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Article by Willi Sucher, September 1937

ASTROLOGY III

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PRENATAL EVENTS AMONG THE STARS

In the previous article we discovered, with the help of the Hermetic Rule, how it is possible to find a certain prenatal constellation—nay more, a living system of constellations all in relation to each other. It will now be our task to bring these cosmic facts into connection with the earthly life of a human being.

We will begin with the case of Richard Wagner. Between August 15, 1812 (constellation of the prenatal epoch) and May 22, 1813 (the date of Wagner's birth) the Moon had circled ten times fully round the Zodiac and had gone on through the small space between Sagittarius and Aquarius. We also took into consideration the paths of the planets and of the Sun. Herein we found the necessary key, enabling us to enter into these relations in a real way.

Experience itself has shown that the lunar cycles in this prenatal time are like reflected pictures, as it were, foretelling the subsequent rhythms of our earthly life. Take once again the example of Richard Wagner. In the prenatal constellation of August 15, 1812, the Moon took its start from the sign of ♏, behind which was the real constellation of Scorpio. Following the Moon in its further course through 27.3 days, we come again to the Moon in ♏. This first of the prenatal lunar cycles is related to the period in Wagner's Earth-life when he was from one to seven years old. The next lunar cycle, leading once more after 27.3 days to the starting-point in ♏, is a reflection of the life-period from seven to fourteen years. Each of the subsequent lunar cycles, in this way, represents a further period of seven years. In the approximately ten prenatal lunar cycles, there are about seventy years that are prefigured (ten times seven years). Seventy years represent a certain ideal average for the length of human life.

This relation of the prenatal lunar cycles to the septennial periods of subsequent earthly life is a completely new [concept in astrology]. We are not, however, attempting to supplant other relationships that may be spoken of in classical astrology. The so-called astrological directions, for example, represent another way of relating the events in the starry heavens to the course of life in time. Later descriptions will show this point of view also to be justified, as it will be possible to recognize its deeper spiritual background.

This correspondence of the prenatal period with the subsequent time-rhythms gives rise to an expressive picture of the drama of human life. In Richard Wagner's case, at the beginning of each new cycle, the Moon comes once again into the constellation of Scorpio. From this we can surmise that this personality, at the beginning of each new seven-year period of life—at the ages, for example, of twenty-one, twenty-eight and thirty-five years—will have to undergo a difficult time in his life; Scorpio is difficult indeed. We shall find this confirmed to some extent when we consider his biography.

Yet the Moon-rhythms by themselves would only give us indications of something that should repeat itself monotonously about ten times—dull and invariable. It is due to the other planets that it is not so. These planets, too, have had their dramatic meetings and relationships to one another in the whole time before birth; thereby, the regular repeated rhythms of the lunar cycles are given a more individual character.

Take, for example, the beginning of the sixth Moon-cycle in the prenatal constellations of Richard Wagner, December 30, 1812. Until this moment the Moon—beginning in ♏ on August 15, 1812—has passed five times completely around the Zodiac and is about to commence the sixth cycle. A few days later, on January 2, 1813, it is New Moon—that is, the Moon passes before the Sun, which at this time is in the sign of ♃. At the same time the Sun is in conjunction with Saturn, so that we have the following picture in the cosmos: Moon, Sun, and Saturn are at this moment one behind the other, and all of them are in the sign of ♃, behind which is the real constellation of Sagittarius.

At this moment, therefore, something of individual and unique significance is taking place in the prenatal development, and as it is at the beginning of the sixth lunar cycle, it will be a reflection of events in Richard Wagner's life about the change from the fifth to the sixth seven-year period. We shall find this confirmed, but

first we will consider a few more of the events in this way that took place in the starry worlds during the prenatal period.

At the beginning of the seventh lunar cycle, on January 27, 1813, there was a conjunction of Saturn and Mercury. This would be related to the forty-second or forty-third year of Wagner's life. A few days later, on February 3, 1813, Venus passed before Saturn. About this time the Moon had already gone beyond its starting-point in \mathfrak{A} , for it was now in \mathfrak{H} , having accomplished about two-sevenths of a fresh Moon-cycle. The time of life here indicated is, therefore, given by $42 + 2$ years = 44 years. The dramatic significance of this moment is indicated by the conjunction of Venus and Saturn. Finally, not long before birth—on April 20, 1813—there was a conjunction of Mars and Saturn. The Moon had already begun its tenth prenatal cycle and stood before Mars and Saturn in \mathfrak{U}_ρ . We are reminded of the former case when Moon, Mars, and Saturn were together, only it is now the Sun in place of Mars. Since it is at the beginning of the tenth lunar cycle, we shall relate it to the sixty-fourth year of Wagner's life.

Manifold other relations of the planets during the prenatal period might be observed in like manner, for we have only been considering the conjunctions of Sun, Mercury, Venus, and Mars respectively with Saturn. Taking all other aspects into account, we should obtain a highly intricate picture. We have discovered four essential moments:

Constellation.	Lunar Cycle.	Corresponding Time in Life.
\mathfrak{h}_2 in sign of \mathfrak{V} (constellation of Sagittarius)	$\delta \odot \delta \mathcal{D}$	$5 + \frac{1}{7}$ = 36th year — 1849
	$\delta \text{♀}$	6 = 42nd year — 1855
	$\delta \text{♀}$	$6 + \frac{2}{7}$ = 44th year — 1857
	$\delta \text{♂} \delta \mathcal{D}$	$9 + \frac{1}{7}$ = 64th year — 1877

Beside these cosmic facts we must now place the actual biography of Richard Wagner: In the year 1849 Wagner came into a very difficult situation. He had taken an active part in the revolution which broke out in Dresden. The revolutionaries were defeated and Wagner was obliged to flee to Switzerland, which was the beginning of a long and arduous period of exile for him. In their more outward aspect, these events came very near to the destruction of his physical existence, but they were no less important in their spiritual aspect. This was about the middle of Wagner's life, and it is as though at this moment two different beings were meeting and wrestling with one another in his inner life. Wagner was one of those men who are strong enough and brave enough to imprint the higher mythical reality of their true self upon the ordinary lower human nature.

These two—the lower man, and the higher man who belongs to the future—were in this year in a peculiar relation to one another in Wagner's life. His share in revolutionary conflict is a symptom of it. He bore within him the strong will to bring to birth a new form of art, one which should bear the human being upward and on to a new and hitherto undivined level of existence. But in the many years of struggle and bitter disappointment until then, he had experienced all the hindrances to which the lower person is subject. In a radical convulsion of the existing social order, he thought he saw the preparing of the ways along which humanity should rise to a higher level, in harmony with the artistic ideals which he felt within himself. The course of events showed this assumption to be wrong, and Richard Wagner had to suffer for it. The year 1849 represents a deep incision in his life. Henceforth, he was to work inexorably at the realization of his artistic ideal, leaving the ordinary, the merely civic man, the citizen behind him. Indeed, at this moment the civil community to which he had belonged drove him into banishment and exile. He was pursued for the part that he had played in the revolution, and many years were to elapse before he could again set foot upon his native German soil.

These events, as I said, are reflected in the prenatal conjunction of Saturn and Sun in the constellation of Sagittarius. How shall we relate this situation in the human being's destiny with the cosmic data? Old astrological rules will not avail us here, for we are dealing with an altogether new astrological conception. We must look for other ways and methods.

In the first place we shall observe that the conjunction took place in the constellation of Sagittarius for which the symbol \nearrow is used. Let us now try to enter rather more deeply into the symbolic language of the Zodiacal signs. The Sagittarius arrow indicates something like a movement; a direction leading toward a certain goal. To make the language clearer and more living to us, we may perhaps transform the symbol into ζ , as it were a steep and winding uphill path.

Saturn was in the sphere of Sagittarius during the whole of Wagner's embryo-development. Now, Saturn has the character of heaviness; it is indeed related to the metal lead. It is above all the representative of fate; of destiny inexorable as the course of time itself. Saturn in Sagittarius will, therefore, indicate a pathway of development toward a certain goal, yet steep and arduous and even painful. Then the Sun comes before Saturn, which has the center and the periphery in equal balance as is shown in the Sun symbol \odot . The Sun comes hither from the constellation of Leo, connected, we may well imagine, with an element of strength and action. The Sun in conjunction with Mars in Leo (as it was in the constellation of the prenatal epoch, August 15, 1812) is a true picture of the remarkable energy of Wagner's nature. For the conjunction of the Sun and Mars signifies, in this regard, an enhancement of active power, the physiological significance of this conjunction notwithstanding.

When, therefore, the Sun passes before Saturn in Sagittarius, it is made possible for this great energy in action, directed as it is in Wagner's being to an artistic ideal for the future of humanity, to be purified and transmuted to a higher level. This is what happened in the events of 1849.

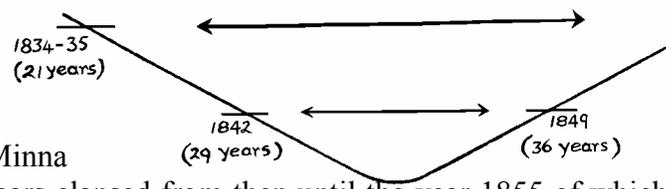
In like manner we should have to understand the passage of the other planets Mercury, Venus, and Mars before Saturn. All these are pictures of successive stages in an arduous and uphill way of destiny, from out of which, however, the outstanding genius of Richard Wagner is able to bring forth his true creative power.

The passage of Mercury before Saturn is connected with the year 1855, approximately speaking (see the table). Wagner was in Zurich at this time. The tragedy of the three women who played a decisive part in his life was coming to a head. In the first place he was growing more and more estranged from Minna Wagner, who until then had been his faithful companion, in her own way, through all the difficulties of his life. The very diverse tendencies of their two lives drew them ever more apart from one another. Moreover, it was about this time that Mathilde Wesendonk came into Wagner's life in a deeply impressive way. *Tristan and Isolde* is at once the picture and the fruit of the deep emotions and far-reaching inner experiences he underwent with her. Finally, it was in these same years that Cosima Buelow came into relation with him. It was Cosima who was to help him carry his life's work to a conclusion.

Looking at Wagner's life in this way, we are led to a very remarkable aspect, which may perhaps be indicated in a diagram:

It was in 1834-5 that Richard Wagner met with Minna Planer, who became his wife. Approximately $3 \times 7 = 21$ years elapsed from then until the year 1855 of which we have now been speaking. In between, there were the events of 1842 and 1849. In 1842, having suffered times of great privation, Wagner came back from Paris to Dresden, and 1849 was the time of his dramatic departure from Dresden—his flight into Switzerland. Comparing these three cycles of seven years—as indicated in the drawing—we see that about the middle of the fifth septennial period (28-35) there was a turning point in Wagner's life. Each subsequent event is like a kind of reflection of a corresponding event before this turning point, yet on a higher level. Thus the return from Paris, where he had not been made altogether welcome, appears again in a changed form in the flight of 1849. The first experience with Minna Planer, in 1834, is transformed into the culmination of the year 1855. We can gain some idea of the overwhelming inner changes that must have taken place in this human soul about the age of 42, (that is in 1855) changes which can only be spoken of with great reserve but which were certainly of deep significance for his creation. The possibility of these deep changes was rooted in all those events which were prefigured in the prenatal life in the conjunction of Mercury and Saturn.

The passage of Venus before Saturn is related in like manner to the year 1857, when the events which we referred to in relation to Mercury reached their culmination, while at the same time another and altogether new element came in. On Good Friday 1857, after a long period of outer and inner darkness, Richard Wagner had a profound experience of new life in the rising Sun, the opening of spring-time. He remembered of a sudden how



once before the thought of Good Friday had come to him when reading Wolfram von Eschenbach's *Parsifal*. From out of this impression he quickly conceived his own drama of *Parsifal*, destined in a unique way to crown his entire life's work.

This event had found its reflection in the prenatal constellations of Venus. On August 15, 1812, Venus had been in conjunction with Jupiter at the beginning of the constellation of Cancer. Passing subsequently before Saturn, the Venus  influence was mightily enhanced by the profound and difficult experiences which were to come in the year 1857, thereby transforming the Cancer symbol  into a picture of the cosmic Spirit coming in from a primeval past, passing through the present age of human life and reaching outward again into the cosmic future of the Earth: 

The Cancer symbol may also be taken as a picture of two spirals passing one into the other—one with an involving movement and the other one more with an evolving movement, signifying the perpetual and living passage from the past into the future.

We need only select from Wagner's *Parsifal* the three characters of Titurel, Amfortas, and Parsifal himself, and the picture becomes alive. Titurel represents the cosmic past, Amfortas the present time of human evolution in the midst of crisis and suffering, and Parsifal the healing spirit of the Earth's future, sustained by the deep power of the Holy Grail.

Parsifal was Richard Wagner's in-born goal in life, to be attained in a long and weary pilgrimage: in 1882 when the finished drama was presented for the first time his life was fulfilled; the next year, in 1883, he left the Earth. This final step toward perfection was reflected in the prenatal conjunction of Saturn and Mars, related by virtue of the lunar cycles to the year 1876-7. In the year 1876, *The Ring* was performed for the first time at Bayreuth. In 1877, the text of the *Parsifal* poem was completed. The first complete performance of the *Ring des Nibelungen* may be regarded as the climax of a long epoch in Richard Wagner's inner evolution. Once again, it was an epoch of about three times seven years (1857-77), and only when this period was ended was he in a position to finish the text of *Parsifal* and to begin putting it to music. Therefore Mars, which was conjunct the Sun in the prenatal epoch on August 15, 1812 and represented, as it were, a higher synthesis of creative energy, had to wait longest of all for fulfillment. Yet, at long last, this was to be the crown of Richard Wagner's life work.

Thus in the prenatal constellation of a human being, seen in relation to the lunar cycles, we have something like a pre-figured and prophetic plan of the Earth-life that is about to begin. It is indeed a highly complex organism woven out of the spiritual essences of the cosmos, formed in a fully individual way for every single human life, and incorporated into the human being's earthly nature. Nor does this delicate and cosmic entity work in the human being as a mere abstract power or decree of fate. It is a living reality, helping to form and shape even the physical body itself. In its effects, we can detect this body of the stars even in the building of the organs of the body, in illnesses, and tendencies to illness. It is itself a body answering to the physical body upon a higher level. We may relate it to what is known in occultism as the etheric body.

Yet this body, woven as it is out of the forces of the stars, is no more than a pre-figured plan of the coming Earth-life. It is like the map of a country. We can map out our journey in a particular direction, binding ourselves to some extent by such resolve, yet for our inner experience of the landscape we are never bound. From the impressions which we receive with our senses as we go upon our way, we can arouse within ourselves all that the inner life and imagination of the soul makes possible. The more alive we are, the more we shall receive. So, too, there cannot be any absolute determination of the course of human life by the world of stars.