

Astrological Encyclopedia

The Variable Aspects

In addition to the five major aspect-patterns (conjunction, sextile, square, trine, and opposition) there are three others with which the astrological student should be acquainted for more complete evaluation of horoscopes. They are the semi-sextile and semi-square and the quincunx. The semi-sextile and semi-square are "young" aspects. The quincunx is particularly important from an alchemical standpoint; it is the most variable of all aspect-patterns and is of prime importance to all astrological study pertaining to "inertia versus propulsion" in consciousness. It is the one aspect-pattern which, in itself, illustrates alchemical potential which is stimulated in variable ways by rhythmic activations.

First, we will consider the real meaning of "aspect-pattern." The Sun, Moon, and planets—as "planetary points"—represent the faculties and powers for expression and reaction on all planes of human functioning. As such they are the expressive focalizers of the zodiacal signs. For clarity in writing and reading, we indicate their symbols inside the circle of the horoscope, but actually these symbols should be accurately placed on the circumference of the circle, because the study of astrology considers the zodiacal position of the planets as seen from the Earth. If it were possible to do so, the planetary aspects would be depicted by straight lines

drawn from the center of the horoscological circle to the planetary points accurately indicated on the circumference. The numerical degree of the angle made at the center by any two "planetary lines" is the planetary aspect. We may consider as valid an orb of eight degrees for the five major aspect-patterns, six degrees for the quincunx, and a maximum of three degrees for the semi-sextile and semi-square aspects.

In imagination you are standing in the exact center of your room. On the floor around you is drawn a large circle of which you are the center. On the circumference of this circle are placed the zodiacal symbols that are indicated on the cusps of your natal chart. You face due north—to the cusp of your fourth house; you make a quarter turn to the right—and face your Ascendant; another quarter turn to the right to face your Midheaven; another quarter to the right to face your Descendant, cusp of your seventh house; one more quarter-turn to the right again to face your fourth cusp. Straight lines are drawn on the floor from the exact center, upon which you are standing, to each of ten points on the circumference representing your planetary-point positions. The lines which are connected to any two planetary points which indicate a square aspect will form, exactly or approximately an angle of ninety degrees at the center where you are; each trine aspect will reveal an angle of one hundred and twenty degrees, etc. As you turn yourself to see each of your aspects in sequence you get a different "viewpoint" of your chart, and a planetary aspect in your chart means "viewpoint as consciousness." As you face each aspect which includes, for example, your Mars, you have to turn yourself at the center where you stand. In life and experience, as you are called upon to deal with qualities in yourself which pertain to the principle of Mars, you have to adjust your viewpoint to events, people, environments, and subjective

conditions. If your home is the nuclear center of your life-environment, remember that as you look out of each window of your house you perceive a different aspect of your exterior environment; in other words, you see your exterior environment from a slightly different viewpoint as you look through each of the various windows.

So it is with your chart; each planetary relationship represents a quality of viewpoint, centered in your consciousness, by which you tend to regard and interpret the principles of life. To regenerate your viewpoint so that you can appreciate and interpret your experience more truthfully would correspond to the action of thoroughly washing the windows of your house so that you can see your exterior environment without impediment or obstruction. By a comprehension of the meanings of your planetary aspects you can intelligently use your timings for alchemical exercise and regenerative endeavors. There are periodic timings throughout your life when each planetary aspect is emphasized by the various types of stimulus and ignition in order that you may have the opportunities to "wash the windows of your soul." This "washing" is regeneration of consciousness, the universal alchemy of the Spirit.

The semi-sextile aspect is exactly what the term implies: half a sextile. Its symbol is the horizontal and the two upper diagonals of the sextile aspect, like a "V" standing on a horizontal line. Because everything in life starts from a process of germination, all aspect-patterns start from the vibratory fusion we call the conjunction; from this vibratory unification or "joining of forces," the planets register the various aspect-patterns from life to life in accordance with the way you use your consciousness and mind. The semi-sextile is the promise of the sextile, which in turn is the mechanism for the generation of the trine: it is like the delicate

green leaf which is externalized on the tree-branch at spring-time, the promise of blossom and fruit to come. The registration of a semi-sextile in your chart is the indication that you have already started, in the past a regenerative program concerning your consciousness of the planetary principles involved. Know that it is up to you to handle that "delicate green leaf" with care, to cultivate its qualities with thoughtfulness and patience, to make yourself constantly more and more aware of its evidences in your life. Give meditative spiritual consideration to the principles represented by the planets concerned and the signs they rule; having already made the regenerative start, you will naturally want to persevere in apprehending the spiritual values indicated as potential by this aspect.

Remember that the semi-sextile, in comparison with the other aspects, is like a young child in relation to older boys and girls, adolescents, young men and women, parents, and elders. It is "impressionable" just as a child is, it can be easily marred if it is not tended and cared for with understanding and consideration. With spiritual diligence and unwavering patience, it is possible that in the course of one life-time the person who "tends his semi-sextile" can unfold a degree of spiritual understanding or awareness that would correspond to a sextile aspect between the two planets. In other words, his next-life horoscope would register the sextile aspect. This is comparable to seeing the first evidence of the blossom during the course of a day—the unmistakable evidence that the blossom has appeared when this morning there was only the leaf. You first become aware of your divine self in a new phase of evolution through your semi-sextile—the childhood of your "Christ Within" being externalized through your consciousness. We owe to our semi-sextiles the same kind of consideration that we tend to give to anything that is young, delicate and

impressionable; its growth must be carefully fostered and nurtured, perhaps over a long period of time, through many stages of development. But the goal is the ultimate fruition which we identify astrologically as the trine aspect—the "viewpoint" by which Power, Love, and Truth are apprehended in terms of internal equilibrium, beauty, capacity, affluence, and joy. The exact semi-sextile aspect is thirty degrees; by orb, twenty-seven to thirty-three degrees. It is interesting to note that the cusps of the twelve houses are in sequences of thirty degrees as are the first degrees of each of the zodiacal signs.

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The semi-square aspect (exact, forty-five degrees; by orb, forty-two to forty-eight degrees) requires a little geocentric consideration. As seen from the Earth, the semi-square is the largest of the valid aspects which can be made between Venus and Sun. The Sun, Moon, and all other planets can form the semi-square to each other. (The sextile is the largest geocentric aspect possible between Mercury and Venus.) The semi-square—half of a square—is a warning; like the semi-sextile it is a "young aspect." The tiny cavity in the tooth which, if not corrected, becomes in time a dental horror, or the first evidence of rot in the tree which, if allowed to spread, kills it, are fairly good illustrative analogies. The semi-square in the natal horoscope is evidence that the person has begun to congest on those awarenesses of spiritual principle represented by the planets concerned. It is as though the person in the past, sought to experiment with life through ignorance of what he was really dealing with, and now the semi-square holds up a warning finger and says "Stop, Look and Listen." The old maxim, "A stitch in time saves nine," is applicable to the semi-square's indications; mend that little run in the stocking of your soul now-this life-or you will risk ruining the stocking. The

semi-square is evidence of gathering tension, the appearance on the horizon of the cloud which might bring rain and spoil your picnic plans. You can't do anything about the storm cloud, but if you don't want to risk having a disappointing experience you will postpone your picnic plans until you know for sure how the weather will be. In other words, you won't stubbornly go ahead with plans when you have the evidence that postponement would be a more practical measure. The experience of feeling a growing progression of fear or anger is like the meaning of the semi-square; while the emotion is still intensifying it can be dealt with and controlled or transmuted, but after it reaches a certain degree of intensity, the astral potency overwhelms your mental-directive power and you plunge into an experience characterized by considerable pain and suffering. If you have occasion to deal with a chart containing several semi-squares keep the thought of past experimentation through ignorance in mind as an interpretive key; such a registration indicates that this present life will contain, for the person, many opportunities to learn from the evidence of instinctual negative tendencies but which must be dealt with regeneratively now or suffer grave consequences in future. Of course the two planets of any semi-square aspect may be regeneratively aspected in many ways by other points in the chart, but the semi-square registers a negative tendency. Understanding of it is necessary so that the person may—in this present life—know what he is dealing with inside of himself, rather than continuing on the path of ignorance and un-awareness that may have characterized his experience in the past in certain ways. Since you, as the astrological reader, stand as a personalized symbol to the person of awareness and knowledge, study the semi-squares by a careful correlation with all regenerative indication in the chart—from semi-sextile to trine—that are involved with the semi-square planets. Look, with the eyes of your

Spirit, at that semi-square as though you were a dentist studying a small cavity as pictured in an X-ray—your job as a reader is to understand that warning as completely as possible.

The quincunx (exact, 150 degrees, five signs; by orb, 144 to 156 degrees) is a fascinating astrological factor; it is like a "coat of many colors," a kaleidoscope and a chameleon all in one. Several pictorial symbols have been devised for it; the author suggests the following: the composite of the symbol for the semi-sextile aspect with a down-ward vertical from the center. These lines would correspond to the cusps of Aries, Aquarius, Sagittarius, Libra and Cancer of the Great Mandala and the picture it presents suggests an unfolded flower on a vertical stem. The quincunx is the only aspect that pictures alchemy within itself because the 150 degrees of its exact scope are primarily focalized by the ninety degrees of the square and the sixty degrees of the sextiles. It also implies the possibilities of the following aspect sequences: five semi-sextiles, semi-sextile and trine, trine and semi-sextile, sextile and square, square and sextile. The following formula may be applied to each of the zodiacal signs as a starting point:

Aries quincunx Virgo. Aries semi-sextile Taurus, Taurus trine Virgo. Aries trine Leo, Leo semi-sextile Virgo. Aries sextile Gemini, Gemini square Virgo. Aries square Cancer, Cancer sextile Virgo. Semi- sextiles: Aries-Taurus-Gemini-Cancer-Leo-Virgo.

Another formula, picturing the quincunx within the Great Mandala is this: Aries quincunx Virgo. Scorpio quincunx Aries. Virgo sextile Scorpio.

Two quincunx aspects which both include one particular zodiacal sign total the entire zodiac when the sixty degrees of the sextile are added to them. All the "variation" of alchemy which is depicted

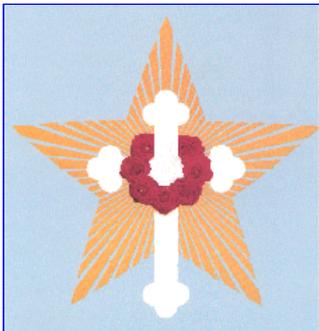
by the contents of each 150-degree aspect is thus shown to have self-directed regeneration as the key-note. In other words the degree of realization of completeness implied as potential by the quincunx is made possible only through self-regeneration. It is suggested particularly to those students who as yet have not "done very much" with the quincunx aspect, that a complete tabulation of the above-mentioned zodiacal formulas be prepared for memorization and use in chart-analysis. (Considerable mental fluency is promised thereby !) An incisive, fluent mental grasp of zodiacal factors is required for the study and interpretation of the quincunx aspect because of the great variation implied by it. To concentrate one's knowledge and perception of the quincunx is to expand automatically one's fluency with all other aspect-patterns.

For practical astrological use, the quincunx is most important in the study of timings. As a natal aspect it pictures a potential of alchemical variation; when studied in terms of activations it reveals a continual periodic emphasis which alternates the yet-to-be-regenerated factors and the relatively regenerated factors. A simple illustration: Sun in 15 Aries, quincunx Saturn in 15 Virgo; 15 Gemini: sextile Sun, square Saturn; 15 Cancer: square Sun, sextile Saturn; 15 Sagittarius: trine Sun, square Saturn.¹⁶ Capricorn: square Sun, trine Saturn. The 150 degrees of each exact quincunx are zodiacally counterpart by the remaining 210 degrees which include a two-fold sequence of square and trine to the natal quincunx planets. Within the 150 degree area, sextilic powers are to be employed to regenerate the square tendencies; in the 210 degree area, trine-powers are used to alchemicalize the square tendencies. In the above Sun-Saturn illustration, it would appear that the unfoldment of spiritualized executive power and ability is the purpose of the quincunx by experiences and training in leadership, personal autonomy, responsibility fulfillment

in work and development of the power of patience. By combining the essential spiritual key-words pertaining to the two planets of a quincunx aspect, the spiritual or evolutionary purpose of the alchemical exercises maybe discerned. From this approach it may be clearly seen that the quincunx is really not a "minor" aspect at all because it is a registration of opportunity in this life to effect very significant transmutations in consciousness. It is like the framework of a building which, depending upon what is put into it and how that equipment is used, can become a hovel or a lovely home.

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