

Angela Merkel and “This Wall”

This article studies the astrology of collective events and one individual, the current German Chancellor Angela Merkel. At the time of the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the subsequent end of East Germany, Merkel was a scientist and had lived a rather ordinary life under Communist rule. Shortly after the Wall came down Ms. Merkel walked into the office of a new political party, asking if she could help out. The rest, one could say, is history.

This article is my fifth astrological profile of current European leaders, beginning with David Cameron in 2009 and continuing with Vladimir Putin in 2013, Francois Hollande of France in 2013 and in 2014 Matteo Renzi of Italy. This profile of Angela Merkel was inspired by a recent profile by George Packer published in the *New Yorker*.



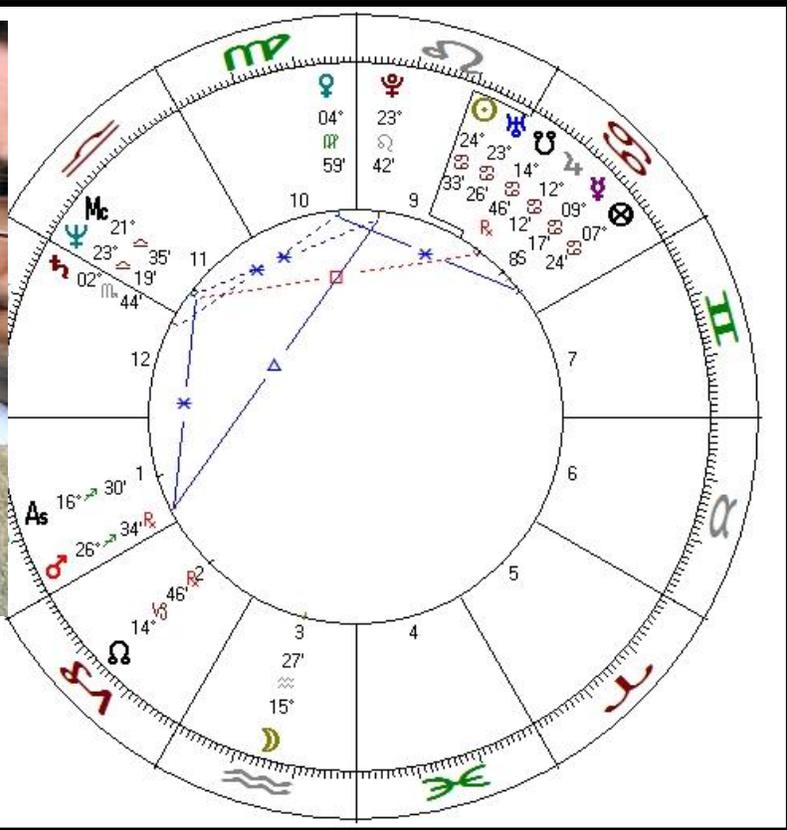
We know – or should know – the story of the Berlin Wall. Last month (November 2014) was the 25th anniversary of the destruction of the Berlin Wall that was erected in the early 1960’s to prevent citizens from East Berlin and East Germany from fleeing to West Berlin and to the West. Over the years there were numerous attempts to pass through or tunnel under the wall; for the few people who succeeded (see photo below) many lost their lives. The Berlin Wall was the scene of two famous addresses to the German citizens by the American Presidents John Kennedy and Ronald Reagan.

It’s 1989 and things have become very different: the governments of the Soviet Union and its satellite Eastern European countries had weakened considerably; there were mass demonstrations against the Communist regimes and the lifestyle it imposed on its citizens of these nations. In October long-standing leader of East Germany was

deposed. In early November there were mass demonstrations in Leipzig and in East Berlin. Czechoslovakia then opened its borders so that people in East Germany could freely go to the West. On November 9 the East German government finally announced that people could cross into West Germany if they desired. Beginning that afternoon and well into the evening, people began crossing and began to destroy the wall using picks, hammers, and drills. The party at the Berlin Wall that evening became the great iconic moment of the fall of the Communist regimes in Eastern Europe. I remember well where I was and what I was doing when I heard that the Wall had come down, and it was a time of jubilation and new possibility around the world.



The
East
German



government soon collapsed and official reunification of East and West Germany took place two years later. After a period of reconstruction, Germany has taken its place as the economic powerhouse of Europe and is the decisive country in the European Union – to the regret of many Europeans who live in countries that have undergone economic austerity programs, at the insistence of Germany and its leader. Recently Angela Merkel was named at “The Most Powerful Woman in the World” and is ranked second (Behind Obama? Or is it Putin?) as the Most Powerful Person in the World. Unlike both Obama and Putin, Merkel is low on personal charisma, deliberately gives dull speeches, and generally conducts herself more like a hard-working bureaucrat than a world leader. Most German citizens admire her cool intelligence and efficiency, but will someday wander off to find somebody more exciting to lead them. That time has not yet come.

Her natal chart is to the right. From my description, she really sounds like a “Cancer”, right? One of the faults of modern astrology is its tendency to reduce individuals to Sun sign stereotypes that would have Merkel at home baking Berliner pastries surrounded by adoring children of all ages. Not quite.

Her Sun in Cancer keeps pretty heavy company, just leaving a conjunction with Uranus and a square to Neptune. (Her political ascendancy began when Uranus and Neptune were in their phase of conjunction.) These outer planet contacts can have a variety of effects on a natal Sun – it gives Merkel a quality of unconventionality and impersonal willfulness (Uranus) and an interest in the larger picture (Neptune). It is also interesting to note that her father was a Lutheran minister in Communist (and atheist) East Germany and the Neptune square may point to a religious connection she does not share publically.

We may also note that her Cancer planets are in the Eighth House that does not easily connect with the First House and Ascendant. You may think of Sagittarius the mutable fire sign and Cancer the cardinal water sign are completely disconnected. There is a connection, however, is that planets from both signs can form *antiscion* relationships if they are equally distant from the Cancer-Capricorn axis. Merkel’s Ascendant at 16° Sagittarius is tantalizingly close to an antiscion relationship with its ruler Jupiter at 12° Cancer (degrees and minutes should add up to 30 to be exact.) This connection would account for her interest in politics in general and for her sustained interest in international relations (especially along economic lines) from India to China to the United States.

Also modifying a Cancer character-type for Merkel is the strongly present Mars in Sagittarius in the First House, representing what part of her you see. Mars strikes me as giving her a more strident and self-righteous demeanor than she generally displays. Growing up in East German as a young woman scientist might reduce the tendencies of Mars to come across too strongly for her. In her early professional life Merkel did what

was necessary to fit in with the East German ideological requirements and she performed her ideological duties with no distinction. It seems that many people who live in Italy, Spain, and Greece see her having a sufficient amount of self-righteous Sagittarian Mars. (In her non-political life Merkel is an avid soccer fan and loves Wagnerian opera: both give vent to the expressive needs of Mars in Sagittarius.)

We need also note the dispositor of her Cancer planets: Moon in Aquarius! Generally speaking Moon in Aquarius does not make for a very happy *Hausfrau*: there is too much independent-mindedness and too much capacity for objective reflection.

The application of Mercury to Jupiter preceding the Sun is fascinating -- Jupiter will rise from the Sun, Mercury is on its way of setting into the Sun but this will take a few weeks. Jupiter, exalted and rising from the Sun, is stronger than one would ordinarily find a planet in the Eighth House. Mercury is able to hang on to Jupiter's coat tails and it seems no accident that the Jupiter career of a politician (especially with a great interest in foreign affairs) succeeded that of a Mercurial scientist.

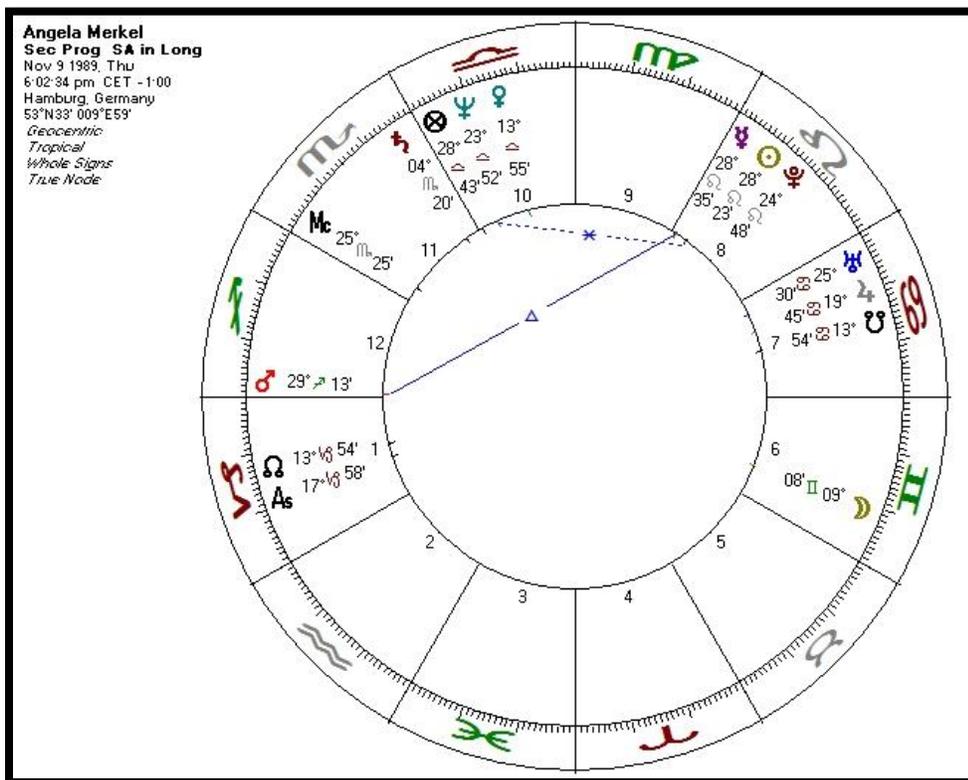
Mercury, with the assistance of Jupiter, looms large, as Mercury is the ruler of the Tenth House of career and calling. Her political career, especially her rapid rise to prominence, is the result of her being not only personally ambitious but extremely crafty, especially in her ability to size up and outmaneuver the competition. We will see the importance of Mercury below when we talk about the fall of the Berlin Wall and the beginning of her political career.

I end our discussion of her natal chart with a look at Venus. It is the ruler of her Lot of Spirit in Taurus and is in the Tenth House of career. Venus is in "fall" in Virgo, of course – its bright side is an ability to use analysis when charm is not sufficient. The close sextile from Saturn in Scorpio may give a Virgo Venus darkness that may approach cynicism. Her path to power is littered with self-absorbed male politicians who made the mistake of underestimating her interpersonal savvy and personal ambition.

Now let's talk about her astrological indicators at the time the Berlin Wall fell.

Hellenistic predictive indicators give us some information. Decennials are an old planetary system whereby a "general planetary lord" reigns for ten years and nine months of 360-day years and gives a "specific planetary lord" for numbers of 30-day months corresponding to the "number" of the planet. (For more information see Chapter 13 of *Astrological Roots: The Hellenistic Legacy*.) Merkel began a Mars general period in 1986, and Mars/Mercury began in August 1989 – Mercury is the ruler of her tenth house. By April 1991 the decennials changed to Mars-Jupiter and Merkel had already risen to political prominence. Additionally, using the technique of zodiacal releasing, during the time of the fall of the Berlin Wall the signs involved were Cancer-Sagittarius, the sign of her planetary line-up, including Sun and Ascendant ruler and the Ascendant itself.

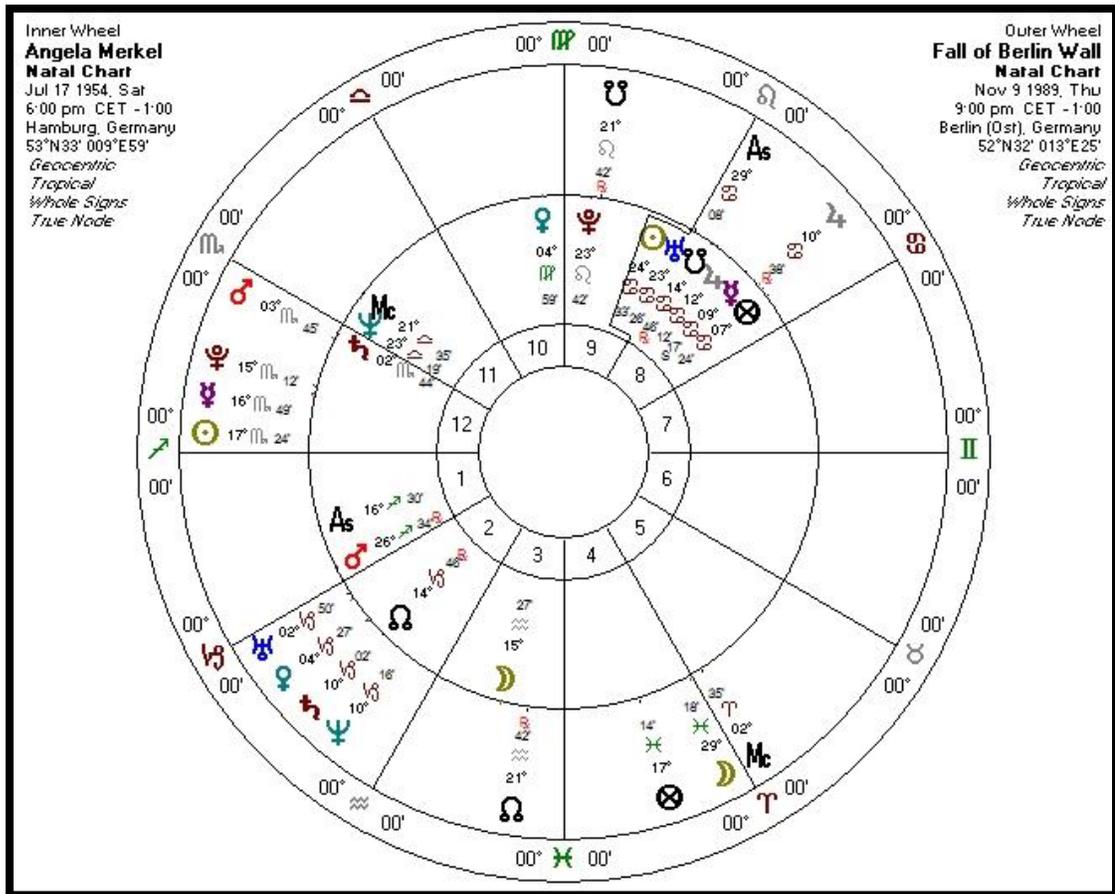
Merkel's secondary progressions for this time are quite interesting. Her progressed chart is to the left. We see a prominence for Mercury.



There was a conjunction of Mercury and Sun in September 1989, followed by Mercury in trine to Mars in March, 1990, followed by Mercury

moving into its domicile sign of Virgo, in September 1990. Then, as Merkel took on different roles in the national government, progressed Sun was in trine to Mars (February 1991) and finally Sun itself entered Virgo (July 1991). This parallels nicely with a complete change of focus, resulting in her surprising climb to power.

Her transits also highlight Mercury. To the right is a bi-wheel of her transits at the time of the fall of the Berlin Wall.



Many astrologers at that time noted the opposition between Jupiter in Cancer and Saturn/Neptune in Capricorn that was signaling the crumbling of Communist hegemony in Europe. Note the closeness of Merkel's Mercury to this configuration. Not only her career but her entire way of looking on herself and the world was to undergo a major change; if not for Jupiter making the most of the situation, the Saturn-Neptune opposition could have spelled major problems for her, especially if she

persisted in her science career. Jupiter helped her think and act more broadly, to take on a larger stage.

This could not have been an easy transition for her – notice that transiting Pluto, at 15° Scorpio, was exactly square natal Moon, the dispositor of her Cancer planets! Remarkably she has been able to preserve her personal life – her husband lives completely behind the scenes – in spite of her being completely taken over by national and international activities.

In many ways Merkel, as an East German woman entering politics during a time of huge national change, was the right person at the right time, but so were others. The difference, it seems, is the prominence of her astrological indicators at the time of her rise to power. The strong participation of Mercury points out to her ability to use her intelligence and subtle craftiness to bring herself to national – and then international – prominence.