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Puzzling Eminence Effects Might Make Good Sense

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Abstract–According to Gauquelin's eminence hypothesis, planetary effects increase with increasing professional renown. The author's former findings, however, did not always support this hypothesis. In some cases planetary effects went down, or first up and then down, with increasing eminence. Müller's recent unexpected results with very eminent professionals, which showed a considerable weakening of planetary effects instead of an amplification, gave rise to the hypothesis that the relationship of planetary effects to eminence might be curvilinear, instead of linear, across all planets and professions. Thus previous results suggesting linear relationships might have been due to restricted eminence sampling. By extending the analyses to athletes (olympic medallists), scientists, and actors covering a wider range of eminence, marked curvilinear patterns did in fact emerge.

Among world-wide research on astrological claims, Michel Gauquelin's work, has been called a golden grain in a heap of dust—Hans Eysenck's metaphor (Eysenck & Nias, 1982), and an erratic block rolled on the road of science—Arno Müller's metaphor (Müller, 1990). Both ways of putting it refer to an apparent anomaly calling for scientific scrutiny. Will Müller's most recent negative results on eminent people of his own collection (Müller, 1992a, partly published 1992b) eventually wash off the golden color from the grain and reduce the block to nothing? Gauquelin's eminence hypothesis is at issue here. I will give an account of its status.

In his first book published in 1955, Gauquelin referred to the incidental observation "that a certain degree of [professional] success was necessary for the planetary effects to be visible." (Gauquelin, 1983, p. 28).

In his second book published in 1960, he repeatedly tested this connection by comparing famous with less famous samples (sports champions, p.89; actors, p.118; politicians, p.109; painters, p.122; scientists, p.76, Gauquelin, 1960). He reported consistent differences of planetary effects in each case.

He then generalized the findings by introducing the eminence doctrine: "The greater the heights reached by an individual in his chosen profession, the more likely he is to have been born in 'planetary conformity' with his peers" (Gauquelin, 1973, quoted in Gauquelin, 1988 , p. 39).

The evidence for Gauquelin's generalization was based, however, on a crude dichotomous classification into famous and not famous, which of course does not account for the entire range of eminence levels that might actually be

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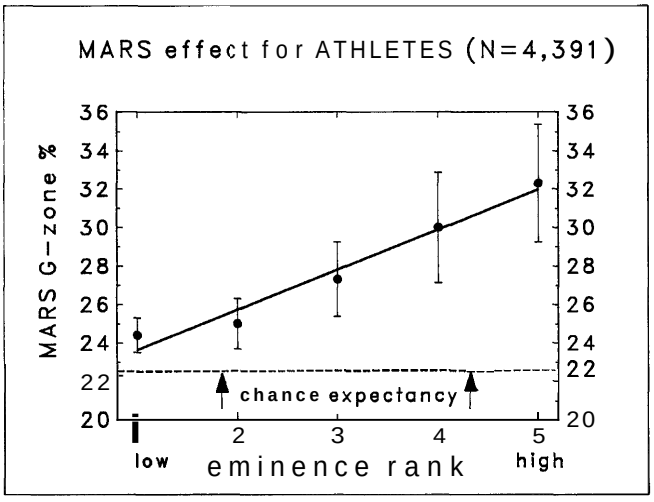

Fig. 1. For athletes (N = 4,391) positive deviations of Mars G-zone proportions increase with eminence.

distinguished. Moreover, Gauquelin's breaking down of his professional samples into high versus low eminence tended to be based on flimsy criteria. So I came to a challenging conclusion: If differences in planetary proportions between samples of high versus low eminence emerged by applying flimsy criteria, they should become more conspicuous by testing them with more refined criteria. If Gauquelin's lemon was genuine, an improved way of squeezing it should yield more juice. If further juice would not come out, Gauquelin's lemon would be dubious.

Eminence scaling requires appropriate reference books, biographical dictionaries, Who's Who's and the like, a great number of them, and the counting of citations. I started out with athletes. The names of 4,391 Gauquelin athletes were looked up, and each citation increased his or her eminence score by 1. With 18 reference sources the highest citation count obtainable was therefore 18.

The wide range of eminence *raw scores* was then replaced by a smaller number of eminence *ranks*. As higher raw scores are rare compared to lower raw scores, higher ranks should cover a wider range of raw scores than lower ranks to avoid an imbalanced distribution. Further technicalities have been minutely described in an earlier article (Ertel, 1988). For the sources of data in the present study, see appendix.

Did Gauquelin's lemon yield more juice when squeezed with an improved device? Yes, it did (Ertel, 1988, p. 68ff); see Figure 1. Here are five eminence ranks, and for each rank is given the percentage of athletes born with Mars in a G-zone (G-zone or Gauquelin zone refers to sensitive key sectors at the horizon or meridian). The results show that the more eminent the athletes the greater the proportion of Mars-born individuals among them.

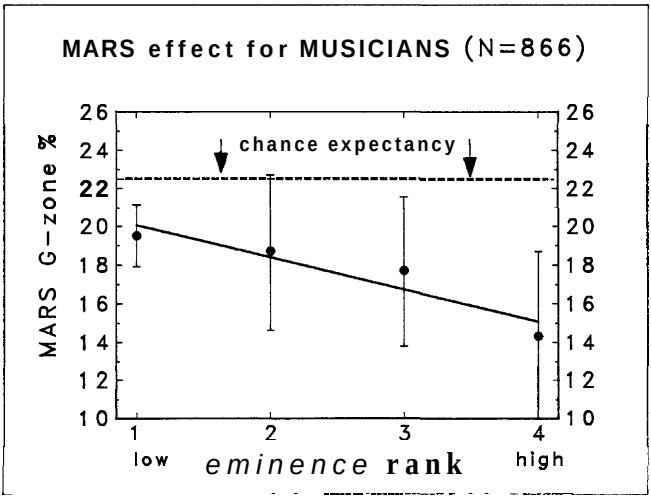

Fig. 2. For musicians (French only, N = 866) negative deviations Bof Mars G-zone proportions increase with eminence.

Figure 2 shows Mars G-zone proportions for musicians (from Ertel, 1987). Its slope here is reversed for the following reason. Planetary effects may be positive, e.g., *more* future *athletes* are born with Mars in G-zones than expected by chance, and they may also be negative, e.g., *fewer* future *musicians* are born with Mars in G-zones than expected by chance. In short: Mars in G zones at birth is "preferred" by athletes, but "avoided" by musicians. If planetary effects increase with eminence, the slope should rise in the first case and drop in the second, departing from the chance line progressively in both cases. The slope in Figure 2 is thus totally predictable from Gauquelin's eminence hypothesis.

The slope in Figure 3, however, representing proportions of *scientists* born with *Saturn* in G-zones (see Ertel, 1989) could never have been predicted by Gauquelin's hypothesis. The *overall* Saturn effect for scientists is clearly positive, but the eminence curve slants downwards instead of upwards. Thus, Gauquelin's hypothesis, in its original form at least, does not hold.

In what follows I will revise Gauquelin's eminence hypothesis, and try to restore, eventually, consistency among eminence observations which presently might appear rather contradictory.

A closer look at Figure 3 shows that it does not represent all possible eminence levels. With scientists at eminence rank one, the proportion of Saturn-born individuals is far above the chance level shown by the general population. The high level of rank one scientists must therefore decline to the low level of the general population. It is not unreasonable, therefore, to postulate the existence of scientists of still less eminence ranging between rank one and the general population. As a matter of fact, rank one on our eminence scale is quite high—such scientists must have had obtained an entry in at least one ref-

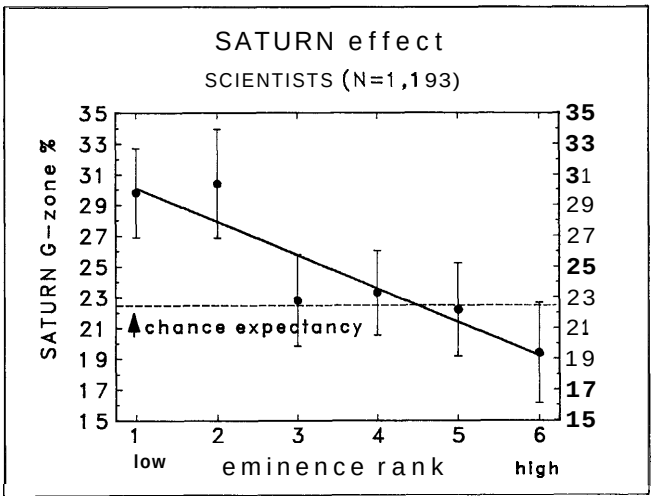

Fig. 3. For scientists (N = 1,193) positive deviations of Saturn G-zone proportions decrease with eminence.

erence book, and perhaps the majority of scientists would not qualify. So it is reasonable to assume that if lower-than-rank-one scientists had been included in this study they would most probably have provided the missing left portion of this curve. The curve would then take on a curvilinear shape, that is, an inverted U as shown in Figure 4 in which has been added, on the extreme left of the scale, Saturn G-proportion for ordinary people.

To summarize the various eminence observations so far obtained for *more-than-expected* planetary proportions: There are, first, upward slopes consistent

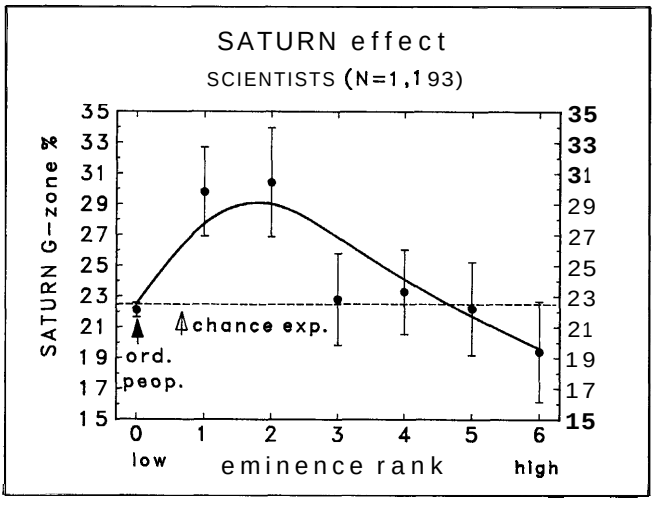

Fig. 4. With a sample of ordinary people added (N = 7,749) the curve takes on a curvilinear shape.

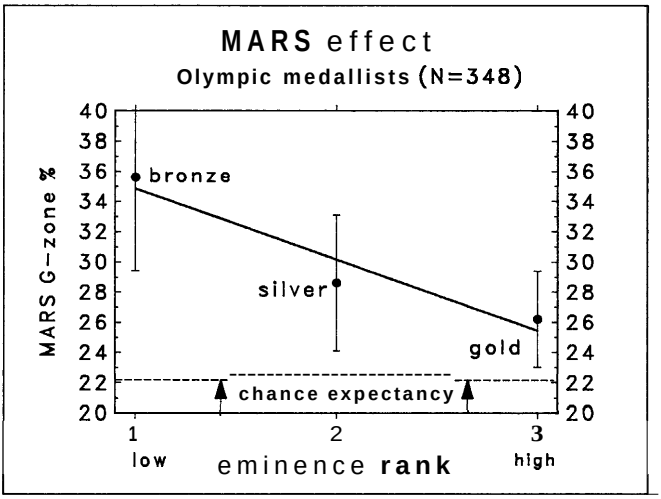

Fig. 5. For olympic winners (N = 348) positive deviations of Mars G-zone proportions decrease with medal rank.

with Gauquelin's expectation (Mars — athletes). There are, second, downward slopes inconsistent with Gauquelin's expectation (Saturn — scientists). Now we have been invoking a curvilinear relation with upward and downward slopes together as parts out of a broader pattern. Thus, the number of shapes does not actually increase.

Now, a hopeful inference is pending: Might the linear slant upwards (Mars — athletes) be regarded as just a section of an entire curvilinear relationship, that is, as its lower or left-hand section? Could it be that a downward slanted complement of the sports eminence curve on the right has not come to the fore because subsamples of the most eminent athletes were too small?

My first observation supporting this idea (unpublished) is several years old. Among Gauquelin's top athletes there are N = 353 olympic winners, most of them ranking high with citations. Among Olympic winners, however, we may still distinguish bronze, silver, and gold-medallists. Following Gauquelin's rule, we would expect an increase of Mars-born proportions from bronze to gold medallists. When I checked this at that time (the highest medal won was used for assigning an athlete to one of the three groups) I obtained the results shown in Figure 5. All three Mars G-zone proportions are high, but the curve goes down from bronze to gold instead of up. This result struck me, and I made a note starting with "Strange finding!"

But of course this graph is not complete. We should now add, at the left-hand section of the olympic eminence scale, athletes who never won medals in olympic games, and who in fact are in the great majority (N= 4,038) among Gauquelin athletes. We should also add, on the extreme left of the scale, the general population, people whose physical ability merely allows for watching olympic games on TV (N= 7,749) . And when we do that, we obtain an eminence relationship that has in fact a curvilinear shape (Figure 6).

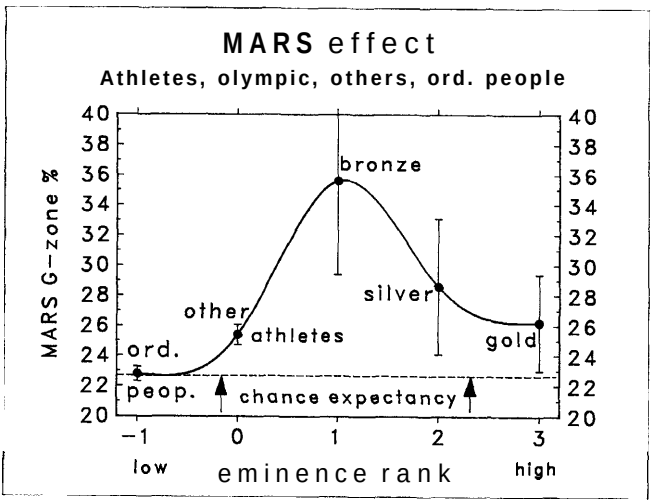

Fig. 6. With olympic non-winners (N = 4,043) and ordinary people added (N = 7,749), the curve takes on a curvilinear shape.

Another indication of curvilinearity that disturbed me some time later was obtained with actors, for whom Gauquelin had reported a Jupiter effect. Applying citation counts, I expected to replicate, for Jupiter and actors, the upwards slope that I had originally found with Mars and athletes (cf. Figure 1). I did actually find this for eminence in the lower range (Figure 7). But I also found a marked halt and even a drop in the upper range. My notebook says, reluctantly: "There is an unexpected drop with highest ranks." I hoped it would disappear by adding counts of citations from a newly-discovered reference book, a comprehensive one on theater and actors. But the turn downwards did not disappear.

Indeed, at that time, I did not welcome such observations. Anomalies within existing anomalies are not comforting. Recently, however, I was heavily reminded of these discomforts when reading Arno Muller's aforementioned report of negative results with very eminent people. Miiller's results gravely contradicted Gauquelin's eminence hypothesis, but they were consistent with my seemingly anomalous observations just described, and thus appeared to call for an eminence hypothesis suggesting a general curvilinear connection. If Gauquelin's claim were true, Miiller's unexcelled samples of celebrities should have displayed unexcelled levels of G-zone proportions. But in fact they were even much lower than those of former Gauquelin samples, which apparently makes sense only if curvilinear relations are real.

Let me do a final empirical check. Muller's two samples of celebrities, male and female, contain 143 actors and actresses. Almost all of them are internationally famous: Gina Lollobrigida, Orson Wells, Silvana Mangano, Grace Kelly, Ingrid Bergman, Marlene Dietrich, Gert Froebe, Bette Davis, Sophia

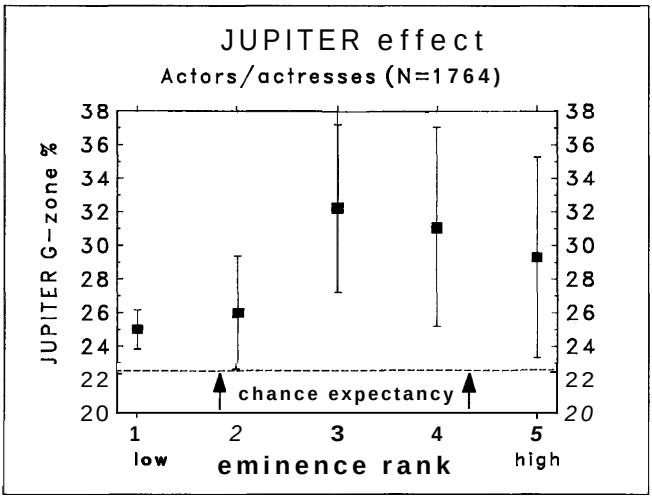

Fig. 7. For athletes (N = 1,764) positive deviations of Jupiter G-zone proportions suggest a curvilinear shape.

Loren etc., whereas Gauquelin's big sample of N= 1,740 actors/actresses is generally far less eminent, see Figure 8.

What should happen? In the actors' sample collected by Gauquelin we had noticed a slight drop of a Jupiter effect with upper ranks (Figure 7). If we add to this sample Miiller's super stars, the curvilinear hypothesis predicts that the drop should become more prominent. As can be seen in Figure 9, this is exactly what occurred. In fact the curvilinear shape has greatly improved. Had Gauquelin himself collected a greater proportion of superstars he might have become aware that his linear eminence hypothesis does not apply. It is to Arno Miiller's merit that he pushed the implications of Gauquelin's eminence hypothesis to the extreme, with seeming failure as the consequence. But actually Miiller's plain result forced us to accept the reality of such deviant observations, and to venture a more radical solution of the puzzle.

What have we achieved? On the one hand our result is modest. First, we do not know whether our revised eminence hypothesis will survive all future tests. Second, even if it does we would not really know what these eminence connections mean, whether curvilinear or not. Third, we would also not understand any better the meaning of planetary effects at all - aside from eminence implications.

On the other hand, however, I see three advances. First, if our hypothesis holds, we have to deal with an amazing degree of precision regarding astropsychological connections. Our library efforts at finding subtle differences among outstanding people at the end of their lives is but a reconstruction of how planets somehow discriminate as these lives began. Up to now we have been underrating the precision of planetary eminence discrimination and its importance had almost escaped us. Second, we have replaced the discouraging

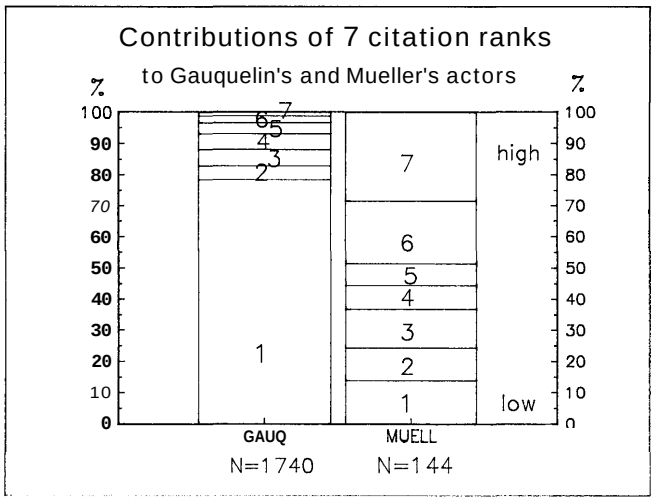

Fig. 8. Gauquelin's actors' total has a large subsample of lowest citation rank, Müller's total contains large subsamples of high citation rank.

confusion of up and down eminence trends with conceptual simplicity on a higher level. Third, we have prevented the triumph of true disbelievers who would see our laboring at self-created anomalies within anomalies as indicating a near end of the entire spook. Undisturbed by such sociological side-effects, we may now keep on playing with Gauquelin's golden grain in a heap of dust, and with that rigid block impeding smooth traffic on the road of science.

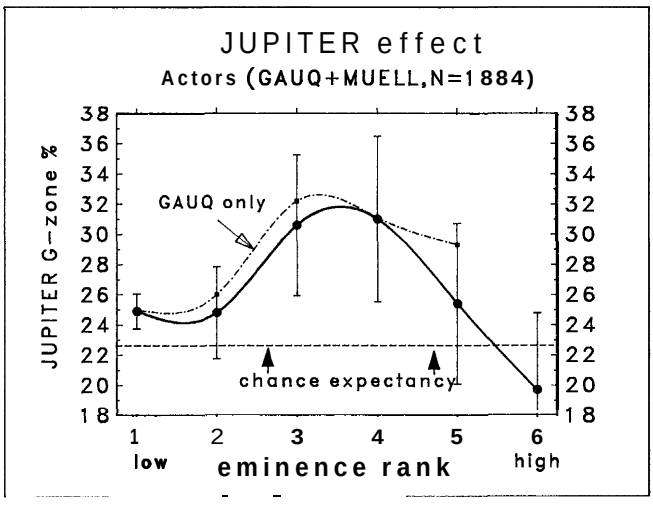

Fig. 9. With Miiller's most eminent actors added (N = 143) the curvilinear shape is greatly enhanced.

Acknowledgements

I wish to thank Arno Miiller for providing birth and planetary data of 612 eminent men and Geoffrey Dean and Jim Lippard for linguistic improvement of this paper. Citation counts were patiently done by Sigrid Hubner and Claudia Kasten.

Appendix

I. Sources of birth and planetary data used for studies referred to in the present paper.

Series A:	Gauquelin, M. & Gauquelin, F. (1970). Birth and planetary data. Series A. Paris: LERRCP. (5 vols.)
New Data:	Gauquelin, M. (1984). New birth data series. Paris: LERRCP. (3 vols.)
1. Actors:	Series A, Vol. 5. New Data, Vol. 3. Muller, A. (1992a), see References.
2. Athletes:	see Ertel, 1988, p. 58-61, 13 sources.
3. Musicians (French):	Series A, Vol. 4. New Data, Vol. 3.
4. Scientists:	Series A, Vol. 2.

II. Reference works used for citations

1. Actors:

Mc Neil, M.C.H. & Mc Neil, B. (1980).
Biography and Genealogy Master Index. Detroit, MI: Gale. 8 vols.
In one former study in addition:
Enciclopedia della spettaculo. (1954-62). Roma:
Casa Ed. Ie Maschere. 9 vols.

2. Athletes:

(see Ertel, 1988, p. 82, 21 sources).

3. Musicians:

Barlow, H. & Morgenstern, S. (1978). A dictionary of opera and song themes. New York: Crown.

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Sadie, S. (1980). The new Grove dictionary of music and musicians. London: Macmillan, 20 vols.

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Gauquelin, M. (1983). *The truth about astrology.* Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

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Muller, A. (1990). Planetary influences on human behavior ("Gauquelin Effect"): Too absurd for scientific explanation? *Journal of Scientific Exploration,* 4(1), 85-104.

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Muller, A. (1992b). *Testing the Gauquelin effect with new data: 612 most eminent men.* Paper presented at the First European SSE Meeting. Munich, Aug. 7-8, 1992.