

Robert Blaschke

Sabian Aspect Orbs

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In discussing the Sabian Symbols as an aid to aspect interpretation, Robert, as usual, took us beyond our ordinary use of conventional aspect techniques into new dimensions of thought.

The seven levels of aspect analysis conventionally used are as follows:

Level One: The nature of the planet-to-planet relationship (what realms of consciousness are uniting).

Level Two: The energy of the sign-to-sign relationship (how the signs, elements and modalities interact).

Level Three: The house placements and rulerships (where are planetary energies directed).

Level Four: The dynamics of the- specific aspect forming (why the planetary forces have joined). Example: a trifle = spiritual integration.

Level Five: Applying or separating orb (are the planetary energies intensifying or releasing energy). In his new book, Robert proposes larger separating orbs to accommodate releasing energies.

Level Six: Waxing (from conjunction to opposition) individuating experience phase or waning (from opposition to conjunction) socializing experience phase.

Level Seven: Direct motion (new life experience) or Retrograde motion (continuation of past-life experience) of planets in aspect.

Aspect Theory

The lunation cycle between the Sun and Moon is at the root of

astrological aspect theory. The first half of the lunation cycle is called waxing (increasing in reflected light), beginning when the Moon is conjunct the Sun at the New Moon to the opposition to the Sun at the Full Moon. The second half of the cycle is the waning period (decreasing in reflected light), beginning at the Full Moon and returning back to the New Moon. The day begins when the Sun is conjunct the Ascendant (sunrise). The month begins when the Moon is conjunct the Sun (New Moon). The year begins when the path of the Sun is conjunct the equator, moving from south to north at the prime meridian. This astrological cycle theory defines a beginning point on a circle at the conjunction, a halfway point at the opposition, and two-quarter points midway between the squares. This model represents the "4th Harmonic" aspect family in astrology. These cycle points are universally accepted as the "dynamic" or "hard" aspects.

When the circle is further divided into eighths, the semi-square (45 degrees) and the sesquiquadrate (135 degrees) are created, and from this are derived the eight phases of the Moon. The first half, or waxing hemicycle, is concerned with individualization. The second half, or waning hemicycle, is the socialization process.

Eight Lunar Phases

The eight lunar phases have been psychologically and spiritually defined as follows:

Waxing: 1) New – 0 to 45 degrees – the impulse to evolve; 2) Crescent 45 to 90 degrees – heeding the call; 3) First Quarter – 90 to 135 degrees – overcoming external resistance; 4) Gibbous – 135 to 180 degrees –

searching for illumination.

Waning; 5) Full – 180 to 135 degrees – achieving awareness and objective understanding; 6) Disseminating – 135 to 90 degrees – assimilation and synthesis; 7) Last Quarter – 90 to 45 degrees – facing internal resistance; and 8) Balsamic – 45 to 0 degrees – mastery, then release and seeding of the next cycle. This cycle theory holds its conceptual accuracy and practical application equally well for analyzing either short or exceedingly long durations of time.

The Conceptual Leap:

This theoretical model of the aspect circle can now be placed onto the 360 degree Zodiac Circle, wherein the conjunction aspect equates with 0 degrees Aries, the opposition aspect with 0 degrees Libra, the waxing square with 0 degrees Cancer, and the waning square with 0 degrees Capricorn.

Thus, the four cardinal points of the Zodiac define the beginnings of each quadrant of the aspect circle.

To determine whether the relationship between any two planets is waxing or waning, we turn to an ancient system known as the Chaldean Order, which places the heavenly bodies in a ranking from the fastest (real or apparent) orbital speed to the slowest: Moon-Mercury-Venus-Sun-Mars-Jupiter-Saturn-Uranus-Neptune-Pluto

You can now rotate the horoscope wheel so that the slower moving planet is on the Ascendant. Then if the faster planet is below the imaginary horizon, it is waxing, if above, it is waning.

This concept is extremely important for advanced aspect analysis. Natal waxing aspects are experienced in a radically different way than waning aspects. Additionally, you can use this concept in progressed and transit cycle analysis to more deeply understand the sequence of consciousness development as it unfolds through the aspect circle.

Applying aspects can be said to have a quality of intensification about them. Separating aspects have an attribute of release or "letting go." For example, there are four different kinds of squares – applying waxing, separating waxing, applying waning and separating waning – and each has a distinctly different manifestation in the natal horoscope, as well as within progressed or transit cycles.

Robert's core premise in his new book is to take this waxing or waning and applying or separating aspect delineation one step further:

to the specific orb of the aspect. Robert calls this the eighth level of aspect analysis wherein he introduces the Sabian Symbols as a method for interpreting aspects. As each degree of the Zodiac has been given a particular description, so, too, can each degree of angular separation between planets be defined individually. Every aspect tells a story. The Sabian symbols represent the heavenly dimensions of astrology, while our techniques for aspect interpretation represent the earthly side of astrology.

The Sabian Symbols:

The Welsh clairvoyant and

astrologer, John Thomas, born 9 November 1826 with a Scorpio Sun and Pisces Moon, used his psychic faculties to ascertain the nature and influence of each degree of the Zodiac for the purpose of rectifying the ascendants of horoscopes. These degree symbols were first published in April 1893.

Around 1915, the astrologer Marc Edmund Jones became interested in these same degree symbols formulated by John Thomas. He made the decision to create an entirely new set of symbols for each degree of the Zodiac. In collaboration with a gifted clairvoyant named Elsie Wheeler, the currently known Sabian Symbols were manifested in 1925 at Balboa Park in San Diego, California. Marc Jones had a pack of 360 index cards, each marked with a degree of the Zodiac. Taking a card at random, Elsie would have a scene flashed to her inner vision. Marc recorded a brief notation on the index card for each degree.

This enormous contribution to astrology by Marc Jones and Elsie Wheeler should forever be linked to the pioneering work of Dane Rudhyar. In 1936, Rudhyar provided a complete psychological reinterpretation of the symbols, and this work of his was even further refined some 37 years later in 1973. Both Jones and Rudhyar were concurrently investigating the 360 symbols to determine if there was an underlying mathematical structure. Jones, in 1953, identified a pattern of five successive symbols linked together and repeated 72 times. Rudhyar's 1973 book further refined this prototype and contains a profound

understanding of astrological cycle theory. He described the Zodiac as being comprised of two hemicycles of 180 degrees each, four acts of 90 degrees each, twenty-four scenes of 15 degrees each, three levels within each scene comprised of 5 degrees each and a five-fold sequence of 1 degree each, repeated 72 times and which cycles through the entire process.

Major, Minor and Esoteric Aspects:

The major aspects conjunction, opposition, square, which comprise through fourth harmonics.

The minor aspects are the sextile, the semisquare and sesquiquadrate, and the two inconjunct aspects – the semisextile and quincunx. These aspects are derived from even whole numbers – the sixth, eighth and twelfth harmonics.

The esoteric aspects are the quintile, the septile, the novile, the decile and the undecile, along with their derivative counterparts derived from odd whole numbers, the fifth, seventh, ninth, and eleventh harmonics.

The Retrograde Planet is an exception to the applying versus separating aspects. If the faster planet is in a lower degree than the slower planet, and in DIRECT motion, then it is an applying aspect. However, if the faster planet is in a lower degree than the slower planet, and in RETROGRADE motion, it is a separating aspect. In either case, the waxing or waning phase position is not affected.

Conversely, if the faster planet is in a higher degree than the slower

planet, and in DIRECT motion, then it is a separating aspect. But, if the faster planet is in a higher degree than the slower planet, and in RETROGRADE motion, it is an applying aspect. Again, the waxing or waning status is unaffected by this.

As a practical application of this theory, in an example from Robert's chart, we see the Sun quincunx Jupiter Retrograde – waxing – 2 degrees, 9 minutes applying. This equates with 28 Leo (147-148 degrees angular separation). The Sabian Symbol for this degree is “Many Little Birds On a Limb of a

Big Tree,” and the interpretation is “A wide, and perhaps confusing, openness to a multiplicity of inspiring potentialities.” Certainly, Robert fits this interpretation!

As a second example, Robert has the Sun conjunct Mercury Retrograde – waning – 1 degree 36 minutes separating. This equates to 29 Pisces (358-359 degrees angular separation). The Sabian Symbol for this degree is “Light Breaking Into Many Colors as it Passes Through a Prism,” and the interpretation is “The analytical power of the mind necessary for the formulation of life processes in their

many aspects.” Adding this to his Virgo ascendant, we all can attest to the spectacular analytical powers that Robert possesses.

Once again, Robert has motivated us to increase our knowledge and fine tune our analytical techniques of interpretation to better understand our charts and ourselves.