

Astrological Chart Rectification

by Richard Vetter

At first sight, with superficial reasoning, the rectification, or correction, of a given birth time seems appropriate and necessary: We certainly do need an exact and reliable basis for any astrological interpretation. However, none of the diverse methods of rectification provides the desired safety or assurance; each rests upon a shaky, theoretical basis. Moreover, different techniques invariably lead to different results, from which, more or less arbitrarily, the "most fitting" eventually gets selected. I principally mistrust every rectification unless the difference from the given time only amounts to a couple minutes and/or the chart's owner did it, after long-time observation.

Adjusting the birth time by several hours (which isn't such an unusual practice) is an absurdity. When this occurs, the thorough, imaginative rectifier tends to construct adventurous theories about the process of certification, about how and why the time could have been wrongly recorded or transmitted. Parents and relations sometimes assist in producing such fantasies: the longer the period of adjustment, the more colorful are the myths that get built around the circumstances of the birth.

When in doubt I always prefer to use the officially given time. Although this may be considered as my natural Capricornian reaction to authority, my primary reason is actually scientific objectivity. In Germany, and in most other countries where the time of birth is routinely recorded, the personnel employed in hospitals, clinics and registrar's offices provide the most credible and authentic records. Why should they be otherwise? In almost every case these times were recorded close to the actual birth, and they are neutral and unbiased. These institutions just aren't interested in providing misinformation.

Certainly, calculating the different birth time variants nourishes our demolished self-esteem; those long and complicated sequences of "hits" are really impressive, they strengthen our pride in what we do. The listings of close aspects look solid and grounded; they furnish our daily work with some scientific paint. The entries re-vitalize our ego (so badly weakened by statistical failures) since here we have unquestionable empirical data, concrete facts from the individual's biography! The juggling with figures gives us the illusion that our construct of knowing is provable; the demonstration makes it obvious to everyone that astrology is truly erected on reason, not on vague theories and speculations.

Yet, upon some closer inspection we are forced to realize that this kind of proof is a circular one; no statement can prove its own premise. Fundamentally, a complete and whole paradigm like our ancient wisdom of the stars can be neither refuted nor denied from outside; therefore statistical investigations of astrology's truth inevitably have to fail. So why are we so desperate, why is our inner astrological self so heavily wounded, why do we need those attempts of legitimization? Isn't it science that has to justify its thoughts and deeds in face of manifold ecological disasters? In astrology we can't equate symbol and event; that would be a false simplification of the archetypes' diversity and multiplicity. Our system doesn't function according to a mathematical diagram of " $y = mx + b$ "; we don't have exact connections between cause and effect as there are in classical physics! We are dealing with creation's primordial principles, which are essentially multi-layered and ambiguous. As astrology's cosmic wisdom can never be grasped completely by anyone, it is my opinion that much more modesty would be appropriate. The study of astrology is a life-long process this is so for even the greatest teacher; the study of it doesn't come to an end. One can never know the exact meaning of any astrological configuration, its definite manifestation or outcome, no possibility can really be excluded - this being our "science's" most frustrating and most fascinating aspect!

Some astrologers invest much time and energy 'correcting' birth times. Wouldn't it make more sense to instead concentrate on an extensive study of the chart? In our field of knowledge "truth" always and only unveils itself intuitively, by way of an intense interrogation of a horoscope or person. The day's planetary configurations (even when no birth time is available) provide an abundance of material to discuss and consider. I suspect that those experts, who abstractly discuss at length questions of the right time, are actually avoiding the real-life situation of counseling: they are fleeing the encounter and confrontation with the client and his problems. Furthermore, I suspect their interpretation ability have become poor (filled with formulae and stereotypes), that they have lost their sensitivity and imagination.

A final point even makes me angry: It seems those specialists in birth-time rectification are unable to handle astrology's implications of destiny. They subconsciously fail to accept facts simply put down "from above", they blasphemously usurp the Creator's role. In a sort of obsession (or psychic inflation, egotism) they want to manipulate, to shake the Tree of Life; like the Fates they want to direct the future's threads themselves, to feel life's currents running through their fingers - in doing so they are abusing their knowledge about the higher things. We should respect the existential powers that are intrinsically interwoven with astrology (which isn't just a funny and tricky psychology) and deal with them cautiously. Subjects like health and death should not be played with. Instead of stirring up the different birth times in a big pot, we should use the horoscope at hand and let it speak to us.