and predictable. Linear time events must (by definition) be non-repeating; but the essential repeatability of events in Cyclic time is the essence of its structure.

Cyclic time will therefore allow us to understand and handle time (and therefore change) in a way that is quite different from what is possible using the Linear time concept. The former asserts that nature works in patterns, rhythms, and harmonic cycles. Some of these may be of great complexity, yet in all there is still a theme of order and naturalness. While change is indeed the law of nature, it is not unbounded, uncontrolled, unreasonable, and unpredictable, but always within properly defined and essentially knowable boundaries.

On the other hand the adherent of Linear time views the future with a degree of fear and apprehension for that unknowable event that forever lurks in the darkness ahead, waiting to entrap and bring down the individual soul.

Obviously Cyclic time is the time frame of the astrologer, which enables one to handle change in a way that Linear time cannot. This is so because Cyclic time always contains within itself the shadow of the future. Cyclic time looks forward as much as it looks backwards; whereas Linear time is essentially orientated towards the past.

An astrological time concept is therefore able to make the future “comfortable”, not by creating some myth about a golden age ahead, but simply by reminding us that the future in fact differs little from the past. By knowing the past we have - in a sense -

come to know the future. Indeed, “past” and “future” are only different ways of talking about the same clock face.

The future contains many knowns. It need not be terrifying, and only asks that we should enter it willingly, accepting in our own experience the same rhythmical and cyclical patterns that underlie the whole of nature.

Thus the ‘belongingness’ of the astrological tradition includes not only a set of static relationships, but also dynamic ones. Change, goodness, badness, light, darkness, fortune, misfortune, are all the essential tools of life. The constantly changing patterns of the planetary system are (for the astrologer) simply images and icons of the constantly changing patterns of life: to be neither dreaded nor avoided, but rather accepted as one facet of the ground of our experience.

The astrological concept therefore holds that change lies at the very foundation of life. There are no constants, and to seek for such is to seek for a chimera. In this regard it is interesting to reflect that such a position is being increasingly taken by modern science. Professor John Wheeler writing in a series of essays entitled *The Physicist’s Conception of Nature*, says, “I have not been able to find any more reasonable way to state the situation than this; nature conserves nothing. There is no constant of physics that is not transcended; or - in a word - mutability is a law of nature”.

The question for many who live in our society, is how they are personally to come to terms with such unceasing mutability in their own lives. The astrologer I think, offers one possible solution.

The third of my four pillars I have simply called Individuality.

Jung wrote elsewhere in an essay in memory of Richard Wilhelm, “Astrology represents the summation of all the psychological knowledge of antiquity”. No matter what opinion may be held regarding the validity of various astrological techniques, there can be no question at all regarding the subtlety of its insights into the nature of human personality. Certainly no modern system of personality classification has approached the complexity of the astrological one.

The process of interpreting a horoscope is one of determining an initial personality “type” which is related to the zodiacal signs of the Ascendant and Sun, and then increasingly refining this so that the “person picture” becomes less and less general and more and more particular. The result is a chart interpretation which is virtually unique to one particular person, and can only be shared by another person who was born at virtually the same time and place within quite narrow limits.

Astrology therefore seeks to deal with the individual in a way which is quite unusual in our society. It is a discipline which is pre-eminently concerned with the individual and his or her specific destiny.

While we often speak at length about the “rights of the individual”, in practice - in both our social systems and in our laws - people are generally only dealt with as they fall into certain recognisable classes. This is especially evident when we consider the assistance available to people in our community who are in distress. The needy

person must be able to demonstrate that he or she belongs within a recognised category before aid can be given. Some find themselves rejected, not because their needs are not real, but because their circumstances are difficult to classify within the accepted parameters.

The process therefore to which we are commonly accustomed is that of reducing the seemingly infinite variety of human personality to a small number of generally agreed categories. The art of the “analyst” (no matter whether he or she be a psychologist or an interviewing officer at the Department of Social Security) is to apply a number of tests in order to determine which of the approved boxes will best suit the person concerned. When this has been achieved, a standard set of procedures appropriate to that class of person (client) will then be activated.

The astrological process is however almost the precise opposite of this. It begins with the easily applied general principles of zodiacal classification, and then through a set of other processes seeks to describe the person in uniquely individual terms.

Astrology is therefore totally committed to the uniqueness - and thus to the unique value - of each person. This commitment to individuality leads on to what I believe to be three important understandings of human nature.

Firstly, it requires that we accept what might be termed the doctrine of the in-equality of all people. If each person is uniquely individual, then obviously each one of us is different from each other person. Some of these differences will involve our inner nature, some our outlook on life. Some will be in the way that we react to certain circumstances, some may be significant differences between generations. It is very hard therefore for an astrologer to accept a concept of human nature which presupposes some kind of equal basic “proto-person” within each of us: the obvious and almost endless varieties of human nature being something like clothing which each of these “proto-persons” wear.

This is however apparently the assumption which many of our social or religious institutions seem to make. For example, in a democratic society it is assumed that in each person there is an equally politically responsible proto-person. In traditional Christian belief it is assumed that no matter how unequal people may be in their nature or circumstances, they are equal proto-persons in sinfulness and in their ability to respond to the Gospel.

It would seem to me that any social system which does not take seriously the basic inequality of people will often fall into serious error in the manner in which it treats or judges those with whom it deals.

Secondly, astrology requires that we adopt a non-judgmental attitude towards people. Generally - and especially in the Christian tradition - we assume that there is an archetypal “ideal” human being who possesses a number of highly desirable qualities. As we possess a greater or lesser number of these qualities we are judged to be a better or worse human being.

Should there be a significant number of omissions of these desirable qualities in a particular person, then he or she is to be pitied, condemned, converted, or “helped to adjust”, as we believe the circumstances require.

However an horoscope is not a moral document. It may indeed contain areas of difficulty, fortunate influences, indications of gifts or talents, or suggestions of perversities: but these are not moral judgments. If this were the case we would then be led to the preposterous conclusion that it is morally wrong to be born at certain times or on certain dates.

No one blames a person born with some physical handicap for that unfortunate affliction; yet we frequently blame those who are born with a mental social or spiritual one. That is not an astrologically reasonable position to adopt.

Thirdly (and because of these sorts of things) astrology would suggest that the goal of human life is not to attain to some almost supernatural ideal personal standard, but rather to fulfil the potentials which are born in us; and which the astrologer would claim to be able to delineate by his or her interpretation of the birth chart. We need to become what we are. In this sense “perfection” or “fulfilment” implies the attainment of that which is possible in our nature, given the tools with which we have been endowed at birth.

The “perfect” human being then is not necessarily a saint of great holiness, but rather someone who has learned to become fully what they were potentially. The horoscope speaks not only about what is, but also about what is possible. It is in the fulfilling of the possible that our goals should lie.

An astrological society would be one which is careful to allow to each person the freedom to be able to pursue that goal in life which is the fulfilment of his or her own nature. The zodiacal pendant so often worn should mean not only “I belong” and “to live is to change”, but also “I am becoming myself”. This latter is an affirmation which too few people seem able to make, and that is a great pity.

The last of my four pillars I have called Symbolism.

This is perhaps the most difficult of the four to discuss, as I feel that the great majority of people who are a part of our present day western culture do not really perceive what the nature of symbolism is, or what its place should be in human experience.

The significant work of an astrologer is not the erection of a chart, but its interpretation. An interpreter is an intermediary, who tries to convey what has been said in one language to those who understand another. In all interpretation there is a loss of some part of the original, as the original is in the end the only proper expression of what is wished to be said.

Thus the subtleties of Shakespearian writing can only be fully enjoyed (I am sure) by those who are fluent in English; as the proper language of Shakespeare is English. In the same way the proper language of particle physics is mathematics, and the proper language of astrology is zodiacal symbolism and harmonic relationships.

Astrological symbolism is deeply emotive and wide ranging; whereas our spoken and written language is quite narrow and precise. Much of the astrologer's art lies in seeking to select those particular interpretations of the symbols which are appropriate for a given situation. But a symbol interpreted is rather like our 19th century science: we have allowed our attention to be concentrated upon a part, and forgotten the whole complex of ideas which gives the symbol its true life.

Let us take an example. One may look up "Sun in Pisces" in any popular paperback astrology book, and be told that the person whose sign this is will probably be sympathetic, impressionable, artistic, emotional, or sometimes impractical, secretive, timid, or deceitful. Yet how much stronger and more emotive is the symbol of Pisces itself: which is two fish tied together swimming in opposite directions.

The other thing is that a symbol is a dynamic statement of the way things are, whereas words are static. The symbol by nature is constantly open to re-interpretation as the circumstances about it change; or itself is able constantly to re-interpret events.

Perhaps an example of this is the concert musician. Here the musical score is the symbol which demands constant re-interpretation. At each performance the player may feel compelled to re-interpret the symbols somewhat differently, even though the score itself remains unchanged.

The zodiacal signs - like the performer's music - are dynamic symbols that make a statement which itself never needs to be re-stated, but yet needs to be constantly re-interpreted. They provide a set of unchanging patterns from which the meaning of experiences can be extracted. They are symbols of power, and as symbols of power they are able to reach across the millennia and still claw at the soul.

Perhaps an example of the difference between a symbol of power and one which is not, is the contrast between the swastika of Hitler's Third Reich, and the invented symbols of later Nationalist parties. The former seemed to have a life and converting power of its own, whereas the latter usually appear rather childish. The manipulation of a symbol of power can be an immensely effective tool.

In contrast, we have tended in our society to look for static statements about our condition. The quest of science for the last 300 years has (in the main) been for the 'immutable laws of nature' (to quote Professor John Wheeler once again), which once codified will remain forever unchanged.

The Church too has succumbed to this concept of seeking static rather than dynamic statements of faith, with its beliefs defined by set and invariable formulae. The ground of religion is sought in a static history of Jesus, and the cross (a universal symbol of dynamic transformation) has become a static symbol in the realistic and historically fixed crucifix.

Perhaps it is because of the strength of its symbolism that astrology has survived to our own age. Beneath the events of life, beneath the circumstances that surround us, there are the hidden streams of the ground of our being. Jung speaks of these as the archetypes. These are things which lie beyond the power of normal language adequately to define or describe. As he wrote, the unconscious must always be the

unconscious or else it ceases to be what it is. One can only begin to approach such areas through symbols which in some way allow us to begin to handle the stuff from which life is made.

Symbols become effective when they enable us to begin to touch the very ground of nature. Indeed, perhaps symbol is the only way that this ground can in the end be approached, because that is the way that the world is put together.

Symbolism then lies at the heart and core of nature. In the 1970's Michael Gauquelin did his extensive studies of the correspondences between the careers of a very large number of professional people and their horoscopes. In the end the thing which disturbed him the most was not that there were obvious correspondences between the location of certain planets in significant parts of the birth charts and these persons' chosen careers; but that the planets in question were indeed the ones associated with such careers in astrological tradition.

It had been the assumption of historic and scientific writers that the ancient astrologer assigned the various characteristics and rulerships of the planets as the result of a number of quite random and unrelated accidental characteristics.

Thus Mars - being red - had been simplistically related to blood, war and fighting. Venus - being white and beautiful and bright - to love, peace, art and beauty. Jupiter - being large and majestic - to law and the church. But Gauquelin's work demonstrated that these were in reality the character traits that were governed by these planets. That is, they actually symbolised what they governed. Symbolism thus exists at the very heart of nature.

Until we are able to examine our experiences symbolically as well as clinically, nature will most assuredly hide many of her most precious treasures from us.

These then are my four pillars of wisdom which I believe form the conceptual framework of astrology. Relationship, Change, Individuality, and Symbolism. Personally as a Christian I would hold that these ideas are very much in accord with the life and teaching of Jesus of Nazareth. To heal division, to change the lives of those who followed, to elevate the dignity of each man and woman, are essential to his teachings. And he who fed 5,000 with Bread and Fish (and whose followers chose as their symbol the Pisces) did things through the symbolism of his actions that were only hinted at by the parables which he told.

The astrologer, in spite of his or her failings, prejudices, ignorances, and foolishnesses, has preserved for our age a way of looking at life which is still deeply meaningful. Astrology is concerned with a wholeness of creation and with the uniqueness of each man and woman. On the other hand science and religion have often denigrated human nature and pushed it to the background. One fears that for both of these latter, "being human" is nothing in which to rejoice.

Our value is that we are. Astrology - in its funny old way - tries to talk about this wonderful and fearful uniqueness which each one of us possesses. If this is really the case, then perhaps it is still able to offer a cup of cool water to those who thirst in the parched deserts of our generation.