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## GUIDE TO TECHNIQUES

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A summary of the chief techniques used in astrology, for the  
guidance of customers

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## A GUIDE TO ASTROLOGICAL TECHNIQUES

### General

This booklet is intended to give an overview of various methods and techniques used in astrology, and which are available for the computer. Some elementary instruction will be given, but this cannot replace a proper study of each subject, for which see our separate List of Recommended Books.

The subjects covered here by no means exhaust the field of astrology, but they include most of the most important and widely used. Not all techniques are of proven value - but then little in astrology can be proved valid for all people and all time. If a technique works for you, be thankful and go on using it. But a less familiar technique may work even better if only you would try it. The beauty of computing is that it obviates your having to learn difficult calculations: all you need to understand is the theory behind the technique.

### Natal Interpretation

More books have been written on this aspect of astrology than on any other: views change periodically and completely new systems appear for a while. Different chart factors are favoured or disfavoured, but the solid basis of most interpretation seems to rest on *signs, houses and aspects*, so it would appear mandatory for every astrologer to master these three. (Astrocalc's Astrotutor series will help here.) However, most authorities agree that aspects are more important than signs and houses - indeed some authorities dispense with one or both of the latter - and aspects certainly seem to be the basis of *all* techniques, whereas signs and houses appear to operate more in natal interpretation than elsewhere. Even more basic are the planets themselves, so the learner is strongly advised to master the meanings of the planets first, then to combine planets in pairs to form the basis of aspects. A competent natal interpretation can be given from aspects alone, because aspects show the planets in operation whereas signs and houses merely modify these operations somewhat.

Aspects being the backbone of all astrological techniques, it is worth establishing a few ground rules before going further:

- 1) The nature of the two planets (combined) is more significant than the nature of the aspect, though this latter does modify the meaning. For example, in Moon square Jupiter, the fact that the feelings will be uncontrolled or freely expressed is not blocked by the square, rather made more active than with a trine, and probably causing problems. Moon trine Jupiter also involves freely expressed feelings, but with ease and probably with pleasing results (perhaps through art).

- 2) Orbs should be varied according to the technique used. Thus in synastry (compatibility comparison of two charts) many astrologers take half the natal orbs or even less. (This makes sense when you remember that twice as many planets are involved.) With most predictive techniques an orb of 1° has been found reliable - hence the usefulness of the *1-degree transit* module which gives the dates enclosing the period in question. In dating an exact transit we don't use an orb at all since we wish to know when the aspect becomes exact.

- 3) The wider the orb, the weaker the effect of the aspect. There is no more important rule in astrology, yet it is all too often completely overlooked. If two aspects in a birthchart mean the opposite of each other, then other things being equal the aspect with the smaller orb predominates. In any case, orbs near the prescribed limit, however small

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## MAIN PRINCIPLES FOR INTERPRETING HARMONICS

Interpretation depends on the numerological symbolism of the number by which we divide the circle. Thus the following meanings are widely known:

Divisor	Name	General meaning
1	Conjunction	Integration
2	Opposition	Challenge
3	Trine	Ease
4	Square	Difficulty, action

but we have more recently learned the following:

5	Quintile	Mental quality, talent
7	Septile	Inspiration, ideal

All the above (except one) are prime numbers. When we know the meaning of the prime numbers we can infer the meaning of non-primes by breaking them down into primes. For example:

6	Sextile = $2 \times 3$	Challenge $\times$ ease = opportunity
4	Square = $2 \times 2$	Challenge $\times$ challenge = difficulty

When a number is multiplied by itself, the meaning tends to be a more extreme form of the basic number; and of course we can multiply again, e.g. 8 (octile) =  $2 \times 2 \times 2$ . But experience shows that these "higher" forms of a principle (especially those of the 2-series) are better seen with more specific keywords, thus the square is associated with action rather than simply extreme challenge.

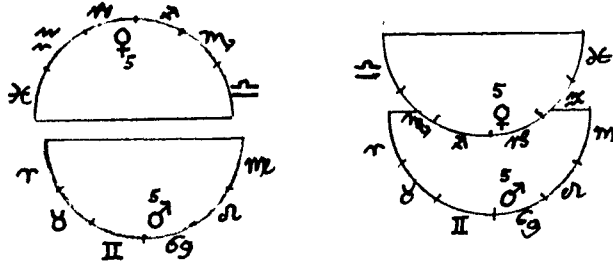
At present we know the meanings of the prime numbers up to 7, but not farther with any certainty. It is to be hoped that the meanings of numbers like 11 and 13 will become established before very long.

Now is a good time to begin exploring the Keyword Tutor program (press 3 to get there): now use option 1 simply to look at the keyword meanings of numbers, but *don't* take on too many numbers at first; just get the general idea of, say, the first dozen numbers. Notice that you are given only one keyword (in capitals) per number; this is the main keyword you should remember. If you wish to do so, change the keyword level to Extra Keywords to see how the simple root-words can be expanded into further meanings (Exit, then option 4, then 2, then 1.) You can also test yourself on your knowledge, but *don't* over-reach yourself at this stage; you can return to this program at any time to learn more. For now just get a preliminary grounding; and take especial care to learn the meanings of 5 and 7, which may not be so familiar to you.

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## HARMONIC CHARTS

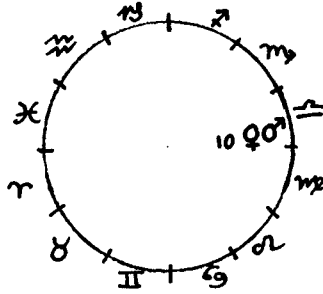
The most vital tool in harmonics is the Harmonic Chart (HC). Each HC has its number, the number the circle is being divided by. The radix or natal chart is in fact the 1st HC, because we have divided  $360^\circ$  by 1, to get  $360^\circ$ , i.e. we have left it alone. That will not sound so baffling if you can follow the next stage of the reasoning: an HC is really an artificial chart which represents the relationships of the original chart in a different way. Let's try the 2nd HC. When we divide  $360^\circ$  by 2, we get  $180^\circ$ . What HC2 (short for 2nd Harmonic Chart) does is to take each of the two resulting semicircles and superimpose one on the other, so that all planets appear within one semicircle from  $0^\circ$  to  $180^\circ$ . Suppose Mars was at  $5^\circ$  Cancer in the original chart (HC1) and Venus at  $5^\circ$  Capricorn; when the two semicircles are superimposed, the second semicircle ( $0^\circ$  Libra -  $30^\circ$  Pisces) will drop on to the first in such a way that these two planets now occupy the same place, i.e.  $95^\circ$  from the start. (See illustrations below.)



Why are we doing this? The answer is, to make it easy to find aspects. The original opposition aspect now appears as a conjunction, which is easy to spot. Of course any astrologer could spot the original opposition easily enough, but would he have spotted septiles, or 28ths of a circle just as easily? To discover septiles, we would set up HC7 by "cutting" our circle into 7 equal parts and superimposing them all on top of each other. If this were done literally, using transparent paper, planets which were originally  $1/7$ ,  $2/7$ ,  $3/7$ ... $7/7$  of a circle apart will now appear in conjunction. We won't easily know how many 7ths but we won't care because all these aspects have the same flavour of "Sevenness".

But we don't actually want to deal with semicircles,  $1/7$  size circles, and so on because it is more convenient always to deal with a complete circle. So what we do is to MULTIPLY each circle-fragment by the harmonic number to bring it back to full circle size. Imagine each semicircle s-t-r-e-t-c-h-e-d like rubber till its two extremities met in a full circle again: this doubles all the distances (angles) within it also. So our Mars at  $5^\circ$  Cancer ( $95^\circ$  from  $0^\circ$  Aries) would become twice that:  $190^\circ$  from  $0^\circ$  Aries, i.e.  $10^\circ$  Libra. And Venus at  $5^\circ$  Capricorn, which was also  $95^\circ$  from the start of ITS semicircle, will appear at  $190^\circ$  round its

full circle when doubled in size: when this new circle is superimposed on the other one, Mars and Venus will appear in exact conjunction at 10 Libra. (See illustration.)



Note that this Libra (like all the other signs in this doubled up chart) is not the real Libra, but a false one we made for our convenience. If we go on to consider HC7, this chart would be made by dividing the original zodiac into 7 equal parts, stretching each part out by multiplying everything in it by 7, then superimposing all 7 newly formed circles to make one grand HC7 (7th Harmonic Chart). All planets appearing in conjunction are really in septile aspect (or possibly conjunction) in the radix.

The actual mechanics of setting up an HC are as follows:

First convert all planetary positions in the chart to absolute longitude (0-360), then multiply by the harmonic number desired. In many cases the result is more than 360, so subtract 360 repeatedly until the result is less than 360. This is the new position, and we translate it back to zodiacal notation. The latter is purely for convenience in charting, and we must remember that the 12 new signs are not real ones. Only in H1 (radix chart) are they valid. The same applies to houses, which cannot even be properly set up in an HC. Remember that HCs are essentially a way to discover micro-aspects easily. They are not "real" birthcharts in the normal sense, they are transformations of the natal chart into a convenient form.

One thing that has held back the use of harmonics in the past has been the tediousness of calculating harmonic positions for all the planets for each new harmonic chart, but now that computers can do it all in a flash, there is every reason for astrologers to experiment with HCs. You can follow the above mathematical process very easily by using the appropriate module in the program ("1 Calculation demonstration"). Perhaps you'd like to try it now. Once you have understood what is going on, there is no need to use this module again; it is given only by way of explanation.

When you have done that, use the module "2 Harmonic Chart Calculation", which sets up any number of complete harmonic charts for you (maybe your own) and perhaps make printed copies: have them by you as you read on.

## ASPECTS WITHIN HARMONIC CHARTS

Calculating an HC and redrawing the planets in their new positions is not the end of the matter. Now we seek aspects within the HC. The point about these internal aspects is that they all share the main harmonic number as one of their factors. Let us suppose we have set up an HC7. We already know that the conjunctions in this chart represent true septiles; however any oppositions actually represent the 14th harmonic, because opposition = 2 and the chart = 7, and  $2 \times 7 = 14$ . Likewise, squares in HC7 represent the 28th harmonic, trines represent the 21st, and so on. What all these numbers have in common is 7 as one of their prime factors, so they all partake of the meaning of 7 (inspiration, ideal). However, the exact meanings will need to combine the meanings of their other factors with 7. Thus a square in HC7 means action at the intuitive level; a trine means ease at the intuitive level.

Try looking at familiar aspects in this way: what is a semisextile in HC1 for instance? If we draw up HC4, it will appear as a trine, so it means ease at the effort level, i.e. in a chart (HC4) which as a whole describes a person's efforts, here is something easy which can help out. But if we draw up HC3, this same aspect will now appear as a square, interpreted as an effort at the ease level, i.e. whilst looking at the sum total of the person's "easy" abilities we see a snag which means he must take a little trouble. Here are two ways of looking at the same thing. Though this "disguised duplication" may seem confusing at first, the way out of the confusion is to understand that the primary purpose of an HC is to concentrate (temporarily) on all the aspects which have one theme in common. The HC acts as a kind of filter which removes all except that which we wish to focus on. It tells the truth, but not the whole truth (but then so does the natal chart, which conceals the higher harmonics - unless we cover it with a mass of confusing aspect-lines). Each HC examines - in detail - one particular facet of character or activity. This is a very powerful concept, provided it is kept in mind that one HC gives only one part of the whole, and several HCs must be examined and synthesised if we are to see everything.

## WHICH HCs AND WHICH ASPECTS SHOULD WE USE?

There are no cast-iron rules about which aspects, but good results can be obtained using the 5 major aspects, which are familiar and easy to spot. Octiles and duodeciles can also be used, with care (see below).

The choice of which HCs is still a matter for experiment, but certain charts have been found very useful, namely H4, H5, H7 and also possibly H9 (more about these later). There are two principles which limit how far we can go with safety:

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1) In natal astrology anyway, the higher the harmonic number, the deeper into the unconscious levels we are going. This may be extremely valuable but until more research has been done, we may be guessing at some of the meanings.

2) Any inaccuracies in the original natal chart will (like everything else) be multiplied by the harmonic number. So an octile in HC9 can be unreliable: if there is an error of say 2' in either of the planets, this becomes an error of 18', which may be enough to move the aspect away from its maximum orb (usually 14' in harmonic charts; see next section for orbs). For these reasons, and also on certain theoretical grounds, it is safest to limit harmonics to the 60th as a maximum.

It can be seen from all the above that duodeciles (12th harmonic) should be used no higher than HC5, because  $5 \times 12 = 60$ . Octiles can be used up to HC7 ( $8 \times 7 = 56$ ).

N.B. You should have learned a lot in the last few pages. If you do not feel confident that you understand everything, go back and read it all again.

#### HARMONIC ORBS

The choice of orbs is crucial. When we use HCs we want to use the same aspects and the same orbs within them, no matter what HC number we are using. We do not want to have to use one set of orbs in HC3 and a different set in HC4. Remembering that the HC system multiplies EVERYTHING (that includes orbs), we can see that an orb of 8' in HC3 is really an orb of 8+3 in the radix, whereas an 8' orb in HC4 is really 8+4. So, using traditional 8' orbs for most aspects, a trine in HC4 would get 8' (actually 2') and a square in HC3 would get 8' (actually 2'40'). Yet these are one and the same aspect (duodecile in HC1)! So we must have CONSISTENCY.

Another point was laid down by John Addey; that micro-aspects can confidently be given the same weight as major ones, provided their orb is reduced in proportion. So we need PROPORTIONAL IMPORTANCE.

Both these aims are achieved by using so-called harmonic orbs, obeying the following rule: 'Whatever number the aspect divides the circle by, you divide the conjunction orb by the same number.'

The conjunction orb is a matter for personal choice, perhaps; but experience shows the value of using 12'. This seems alarmingly large at first, but in time you will see why this is about right. So the opposition orb must be 6' because opposition divides the circle by two. Work out the rest for yourself, or look below. The more we divide the circle by, the smaller the orb gets. Of course this is compensated for by the fact that there are more of the

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relevant aspect, e.g. there are seven possible locations for septiles.

Once we have fixed the conjunction orb, we can use harmonic orbs with confidence, in any HC. The multiplication system takes care of all apparent discrepancies.

Table of harmonic orbs

<u>Name</u>	<u>Divisor</u>	<u>Orb</u>
Conjunction	1	12°
Opposition	2	6°
Trine	3	4°
Square	4	3°
Sextile	6	2°
Octile	8	1½°
Duodecile	12	1°

You may think that most of these are too small, but traditional orbs have always been too large. The fact that they "work" is explained by the fact that they often trespass on higher harmonics, i.e. they get the wrong aspect. For example an aspect of 85½° is actually the 21st harmonic, not the 4th; an aspect of 112½° is the 16th harmonic - very different in meaning from a wide trine. And there are many, many other such examples. By using the right harmonic charts you will automatically be giving all angles their correct meanings.

#### DUPLICATED ASPECTS

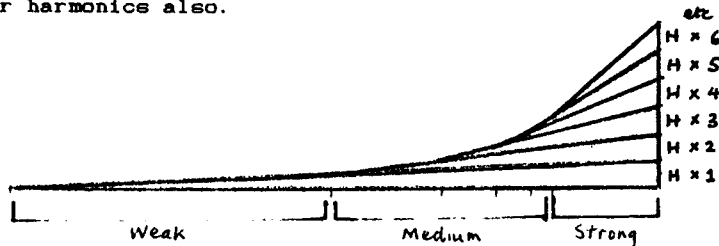
It was mentioned earlier that the same aspect can appear in a different HC in a different guise, and you may be wondering about this sort of duplication. The most common case of duplication concerns the conjunction (a close conjunction in the natal chart will appear as a conjunction in several HCs). A conjunction represents  $360^\circ \div 1$ , certainly; i.e. it is 1/1 of a circle: but it is also  $2/2$  of a circle,  $3/3$ ,  $4/4$  ... and so on to infinity. In other words it is part of EVERY harmonic. 7/7 is as much a septile as 1/7. It looks as if the conjunction has a very mixed nature! This is true, but only of an EXACT conjunction. If it is not exact, which of course is normally the case, then, using a 12° orb, any conjunction with orb greater than 6° will have an orb greater than 12° when multiplied by 2 or indeed any higher number: this conjunction will disappear in HC2, HC3, etc. A conjunction with orb of 5° has an orb of 10° when multiplied up into HC2, so will appear as a conjunction here; but this will not apply to HC3 and beyond. But a conjunction with orb 1° will still be a conjunction even when multiplied by 12. So we can see that, according to the closeness of the orb, conjunctions can reappear in a number of higher charts (orb getting wider all the time, of course). Not only conjunctions, but all aspects are subject to this law; think about it.



The implication for interpretation purposes is that only wide aspects are pure, i.e. their meaning confined to the numerological one connected with the relevant harmonic. The closer an aspect is to exactness, the more it has a mixed nature of 1 x itself, 2 x itself, 3 x itself..... up to its limit. For example a natal trine may be exact enough to qualify for appearance in HC1, HC2, HC3 and HC4 after which it disappears. The actual harmonics represented by these charts are 3, 6, 9 and 12. This particular trine has the qualities of all those numbers, whereas another trine may not. One way to discover all this is to set up several HCs and to reinterpret the aspect in each chart, in the light of the overall meaning of that chart. So when we see a conjunction in say HC4, we do not need to fret about whether it started life in HC1 as a conjunction, opposition, or square (it could be any of these), but realise that whichever of those it was, it is a conjunction NOW, and as such represents integration at HC4 level.

#### CLOSENESS OF ORB

There are further implications in the above paragraph. For example, the traditional interpretation of the conjunction is integration, whereas a better one would be potentiality. In other words the PURE conjunction (i.e. the wide-orbed one) is potentiality, so that the two planets are not necessarily integrated - it's just that they might become so. But the moment a conjunction has an orb less than 6° (1/2 permitted maximum) it is not pure, it partakes of H2: and the closer the orb becomes, the more it qualifies to be part of higher harmonics. THAT's more like integration because the planets can combine at many different psychological levels. All this explains why close orbs are stronger than wide ones - the aspect is really several other aspects in disguise, all fused together. When we set up an HC we take a detailed look at just one part of these. The following diagram may help to clarify this principle, i.e. that as an orb becomes closer, the aspect qualifies for higher harmonics also.



So it is useful to note which aspects in an HC are close, because it shows us that these are the ones operating at many levels (LINKING the levels together if you like) and thus are the most significant. It is important to realise that close trines are not soft, but mixed in nature, because they consist of harmonics 3, 6, 9, 12, 15, 18, etc. - every other one of which is a multiple of 2, the hard or active

principle. One more example: a really close opposition in HC7 partakes not only of the combined nature of harmonics 7 and 2 (= 14, the obvious one) but also of 28, 42, 56 etc., because its closeness ensures that it would reappear in the HCs of those numbers! Always look first for the really close aspects in HCs - these tend to dominate the chart. It is a good idea to classify aspects into three categories:

- 1) Orb less than 1/6 of maximum: these aspects will always contain at least three higher harmonics of the 2-series (these are active) and so will be likely to manifest strongly.
- 2) Orb between 1/6 and 1/2 of maximum: these include one or two of the 2-series. Medium strength.
- 3) Orb greater than 1/2 maximum: pure, but relatively weak.

#### DRAWING THE HARMONIC CHART

Let us assume that you now know how to set up the planetary positions for an HC (or get a computer to do it): now you need to draw the chart. Because the Ascendant and MC can be in peculiar new relationships, you may prefer to leave them out, but in any case it is probably more convenient always to put  $\emptyset$  Aries on the left rather than the Ascendant (this makes for consistency and speed in drawing charts). You will now have to discover the major aspects within it, perhaps plus the octiles and duodeciles. You will also classify the aspects according to orb strength. It is a good idea to draw the aspect lines within the chart as follows: a dotted line for weak aspects (more than  $\frac{1}{2}$  max orb), a solid line for medium aspects, and a double line for strong aspects (less than 1/6 max orb). Show conjunctions by a small curve. Again a computer program can help you discover all this easily. Another good idea is to use one colour for hard aspects (2, 4, 8) and another colour for soft (3, 6). 12 is probably best treated as hard, if you do include it. It is important to realise that CLOSE trines and sextiles are mixed in nature, including some hard elements - see CLOSENESS OF ORB, above.

You may now like to study the chart on the front cover, which is Margaret Thatcher's natal chart, or rather, her HC1 drawn according to the above guidelines, using major aspects and octiles. Since it was impossible to reproduce two colours, soft aspects have been shown as thinner lines.

#### INTERPRETING HCs: (1) THE PLANETS & ANGLES

How should we interpret the planets? The simple answer is, the same way as ever. There is nothing to suggest that the basic meanings of planets are any different in HCs.

Aspects between planets will, as usual, carry the combined meanings of the two planets, plus the meaning of the aspect type. The new feature is that we are now greatly expanding the aspect types, according to the interpretations of the relevant harmonic numbers. But, as always, the planets'

meanings should predominate, not the aspect meanings, which should simply colour the former. For example, aggressiveness is one of the meanings of H16, but this does not mean that you should count a person as aggressive on the basis of one square in HC4! (Different if he has many close squares there: even then, aggressiveness is a probability rather than a certainty.) Astrologers must always use their judgement to decide traits after an over-all inspection of the whole chart (in harmonics this means several harmonic charts). If you are interpreting a single aspect in an HC, then by all means include this latter meaning; but if a whole HC is being synthesised, then it might be better to interpret the chart on normal principles, then reconsider the whole thing in the light of the HC number. For example, an HC5 (interpreting the aspects in the traditional way) may show the native to be original, restless and active, but because the overall colouring of HC5 is mental, we must be careful to note that this makes him *mentally* original, restless and active, and he may be unable to carry out any of his marvellous plans if his overall character, as revealed by an in-depth study of several HCs, does not permit this.

Aspects to angles should be used with great care: if the birthtime is wrong, the angles are the first to suffer, especially when multiplied up. If you do use these aspects, it is best to confine them to HC1. If you see, for example, Sun conjunct MC in HC5, this may mean only that Sun was quintile MC in HC1 - or it might be caused by an inaccuracy in the birthtime. Either way, it does NOT mean that the Sun is angular in HC5; the only true angularity is that which is seen in HC1. So a safe plan is to note which planets are angular in HC1 (preferably on Gauquelin's principles) and to ignore angles in other HCs, but bearing always in mind that the angular planets are strong wherever they appear.

#### INTERPRETING HCs: (2) THE ASPECTS

There are two ways to approach interpretation: 1) by using the APPARENT number, e.g. 3 for trine, 4 for square, in whatever chart you are looking at; but also bearing in mind the overall flavour of the HC number; 2) by translating each separate aspect into its ultimate harmonic number (multiply the HC number by whatever the aspect is dividing the circle by; e.g. a sextile in HC7 is really the 42nd harmonic) and then considering the meaning of that number. Both have their advantages. Let us look at each method.

To use method 1, first grasp the meaning of the HC number and keep that in mind throughout. Let us say it is HC4, the meaning of which is effort or action. Now look at each aspect but don't multiply it by the HC number (4) - leave it as it is. Suppose it is a sextile, the meaning of which is ability. Then this aspect is telling us about the native's ability to act, or if you prefer it, about what ability he has WHEN IN ACTION. Suppose the planets in sextile were Mars and Saturn, implying that he operates with painstaking

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care. Then we can assume that the person has the ability to act, or make efforts, with painstaking care. It does not mean that he WILL do so, because sextiles show abilities or opportunities: and it does not mean that he has the ability to PLAN with painstaking care, because planning pertains to H5. Likewise if the sextile were in HCS, he could perhaps plan carefully but not necessarily act carefully.

This approach is suited to in-depth analysis for special purposes. We take one psychological level at a time, and seek the meanings within it. Because we only need use a handful of aspects within each chart, we need memorise only a dozen or so meanings, and combine them as we go.

You can practise method 2 by exploring the Harmonic Meanings option in the main menu. This requires you to learn keywords somewhat parrot-fashion but it does give you a chance to explore the rich world of subtle meanings which harmonics provide. Explore only the first 10 or 12 harmonics at first, expanding as you learn more. Use the tests which follow as soon as you can, remembering to confine the number of harmonics tested to those you have learnt.

It should be emphasised that the meanings of the harmonics as given in the program are intended as guidelines rather than as rigid interpretations: like other keywords in astrology they can and should be expanded and modified in the light of other chart factors or external influences.

One final warning: don't get confused between *harmonic* and *harmonic chart (HC)*. Method 1 concentrates on an HC, method 2 on a harmonic.

#### INTERPRETING HCs: (3) UNASPECTED PLANETS

If a planet is unaspected in a particular HC, this is very significant, because it shows that the native cannot easily use this planet - at the particular psychological level indicated by the HC number. Indeed, if a planet receives only one weak aspect, it is not going to be prominent either. It is a good idea to draw on the chart a small circle round an unaspected planet, and brackets round a weakly aspected planet, to provide a quick indication. When we have drawn up the 4 or 5 recommended charts, we can see instantly where each planet is operating actively and where it is doing nothing - this is extremely valuable.

It is a good idea to rethink the concept of unaspected planets as usually expounded (i.e. that they still might manifest strongly but unpredictably). We now can see where they would manifest. We can also understand that, in a theoretical sense, no planet is ever truly unaspected because every planet is at some angle or other to every other planet, and this angle corresponds to a harmonic number, however high: however, in a practical sense, if a planet is totally unaspected in HCs 1, 4, 5, 7 & 9 (which is

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extremely rare) then it is useless to the native for all normal purposes. (N.B. Remember that this whole question is affected by a) size of conjunction orb; b) number of aspects used; c) number of extra points such as Angles, nodes, asteroids, etc. If you increase all these you will virtually rule out the chances of any planet being unaspected.)

#### INTERPRETING HCs: (4) STRONG PLANETS & STRONG CHARTS

The opposite situation to being unaspected is that a planet has several medium or strong aspects in an HC. (4 or more is a good number.) Such a planet is strong in that chart, and if the same planet is strong in several HCs then it is a truly dominant planet (just as an aspect repeating in several HCs is a dominant aspect).

Again, the total aspect strength of an HC should be assessed by noting whether it has many aspects, also whether there are several strong patterns such as multiple conjunctions, double oppositions, T-squares, Grand Trines, etc. By observing which HCs are strongest, we form clues about a person's general approach to life. See below.

#### WHICH HCs DO WE NEED TO STUDY?

No HC need be ruled out in theory, because each represents a unique facet of the whole (remember that everything ultimately derives from the natal chart, which we now see is unable to tell us the whole story if we limit the number of aspects within it). Nevertheless there are a few basic ones which have proved their value for busy astrologers who only have time to study four or five. These are:

HC1 which is the "potentiality" chart, and very often describes the early life of a person, before he has grown into his deeper levels of personality as revealed by the other HCs.

HC4 which is the "action" chart, and shows how people tackle their difficulties, including self-made ones.

HC5 which is the "strategy" chart, and shows how people think, especially logically, in order to make plans.

HC7 which is the "intuition" chart, and shows how people "feel", perhaps irrationally, and what their ideals are.

HC9 which is the "happiness" chart, and shows what makes people happy or what they find easiest to do (line of least resistance).

It is necessary to study at least HCs 1, 4, 5 and 7 to gain a thorough understanding of a natal chart.

By noting which is the strongest chart we can see whether a person is dominated by idealism (HC7) or by rational thought (HC5) or by action (HC4). If HC1 is strongest, he will likely stay within his childhood potential and not change from it: if HC7 or HC9 stands out, he will reach out for this goal (ideal self) - though without a reasonably strong

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HC4 and HC5 he is unlikely to achieve it. One could speculate further.....

#### A CASE STUDY

You are recommended to study the four charts given on the opposite page. They are the remaining charts for Margaret Thatcher (refer also to her HC1 on the front cover). I will give some pointers; these are necessarily brief, but you should confirm for yourself how the wordings were arrived at:

1) Her natal Jupiter-Pluto opposition is close enough to appear in all the charts (it's a conjunction in HC4, for reasons I hope you can see). This makes it a dominant aspect. Interpretation: a need for self-expansion and power at all personality levels.

2) Venus weakly aspected throughout: relationships not important. One exception is the trine with Moon in HC9, showing that she can use facile charm when she likes.

3) Saturn (already strong by angularity) strongly aspected and receiving mostly soft aspects: discipline and control come easily to her.

4) Uranus either unaspected or receiving hard aspects: difficulty in expressing individuality except in a stressful manner.

5) HC9 (what makes her happy) is full of stressful aspects, especially oppositions (= 18th harmonic = competence.)

And now to deal with some individual aspects (I will take only the close ones, and will give the true harmonic number after each aspect name):

6) Mars octile Neptune in HC1 (8) (duplicated as an opposition in HC4): insistence on crusades.

7) Sun octile Uranus in HC5 (40): Obsessive planning how to express her own uniqueness.

8) Mars trine Saturn in HC7 (21): Creative ideas involve careful action.

9) Saturn opposite Uranus in HC7 (14): Problems with idealistic use of iron individuality.

10) Sun square Mars in HC9 (36): Skill in self-assertion.

11) (Mars octile Jupiter) in HC9 (72): Similar to the above. (Interesting, though strictly speaking it exceeds the 60 limit.)

12) Mercury opposite Saturn in HC9 (18): Competence with controlled ideas and communications.

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*Year-harmonics* is the technique of using a harmonic chart whose multiplier is the age of the subject (or one less - there is no agreement on this). For example, the 40th harmonic chart is supposed to relate to the 40th (or 41st) year of life. A modification is *Decimal (dated) harmonics*, which enable one to specify a particular date in the year by converting it to the exact age in decimals and using this figure as the harmonic multiplier (e.g. age 32 and 3 months would use 32.25). These techniques belong to the earlier, experimental days of harmonics, and have increasingly been seen as unreliable - certainly when compared with progressed harmonics. However, you are still welcome to experiment with them.

*Planetary harmonics* have come under similar suspicion recently. Here, one uses the position of a particular planet to generate a harmonic number. So if Mars were at 13 $\frac{1}{2}$  Capricorn we would first find what fraction of 360 $\circ$  Mars is from 0 Aries - in this case  $1/4.70588236$  - and multiply everything by the divisor (4.70588236). The resulting chart would give details of the Martian side of the person's nature. The main objection is that the use of fractional harmonics is contrary to the central theory of harmonics, though there are other objections (e.g. Mars' position is *not* multiplied at all). However, planetary harmonics have been strongly advocated by John E. Greig, and you may wish to explore them.

#### Synastry

From Greek, meaning literally a coincidence of stars, but applied now to the practice of comparing two birthcharts with a view to discovering compatibility. Indeed, at the simplest level the ease with which two people can get on together is indicated by the number of soft aspects (trines and sextiles) discovered, and the difficulties by the hard aspects (multiples of 45 $\circ$ ). But synastry is not confined to a simple pronouncement on the degree of compatibility; because every aspect can be given a specific meaning it is possible to report on the pair's interaction at emotional, mental, physical and even soul levels, thus describing the total relationship in some detail. Synastry is most commonly used for sexual/marital matters but is also appropriate for any type of relationship such as business partners, teacher/pupil, parent/child and even astrologer/client.

*Direct Chart Comparison* is the earliest and most standard way. Imagine the two charts superimposed with 0 Aries coinciding, then take all aspects (half natal orbs or less) from each planet and Angle in one chart to those in the other. (The use of harmonic charts can greatly expand the range and meaning of inter-chart aspects.) Some astrologers draw inferences from the signs involved, also from noting in which houses of the partner's chart the planets fall.

*Composite Chart* is a single chart made from two birthcharts, by taking the midpoint of the two Suns to create a new Composite Sun, and so on with all the planets and Angles. The resulting chart shows a planetary pattern which never existed in the sky, but sheds remarkable light on the interaction of the people involved (there is even a technique to make a composite chart for more than two people). It is unlikely that the Composite Chart shows the nature of the inner relationship as often supposed (after all, the Direct method reveals this), but more usefully and logically it describes the people as a pair, i.e. it shows what impact they have on the rest of the world, their combined image. Interpretation rests principally on the internal aspects, but houses can be used, also the signs but the latter seldom seem relevant. [An interesting technique which deserves wider trial is the making of a Composite of a person and an event affecting him, e.g. a man and the moment of his moving into a

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new house (showing how he behaves while he lives there), or a bride and the time of her wedding (showing her as a married woman)].

**Relationship Chart** has a similar purpose to the Composite and is interpreted similarly. The difference is that this is a chart for the midpoint of the two birthtimes, as if at the midpoint of the two birthplaces. This technique can be thought of as supplementing or replacing Composites, but the two methods are unlikely both to be valid. They will often give vaguely similar charts for technical reasons.

**Progressed Synastry:** whichever of the above methods of chart comparison/combination you employ, the situation can be updated by progressions (day-for-a-year). In the case of the Direct method, we can end up with four sets of aspects: Natal/Natal, Prog/Natal, Natal/Prog, Prog/Prog, each revealing a different comparison. The most valuable are the first of these four (basic long-term relationship) and the last (current relationship).

#### Minor planets

The asteroid belt between Mars and Jupiter contains many thousands of small bodies of various sizes. Astrologers have taken some interest in the four largest: here are their names and putative meanings:

Ceres: careful nurture, mother, children.  
 Pallas: social contacts, politics.  
 Juno: personal love, marriage.  
 Vesta: work, personal estrangement.

Chiron is a planetoid whose orbit lies between those of Saturn and Uranus. It was discovered in 1977. Its meanings are still being investigated; here are some which have been suggested so far: birth, relationships, key, maverick, healer.

Isis (or TransPluto) is a hypothetical planet which was postulated to account for some of the unexplained perturbations of the outer planets. There are also 8 hypothetical TransNeptunian planets postulated by Witte in the "Hamburg School" system of astrology.

#### House systems

"Without doubt the most contentious area in astrology." (Geoffrey Dean). House systems are essentially concerned with the division of the birthchart into 12 (usually unequal) sectors, and they differ in the method used to calculate the dividing lines. As many as 20 different systems exist, but Astrocalc have narrowed them down to the 8 most popular.

All house systems have drawbacks, and most of them give trouble for birthplaces in polar regions (latitudes more than 66°) in that houses can become of disproportionate sizes, or certain degrees of the Zodiac cannot be the Ascendant, or even that house cusps cannot be calculated at all for certain times. Those who use the Vertex should realise that similar considerations apply as the birthplace approaches the Equator, i.e. there are Vertex problems in tropical regions.

The matter of system choice is further complicated by the insistence of many authors that only the such-and-such house system is valid for astrology, or for a particular technique. So we are back to the above quotation, and you, dear reader, must make your own decision.