

# Karel Hujer: *Lure of Astrology.*

Recently Dr. Bart Bok, distinguished astrophysicist now with the astronomy center of the University of Arizona, organized a publicity action against the widespread exploitation of astrology current in our society. His eloquent text, supported and signed by a number of leading scientists including several Nobel Laureates, was widely published. This is not the first time Dr. Bok undertook this Herculean task. Some fifteen years ago, he made a similar attack on this ancient superstition when he agreed to have a public disputation with a leading astrologer in Washington. Astrology, the tenacious survival of the age of mythology when the world was still considered flat, has thousands of years of deeply rooted tradition. To struggle against such a pseudoscience is much harder than Don Quixote fighting his windmills.

First of all, despite our advanced technology, astrology continues to appeal to many people due to its individual relation to each person. Through the ages, no two horoscopes were identical. Astronomy, on the other hand, appears indifferent to man, crushing him to nothingness with the immensity of the universe. Astrology indicates that each human being is unique because at the moment of birth the combined distribution of celestial objects of the solar family among the twelve signs of the zodiac, from one moment to another, is never the same and can never be repeated. Since the dawn of civilization man is concerned in his own destiny, and the mysterious horoscope first conceived by mythological thought, nourishes his anthropomorphic illusion. Cold and dehumanized science in this age of triumphant technology,

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abysmal distances and other physical facts of the material universe, never warms man's heart.

Consequently astrology, with its intimate relation to the individual, is deposited deep in man's subconsciousness. Astrology feeds on a feeling of insecurity and premonition. Early Christian fathers like St. Augustine most vehemently warned against this delusion. When man worships his own corruptible products more than he does the God of creation he is liable to fall into the trap of necromancy. The devout faith of guiding religion allays worries about the future. In 1935, for several weeks I stayed with Mahatma Gandhi in his Ashram at Wardha and he never tired of repeating, "Whoever fears God needs not to fear anything or anyone in this world."

If astrology now flourishes, we must not overlook the guilt of our science which does not answer the inner sentiment of man. In wartime, science has become the tool of mass slaughter and in peacetime it enriches the rich. Our science shares with astrology the common guilt of surviving mentality of anthropomorphic mythology. The average man in our Western world, in the very comfort provided by technology if he can afford it, will turn away from science even if it puts man on the moon. With his religious faith faltering, he will turn to astrological prognostication. No scientific rationalization will efface this most enduring dogma which offers to speak to the human soul, ready to respond any time at

the call of man's searching agony.

Thus, in the form of thriving astrology, it should not be surprising that we still live overwhelmingly by the power of myth. The social counterpart is tribalism of which the late Harvard sociologist, Pitirim Sorokin, maintained that tribalism together with the scourge of wars is still the tragedy of our civilization.

Despite the widely publicized scientific triumphs of the twentieth century, in the U.S.A. today there are more than fifty astrological periodicals and countless astrological tracts. Even intellectual personalities are addicted to this cult, and horoscopes are published daily in newspapers. We hear much about the Aquarian Age, a typical ASTROLOGICAL promise that the zodiacal sign, Aquarius, will rule over the destinies of mankind and the fate of rising or falling civilizations. The ASTRONOMICAL fact is that due to the precession of equinoxes or the conic motion of the earth's axis of the rotation, the spring equinoctial sun of March 21st, is slowly entering into Aquarius to remain there for the next twenty-two centuries.

These physical, material objects, members of the solar family, supposedly mysteriously influence individual human destiny by sheer association with a specific time of birth, making man a helpless toy of predetermined fate. This makes astrology subject to the doctrine of materialism in which any morality in a deterministic frame is meaningless. On the contrary, it is man himself who shapes his future and reaps the fruit of his actions even beyond the borders of the mysteries of conscious life in this universe.