The Horary Practitioner

including

Traditional Horary, Electional, Natal, Mundane & Medical Astrology

Considerations Before Judgment Revisited

By Sue Ward

In early 1993 I was led into some research on Lilly's methods and his attitude towards the so-called strictures. This was as a result of an article by Maurice McCann in The Astrology Quarterly, (published by The Astrological Lodge of London). This research turned up some surprising information particularly pertaining to application, separation and thus the void of course condition. The primary aim of that work was to demonstrate that Lilly did indeed follow the Considerations Before Judgement, but it developed beyond that. At the time it caused few waves, but in the last few years I have been called upon to explain the work I did and my findings more frequently. More recently, subscribers to the William Lilly Mailing List have raised the issue again and it was apparent that what I had set out to do and actually achieved was becoming blurred with time. It seemed reasonable to put forward, in detail, the conclusions I reached over four years ago.

What I discovered changed my working methods irrevocably and with far more successful results. I find that my position has changed little, if at all, since then on these matters, although I have thought deeply about them and have developed these ideas further. I have used endnotes to explain further where necessary or to develop the point.
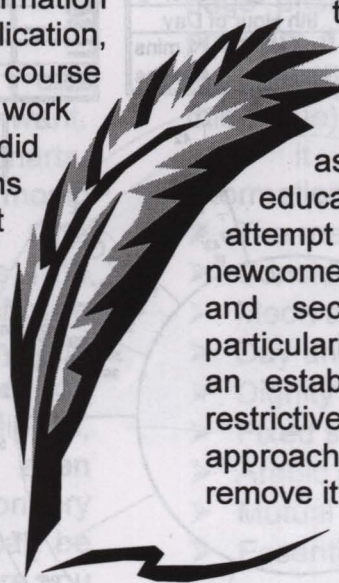
Stricture: a censure.

Rule: that which is established as a principle, standard, or a guide of action or procedure. (New English Dictionary, Odhams).

Traditional astrology has a set of established principles which act as a guide of action and procedure and offers a standard to aim for. Generally, these are ignored by those who have never studied or understood them, but who write prolifically about the failures of the traditional method. There is no academic discipline which allows `creativity' to outweigh established principles; astrology is no different. So, let us educate ourselves first before we attempt to develop the art. For newcomers to astrology, the guidance and security of set procedures, is particularly important. Therefore, when an established principle seems to be restrictive or redundant, a very careful approach is required before attempting to remove it.

The dictionary definition of the word `stricture' isn't particularly helpful, but disapproval is implied. So, in this sense a stricture in a chart would be like a rebuke. It is usually treated as making a chart unreadable or non-radical, and suggests that an incorrect answer will be obtained. These strictures have been a bone of contention for some considerable time and have become an established principle in more modern times. So, care is needed in any investigation.

The following research is a result of an article by Maurice McCann about the Considerations before Judgement

Christian Astrology pages 121-122). He compared all of the charts in Christian Astrology with the Considerations to see if Lilly had complied with them. This was with reference to the more modern use of the Considerations as strictures, used to decide radicality, that is, if a chart is fit or safe to be judged.

My objective here is to deal with these `rules' in general and particular terms, with reference to Christian Astrology. Furthermore, I have access to Lilly's workbooks for parts of the years 1647 and 1649, so the points raised by Maurice regarding Christian Astrology can be extended into Lilly's daily practices. Hopefully, this will clear up some of the misapprehensions associated with these procedures, particularly in terms of Lilly's use of them. My own position, and that of *The Horary Practitioner*, is that of the dictionary definition, and of common sense and there is little here that will come as a surprise to regular readers. As always, we abide by the `rules', but let's be clear about what these are.

A few words about Lilly's workbooks would be in order, since most readers will be unfamiliar with them. These take the form of very large ledgers, which he stamped with chart squares as required. There could be up to six on a page. It was not unusual for him to undertake eight charts a day, beginning at around 7.00am. These were mainly horaries, but also included event and natal charts. He was a very busy man and would see clients personally and also deal with questions by post.

The pages are crammed with charts, sometimes there are notes about the querent, the question and,

occasionally, the answer. Sometimes he calculated the planets' positions roughly, sometimes more accurately - significators were dealt with more carefully. He would have been acutely conscious of the planetary hour and restrictive phenomena, such as a void of course Moon, early and late degrees rising, Moon in the Via Combusta or late degrees of a sign. His charts often had only a few minutes separating them, so it would have been impossible to have been unaware of these things. His clients would often undertake long journeys, frequently on foot, to see him. So it would be reasonable to assume that Lilly was under pressure to produce their horaries, no matter what. As I point out later, there were significant gaps in his working day around the time of certain configurations, which fall under the heading of Considerations before Judgement.

I would like to explain the importance of Christian Astrology to this discussion and that of its author, William Lilly. In drawing together the work of so many ancient writers, in the English language, he presents a body of knowledge, which I suspect, is unavailable in any form anywhere. Lilly presents astrological principles, which had been established for many hundreds of years. He tested these in his own practice, which was huge, rejected those precepts which could not be substantiated, and simplified those which were overly complicated.

Serious students of traditional astrology soon find that Lilly's attitude is surprisingly avant garde. He is very frank when he disagrees with ancient authorities, but then Christian Astrology would never have been written if he had blindly followed his predecessors. His

text is, at first, difficult to read and there is a temptation to allow others to do this for us and trust what they say as being right. Maurice McCann has, quite correctly, checked for himself and brings certain inconsistencies to our attention. But, let me point out that Lilly did not take a laissez faire attitude to astrology - far from it. This Question fals not under the notion of vulgar rules, or must the Astrologian expect particular Rules to governe his fancy in every Question; it was well said, A te & a scientia for I doe daily resolve such Questions as come not into the vulgar Rules of Guido or Haly; and yet I was never to seek a sufficient reason in Art, whereby to give a good and satisfactory answer to the Proponent, etc .... In other words, whilst he detaches himself from established principles in this case, he still uses rigorous astrological reasoning to obtain an answer. It does not mean that he made it up to suit his convenience.

In general terms I agree with Maurice, there are no strictures - this is a modern term. Their are rules, though, as guides to action and procedure. That is what the Considerations before Judgement are. Also, I believe that each astrologer has to satisfy themselves of the radicality of a chart. My reasoning is that the rules were founded on self-preservation - an astrologer's life was forfeit if the answer was wrong or unsuitable. These days only our reputations (and pride) are at risk if we get it wrong - no small thing, nonetheless, and we still need to be protected from the unscrupulous querent. If we maintain this overview, the purpose of the Considerations becomes clearer.

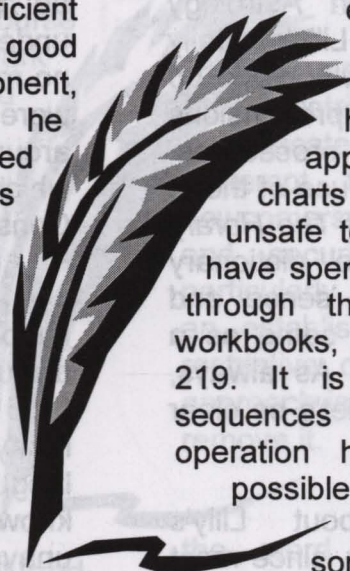Lilly's method, before judging a chart, was to ascertain the physical description of the party or parties concerned. He was meticulous in this respect, and in his workbooks there is strong evidence that he used this method of testing a chart for radicality. A point to bear in mind is that when a Consideration is found to be operating in a chart, it can often give its own answer, which might add to that found elsewhere - examples of this are given below. However, Lilly instructs us to use common sense and astrological reasoning in our judgements and this is what I have tried to do. Also, remember to keep any Considerations in context with the matter under examination.

I should mention here that although Lilly appears to have judged all charts no matter what, it would be unsafe to jump to that conclusion. I have spent a great deal of time going through the copies I have of his workbooks, with charts numbering some 219. It is apparent from the time sequences that when a rule was in operation he suspended work. It is possible that this was simply because he was hungry or wanted some fresh air or a friend called, but there is a pattern suggesting that he did not judge just anything at any time.

The Considerations are there for a reason and should never be ignored.

Planetary Hours

This is one of the oldest techniques still in use today - which suggests something of its value. It reflects Mesopotamian and Egyptian mythology of great antiquity. It is part of the story of the Sun God's journey into the Underworld at the end of each day.

His progress throughout the night was achieved one hour at a time and the gate leading into each successive hour was guarded by the ruler of that hour. On giving the correct password, the Sun God would be allowed through each gate, until being born again into a new day.(1)

This gives an intense image of the use of planetary hours. Its accord with the ascendant, or rather the querent, demonstrates a harmony between them. The querent is not attempting to go against the tide of events, but is moving with the flow. It is obvious that lack of accord would not necessarily prevent a positive outcome, but it would make it more difficult and require more effort. It also offers advice on the querent's approach to the matter. For example, in an economic recession, a question is asked about a new business venture and the planetary hour does not agree with the ascendant. This suggests that the querent's timing is wrong and that what they propose is not workable at the present time. They would be unwise to force the issue.

To find any accord between the hour and the ascendant, Lilly provides three criteria:

➢ That the ruler of the hour and that of the ascendant are the same planet.

➢ That the ruler of the ascendant triplicity and the hour are the same.

➢ That the ruler of the hour and the ruler of the ascendant are of the same nature (2).

If there is no accord by these three methods, then the chart is not radical and is unsuitable for judgement - or so says the ancient rule. I agree with this, except that I feel the criteria for radicality should (3) be expanded somewhat. Nevertheless, I do not think that the same degree of accord can be attributed to any charts which don't conform to the original three criteria. Maurice has checked Lilly's charts in Christian Astrology and found that, of those which show the ruler of the hour, 10 are non-radical according to these criteria.

These non-radical charts demonstrate how radicality can be expanded, although not improving the hour's accord with the querent. (Olivia Barclay also points out the conjunctions and trines of significators with the ruler of the hour.)

➢ Page 177 If he should be rich, or subsist of himself without marriage? ...

Ascendant: ♎, triplicity ruler: ♄, hour ruler: ☉. The ☉ is △ ♄. The result was good but there was difficulty and worry.

➢ Page 219 If I should purchase Master B. his houses?"

Ascendant: ♎, triplicity ruler: ♄, hour ruler: ☉. The ☉ is △♄ and ☌ ♀, ruler of the ascendant. Also, the ☉ is angular. This chart had a good outcome, but there were difficulties.

➢ Page 238 If the Querent should ever have children?"

Ascendant: ♏, triplicity ruler: ♀, hour ruler: ♃. I can find no mitigation in this chart. The result was that the querent was incapable of having children.

➢ Page 286 A sick doctor, what was his disease? If curable?"

Ascendant: ♏, triplicity ruler: ♂, hour ruler: ♀. ♀ is angular. The doctor died.

➢ Page 385 A lady, if marry the gentleman desired?"

Ascendant: ♌, triplicity ruler: ☉, hour ruler: ♄. ♄ is angular and is in an applying

✶ with the ☉, both of which are primary significators. The lady got her man, but with some difficulty.

➤ Page 392 A Dogge missing, where?"
Ascendant: ♑, triplicity ruler: ♀, hour ruler: ♂. ♂ is in the 6th house of the quesited. The dog was found, but did not return of its own accord, so effort and a degree of difficulty was involved.

➤ Page 395 Money lost, who stole it? If recoverable?"
Ascendant: ♏, triplicity ruler: ♂, hour ruler: ♃. I can find no mitigation at all, except that ♃ and ♂ are in the same sign (♌). This chart had a positive outcome, but Lilly's dislike of the querent is made very obvious.

➤ Page 417 A woman of her husband at sea, if alive ...?
Ascendant: ♍, triplicity ruler: ♀, hour ruler: ♂. This is a chart directly connected with the Civil War, and ♂ is the natural significator of war. He did return but only after great dangers and being imprisoned by the King's forces.

➤ Page 419 What manner of death Canterbury should die?
Ascendant: ♉, triplicity ruler: ♀, hour ruler: ☉. The ☉ is placed in the 8th of death. He was beheaded, which was considered to be a more noble method of execution than hanging, which I think was threatened.

➤ Page 468 If bewitched?"
Ascendant: ♊, triplicity ruler: ♄, hour ruler: ♂. ♂ rules the 12th house of witchcraft. The querent was not bewitched but was sick and it took a little while to recover.
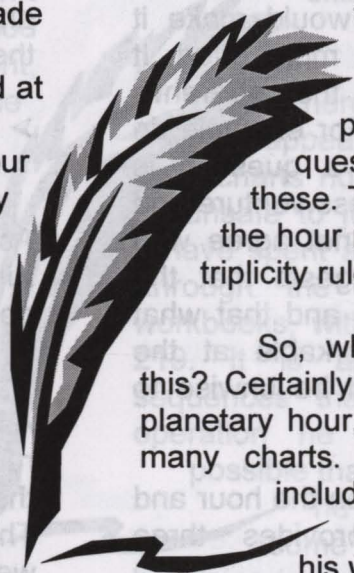
Of these ten charts, eight show some an important link with the ruler of the hour, but a degree of difficulty is

shown. In the two with no planetary hour connection at all, the matter ended badly.

From information supplied to me by C J Puotinen, I was able to check those charts that do not show the planetary hour. She calculated the hour rulers from the data provided by Lilly, but of course, these hour rulers are not necessarily those which he used (the lack of clock time standardisation causes great problems in this type of exercise). Nevertheless, I found the results to be similar to those above. Of the nine I checked, only two complied with the radicality criteria. The rest, though, had the hour ruler angular, or it was the natural ruler of the matter, or it was placed in the house of the quesited, or a combination of these. The △ and ☌ links between the hour ruler and the ascendant or triplicity ruler were less in evidence.

So, what can we deduce from this? Certainly not that Lilly ignored the planetary hour, since it is included in so many charts. The fact that it is not included in all of them is not material, as the charts in his workbooks illustrate, where none were shown. All this demonstrates is that he didn't write it on to his charts. Since he noted the planetary hour in so many cases I would suggest that he knew what it was at all times. However, lack of strict radicality did not prevent him from judging the charts.

Before moving on to the other rules and Lilly's attitude to them, I want to explain what is meant by `afflicted' charts. These are charts which have many unfavourable configurations in them and under the stricture regime would be

thrown out as not fit to be judged. But these charts are often about very serious matters: kidnappings, murder, war - who would expect to obtain a nice, pale pink, flowery chart in these circumstances. So, a certain amount of discretion and common sense must always be applied within the context of the question.

Early degrees on the ascendant

Early degrees on any significant cusp show immaturity or newness, so on the ascendant suggest that the matter needs to develop further before the question becomes relevant. This does not appear to be the case with the chart on page 417, but Lilly is at pains to provide a detailed physical description of the querent and of the conditions of the quesited.

In his workbooks, there are several examples of the early ascendant, but without knowing the context of the questions, it is impossible to draw any conclusions. The most successful house purchase chart I ever had, showed the ascendant at 0° ♈, being within 2' of the querent's natal 4th house cusp. The general circumstances were more than adequately described by the ascendant degree and sign, so I accepted the chart.

Late degrees on the ascendant

Late degrees can show just that: lateness, and this position is often indicative of an imminent change of circumstances which could affect the relevancy of the question. This in itself can give an answer, depending on the question. It can also show that the querent is being frivolous.

I have found a few charts in the workbooks with these, one of which was entitled, One at Twickenham, of her sweetheart. The chart is generally afflicted, so whatever the exact question, the outcome would not have been good. Personally, I think that the late ascendant is extremely suspect and I approach these charts with the greatest caution.

The Moon is in late degrees

Although there are no charts in Christian Astrology with the ☽ in late degrees in Gemini, ♏ or ♑, there are in the workbooks. Again, this does not mean that Lilly disregarded this rule, but perhaps judged accordingly. In life and death questions you wouldn't necessarily throw a chart out because of late degrees. These areas of the signs are the terms of the malefics and so afflict the ☽ when it is so placed. However, this can be very relevant and descriptive. Again, much depends on the context of the question. This position can have similar meanings to those above. I ought to mention that there was a significant gap in the workbooks after Lilly had judged three charts with the ☽ in late ♊. He restarted work after the ☽ had changed signs by a few degrees.

Via Combusta

Lilly says on page 122: ... as some say, when she [the ☽] is in the Via Combusta ... suggesting disagreement among other writers about this matter. He does not allow this to prevent him judging a chart and I can see no reason why this should make a chart non-radical. Its interpretative value is illustrated below.

The ☽ in the Via Combusta shows many things: fear, illness, death, hidden

matters and imprisonment being some. Therefore, it is not unusual to find this position in a chart about these topics. The first chart Maurice quotes (from page 415) is a question about which of the husband or wife would die first. Lilly advises us that there were many serious reasons why the question was asked. He uses the ☽ to show the wife's conditions, which are commensurate with those of the ☽- she died soon after.

The second chart (on page 468) is that of bewitchment. The querent was very ill and the ☽ in the Via Combusta showed the tremendous fear felt by that person of being attacked by witchcraft.

Both charts would fall under the heading of describing the conditions of the querent and would therefore be radical in Lilly's terms. If they didn't describe like this, then perhaps it would be wiser to put the chart aside (4).

When the 7th cusp or its ruler is afflicted

Here we are dealing directly with the safety of the astrologer, but not, I would say, when the astrologer asks their own question. So, an element of personal control can be put into effect here. Also, questions about 7th house matters are exempt from this rule. Lilly conforms to this rule in Christian Astrology in all but one example:

Page 196 ... The 7th ruler ☽ is in fall, so it is unfortunate. However, in this case - and remember that we are dealing with the astrologer's position - the ☽ is △ the 7th cusp, as is the ☉. The ☽ is also in △ with an exalted ♃. Protection enough, I think.

♄
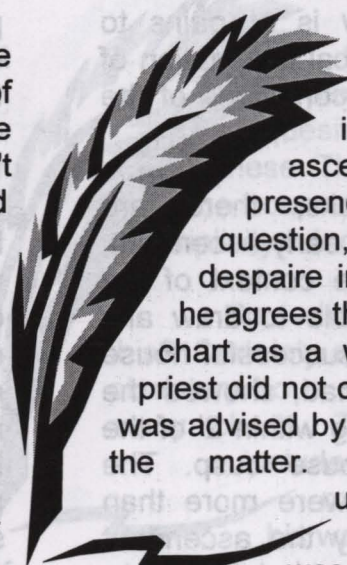## Saturn in the 1st house

On page 122, this Consideration is preceded by the phrase: The Arabians ...doe deliver these following rules, as very fit to be considered ... which is also the case for Saturn in the 7th house, the rule of the ascendant combust and the ruler of the 7th unfortunate. Is he agreeing with this or merely reporting?

The chart on page 437, has ♄ ℞ in the 1st house. This question, If he should obtaine the parsonage desired?, was rather distasteful to Lilly, since he disliked the priest and his reasons for asking. Nonetheless, he judges the chart and, in fact, uses this placing of ♄ to describe the querent's conditions: ♄ is impedited in the ascendant, and by his presence infortunates the question, causing the querent to despaire in the obtaining of it. So, he agrees that ♄ here is afflicting the chart as a whole and certainly the priest did not obtain the parsonage and was advised by Lilly not to proceed with the matter. The matter ended unfortunately, in that the priest did proceed and was subsequently reported anonymously for some liaison with a woman, ruining his chance of getting the post.

The outcome didn't bring any good and it ended badly for the querent, but that doesn't mean that it should not have been judged. Suppose ♄ represented a lost or stolen item; found in the first and retrograde it could be said that the item would be found or returned. ♄ is often found in the ascendant in charts about kidnap and other serious crime, where it

can show someone in fear for their life. Also, Saturn describes worry and old age, so any of these descriptions can be useful in finding radicality not denying it.

♄
Saturn in the 7th house

Again, it isn't clear whether he actually advocated the use of this rule or not, but I will proceed to each chart in turn. I think that each of these 7th house considerations can only apply when it is not a 7th house matter under scrutiny and each of the following charts falls into that category. Although, it is interesting to see the outcome of each.

Page 200 A report that Cambridge was taken by the King's forces; if true? This is an event chart, so Considerations do not apply. In any case, it is a 7th house matter being a chart connected to war, and a malefic in the 7th of your enemies would be greeted with delight. However, it is true that this matter did go from one misfortune to another - the King was beheaded!

Page 395 Money lost, who stole it? If recoverable? ♄ is in the 7th but theft is essentially a 7th house matter and we can see from the outcome that Lilly's judgement was not faulty. Whether the matter went from one misfortune to another or not, we have no way of knowing. One thing is certain: Lilly disliked the querent and this person did try to persuade Lilly to an erroneous judgement.

Page 415 Whether man or wife shall dye first? This again is a 7th house matter, but we can also look at the fact that this question was about death, of which ♄ is the natural ruler and is in the house of the wife. The woman did die soon after, so ♄'s position is relevant to the question. So, even though these were 7th house matters, none of them had happy endings.

Ruler of the ascendant combust.

I would apply the same comments here as I did to the ☽ in the Via Combusta, in that this position can be very descriptive. Combustion is used to show hidden matters and secrets, so getting description from the chart is vital to ensure you are not being duped or misled.

Page 219 If I should purchase Mr. B his houses? This was Lilly's own question, so presumably this Consideration would not apply since he is hardly likely to be hiding anything from himself. His significator is combust in the 7th house. However, these are the two primary significators and it was the perfection of this ♂ of his significator and the ☉ which successfully closed the deal after some difficulties.

◎

Ruler of the 7th unfortunate

Maurice listed 22 charts as having the 7th ruler unfortunate, there simply is not space here to look at all of them. What I suggest is that since this Consideration is more or less the same as having ♄ in the 7th and the 7th cusp or its ruler afflicted, the same arguments apply. Moreover, many of the charts cited in those earlier paragraphs are included in this one. In this regard I think that I have shown what I set out to and therefore further effort is unnecessary.

Equal testimonies

The interesting thing here is that Lilly instructs his readers to ask another question if this equality is found. This does not necessarily mean that the same question can be asked, but it certainly casts doubt over the stricture that a question may only be asked once. This stricture (the source of which is unknown to me) has always puzzled me - how is it possible to know that your question has never been asked before? I refer, of course, to those matters about which we are all concerned, ``Will the child be found?'', ``Who will win the election?'' (hopefully not ``Will Charles and Diana separate?''!) (5)

If a personal question is repeatedly asked there is something very wrong with either the astrologer or the querent. It may be necessary to respond to new developments with new horaries, but if a chart tells you that you will never marry this person, why pursue it every time your beloved calls you?
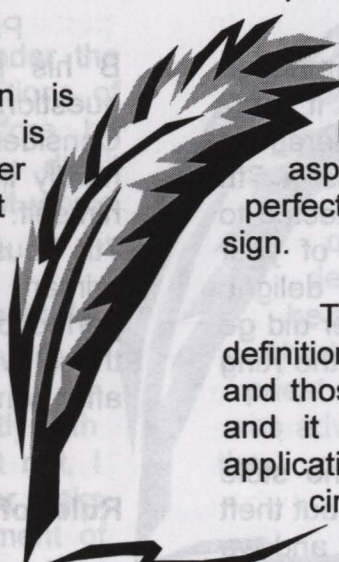
☽ Void of Course

I have dealt with this rule separately because in the course of my researches for this article, some surprising information came to light.

Most of us follow the same method of deciding when this rule is in effect, that is when the ☽ has no more major aspects to perfect in its sign. So, at first glance the five charts which Maurice mentions certainly have the ☽ void of course. Lilly has, in fact, used the next aspect the ☽ will perfect after it changes sign in each of these charts. I was aware that Lilly did

this and used it in my practice, regular readers will have read as much in this column in the past. But there is much more to it than that.

Lilly says: A planet is void of course, when he is separated from a planet, nor doth forthwith, during his being in that sign, apply to any other: ...". Contrary to what most of us understood, this does not mean that the aspect has to perfect while the ☽ is in its current sign. What it does mean is that the application has to be in effect while the ☽ is in its current sign. Application operates only when the ☽(or planet) is within orbs of the next major aspect. It doesn't matter, from this point of view, that it has to leave the sign before perfecting the aspect. So, to be void of course the ☽ (or planet) has to be out of orb of the next major aspect - even if it will eventually perfect this aspect within the current sign.

This matter largely depends on the definition of application in Lilly's terms, and those of the authors he drew upon, and it meant to be within orb. The application happeneth when as the circles or beames of the planettes come to joyne togeather by a corporall conjunction or by aspecte of the one half of their deamiters. (Chpt. 7 A breefe and easie Introduction to Astrology..., Claude Dariot 1583?) This definition is clear: a planet cannot be said to be applying until it is within orb of aspect. By this I mean, when the moiety of each planet touches. What we have done is to alter the meaning of application to that of moving forward in the sign. Applying to aspect means to be within orbs of that aspect. (6)

Now, the definition of void of course:

➤ ... not joined to any planet by body or aspect. (Page 4 Anima Astrologiae, Bonatus. Pub. Regulus)

➤ If the ☽ is so located that she is moving toward nothing, is in aspect to no planet, ... (Page 123 Mathesis Firmicus Maternus, trans. Jean Bram. Pub.)

According to these quotes, and others not included here, no one says that the ☽ has to perfect the aspect before it changes sign. This is a modern assumption based on a misreading. The evidence in Christian Astrology does not support this misreading and leads me to conclude that the ☽ is not void of course if it is within orbs of an aspect, whether it perfects in or out of its current sign. Therefore, the ☽ (or planet) can be void of course even when it is in early degrees, if the next planet it meets in major aspect is out of orb (7).

The crucial point about this is the definition of `application' and I have checked all the charts in Christian Astrology to see just how Lilly uses this term. Of these there are three which are dubious in this respect:

➤ Page 156 ... ☿ at 17° ♋ is said to be applying to a □ of ♃ at 27°15' ♎. This application is .5° out of orb.

➤ Page 399 ... The ☽ at 8° ♉ is said to apply to ☿ at 21ø ♓. This is 2° out of orb. (8)

➤ Page 468 ... The ☽ is at 6°20' ♏ and he says it is applying to the ☍ of ♄ at 15°30' ♉ and then to ☿ at 23° ♓. The △ to ☿ is out of orb by 7°. (9)

I cannot explain these discrepancies (10), but I think that having only three

charts at variance with the rest of the evidence does not necessarily invalidate that evidence. Besides 30' is too small to worry about when Lilly himself says that he used whichever orb he remembered at the time. (Page 107 shows the variety of orbs offered.)

The most telling example of how application was used and, perhaps, an explanation of how it became confused, is the well known horary If Presbytery shall stand? (page 439). ♀, ruler of the 9th house, is at 9°16' ♈, he says: ... but before she fully get out of this movable signe Aries, she first hath occurse to the sinister □ of ♃, then of ♂, ...♃ is at 28°54' ♋ and ♂ is at 25°40' ♋, both are out of orb, so ♀ is not applying to aspect. He is registering this by using the word `occurse', meaning that ♀ has to make these aspects before leaving the sign. He is not saying that ♀ is applying to aspect these two.

This is further supported in the same judgement: We have the ☽ separating from ♀ in the eighth, then going to be vacua cursus [void of course] afterwards she □ with ♂, then with ♃: ... The ☽ is at 13°37' ♎, ♂ is at 25°40' ♋ and ♃ is at 28°54' ♋. ♂ and ♃ are out of orb of the ☽ and so the ☽ is not applying, but because he feels that these aspects are relevant he mentions them as occurring later. This chart has been judged with the ☽ void of course.

This is my perspective of the evidence, but it is possible that I have missed something which refutes it, if you know of something write to me.

The following charts, cited by Maurice as having the ☽ void of course, are good examples of the rule in practice and show

that Lilly did not ignore it. In fact, I can confirm that he adhered fairly closely to this rule in his daily work, too.
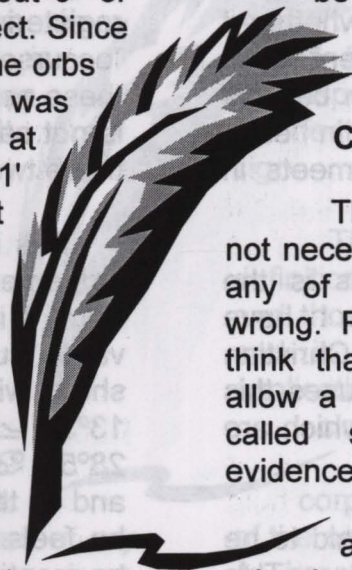
➤ Page 152 ... The ☽ is at 26°43' ♓ and the ☉ is at 7°03' ♌. These two are within orbs of a △ and so the ☽ is not void of course.

➤ Page 238 ... The ☽ is at 29°53' ♏ and is within orbs of a □ to the ☉ at 0°31' ♋.

➤ Page 385 ... This is a good example, because Lilly has noted the ☽ progress as a voc [from void of course] ad ☍ ☉ [to the ☍ of the ☉]. The ☽'s last aspect was an ☍ with ☿ over 12° before. The ☽ has a moiety of around 6° and ☿ has a moiety of around 3.5°, therefore at about 9° or 10° before, they were in aspect. Since then the ☽ has been within the orbs of no other planet and so was void of course. The ☽ is at 28°09' ♐ and the ☉ is at 5°31' ♋. It is in these cases that the usual interpretations of the void of course ☽ would apply.

➤ Page 401 ... Another example of his stating that the ☽ is separating from void of course, but in this case its application is to a ✶ of ♂. The ☽'s last aspect was by △ to ♃, but that was more than 17.5° ago and their combined moieties are about 11ø. The ☽ is at 27°33' ♌ and ♂ is at 5°14' ♋ and is an applying △.

➤ Page 471 ... The ☽ is at 28°10' ♒ and applies to ✶ ♄, which is at 0°36' ♉ and then to a △ of ♃ at 5°53' ♋. Both are counted because both are within orbs, in fact, if you needed to, you might also include the applying △ to the ☉ which is at 6°30' ♏.

So we can conclude that it is rare for Lilly to judge a chart when the ☽ is void of course. The one example that I have mentioned (If Presbytery shall stand?) had great descriptive value. It was also an afflicted chart in other ways, one being the ☽ in the Via Combusta, but that is hardly surprising considering the nature of the question and its implications.

As for the interpretation of the ☽ void of course, we tend to stick to one or two (for further details read the Questions and Answers column), but Lilly gives several: pages 190, 192, 299, 310, 377 and 448. The fact that he does this implies that he did not reject a chart because the ☽ is void of course. He is accepting the interpretation it offers.

Conclusion

The rules, or Considerations, are not necessarily strictures, but to say that any of them should be discarded is wrong. Radicality must be found, but I think that the methods of finding that allow a little more scope than the so-called strictures would admit. The evidence, as far as can be ascertained, shows that Lilly did at least acknowledge the rules. We know that he spent a considerable amount of time on finding description in the chart, and this must be the ultimate test of radicality. Furthermore, we need to separate the charts we do for clients and those we do for ourselves. If any of these rules are in operation with no descriptive reason, then it would be better not to give judgement to a client. Henry Coley verifies this to some extent: But when the sign ascending, and his lord represent the querent, or a planet in the ascendant

signifies him truly, you may safely venture to give your judgement. (Key to the Whole Art of Astrology, Henry Coley, page 127)

No chart should be rejected simply because one or other of these rules is in operation, but a careful appraisal of the situation should be made. Always find the description and if it fits go ahead, but be careful particularly if you have to give judgement to a client. If you can't find strict radicality it is likely that difficulties can be anticipated. It would appear from Lilly's own work that the smooth and easy perfection of a chart sought by the querent was obstructed by the operation of these rules.

To repeat: the ancient astrologers were often in great danger if they could not give the querent the answer they wanted. The rules gave them ample warning that there was a risk in giving judgement. The same applies to us today, but if you are prepared to take that risk, or if it doesn't seem too great, then go ahead. Which brings me to an important point: make sure that the querent really wants to know the answer.

This research has shown me that Lilly applied the spirit of the rule rather than the letter. The rules are there to help and advise, not to restrict, and this is so in all of astrology, not just in considerations before the judgement of a horary chart. However, Lilly found a method that allowed him to assess radicality in a broader sense than had ever been used before. In his words: ... and if my Judgements doe vary from the common Rules of the Ancients, let the Candid Reader excuse me, sith he may still follow their Principles if he please; and he must know, that from my Conversation in their Writings, I have attained the Method I follow. Therefore, it would seem unwise to deal with the rules as he did and then not follow his method.

The rules are there to guide us in our judgements and were ratified by William Lilly - a better astrologer than any of us is ever likely to be.

Appendix 1997

There has been some difficulty with what I have put forward here. The crux of the matter of the void of course condition is the meaning of application, I have no doubt that the definition I provided four years ago is the correct one. This is not pedantry or intellectual conceit, I have checked and double-checked and found nothing to contradict it. Project Hindsight gives the literal meaning of the Greek as 'coming into contact with', this does not translate as 'will get there eventually'.

In his very interesting article in the last issue of this magazine, Anthony Louis presents some definitions of the void of course condition: the modern one, as I described earlier in this article, and that offered by Lilly and Dariot which, unlike Anthony Louis, I consider to be almost identical. I can see no difference in the two definitions. Much has been made of this word forthwith that Lilly has used in his definition, my view is that this is of no great importance and has no bearing on the definition as a whole. Since application can only occur in a precise set of circumstances, forthwith can only reinforce that. Dariot and Lilly concur which is unsurprising since Lilly cites Dariot as a primary source.

Whatever you think of the void of course debate, the incontrovertible fact is

that 'to apply' is a technical term with specific parameters. I was interested only in showing that it is our misuse of the term that has changed the meaning of the void of course rule and that Lilly did not flout the void of course caution. If you accept the meaning of 'application' and use it then I suggest you also try the traditional definition of void of course.

Take a look at failed horaries where you have assumed a void ☽ and promised no action and something did indeed happen, or where you have predicted an event that wasn't, perhaps the ☽ was void according to the traditional definition.

Endnotes

1. Thank you to Deborah Houlding for this information.
2. It is not correct to look for agreement of nature between the ruler of the hour and the rising sign.
3. For 'should' read 'could' - I'm more cautious these days!
4. Lilly rarely even mentions the Via Combusta and never when the ascendant or a significator is so placed.
5. I take a different line with this type of question now and have come to the conclusion that such questions will only produce a clear, judgeable chart if the matter is of serious importance to the querent and it does not involve interfering or intruding in someone else's life.
6. For example: ☽ at 21° ♈ and ☉ at 2° ♉ (no other planets intervening). The ☽ is applying to ♂ the ☉ because their moieties, or half orbs, total to

about 14°. The ☽ is thus making an application from its current sign and so is not void of course, the fact that the completion of that ♂ takes place in ♉ is immaterial.

7. For example: ☽ at 5° ♈ and ☉ at 19° ♈ (no other planets intervening). Here they are out of orb of the conjunction and since the ☽ applies to no other earlier planet by major aspect, it is void of course.
8. Although the phrasing in this passage is misleading and he says _and then to ☿, it is possible that he is not implying application here.
9. As above, I do not think that he implies application here.
10. See 8) and 9) above.

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