

Symmetrical Astrology - Psychological Sequences and Event Ecology by Gary Christen

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Are you ready to embark on an adventure in astrology and grapple with new terms, such as 'arc opening', 'resonance', 'event ecology' and 'personal points'? Then take a deep breath and read on. The author gives an introduction to Symmetrical Astrology which invites us to look at stargazing work in an entirely fresh way for the 21st Century and offers a more 3-D view of our lives.

Symmetrical Astrology is a conceptual view of astrology taken from the work of Alfred Witte's Uranian System and Arthur H. Blackwell's view of pre-Greek astrology combined with a strong philosophical basis as outlined in Robert Hand's essay, *Astrology as a Revolutionary Science**.

Witte's work is a modern synthesis of Greek classical and Renaissance astrology developed after WWI and is highly geometric in nature. Blackwell takes us off the ecliptic

and emphasises the horizon and parans. Hand's essay is the collective expression of astrology's role in the age of materialism. We are going to focus this article on some applications of a component of Symmetrical Astrology, *resonance*.



Perfect Symmetry

Source: [Bkrmadtya Karki](#) from Pixabay

Astrology employs various forms of resonance to operate and resonance is one of the fundamental concepts underlying Symmetrical Astrology. Most of us are familiar with *symbolic connections* between material in the horoscope. Symbolic connections involve rulership style interactions that link a placement in the zodiac to a planet to characterise how it interacts with other material in the horoscope. Resonance, as used in Symmetrical Astrology, is much more direct in the way it makes chart connections.

The ideas are really quite simple. It is all about the spaces or arcs between planets and other chart points being of equal length. When they are, they resonate with each other and affect each other much like aspects do. Like any simple idea, it can be expanded and observed. Expanding this concept would seem to make a simple idea more complex and unwieldy, but the opposite is true. The more one explores these ways of organising information, the more one easily derives essential chart information.

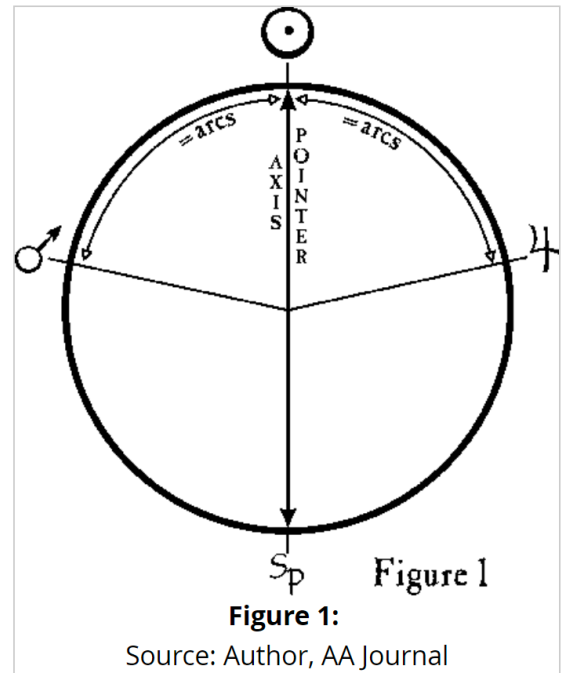
The 'personal points'?

The organisation of information is critical to understanding the story each chart carries. With Symmetrical Astrology, we filter everything in the chart through the *Personal Points*. The personal points are the Sun, Moon, Ascendant and Midheaven, along with the Cardinal points and the Moon's Nodes. It is often said that nothing happens in a horoscope unless the personal points are involved and the more they are involved, the more pronounced the indicator becomes. Observing the interactions of these points in any horoscope will always keep you focused on what is essential without being distracted by the amount of information you reveal.

Once we cast and observe a horoscope it becomes an entity that unfolds in time bringing forth different hues and intensities of not only events but character unfoldment. Like a child growing into an adult, a horoscope is a thing of eternal change amplifying parts of itself with each movement of time. While the intrinsic essence of the horoscope remains relatively the same throughout time, the reaction and evolution of the chart to the stimulus of time and the conditions that time sets up, bring different forms of being into focus as the chart matures.

Particular focus should be on the Sun as a central timer for the unfoldment of the chart. Metaphoric connections between the day and the year all involve the Sun. The daily movement of the Sun, and its yearly movement creating geometric interactions with Earth, have always been linked and observed in astrology. The resonance of the Sun crossing the Meridian at noon and the Sun crossing into Cancer at the longest day in the North (standing at noon for the year) is all about the primacy of the Sun in creating spirit and life's energy. The Sun times the day and as we compare it to the years going by, each day becomes like a year. This movement is called the progression of the Sun and accumulates roughly a degree a year. We simply call the symbolic motion of the Sun as it moves the solar arc.

When we think of the solar arc, we shouldn't only think about it in the way we think of symbolic connections between the placement of things in the zodiac and the influence that rulerships imply. This kind of approach is important, but something more critical is going on. When we think of the solar arc, we should think of it simply as an *Arc Opening*. The solar arc is the distance travelled between the natal Sun and the progressed Sun in any chart. This simple arc will resonate between all other similar arc openings. The effects of resonance will be seen in the horoscope and all the charts it interacts with, such as other people, places, transits, returns, etc.

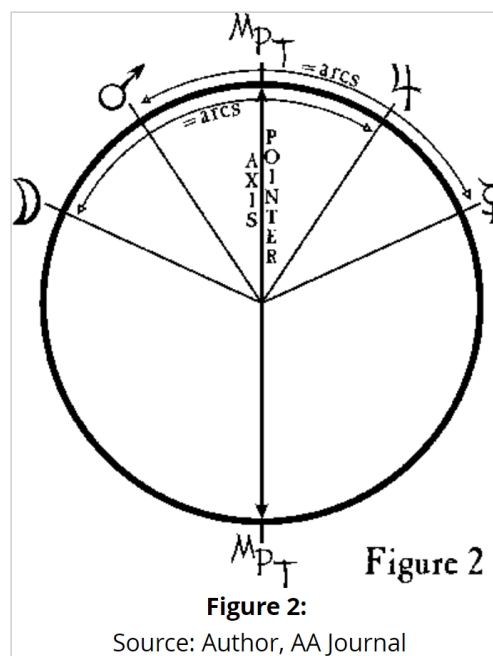


When we talk about the space between chart factors or arc openings, we are describing conditions in the chart where the distance between two factors is expressed in degrees, minutes and seconds. If we solely apply the idea of arc openings to the solar arc, again we are not concerned about the location of the natal or progressed Sun. Whether factor A is in Gemini or the 6th house is not a concern when beginning to analyse arc openings. It is the distance between factor A and factor B that is of concern. This cannot be stressed enough.

What are 'planetary pictures'?

Planetary Pictures are groups of factors in the horoscope that are symmetrical. All planetary pictures are formed out of equal arc openings between chart factors of one form or another that resonate with each other. When personal points are involved in completed planetary pictures, the resulting effects are very powerful, descriptive and specific. Angularity and aspect, particularly involving the personal points are still the strongest and most visible indicators of character and possibility. Using planetary pictures to fill in detail with timing completed by the solar arc provide a simple to use structure to tell us the when and the why in a chart. The fact that the solar arc becomes the connective instrument brings in the Sun as a primary personal point in all resonant pictures where we employ the solar arc.

I am introducing some unfamiliar terms like arc opening, resonance and personal points with more to come. Defining these terms allows one to think in a new construct without changing the way one may have previously conceived of the same information. New terms often describe things we already know in another form, allowing us to conceive of them in perhaps new or novel ways. It helps us create a different slant on the way we process information. Observing the effects of new concepts we can become more fluid and secure in our ability to read the chart. Adding together the idea of arc openings sorted along a hierarchy following the personal points and employing the solar arc as a trigger creates a very easy timing device to use in astrology. Still, we can carry these simple ideas further.



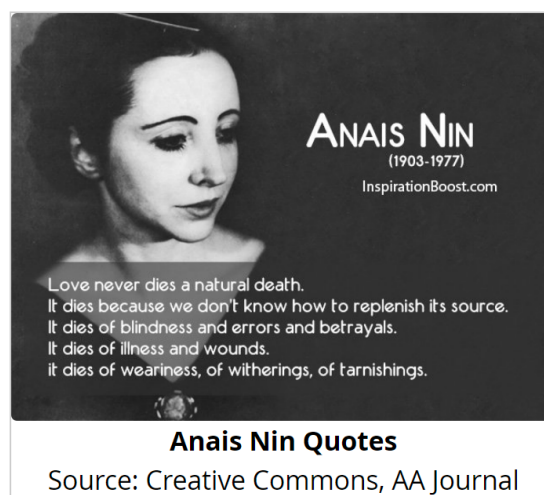
'Psychological sequence'... and love examples

The term *Psychological Sequence* refers to the order that we experience our internal reactions and response. As modern astrologers begin to derive the concepts underlying Babylonian astrology, it starts to become apparent that the Babylonians didn't have the same conceptions about astrology as the later Greeks did. They didn't seem to focus on a specific event like a specific birth chart does, but a series of events that took place before and after the birth (and possible events) that influence the actual native's development. The same way of conceiving time's passage is true for us as we experience life. Normally it is not a single event that defines something for us, but the actual event is really a series of sequential actions that make up a period of time. This is what we organise internally and that organisation becomes part of our experiential memory of how something has unfolded.

For example, in any given horoscope the Moon makes its monthly pass around the zodiac. As the Moon goes through the signs it conjoins all the planets. Suppose the planets are arranged in the order of Saturn furthest along with Mars following and Mercury behind Mars and the Sun running last, then the monthly experience of the native could express itself in the following way: action of the will (Sun and Mars) requires movement and communication (Mercury) with the energy to manifest the will coming to a need to structure, halt, experience difficulties or study (Saturn). The psychological sequence would be the Moon hitting the Sun, then Mercury, then Mars and finally Saturn. If someone had another sequence of planets, for instance, Saturn, followed by Mercury, followed by the Sun, followed by Mars, then the sequence of events would be entirely different. The native might often find oneself in a difficulty or deep study with lots of details causing them to have to communicate or contemplate the dilemma (Mercury and Saturn) which leads to decisions (Sun) with physical movement and the expenditure of work or energy to complete or carry out the decisions (Mars). Thus the idea of a sequence where the physical arrangement of the order of the planets creates a unique unfoldment of events and the impression of this sequence is reinforced by its repetition through time.

If we observe someone with a Venus and Neptune conjunction, obviously we will find that they have an experience of love very different from a person with a Venus-Saturn conjunction. The same is true in the order that these planets are arranged. If Venus is applying to Saturn, then the native loves and then possibly experiences loss. If the Saturn is applying to the Venus, then the native recovers from hardship by falling in love. The same is true of the Venus and Neptune where if the Venus is behind the Neptune, then love appears first then it becomes more fantastic and dreamy. If the Neptune operates first, then the natives finds love without even knowing they are looking for it or has a sense about it first and finds desire. It is all in the order and layout of the horoscope and thus the definition of the term psychological sequence.

Sequences can get very complex and organising them is quite important. If your computer software doesn't support it, you can find instructions to retrieve a free Difference Sort based on your chart or someone else's chart or an electoral chart, event chart, etc. at <https://alabe.com/arcs/>. (** See instructions below) A difference sort lists all the openings between all the pairs of planets and other factors (like Asc, MC, etc.) in degrees and minutes and sorts them either by the order of the planets or by the arc openings between each pair. This particular difference sort modulates all the arc openings to a limit of 45° and sorts them from the smallest arc opening to the largest. In other words, the sequence can only go from 0° to 45° and then starts over again. It focuses on the half-square and sesquiquadrate aspects (45° and 135°), but also includes the conjunction, opposition and square. The 45° sort focuses on these harder or more dynamic aspects because they are very likely to show strong events. You are not limited to such hard aspects and you can make a difference sort of any opening (like 30° for all the soft aspects) with most major commercial astrological software packages.



And what is 'event ecology'?

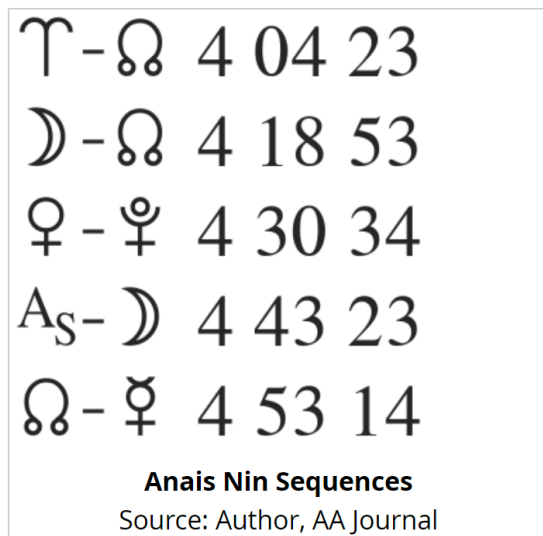
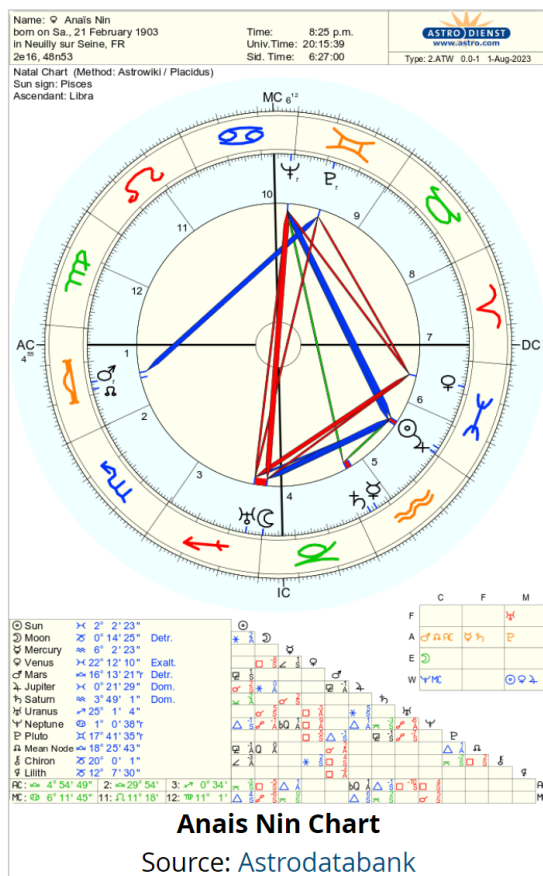
The last original term I will introduce is *Event Ecology*. Like a psychological sequence, an event ecology describes the kind of dynamic event structure the native experiences. The way we can sum up parts of a personality with an astrological description (e.g. "That guy, he is a walking Mars-Saturn and everything he does takes forever" or "Flirts just like a Moon in Libra") we can do the same for an event ecology. By analysing the psychological sequence we can understand how a dynamic personality reacts and colours a series of events or demonstrates the way they physically react. Closely related to a larger psychological sequence, the event ecology is a subset that is less linear and more of a rich description than a simple sequence. This is due to the dynamic factors that set off the subset of the sequence since they characterise the influence that is external to the native. Here we begin to characterise a fuller picture of the native in a dynamic way.

When we observe the arrangement of a difference sort the striking thing is the great diversity of how the pairs are sequenced. In the chart of (the late author) Anaïs Nin we can see this in action.

This sample shows a portion of her psychological sequence and represents a small event ecology, the subgroup of the larger psychological sequence and this subgroup revolves around a central theme. The theme concerns connections. As the solar arc goes from 4° 4' to 4° 53' a repetitive story unfolds in her life. The time of the sequence is approximately ten months using the normal SA and if we use the half SA it becomes closer to one year eight months and 2 x SA becomes closer to five months duration. Any transits or other people and places that have similar arc openings will generally be involved.

Essentially, as she makes intimate connections in the world at large (Aries Node), she pulls them into her as emotional connections (Moon Node). This leads to obsession and desire (Venus-Pluto) expressing itself emotionally in the local environment and through her other emotional connections and even at public places (Asc Moon). Finally she begins to connect intellectually and through writing what she is experiencing (Node Mercury).

She cannot alter this flow of experience; she must always have desire following connection and never the other way around. And once she has publicly expressed her feelings, she has to communicate them. She cannot have desire leading to a connection, as many do. She can only respond with desire to the connection being formed.



Using a difference sort, dynamic arcs like the solar arc and a hierarchy to decide what is important in actualising resonance is an excellent illustration of the backbone of Symmetrical Astrology and all we do as astrologers. While astrologers do not have a demonstrable mechanism for how astrology works for the scientific community, we can certainly describe its actions using resonance.

By understanding these simple concepts we can see the native's life experience as a narrative instead of a patchwork of observations and anecdotes. This seems to be similar in concept to the way the Babylonians conceived of the 'heavenly writing', except it is thoroughly a modern way of understanding the unfoldment of personality, the shaping of life via the events one experiences and a more three-dimensional view of our life. Still, these concepts really are older than dirt and thus there is nothing new under the Sun, except in the way we light it up and look at it through different facets.

Note:

* You can download a free pdf of *Astrology as a Revolutionary Science*, taken from *The Future of Astrology*, Edited by A.T. Mann, Unwin Hyman LTD, 1987, at <https://alabe.com/library.html>.

**** A 45 degree Difference Sort and Lifetime Solar Arcs**

You will need to have your own tables in order to play with these ideas after reading this article. I introduced these tables into Astrolabe's software more than forty years ago and since imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, most of the mainstream software today now produces similar tables. You can find means to generate such tables in WinStar, SolarFire, Nova, Nova ChartWheels and many other programs I am not fully aware of. However, you may not have access to these software packages, so I arranged for Astrolabe to make a limited form of the tables available on the Internet for your personal use. You can make personalized printouts by simply accessing the web site listed below and you can use this link for the foreseeable future.

Go to <https://alabe.com/arcs/>

The main screen is labeled "Free arc opening" with the chart input screen. You should fill in your data & select Submit.

The Differences and Solar Arc tables will list and you may print this list.

What you are getting is a lifetime listing of Solar Arcs that key into the Difference Sort to show all the timed hits over a lifetime. This is set up for a 45 degree modulus, but in practice any modulus works (22.5, 30, 45, 90, etc.) and show when planets are completed by the Solar Arc. The modulus shows what kind of aspects we are looking for. I prefer the hard series since these make for strong events. I also like strong coffee.

Look up nearest date to the events in question (or just nearest current date) in the Solar Arc Table and to the right is the Solar Arc to age 45. After age 45, the table has 2 listings – one, the continuing increasing Solar Arc and the column next to it on the right is modulated to the 45-degree Difference Sort. Select the Solar Arc listed next to the date in question and look up that Solar Arc in the Difference sort to find the nearest planetary combination for that era in time.

You can list Differences for transits, secondary progression, other people's horoscopes, static charts like Solar returns, etc. Plugging in your Solar Arc into these various charts will show what you are activating in the charts you examine.

Have Fun!