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# The Transformational Techniques of Huber Astrology

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## Sue Lewis

**Abstract:** While Bruno and Louise Huber were developing their Astrological Psychology, they assisted with the foundation of the Arcane School in Geneva and worked for three years with Roberto Assagioli at his Psychosynthesis Institute in Florence. Their non-predictive method blends astrology with psychosynthesis as a way to self-realization that resembles the pillars of ascent of Kabbalah and Neoplatonism. Like Jung, Assagioli concealed his esoteric interests to preserve his professional reputation, and Huber astrologers do not usually class themselves as magicians. Nevertheless their engagement with the evolution of the will through the shifting borders of the mind and its memories by way of learning triangles in the Natal Chart, as well as Moon Node Astrology, is similar to the use of celestial magic as a way to self-empowerment practised by members of the Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn. This paper will examine the Hubers' astrology within the context of Neoplatonic, Kabbalistic and magical philosophy.

This is a revision of a paper presented at the Sophia conference on 'Celestial Magic' in June 2013, during the thirtieth anniversary celebrations of the English Huber School, now known as the Astrological Psychology Association (APA).<sup>1</sup> Astrological psychology is a direct translation of Astrologische-Psychologisches, the title given by Bruno and Louise Huber to the parent Astrologische-Psychologisches Institut (API) they founded in Zürich in 1964. The word 'magic' is not usually applied to Huber astrology, so my reasons for presenting its transformational techniques at this conference require some explanation.

Professor Wouter Hanegraaff of the University of Amsterdam has devoted some thirteen pages to unpicking what we might understand by magic under the subheading 'Tainted Terminologies'. The most relevant section of this overview draws on *De occulta philosophia* (1533), by the Renaissance magus Cornelius Agrippa (1486-1535):

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<sup>1</sup> The English Huber School, now APA, was founded on 8 June 1983, at 12.30pm BST, in London, UK, at <http://astrologicalpsychology.org>.

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Magic was explicitly presented here as the ‘ancient wisdom’, whose reputation needed to be purified from the common association with illicit practices of evil sorcery, superstition, and demonism. Agrippa adopted Reuchlin’s categorization of the *ars miraculorum* as consisting of three levels (physics, astrology, and magic, the latter subdivided into a negative *goetia* and a positive *theurgia*), but he made *magia* into the umbrella term, subdividing it into (1) ‘natural magic’, concerned with the sublunary world of the elements, (2) ‘celestial magic’, pertaining to the realm above the moon but below the fixed stars, and mostly concerned with numbers and astrology, and (3) ‘ceremonial magic’, concerned with demonic and angelic entities above the fixed stars, and dominated by kabbalah.<sup>2</sup>

Professor Arthur Versluis of the University of Michigan has depicted astrology as ‘standing midway between magic and mysticism... a complex union of Platonic philosophy with Christian herbal and astrological medicine, bound up together in what we might call an astrological mystico-magic’. His comment, that ‘through astrology, the sage might glimpse aspects of the future, might even alter what before looked like destiny’, suggests perhaps that the astrologer who uses a combination of technique and insight to open the way to self-knowledge and aspires to add something to the way of world may be slightly more deserving of the title of magician than the traditional practitioner of horary or judicial astrology who follows a set of rules to answer specific questions or predict the future.<sup>3</sup> Theurgy, the positive, goodwill magic that concerns us here, has been defined by the American magician Israel Regardie (1907-85) as: ‘a quest spiritual and divine... a task of self-creation and reintegration, the bringing into human life of something eternal and enduring’.<sup>4</sup> Regardie, who brought the secret workings of Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn out of the closet and into the public domain, also made the connection between modern psychology and ancient wisdom, insofar as both concern

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<sup>2</sup> Wouter J. Hanegraaff, *Esotericism and the Academy: Rejected Knowledge in Western Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), pp. 164-77 (pp. 175-76); Henry Cornelius Agrippa of Nettesheim, *Three Books of Occult Philosophy*, trans. James Freake, ed. Donald Tyson (Woodbury, MN: Llewellyn, 2007). Hanegraaff also refers to *De verbo mirifico* (1494) by the Christian Kabbalist, Johann Reuchlin (1455-1522) as one of Agrippa’s sources.

<sup>3</sup> Arthur Versluis, *Magic and Mysticism: An Introduction to Western Esotericism* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2007), pp. 96-97.

<sup>4</sup> Israel Regardie, *The Tree of Life: An Illustrated Study in Magic*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, ed. Chic Cicero and Sandra Tabatha Cicero (Woodbury, MN: Llewellyn, 2010), p. 19.

themselves with ‘spiritual development and synthesis’.<sup>5</sup> With reference to the analytical psychology of the Swiss therapist Carl Gustav Jung (1875-1961), about whom more is written below, Regardie expressed the view that:

Analytical psychology and magic comprise... two halves or aspects of a single technical system. Just as the body and mind... are... dual manifestations of an interior dynamic ‘something’, so psychology and magic comprise similarly a single system whose goal is the integration of the human personality.<sup>6</sup>

The psychosynthesis of Italian therapist Roberto Assagioli (1888-1974), which had a formative influence on Huber astrology, is less widely known but similarly concerned with self-integration. Bearing the above qualifications in mind, the astrological psychology of Bruno and Louise Huber merits consideration under the heading ‘Celestial Magic’.

Louise Huber (1924-2016) studied astrology in Stuttgart immediately after World War Two, and found traditional techniques of astrological interpretation woefully inadequate to the task of helping her fellow Germans to rebuild their lives. In search of a spiritual dimension, she took a correspondence course with the Arcane School, which had been established by the English Theosophist Alice Bailey (1880-1949) in 1923. Her Swiss tutor, Anny Huber-Wuhrmann, was the mother of Bruno Huber (1930-99), whom she met in 1952 and married in 1953. Bruno had been studying astrology since 1947, and the scope of his reading ranged from classical astrologers to the English Theosophist and founder of the Astrological Lodge, Alan Leo (1860-1917). In his late teens, Bruno started an undergraduate course in physics at the University of Zürich, but soon transferred his allegiance to psychology. By the time he met Louise, he had reached the conclusion that:

It was the ancient wisdom which provided me with the most fruitful approach to research into astrology. Esotericists explore the underlying structure and the intent which underpin the outward phenomenal appearance of life. That’s how they hope to gain a glimpse of the pattern and purpose of nature’s ways.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Israel Regardie, *The Middle Pillar: The Balance Between Mind and Magic*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, ed. Chic Cicero and Sandra Tabatha Cicero (Woodbury, MN: Llewellyn, 2004), p. 4.

<sup>6</sup> Regardie, *The Middle Pillar*, p. 5.

<sup>7</sup> Bruno Huber and Louise Huber, *The Development of Astrological Psychology*, trans. Agnes Shellens and Heather Ross (Knutsford: API [UK], 2006), p. 5. The

Bruno and Louise shared an interest in non-predictive astrology that nourished psyche and soul, by illuminating those underlying patterns that give meaning and direction to an individual's life in a topsy-turvy world.

From 1956-58, Bruno and Louise administered the new European centre of the Arcane School in Geneva, and Bailey's esoteric astrology exerted a profound and lasting influence on their work: they adopted her introduction of esoteric as well as traditional planetary rulerships.<sup>8</sup> Louise's meditations across the zodiac sign axes (pairs of opposite signs) at Full Moon, and through the Moon signs, which aim to raise awareness and activity from the level personal rulership to the transpersonal level expressed through the esoteric ruler, owe much to Bailey, as do exercises with the ego and transpersonal planets discussed later in this paper.<sup>9</sup> The Hubers put into practice Bailey's observation that 'astrologers will eventually find it necessary to cast three horoscopes' by using Moon Node and House Charts along with the Natal Chart for comprehensive individual interpretations, reflecting on karma – meaning unfinished business we have brought into this life to complete – and extending insight into how we experience the attractions and stresses of our surrounding environment, revealing interweaving inner and outer paths on our journey to self-realization.<sup>10</sup> This triple vision was underpinned by a series of

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two articles in this booklet are the primary source of historical background leading to the founding of API and are considered in greater detail in Sue Lewis, *Astrological Psychology, Western Esotericism, and the Transpersonal* (Knutsford: HopeWell, 2015), pp. 15-38.

<sup>8</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *Esoteric Astrology, A Treatise on the Seven Rays*, Vol. 3 (New York and London: Lucis, 1951), p. 68. The traditional (T), modern (M) and esoteric (E) rulers of the signs are: Aries: T Mars, E Mercury; Taurus: T Venus, E Vulcan; Gemini: T Mercury, E Venus; Cancer: T Moon, E Neptune; Leo: T Sun, E Sun; Virgo: T Mercury, E Moon; Libra: T Venus, E Uranus; Scorpio: T Mars, M Pluto, E Mars; Sagittarius: T Jupiter, E Earth; Capricorn: T Saturn, E Saturn; Aquarius: T Saturn, M Uranus, E Jupiter; Pisces: T Jupiter, M Neptune, E Pluto.

<sup>9</sup> For Full Moon meditations, see Louise Huber, *Reflections and Meditations on the Signs of the Zodiac*, trans. Moray Patterson (Tempe, AZ: American Federation of Astrologers, 1984); for 'The Moon as our Feeling Nature', and 'The Moon in the Zodiac Signs', see Bruno Huber and Louise Huber, *The Planets and their Psychological Meaning: Capabilities and Tools of the Personality*, trans. Heather Ross, ed. Barry Hopewell (Knutsford: HopeWell, 2006), pp. 239-84.

<sup>10</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *A Treatise on White Magic or The Way of the Disciple* (New York and London: Lucis, 1951), p. 439. For 'Working with the Three Charts', see Joyce Hopewell, *The Living Birth Chart: Astrological Psychology: A Practical Workbook* (Knutsford: HopeWell, 2008), pp. 183-214.

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Theosophical concepts; karma, reincarnation, the existence of Akashic records of past lives, the belief in the divine fragment at the central core of each human being, and the understanding of the Will as a ‘principle of abstract eternal motion, or its ensouling essence’.<sup>11</sup>

Notwithstanding their inspirational content, Bruno was not entirely satisfied with Bailey’s channelled astrology nor with the lofty spiritual orientation of the Arcane School in Geneva, whose leading initiates were reluctant to engage with the psychological needs of their disciples. He found the more grounded approach he was seeking in Assagioli’s psychosynthesis and, from 1959-62, the Hubers worked at his Istituto di Psicointesi in Florence, where they had many opportunities to talk to clients and undertake statistical tests using case histories.

Assagioli’s Jewish mother and Catholic wife were both Theosophists, and he was attuned to religious mysticism or spirituality that extended beyond the boundaries of any particular dogma or faith, although he kept his meditative practice in a separate compartment from his therapeutic work, which he approached from a scientific perspective.<sup>12</sup> In 1930, he shared a platform with Bailey at a pre-Eranos summer school in Ascona on the banks of Lake Maggiore.<sup>13</sup> Seven years later, he and the pioneering astrologer Dane Rudhyar (1895-1985) became friends, following publication of Rudhyar’s seminal work, *The Astrology of Personality* (1936), which brought together astrology and analytical psychology.<sup>14</sup> Rudhyar, writing about astrology and Regardie about magic independently made comparisons with analytical psychology, the term adopted by Jung, in 1913, to distinguish his psychological science from the psychoanalysis of Sigmund Freud (1856-1939), whereas Assagioli replaced analysis by

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<sup>11</sup> Alan Leo, *The Art of Synthesis*, 6<sup>th</sup> edition (1912; New York, NY: Astrologer’s Library, 1978), pp. 255-84.

<sup>12</sup> Jean Hardy, *A Psychology with a Soul: Psychosynthesis in Evolutionary Context* (London: Arkana, 1989), pp. 2, 11, 15.

<sup>13</sup> Hans Thomas Hakl, *Eranos: An Alternative Intellectual History of the Twentieth Century*, trans. Christopher McIntosh with Hereward Tilton (Montreal and Kingston: McGill University Press, 2013), pp. 28-30.

<sup>14</sup> Deniz Ertan, *Dane Rudhyar: His Music, Thought, and Art* (Rochester, NY: Rochester University Press, 2009), p. xxiv; Dane Rudhyar, *The Astrology of Personality: A Re-formulation of Astrological Concepts and Ideals in Terms of Contemporary Psychology and Philosophy*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1970), pp. 85-113.

synthesis.<sup>15</sup> Both Jung and Assagioli studied and learned from Freud's sexual theory but reacted to its limitations by developing therapeutic methods for working with the whole person, body, mind and soul.

It is important to recognize that, as Assagioli and the Hubers worked together in the late 1950s, psychosynthesis was incorporated into the Huber method at inception, and that the subsequent influence of Jung resulted largely from posthumous publication of his *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* (1961).<sup>16</sup> This provided the Hubers with an autobiographical journey against which to demonstrate the effective working of their method of Age Progression through the twelve houses, spending six years in each over a seventy-two-year cycle, during which intensity curves through the quadrants and houses highlight periods of introspection at low points and increased outgoing activity around the cusps of houses, with a surge of pressure immediately before each of the four cardinal angles.<sup>17</sup>

Given his appreciation of Rudhyar's alignment of analytical psychology with modern astrology, Assagioli was naturally interested in the possibility of an astrological psychosynthesis and readily contributed to the Huber project. As a doctor and psychiatrist, he built up profiles of human consciousness through experiment and observation, and devised exercises balancing polarities and using triangles to achieve 'synthesis between the

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<sup>15</sup> Andrew Samuels, Bani Shorter, and Fred Plaut, *A Critical Dictionary of Jungian Analysis* (London and New York: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1986), p. 21, dates Jung's adoption of the term 'analytical psychology' referred to by Rudhyar in *The Astrology of Personality* and Regardie in the *The Middle Pillar*. Hardy describes the development of psychosynthesis in the 1920s and 1930s on pp. 17-18 of *A Psychology with a Soul*.

<sup>16</sup> Carl Gustav Jung, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, ed. Aneila Jaffé, trans. Richard and Clara Winston, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition (Glasgow: Collins Fount, 1977).

<sup>17</sup> Bruno and Louise Huber, *LifeClock: The Huber Method of Timing in the Horoscope* (York Beach, ME: Samuel Weiser, 1994), Vol. 2, pp. 173-204. Jung was born on 26 July 1875 in Kesswil, Switzerland. The Rodden Rating C reflects a birth time span from 17:20, with a Capricorn Ascendant to 17:29 with 3 degrees Aquarius ascending. Huber places the Ascendant on the cusp of Aquarius. For more on Age Progression and cosmic cycles, see *LifeClock*, pp. 23-52. The house intensity curve uses Golden Mean proportions, and stress points behind the angles of the Ascendant, Midheaven or Medium Coeli, Descendant, and Imum Coeli correspond to the Gauquelin effect – see Bruno Huber and Louise Huber, *Transformation: Astrology as a Spiritual Path*, trans. Heather Ross, ed. Barry Hopewell (Knutsford: HopeWell, 2008), pp. 44-47.

stages, qualities, and levels of love and will'.<sup>18</sup> As a scholar, he drew analogies with the insights of great philosophers.<sup>19</sup> In a collection of basic writings on psychosynthesis, published in 1965 but written over many years, Assagioli introduced the allegory of the cave, in which Plato (ca. 428-ca. 348 BCE) depicts unenlightened humanity as prisoners chained in a dark cavern, unable to endure the light.<sup>20</sup> This state of being precedes the arduous process of transmutation through which the individual must pass before opening up to the light of self-realization, 'a state of consciousness characterized by joy, serenity, inner security, a sense of calm power, clear understanding, and radiant love'.<sup>21</sup> Similarly, Huber astrology recognizes three tiers of planetary operation – asleep when reacting automatically, awakening with the dawning awareness of a need for change, and fully awakened at a level of integrity and discernment, in alignment with the soul.<sup>22</sup>

Kocku von Stuckrad begins his study of Western esotericism with 'Footnotes to Plato' and ends with Assagioli, initially observing that:

Symbolic correspondence—the ties of the soul in Plato—remains a prominent part of astrology right up to the present day. Even the conception of the cosmos as a living being in which all parts are interconnected is an unshakeable foundation of esotericism and philosophy of nature ever since Plato.<sup>23</sup>

Von Stuckrad concludes by stating the intention of Assagioli, and the transpersonal movement he joined in the 1960s, 'to replace the predominant medical approach of psychology, even more so of psychiatry, with a model that emphasizes the healthy rather than the pathological person' and that 'sees the person's spiritual needs as an indispensable

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<sup>18</sup> See the foreword by Piero Ferrucci on his study of human consciousness in Hardy, *A Psychology with a Soul*, p. xi; Roberto Assagioli, *The Act of Will: A Guide to Self-Actualization and Self-Realization* (Woking: David Platts, 1999), pp. 100-05, on polarities and synthesis. Assagioli's fundamental archetypes are love and will.

<sup>19</sup> See Hardy, pp. 121-23 on Assagioli's debt to Plato.

<sup>20</sup> Plato, *Republic*, 2 Vols, trans. Paul Shorey (Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press, 1937), VII.I-II.

<sup>21</sup> Roberto Assagioli, *Psychosynthesis: A Manual of Principles and Techniques*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (Wellingborough: Turnstone, 1975), pp. 48-49.

<sup>22</sup> Huber and Huber, *The Planets*, pp. 154-57.

<sup>23</sup> Kocku von Stuckrad, *Western Esotericism: A Brief History of Secret Knowledge*, trans. Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke (London: Equinox, 2005), p. 13.



aspect of their total personality'. Stuckrad categorizes this movement as one of the contemporary fields of discourse taking forward the esoteric project.<sup>24</sup> This is the context into which I place Huber astrology.

Like the psychological astrology of Liz Greene, which interfaces with Jungian psychology and is referred to by Patrick Curry, Huber grew out of the Theosophical astrology of Leo to meet the needs of the New Age, while also bearing characteristics of earlier Neoplatonic and Hermetic astrologies that crystallized in and around Alexandria during the first centuries CE with their emphasis on self-knowledge and self-transformation.<sup>25</sup> Notably, Curry cites Hermetic rather than Gnostic influence, with which I incontestably agree, but this choice needs clarification. Whereas Hermeticists and Gnostics were equally concerned with 'gnosis' – meaning revealed knowledge not obtained through systematic reasoning – the Gnostic view that 'our world is the result of a tragic split within the divine world' has been described by Roelof van den Broek as 'anticosmic': 'Gnostics considered the planets and the signs of the zodiac as evil powers, which the soul on its way back to its origin could pass only if it had true gnosis', by being one of a chosen few granted access to divinity.<sup>26</sup> In contrast, Hermetic philosophical doctrine 'became the core of a cosmic religiosity, which could lead to the mystical experience of falling together with the universe', and 'the Hermetic way finally led to initiation in the divine mystery'.<sup>27</sup> So, from the Hermetic viewpoint, humanity could be empowered, capable of self-recovery and of contributing to world regeneration through self-will, with the planets and signs of the celestial world acting as helpful intermediaries.

Huber astrology extends the five relational aspects between zodiac signs of the 360-degree circle established by Ptolemy, the second-century Alexandrian astronomer and geographer, to include not only the 0-degree conjunction, 60-degree sextile, 90-degree square, 120-degree trine, and

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<sup>24</sup> Stuckrad, *Western Esotericism*, pp. 145-46.

<sup>25</sup> Patrick Curry, 'Varieties of Astrological Experience', in Roy Willis and Patrick Curry, *Astrology Science and Culture: Pulling Down the Moon* (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2004), pp. 65-76 (pp. 72-73), explores the correlation between Neoplatonic/Hermetic astrology and psychological astrology without mentioning Huber.

<sup>26</sup> Roelof van den Broek, 'Gnosticism and Hermetism in Antiquity: Two Roads to Salvation', in *Gnosis and Hermeticism: From Antiquity to Modern Times*, ed. Roelof van den Broek and Wouter J. Hanegraaff (Albany, NY: State University of New York, 1998), pp. 1-20 (pp. 1, and 9).

<sup>27</sup> Broek, pp. 10, 12.

180-degree opposition of which he approved, but also the 30-degree semi-sextile and the 150-degree quincunx brought into the correspondence between musical instruments and zodiacal aspects by Marsilio Ficino (1433-99).<sup>28</sup> Huber attributes consciousness-raising qualities to semi-sextiles and quincunxes, which pave the way to psychosynthesis, but does not use the divisive semi-squares and sesqui-quadrates introduced by Johannes Kepler (1571-1630) and favoured by many modern astrologers. The Huber figure of 30-degree aspects fanning out to the circumference from the conjunction of Cancer and Leo, traditionally ruled by Moon and Sun, extending 30 degrees to Gemini and Virgo ruled by Mercury, 60 degrees to Taurus and Libra ruled by Venus, 90 degrees to Aries and Scorpio traditionally ruled by Mars, 120 degrees to Pisces and Sagittarius traditionally ruled by Jupiter, and 150 and 180 degrees to Aquarius and Capricorn ruled by Saturn, creates a symmetrical pattern connecting signs, planets, and aspects.<sup>29</sup> This is especially effective if coloured to highlight the elements of the sign glyphs – red for fire, green for earth, yellow for air, and blue for water – and the lines of the aspects – orange for conjunction, green for semi-sextile and quincunx, blue for sextile and trine, and red for square and opposition. Artistic presentation, attracting the gaze inwards to illuminate underlying patterns, plays an important part in Huber interpretation, but the inconjunct green aspects it introduces deviate from Ptolemy's preoccupation with perfect cosmic order, signalling a dynamic shift of emphasis to encourage growth and transformation.

After Alexandria comes Florence, where Ficino was a towering figure of the Renaissance. The son of a doctor, he transferred his allegiance from Aristotelian medicine to Plato's philosophy, and became the Medicis' translator of Greek texts into Latin, to which he added commentaries. These included the *Corpus Hermeticum*, *Dialogues* of Plato, *Hymns* of Orpheus, *Sayings* of Zoroaster and works by the pagan Neoplatonists of the third to fifth centuries CE.<sup>30</sup> Besides being a scholarly translator, Ficino was a priest, musician, astrologer, and writer, who presented himself as a

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<sup>28</sup> Claudius Ptolemy, *Tetrabiblos*, trans. F. E. Robbins, Loeb Classical Library, 435 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1940; repr. 1994), I, 12-16, pp. 69-79; Angela Voss, ed., *Marsilio Ficino*, Western Esoteric Masters Series (Berkeley, CA: North Atlantic Books, 2006), pp. 184-86.

<sup>29</sup> Bruno Huber, Louise Huber, and Michael Alexander Huber, *Aspect Pattern Astrology: A New Holistic Horoscope Interpretation Method*, trans. Heather Ross (Knutsford: HopeWell, 2005), pp. 23-24, 47; Lewis, *Astrological Psychology*, pp. 8, 86-87.

<sup>30</sup> Voss, *Marsilio Ficino*, pp. xiii-xv.

‘doctor of souls’ in the foreword to his *Liber de Vita* (1489).<sup>31</sup> In part three, ‘On Making your Life Agree with the Heavens’, he encourages the use of powerful colours for creating a talismanic map of the universe to attract auspicious planetary energies:

There are three universal and singular colours of the world: green, gold, and sapphire, and they are dedicated to the three Graces of heaven. Green, of course, is for Venus and the Moon, moist, as it were, for the moist ones, and appropriate to things of birth, especially mothers. There is no question that gold is the colour of the Sun, and no stranger to Jove and Venus either. But we dedicate the sapphire colour especially to Jove, to whom the sapphire itself is said to be consecrated. This is why lapis lazuli was given its colour (sapphire), because of its Jovial power against Saturn’s black bile. It has a special place among doctors, and it is born with gold, distinct with gold marks, so it is a companion of gold just as Jupiter is the companion of the Sun. The stone ultramarine has a similar power, possessing a similar colour with a little green.<sup>32</sup>

Given Christian distrust of astrology, ‘as a manifestation of human pride that seeks to understand destiny and the hand of God in ways that human beings allegedly were not meant to’, in the words of Versluis, it is no surprise that Ficino struggled to get his astral magic past Papal inspection, and hid behind classical authorities.<sup>33</sup> Notwithstanding, this was an influential book in the sixteenth century, and again in the twentieth. Ficino inspired the healer and medical theorist Paracelsus (1493-1541), much of his *Book of Life* was reproduced in Agrippa’s *Occult Philosophy* and, in 1548, a translation from Latin into Italian was marketed in a pocket edition as an everyday guide to healthy living.<sup>34</sup> Referring to the revival of interest in Ficino during the twentieth century, Michael Allen alludes to ‘striking parallels to current new age therapies’ and notes ‘his holistic approach to health and to the importance of our inner sense of well-being and of well-

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<sup>31</sup> Marsilio Ficino, *Book of Life*, trans. Charles Boer, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (Woodstock, CT: Spring, 1996), p. 1.

<sup>32</sup> Ficino, *Book of Life*, p. 153.

<sup>33</sup> Versluis, *Magic and Mysticism*, p. 96; ‘The Apology of Marsilio Ficino’, in *Book of Life*, pp. 184-89.

<sup>34</sup> Nicholas Goodrick-Clarke, *The Western Esoteric Traditions: A Historical Perspective* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 58 on Agrippa and Ficino, and pp. 80-81 on Paracelsus and Ficino; Sandra Cavallo and Tessa Storey, *Healthy Living in Late Renaissance Italy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), pp. 18-19.

being's power over the external world'.<sup>35</sup> It is easy to find correspondences between Ficino and Huber regarding their use of all seven aspects, emphasis on relationships between planets and colours, and concern for the health of body and soul. Both astrologies belong to the Neoplatonic and Hermetic streams. Ficino's 'astrological powers and influences, ever-changing in their dance', as Allen describes them, become Huber learning triangles, although Bruno and Louise credited more immediate sources of inspiration.

Florentine art had such an impact on Bruno that he toyed with the idea of becoming an artist. This experience awakened him to the importance of the initial visual impression of the astrological chart. Like a lotus, it opens out from the centre, and its five levels from the centre to the periphery can be seen in the charts of Bruno and Louise, who always introduced themselves to their students by sharing their horoscopes. According to Leo, whose advice the Hubers followed:

Every human being is a 'Divine Fragment', a centre within the universal divine consciousness, inseparably united with every other centre, and all blended in one ultimately by the universal Life and Consciousness in which they are centred... The 'Divine Fragment'... may be represented as a small blank circle in the centre of every horoscope...<sup>36</sup>

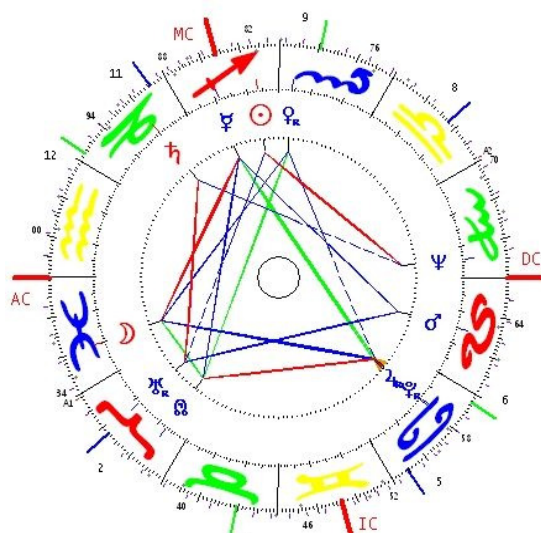
Moving outwards from the divine fragment in the centre, the innermost circle contains the aspect structure representing inner motivation, and here the astrologer ponders for a few minutes to allow a picture of the person behind the chart to emerge before starting to analyse coherence, colour, shape, and aspect patterns. Bruno's chart conveys a mountain range, while Louise's displays a large plateau, although the dominant triangles in Bruno's extend into four-sided figures, emphasizing his urge to convert research and learning into a system, while the incomplete trapeze in Louise's stimulated her drive 'to create something active and enduring from her understanding of the processes of life'.<sup>37</sup> Both display significant green quincunxes, minds working together to solve problems and raise awareness.

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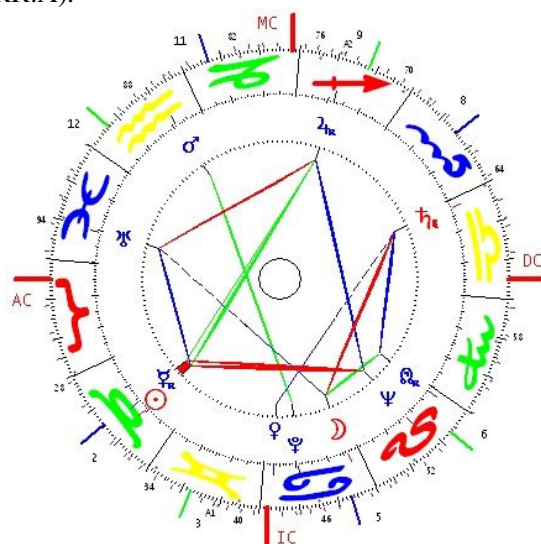
<sup>35</sup> Michael J. B. Allen, 'Ficino, Marsilio, b. 19.10.1433 Figline, d. 1.10.1499 Careggi (Florence)', in *Dictionary of Gnosis and Western Esotericism*, ed. Wouter J. Hanegraaff, with Antoine Faivre, Roelof van den Broek, and Jean-Pierre Brach (Leiden: Brill, 2006), pp. 360-67 (p. 364).

<sup>36</sup> Alan Leo, *Esoteric Astrology* (Rochester, VT: Destiny, 1983), pp. 241-42.

<sup>37</sup> Huber et al., *Aspect Pattern Astrology*, p. 208.



**Fig. 1:** Bruno Huber (1930-99), b. 29 November 1930, 12:55, Zürich, Switzerland (RR:A).<sup>38</sup>



**Fig. 2.** Louise Huber, b. 10 May 1924, 03:15, Bamberg, Germany (RR:A).<sup>39</sup>

<sup>38</sup> Repr. using MegaStar from [www.catharsoftware.com](http://www.catharsoftware.com).

<sup>39</sup> Repr. using MegaStar from [www.catharsoftware.com](http://www.catharsoftware.com).

On the psychological effect of colour, Bruno and Louise cite Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832), Friedrich Wilhelm Ostwald (1853-1932) and Aemilius Müller as creators of the colour wheel, and a key source of inspiration was *Concerning the Spiritual in Art* (1911) by Wassily Kandinsky (1866-1944), the Russian abstract artist working in Germany.<sup>40</sup> Kandinsky described the founder of the Theosophical Society, Helena Petrovna Blavatsky (1831-91), as a torchbearer and had much to say about colour, shape, movement, and the inner person:

Colour provides a whole wealth of possibilities of her own, and when combined with form, yet a further series of possibilities. And all of these will be expressions of inner need.<sup>41</sup>

The life of the spirit may be fairly represented in diagram as a large acute-angled triangle divided horizontally into unequal parts with the narrowest segment uppermost.

The whole triangle is moving slowly, almost invisibly forwards and upwards.<sup>42</sup>

The mobile state described by Kandinsky corresponds to the three-coloured learning triangle, an innovation of astrological psychology that illuminates the cycle of growth. There are four sizes, the smallest affecting a specific segment of life and the largest expressing the core personality.<sup>43</sup> A person with a small learning triangle, comprising a red square, a blue sextile, and a green semi-sextile, often experiences inner tension that results in a need to change something in the outer environment. Someone with a medium learning triangle, comprising a blue trine, a square, and a semi-sextile, may be nudged out of complacency by conflicts and problems in the environment. A large learning triangle, comprising a green quincunx, a sextile, and a square, suggests preoccupation with expansion of consciousness, learning and development, and an ambivalent attitude to the environment. A dominant triangle, comprising a quincunx, a trine, and a square, encompasses the centre of the chart, so that issues of growth and learning are wholly life-transforming. A point of conflict arises where the square aspect meets either the sextile or the trine, and the green aspect acts as a trouble-shooter, seeking a solution. If the sequence of blue/red,

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<sup>40</sup> Huber and Huber, *Transformation*, p. 154.

<sup>41</sup> Wassily Kandinsky, *Concerning the Spiritual in Art*, trans. M. T. H. Sadler (Mineola, NY: Dover, 1977), pp. 13, 33.

<sup>42</sup> Kandinsky, *Concerning the Spiritual in Art*, p. 6.

<sup>43</sup> Huber et al., *Aspect Pattern Astrology*, pp. 198-209.

red/green, green/blue angles runs clockwise the learning process will take longer than if it runs in an anticlockwise direction – which is direct in astronomical time.

Beyond the inner circle of the aspect structure is the circle of the planets, and here Huber interpretation of Saturn radically differs from Ficino's reflections on the melancholy scholar.<sup>44</sup> The Huber Saturn represents the body and the mother figure, and bears a striking similarity to the *Shekhinah*, as the 'lower waters' of *Malkhut* rising to the 'upper waters' of the 'sea of *Binah*', the two feminine poles of Kabbalah.<sup>45</sup> In Bruno's model of an amphora – a narrow-necked open flask – the three ego planets, Saturn, Moon, and the Sun, rise sequentially up the middle pillar with Saturn at the base, while in the illustrated hierarchy of planets, the three ego planets occupy a central band, with Saturn on the fixed column or pillar of form, one rung lower than Binah on the Tree of Kabbalah. Professor Les Lancaster has highlighted similarities between the Tree of Kabbalah and the psychosynthesis egg diagram:

Emphasis on integration is a primary imperative in Kabbalah. Unification of the levels of the soul is just one dimension of that global process of transformation that is seen by kabbalists as their major task...

The name that Assagioli gave to his system of therapy, psychosynthesis, suggests that its goals bear comparison with those more cosmological objectives of Kabbalah... Assagioli seems to have drawn on the kabbalistic understanding of the divisions of the soul. He posited three realms of the unconscious: a lower unconscious, identified with bodily functions, a middle unconscious dealing with present experiences and their relation to 'I'; and a higher unconscious concerned with intuitive and spiritual functions. Psychosynthesis is directed to the integration of these levels, and especially to forging synthesis between the personal self and the transpersonal self.<sup>46</sup>

Lancaster's comparison can be extended to the Huber hierarchy of planets with its three tiers. The lower life-sustaining functions correspond to Venus in the fixed column to the left, expressing a love of harmony, Mars in the cardinal column to the right, epitomizing action, and Mercury and Jupiter in the middle, mutable column, representing the learning and







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<sup>44</sup> Ficino, *Book of Life*, pp. 6-33; Raymond Klibansky, Erwin Panofsky, and Fritz Saxl, *Saturn and Melancholy: Studies in the History of Natural Philosophy, Religion and Art* (London: Nelson, 1964), pp. 250-59.

<sup>45</sup> Brian L. Lancaster, *The Essence of Kabbalah*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (London: Arcturus, 2006), p. 110.

<sup>46</sup> Lancaster, *The Essence of Kabbalah*, pp. 40-41.

experience that underpin growth. In the central tier are the three ego planets, Saturn corresponding to the body and sense of security, Moon to the feelings and desire for contact, and Sun to the mind and sense of self. Along the upper tier are the transpersonal planets, Uranus as creative intelligence, Neptune as unconditional love, and Pluto as spiritual will.

<b>CREATIVE INTELLIGENCE</b> MOTHER  IMAGO Occultist Methodology Ideal of the perfect world Organising	<b>ALL – LOVE (Christ)</b> CHILD  IMAGO Mystic Mediation Ideal of unconditional love Serving	<b>SPIRITUAL WILL</b> FATHER  IMAGO Magician Metamorphosis Ideal of the perfect human being Creating
<b>BODY</b> Self-Confidence  Immunity      Security housekeeping      closing MOTHER      heteronomous	<b>FEELING</b> You-awareness  Sensitivity      Sympathy learning      opening CHILD      ambivalent	<b>MENTALITY</b> Self-awareness  Vitality      Mental capacity growing      radiating FATHER      autonomous

**Fig 3.** Planetary Table, representing (from left to right) at the higher, spiritual level, the transpersonal planets, Uranus, Neptune, and Pluto and, at the middle level, the personal, ego planets, Saturn, Moon, and Sun.<sup>47</sup>

Citing Assagioli’s psychosynthesis and Bailey’s esoteric astrology, Huber asserts that ‘transformation of the threefold personality is an important precondition for spiritual development’, and adapts the first three of five initiations related by Bailey to the life of Christ: ‘1. Birth in Bethlehem; 2. Baptism in Jordan; 3. Transfiguration on Mount Carmel; 4. Crucifixion on Mount Golgotha; and 5. Resurrection and Ascension’.<sup>48</sup> According to Bailey:

At the first initiation, the control of the Ego over the physical body must have reached a high degree of attainment... The second initiation forms the crisis in the control of the astral body...<sup>49</sup>

<sup>47</sup> Repr. Huber, *The Planets*, p. 97.

<sup>48</sup> Huber and Huber, *The Planets*, pp. 91, 106.

<sup>49</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *Initiation Human and Solar*, 8<sup>th</sup> edition (1967), pp. 82-83, 85-86, repr. in *The Soul: The Quality of Life*, compiled by a student from the writings of



At the third initiation the control of the soul-illuminated mind is finally established, and the soul itself assumes the dominant position and not the phenomenal form.<sup>50</sup>

The first initiation, which describes the passage from Saturn to Uranus, was likened by Bruno and Louise to the Damascus experience, when sceptical Saul is transformed by a lightning flash into the apostle Paul; it is about letting go of personal fear and becoming responsible for more than just oneself.<sup>51</sup> The second initiation, from Moon to Neptune, engages with the feelings, and the sense of abandonment felt by Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane, when Judas sold him for thirty pieces of silver, Peter denied knowing him, and other disciples slept; by abandoning hope at one level, the initiate lets go of emotional attachment, accepts what comes along, is forgiving, attuned to the universe, and transmits unconditional love.<sup>52</sup> The third initiation, from Sun to Pluto, was compared to the Way of the Cross; it forces us to understand what is happening mentally, control our thoughts, and stride towards the top of the mountain where we discover a new light of understanding.<sup>53</sup>

While retaining Christian analogies, these three initiations adapt the path of spiritual ascent up the Jacob's ladder of kabbalists, or the ladder of St John Climacus of the Byzantine Church, to the transition from ego-centred to transpersonal or soul-centred living with the personal and transpersonal planets of the celestial sphere as intermediary guides. By incorporating three rather than five initiations, the Hubers followed the guidance of Assagioli, who clearly stated: 'Psychosynthesis does not aim nor attempt to give a metaphysical nor a theological explanation of the great Mystery – it leads to the door, but stops there'.<sup>54</sup>

Returning now to the five levels, beyond the centre, aspect structure, and planetary cycle, are the circles of signs connected with inheritance, and houses determining the sequence of age progression in relationship to planets and signs. Through the axes of the signs and houses more transformational journeys can be made.

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Alice A. Bailey and The Tibetan Master, Djwhal Khul (London and New York: Lucis, 1974), pp. 256-57.

<sup>50</sup> Alice A. Bailey, *The Rays and the Initiations, A Treatise on the Seven Rays*, Vol. 5, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (1965), p. 674, repr. in *The Soul*, p. 259.

<sup>51</sup> Huber and Huber, *The Planets*, pp. 108-10.

<sup>52</sup> Huber and Huber, *The Planets*, pp. 111-14.

<sup>53</sup> Huber and Huber, *The Planets*, pp. 115-17.

<sup>54</sup> *Psychosynthesis*, pp. 6-7.

The aspiration to contribute to an eventual triumph of unity and light over separation and darkness has been repeated throughout history. This paper demonstrates ways in which, according to the Hubers, the planets of the celestial sphere can be instructive intermediaries, helping us to build bridges between ourselves, our planet, and the infinite space beyond, and how astrological psychology provides some modern solutions to an eternal quest.

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