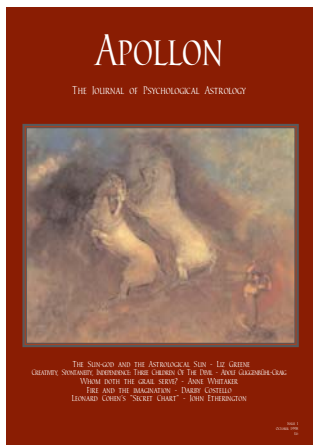


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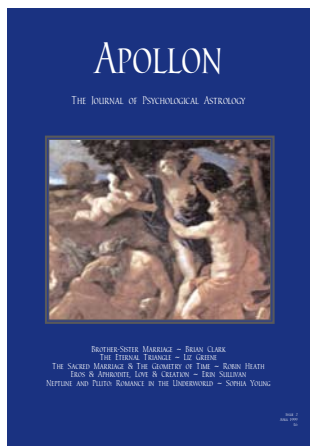
THE JOURNAL OF PSYCHOLOGICAL ASTROLOGY



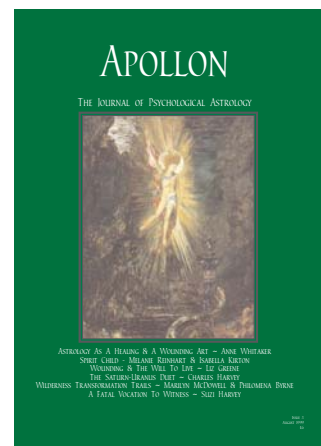
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THE GOLDEN AGE ~ NICHOLAS CAMPION
MEASURING THE *DAIMON* ~ LYNN BELL
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AN ENCOUNTER WITH "THE AMBASSADORS" ~ SIMON CHEDZEY



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Posthumous portrait of Nostradamus by his eldest son, César, allegedly as he looked at age 62 (i.e. shortly before he died).
Bibliothèque de la Béjanes [(c) et archive]



Fatalisme

Jan Toorop (1858-1928)

Collection Kröller-Müller Museum, Otterlo, The Netherlands

Jan Toorop was one of The Netherlands' most important symbolist painters. Around 1890, he broke with naturalism, a trend in art in which the artist strives after the imitation of reality. Toorop became interested in a highly personal interpretation of his topics and the deformation of his perceptions. Next to seascapes, he painted symbolist-literary topics in a highly decorative style announcing the Art Nouveau.

Cover Picture



APOLLON

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APOLLON

polon

haploun

iepaieon

he who causes the heavenly bodies to move together in harmony
the simple, a euphemism for the complexity of the oracle, which is also honest
to heal, also to throw or strike (with consciousness)
from *Greek and Egyptian Mythologies*, compiled by Yves Bonnefoy, transl. Wendy Doniger
University of Chicago Press, 1992

Editorial

You will meet a dark stranger...



Dermod Moore is a Dubliner. A former actor with Ireland's National Theatre, the Abbey, he holds the Diploma in Psychological Astrology from the CPA. He is a writer and columnist, and is in training as a Psychosynthesis therapist. He practices as a psychological astrologer in London's Neal's Yard Therapy Rooms. He moderates the discussion group on the Internet on psychological astrology, and runs the Metalog Directory of Astrologers at www.astrologer.com. He is looking forward to supervising students at the CPA in early 2000.

Fate and the thorny question of predestination are the themes for this issue. It's in the air, as we step forward into a new era. What does this vast new chunk of future hold for us? Once we've survived the dreaded bug, and overcome the disappointment in discovering that hangovers feel the same in any century, the future is much less pockmarked with projections than those that have marked this millennium - apart from Kubrick's *2001: A Space Odyssey*, with its haunting soundtrack of Strauss' *Also sprach Zarathustra*, set against the atemporal infinity of space. "The individual enters the world, or the world enters the individual," wrote Strauss on the title page to his score.

This future, our future, is a smooth, blank canvas; all the more capable of scaring or reassuring us, depending on our own fears and faiths. As astrologers, more used to thinking in terms of cycles and epochs than most, it is, perhaps, easier for us to contemplate the personal, societal and cultural shifts that lie ahead, to imagine what marks we may leave on that canvas. Which is not to say that such imaginings are any more or less likely to come true; none of us has the capacity to step outside our conscious and unconscious inheritance, and achieve Olympian perspective on our lives. We are all in the gutter, but some of us are looking at the stars. Our future lies as much in the gutter as in the stars; it's up to us to choose where we look.

As Melanie Reinhart points out in her Reflections piece in this issue, the new millennium starts with a Chiron-Pluto conjunction in Sagittarius. Our capacity to make meaning of our lives is being reborn; but only after we have endured the experience of meaninglessness, a dearth of hope; making way for a new, personal vision; enriched by the experience of our humanity. The Piscean age ends with a sting in its tail, as God forsakes us; and only then can we begin to build a truly Aquarian society.

In this issue, we look back in history for clues to this future. In an extract from Nick Campion's definitive *The Great Year*, he explores the recurrent myth of the golden age, and remarks how "the lost age is always in the distant past, and the future age, while imminent, is invariably always just beyond reach." One golden age was recalled during the presidency of John Fitzgerald Kennedy - Camelot. In her poignant study of the family dynamics at work in this fated Irish-American clan, Liz Greene sifts through their history and views their story in


the light of her understanding of family curses in Greek mythology. By highlighting those times when family members failed to seize the moment, and break away from the family *daimon*, she brings home to us the reality that their struggles and failures, although heightened and exaggerated in the glare of publicity, are not so far removed from our own.

Going back to basics is always a good idea; the eloquent Erin Sullivan contributes a valuable article, in which she lays out the philosophical and practical groundrules of our art - an ideal introduction for those unfamiliar with astrology.

Mention Fate to a lay person, and they are more likely to mention the Tarot before anything else; for it is the repository for some of the gloomier projections and fears that exist in our culture. Juliet Sharman-Burke, fresh from producing her marvellous *The Mythic Journey* with Liz Greene, reflects on this and the Death card, continuing her excellent series. We also have Brian Clark sharing his insight into the progressed Moon, and how it has reflected change in his clients' lives. Also writing about her experience with clients is Lynn Bell, whose moving account of the *malus daimon* or dark angel of the 12th house gives us great food for thought.

The Internet is undoubtedly part of the future; the Psychological Astrology Mailing List has been running for over four years now. In an edited selection of a "thread" of conversation from the list, the members from around the world share their concerns about the future, and how they, as astrologers, grapple with their fears and make meaning of their own lives. We also have Kim Farnell adding her own spicy irreverence to this issue, to prevent us from taking ourselves too seriously. God forbid.

We end with Simon Chedzey, and his unique insight into the symbolism of a 500-year-old painting - "The Ambassadors" by Hans Holbein. It is by such imaginative exploration of our past that we can begin to grasp a sense of what lies in store for us.

Whether the dark stranger that is in our path is a dark angel, the Antichrist, or the man of our dreams, is to a large extent up to us. We see what we want to see. Particle or wave; angel or devil; faith or despair. Our choice. 

The Oracle and the Family Curse

Liz Greene

Breaking free from family dynamics is never easy, writes **Liz Greene** in this compassionate study of the unhappy Kennedy clan. "One must find the courage to make the heartbreaking separation from the matrix of the family psyche in full consciousness, emerging as an individual - lonely, unique, and attuned to the needs of one's own soul." Sadly, in the Kennedy family, such courage was hard to find.

In 1969, when Senator Edward Kennedy faced the collapse of his Presidential hopes after Chappaquiddick, he asked whether there was a curse on his family. Over the decades, a great many people have asked the same question, privately and in print; the history of this extraordinary clan does make one wonder whether some *daimon* of misfortune dogs its members. The recent death of John F. Kennedy Jr. has once again roused speculation about why the male Kennedys seem to be picked off like wooden ducks in a fairground booth, not to mention the drug-related hospitalisations, virulent divorces, and other human messes which, although more private and less florid, are perhaps no less tragic for those involved. No generation of this powerful family has remained unscathed. Naturally, the Kennedy horoscopes have been pondered by astrologers from every perspective. Anyone who has studied them can recognise factors in each individual birth chart which might reflect, at least in part, the tragedy of that particular life. Yet here is a sequence of tragedies which are strangely coherent in their continuity. Can we link these astrologically? Do they make sense psychologically? Are we looking at what the Greeks meant by a family curse? Are we looking at the products of a lethal but very human mixture of ingredients - a dysfunctional family driven by obsessive ambition and habitually involved with echelons of power and corruption that, sooner or later, would involve danger and possibly violent death? Are we viewing coincidence? Or, as Ian Fleming would have suggested, is it "enemy action"? And if so, what, and where, is the enemy?

The word "curse" conjures up images of witchcraft, black magic, Dennis Wheatley novels, and B-grade films about reanimated Egyptian mummies. It is a word which, understandably, we do not like to use these days, and any mention of the Curse of the Kennedys tends to provoke uneasy laughter. But the ancient mythology which underpins our Western culture and permeates our Western

psychology took the concept of the family curse very seriously indeed, and did not associate it with witches or malevolent occult rites. The English word "curse" has obscure origins, but my etymological dictionary¹ suggests that it derives from an Anglo-Saxon word meaning "wrath". The first known example of the word occurs in the 11th century: *Goddes curs*, the wrath of God. A curse is thus something inflicted by a wrathful deity in response to human wrong-doing. Its roots lie in the past, but it predetermines the future. Most of us do not think in terms of our families being "cursed", whatever difficulties we experience with and through them. Some families exhibit clearly repetitive patterns, but these may involve gifts and good fortune as often as they involve misfortune and pathology. But there are some families which seem to bear more than their share of tragedy, albeit on a less grandiose scale than the Kennedys. Repeating generations of broken marriages, alcoholism and drug addiction, suicide, financial ruin, and functional disease dog many families. Sometimes these patterns are deeply disturbing in their consistency and precision. Lynn Bell demonstrates, in her excellent book, *Planetary Threads*², the ways in which particular attitudes and experiences, embedded in the family psyche, can unconsciously dominate behaviour over several generations, sometimes emerging only when each individual reaches the precise age at which his or her predecessors themselves re-enacted the ancient story. Family therapists call this "the anniversary syndrome". Astrologers, accustomed to the cyclical nature of transits and progressions, can map it with precision, but its meaning may be more elusive.

An important question for the astrologer is whether family tragedies can be seen in nascent form in the birth chart, and counteracted before they have a chance to repeat. For if we take seriously the possibility of a destructive psychological inheritance, we are forced to consider the implications for astrological



Liz Greene holds a Doctorate in Psychology and the Diploma of the Faculty of Astrological Studies, and is a qualified Jungian analyst. She works as a professional astrologer and analyst, and teaches and lectures extensively throughout Europe. She is a Patron of the Faculty of Astrological Studies. She is the author of many books on astrological and psychological themes, including *Saturn, Relating, Astrology for Lovers*, *The Astrology of Fate*, and *The Astrological Neptune and the Quest for Redemption*. She lives in Switzerland. *The Mythic Journey*, written with Juliet Sharman-Burke, has just been published by Gothic Image.

1 Ernest Weekley, *An Etymological Dictionary of Modern English*, Dover Publications, New York, 1967.

2 Lynn Bell, *Planetary Threads: Patterns of Relating Among Family and Friends*, CPA Press, London, 1999.

prediction. A family curse, in myth, demands an expiation of some kind, without which it continues to unleash its wrath on subsequent generations. The future of an individual, in this context, is dependent not on his or her conscious choices, nor even on his or her birth chart, but on something from the past which lies buried beneath the surface of life and influences or conditions future choices and consequences. In other words, the family curse makes us live the placements in our individual charts in particular ways which are not entirely our own. Our special pattern of planets and signs and aspects, so unique and so full of individual potential, becomes the unwitting vessel for a larger, older, and often inimical collective *daimon*. John F. Kennedy, before he went to Dallas in November 1963, was reputed to have received many warnings, amongst them several from astrologers who did not like the look of the configurations being triggered in his birth chart. He chose to disregard these warnings. John F. Kennedy Jr., before he took his fatal flight in July 1999, was warned not to attempt it in the prevailing bad weather conditions, especially in light of his inexperience and his injured foot. He chose to disregard this warning. Is "chose" perhaps the wrong word to use here? Later I will look very briefly at John Kennedy's chart, as well as those of Joseph P. Kennedy Sr., Robert Kennedy, and John F. Kennedy Jr. First I would like to explore in greater depth just what the Greeks might have meant by the family curse, and how this could be relevant to us psychologically and as a pattern of destiny within a family.

The family curse in Greek myth

In Greek myth, the family curse is presented as a punishment inflicted by an angry deity on the descendants of an individual who has offended that god. The curse or punishment is also intimately connected with Apollo's oracle, and most of the family curses in myth involve one or another member of the family consulting the oracle for help or a revelation about the future. The curse, although a legacy from the past, is also a destiny, and involves prophecies of what is to come. It has the power to overrule any potential individual development, rendering the person a mere vehicle for the unfolding of the curse. Only in understanding the words of the oracle, accepting the fate decreed, and performing expiation according to the god's will, can the curse be lifted or neutralised. Inevitably, the figures of Greek tragedy neither understand nor accept the oracle, nor do they perform the expiation required. Each person is either ignorant of the curse or feels he or she is exempt, and thus meets a destiny which is both imposed and chosen - inherited consequences interwoven

with present choices to create a predetermined future.

For example, the curse imposed upon the mythic house of Thebes begins with King Laius, who manages to offend both Apollo and Artemis, the divine protectors of children, by raping a noble youth who is the son of his friend. Laius is warned by the oracle of the god he has offended that, should he have a son, he will meet his death at this son's hands. The wrathful deity, although ready to inflict punishment, also simultaneously offers the possibility of expiation through that punishment. Since every human must meet death one way or another, and given the nature of Laius' offence, the expiation might be seen as just. Laius, however, will not accept the sentence. He interprets the oracle as a warning rather than an opportunity for expiation, and attempts to avoid the punishment by avoiding intercourse with his wife. But his shame makes him secretive, and he neglects to tell her the reason for his sudden aversion to the marital bed. Because Jocasta is ignorant of the real cause of the rejection, her feminine pride is offended, and she seduces him while he is drunk. She becomes pregnant, and when the child is born, Laius again tries to cheat the oracle by leaving the newborn boy on a hillside to die. The deities' wrath is thus compounded, and the entire city of Thebes now comes under their curse in the form of the monstrous Sphinx.

The child is, of course, Oedipus, whose name means "swollen foot" because his father, determined that he should die of exposure, has nailed his feet to the ground with a spike. But Oedipus is rescued by a kind shepherd and survives, and spends his youth believing he is the son of the King and Queen of Corinth. Then he, like his father, consults Apollo's oracle, which informs him that he will become his father's murderer and the husband of his mother. The possibility of expiation is no longer offered. Because Laius has exacerbated the gods' wrath by compounding his crimes, the curse has crystallised into an irrevocable future. Oedipus, like his father, tries to flout the oracle, flees Corinth, and runs straight into the arms of his destiny - a destiny which is both irrevocable and self-architected. Here is a strange blend of *hubris* (an arrogant effort to cheat the gods), innate character (he kills Laius on the road in a fit of uncontrollable temper because the unknown older man has blocked his way and spoken to him in an abusive fashion), heroism (he courageously confronts the Sphinx and breaks the curse imposed on Thebes, thereby winning both the kingship and, unwittingly, his mother, as a

reward), and a genuine wish to remain a decent human being. [Editor invites the reader to see *Oedipus and the Sphinx* by Ingres, reproduced on the back cover.] Yet even Oedipus' terrible expiation does not alleviate the curse, for after he blinds himself and dies outcast, the curse moves on to his children. It is only when every member of the House of Thebes is dead that the curse is at last spent. This mythic family inheritance is shocking in its relentless brutality. Yet we can see that individual choice and individual consciousness are as relevant to the outcome as the workings of deity and the predeterminants of the past.

There are certain consistent features which appear in every myth about a family curse. In a way, they form the criteria for what defines a family curse. These features may help us to understand what we are looking at psychologically.

1. The individual who first activates the curse is invariably royal, descended from a god, and blessed or gifted by a god. He or she is never merely ordinary, but has received some special boon from the deity. The wrath of the deity is thus linked not with mere human transgression, but with the abuse of a god-given talent or advantage. In other words, the curse is not a curse from the outset, but begins as something positive and creative which has been misused or distorted through arrogance, greed, or cruelty. Since the gift of a god is a symbol of the god's nature translated into human form, the curse is really an inversion of something divine within, an abuse of that which is a property of one's own soul.

2. The individual is afflicted by *hubris* - a disrespect for mortal limits and the conditions and requirements for living imposed by the gods. *Hubris* is, in effect, arrogance of a special and deadly kind. Although it contains elements of courage and heroism, it is nevertheless a repudiation of that deeper religious sense which acknowledges with humility the gifts and benefits which life bestows.

3. The curse is usually linked with the abuse of children. We need to view this symbolically, as the abuse of creative potentials, although it may also be relevant literally; every sociologist and social worker knows that child abuse within families tends to have long-lasting repercussions over the generations. In the myth, Laius rapes a youth, and then exacerbates the curse by exposing his own son to die. Tantalus, in the myth of the curse of the House of Atreus, cuts up his son and serves him as a meal to the gods, merely to test them. His sons, Atreus and Thyestes, in turn destroy their own children as a means of revenge upon each other; and Agamemnon, the son of Atreus, in turn

destroys his daughter in order to gain victory in the Trojan War. Each subsequent generation of this tortured family is involved in some form of callous injury to or destruction of a child or young person.

4. The members of the family who inherit the curse exacerbate it through their own hubris. Each generation has the opportunity to expiate the curse by accepting the punishment, but each generation fails to do so because the individual cannot resist indulging in greed, anger, or desire for personal vengeance. The curse therefore becomes more powerful and more all-encompassing. What is really inherited is a particular set of attitudes which the individual does not wish to relinquish or transform, resulting in a blind wallowing in instinctual responses and a refusal to make necessary sacrifices or impose internal limits - even when warned by the god. It is, in effect, putting the self before the Self when the chips are really down.

5. The oracle always warns the perpetrator or inheritor of the curse about the consequences, but the terms of the oracle are wilfully misunderstood, or there is a determined attempt to avoid the prophecy. The attempt to cheat the oracle paradoxically results in the fulfilment of the oracle.

In viewing psychologically inherited patterns from a mythic perspective, I am not attributing some literally supernatural agency to the kind of repeating sorrows which so often plague families. Rather, I am thinking symbolically. The features listed above suggest that the family curse is a psychologically predetermined set of behaviour patterns, which require consciousness and inner struggle if any kind of transformation or expiation is to occur. We inherit not only our ancestors' genetic blueprints, but also certain deeply entrenched emotional and mental perspectives. Perhaps we also inherit certain complexes - inherent "stories" or archetypal enactments which are not, in themselves, malevolent, and may involve gifts and talents of a special kind. These inherent family perspectives and archetypal patterns are not difficult to trace in the horoscope. We can glimpse their outlines in the parental significators in a birth chart, and in the repetition of signs, planetary aspects and house placements which are so common in every family. These patterns are not in themselves suggestive of a "curse", but anything in the birth chart can behave like a curse if it has been handled destructively or wilfully suppressed for many generations. It is not clear just how we inherit these things. Dedicated geneticists would suggest that human character, like the human body, is a matter of DNA, and if alcoholism or depression runs in our

...Anything in the birth chart can behave like a curse if it has been handled destructively or wilfully suppressed for many generations.

Joseph P. Kennedy holds sons Joseph Patrick Junior (left) and John Fitzgerald Kennedy, in 1919



family, we stand a good chance of becoming alcoholic or depressed because it is in the genes. At the other extreme, archetypal psychology postulates the reality of the family unconscious and the unity of the collective psyche of which every individual is a part. Perhaps the truth lies in a combination of the two. But whatever the means of inheritance, physical, psychic or both, something seems to pass down the generations in response to the repeated abuse of some natural law. This “something” appears to have a morality of its own, whether we attribute this morality to God, the psyche, the Self, the instincts, Nature, or life itself.³

The Curse of the Kennedys

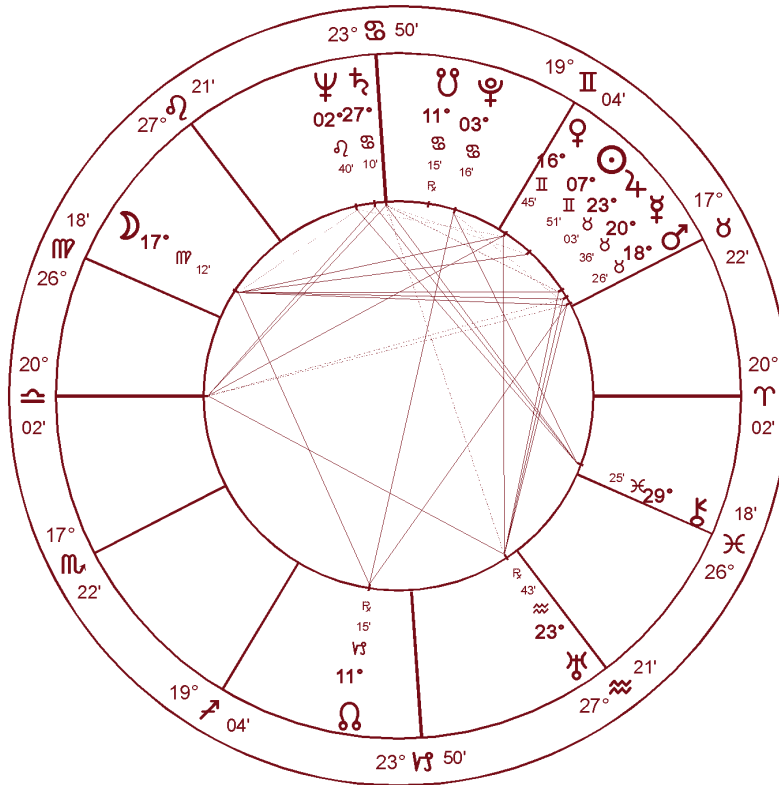
A brief summary of the Kennedy tragedies can help us to see how aptly the suffering of this family fits the criteria for the Greek family curse. The patriarch of the family, Joseph P. Kennedy, rose to a position of enormous power and wealth during the 1920's and '30's, much of which was acquired through bootlegging and other questionable means. Glenn Richter, in an article written after the death of John F. Kennedy Jr., suggests that the Curse of the Kennedys is simple arrogance, exhibited in equal quantities by each generation. His assessment of Joe Kennedy is damning: “...All it took was a little help from his good friend FDR and plenty of nerve, something Papa Joe had in abundance. How else could he keep consorting with crooks and still hold his head high in high society? How else could he keep cal-

lously canoodling with sexy screen sirens while his wife stayed home cranking out more Kennedys? Papa Joe was not exactly what you'd call a nice guy.”⁴ Here is the gifted individual of Greek myth, favoured by the gods with a heady mix of audacity, determination, charm, and political brilliance. However, “Papa” Joe was clearly afflicted with *hubris* in the best Greek sense. His eldest daughter Rosemary, born in 1918, was a happy and good-natured child. But she was mildly retarded, and was a source of enormous social discomfort to her father. He seems to have been incapable of accepting her as she was and counting his many blessings. In consequence he ordered a lobotomy performed on her in 1941, when she was twenty-three years old. The operation went badly wrong. This once contented and sweet-tempered girl emerged severely retarded, and was consigned by her embarrassed father to an institution for the rest of her life. The deities of Greek myth do not appear to concern themselves with garden-variety transgressions such as bootlegging and adultery; after all, they indulge in such pastimes themselves. But if these were characters in a Greek tragedy, we would be told in no uncertain terms that Joe Kennedy, in destroying his daughter, set something in motion which would have terrible consequences down the generations. Perhaps equally destructive was his obsessive ambition to produce a son who would be President. On a subtler level that, too, is a form of child abuse, for his children were given no opportunity

3 See *The Astrology of Fate*, Liz Greene, George Allen & Unwin, London, 1984, Thorsons, 1996.

4 Taken from <http://record-journal.com>, “Commentary by Glenn Richter: If it's not arrogance, what is it?”

John F. Kennedy
 29 May 1917
 3.00 pm EST
 Boston, Massachusetts
Tropical
Placidus
Geocentric

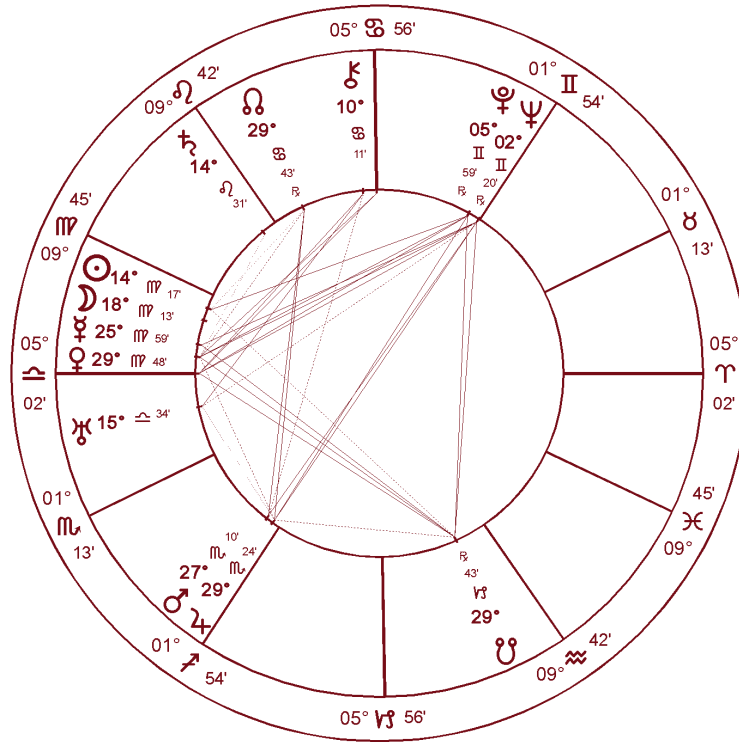


whatsoever to become themselves. Obsessive ambition, already overweening long before Joe Kennedy was born, ensured that every individual's unique potentials were swallowed up by the family *daimon*. I do not pretend to know whether the cosmos truly carries such a stern morality as the Greeks believed in. In the context of our more simplistic and highly personalised Judaeo-Christian morality, the Greek conception of the universe may seem shockingly impersonal. But if we consider the list of features of the family curse I have given above, it is clear that Joe Kennedy faithfully met Criteria Nos. 1, 2 and 3.

Does this really mean that his "sin" would inevitably be "punished" down the generations? I am not suggesting this, nor do I personally believe life is that simple. The world is full of extremely nasty pieces of work who live long and destructive lives and die self-satisfied in their beds, while many good, decent people encounter terrible experiences which neither they nor their ancestors have merited. Moreover, not all tragedies form part of a repeating ancestral pattern. When they do, however, we need to sit up and take notice. Let us bear in mind Criterion No. 4, and consider in brief the unfoldment of the chain of tragedies which has afflicted the Kennedy family. This short list does not include issues such as divorce, adultery, alcoholism, and other family pastimes which are sufficiently common not to merit the term "tragedy" except, perhaps, to the individual participants.

- Joseph P. Kennedy Jr., Joe's eldest son, the great hope of his father for the American Presidency, is killed in a plane crash in 1944, aged twenty-nine.
- Kathleen Kennedy, Joe's second daughter, dies in a plane crash in 1948, aged twenty-eight.
- John F. Kennedy, 35th President of the US, is assassinated in Dallas in November 1963, aged forty-six.
- John F. Kennedy's son, Patrick Bouvier Kennedy, born prematurely to the President and his wife in 1963, dies three months before his father's assassination.
- Robert F. (Bobby) Kennedy, Joe's third son, is assassinated in June 1968, aged forty-two.
- Edward M. (Ted) Kennedy, Joe's youngest son, drives a car off a bridge on Chappaquiddick Island in July 1969, after a party. His aide, Mary Jo Kopechne, is found dead in the submerged car. His political career has not survived the speculation surrounding the incident.
- Bobby Kennedy's son Joseph is involved in 1973 in a car accident which leaves a female passenger paralysed for life.
- Ted Kennedy's son, Edward Jr., has his right leg amputated in 1973 because of cancer.
- Bobby Kennedy's son David dies in 1984 of a drug overdose.
- Ted Kennedy's son Patrick is treated for cocaine addiction in 1986.
- Ted Kennedy's nephew, William Kennedy Smith, is acquitted of rape in 1991.
- Bobby Kennedy's son Michael is killed in a

Joseph P. Kennedy Sr.
 6 September 1888
 7.06 am EST
 Boston, Massachusetts
 Geocentric
 Tropical
 True Node



skiing accident in December 1997, aged thirty-nine.

- John F. Kennedy's only surviving son, JFK Jr., dies in a plane crash in July 1999 (exactly thirty years after Chappaquiddick), aged thirty-eight.

Even given the fact that there are a great many Kennedys and that therefore, statistically, their chances for a list of tragedies such as this are greater, the males in this family do seem to have suffered more than their share of catastrophes and early deaths. Could all these people have been afflicted with Criterion No. 4 - with *hubris*, a refusal to alter the inherently destructive or arrogant attitudes which are part of their psychological inheritance? We could certainly say this about some, if not all, of them. Even JFK Jr., who eschewed the political limelight and seems to have been a well-liked and relatively innocuous individual, insisted on flying his plane with a broken foot and in weather conditions that would daunt even an experienced pilot. It is unnecessary to elaborate on the kind of world in which John F. Kennedy and Bobby Kennedy moved; one does not need to postulate family curses to recognise that members of the Mafia tend to shoot people when they are crossed and, just possibly, so do members of the American military, the FBI, and the CIA. And ambition, power, and great wealth can generate their

own kind of curse. We do not need to imagine some dark ancestral *daimon* to understand why cocaine addiction or alcoholism might afflict a member of this family. Taken individually, each tragedy is explicable in its own, very human terms. Taken together, they present a rather more disturbing picture.

The horoscopes

If I were to peruse a horoscope for traces of what I understand as a family curse, I would consider first of all the presence of planets in those houses concerned with inheritance from the past. Until we have some insight into the complexes belonging to the larger matrix from which we have emerged, we are liable to suffer from unconscious compulsions and behaviour patterns which may reflect our own characters only in part. Family complexes underpin all the buried feelings which colour the psychic atmosphere in childhood, and as determining patterns they form part of our ancestral inheritance. My analytic work has taught me that nothing is quite as powerful as a family secret nursed in the darkness for many generations, accruing energy and "wrath" in proportion to the ferocity with which it is blocked from conscious awareness and expression. Family ghosts may not take the form of dead Uncle Fred speaking through a medium. But they are very real and very powerful, and they can haunt us as relentlessly as the Furies did

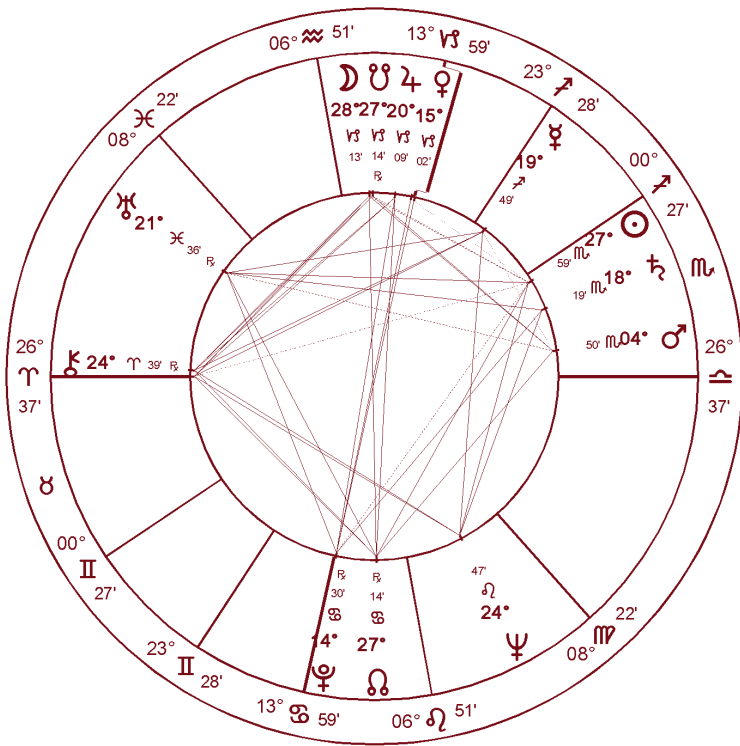
Orestes. Astrologically, planets in the 4th, 8th and 12th may suggest energies, patterns and qualities which are inherited but which need individual consciousness to release their most positive dimensions. Left unconscious, they may release more destructive dimensions, impelling the individual into compulsive behaviour which results in events which feel "fated". The parental signifiers - planets placed in the 10th or 4th or conjuncting the MC or IC from the 9th or 3rd - may also be important in understanding the family inheritance. And I would place considerable importance on the position of Pluto in the horoscope, paying particular attention to Pluto on an angle, placed in the 4th, 8th, or 12th, or in strong aspect to the Sun or Moon. This planet seems to reflect that "Law of Nature" for which the Greeks had so much awe and respect - a kind of instinctive natural justice which serves the survival and evolution of the species, the group, and the creative *daimon* of the family. If a family curse involves some violation of natural law by earlier generations, we may expect Pluto be strong in the horoscope, demanding that the individual face and make peace with an inheritance from the past which requires reparation. Until this challenge is met, the individual's own potentials may be partially or even entirely subsumed by issues that began long before one's birth.

In "Papa" Joe Kennedy's chart, bearing these factors in mind, I would view the full 12th house as significant, and also the placement of Chiron in Cancer at the MC. This chart can obviously be approached from many different perspectives. I am concerned here not with a character analysis so much as the indication that Joe Kennedy was himself the vessel for unresolved inherited psychological issues. The interpretations which follow are therefore unavoidably brief and focused on this single point. To me, any planet placed in the 12th describes some impetus, drive or *daimon* within the ancestral psyche which has not been sufficiently or fully lived, and which turns that planet into a kind of medium for what has been left unfinished from the past. The individual's expression of the planet is therefore coloured by what previous generations have or have not done with it. "Left unfinished" does not necessarily mean "destructive"; a painting may also seem unfinished to its creator although complete in the eyes of the viewer, and it could be argued that no creative endeavour is ever really complete in terms of its ultimate potential. The designs of the family *daimon* take much longer to unfold than one individual life. Everything depends on how the individual handles that unfinished business.

Joe's new Moon placed in the 12th house, with the Sun widely square Pluto in the 9th, suggests an inheritance involving complex religious issues as well as an overwhelming drive toward individual expression and achievement which has somehow not found sufficient expression in the family background. We may need to go back to Joe's Irish Catholic ancestry and the years of the Great Hunger to understand something of what he may have been carrying. Although it would be easy to view Joe Kennedy as the initiator of the difficulties of the family, it would seem that he himself was the inheritor of family complexes which drove him compulsively toward personal power and achievement. It is as though the voices of long-dead ancestors, starving and persecuted, pushed him along, demanding that he and he alone be the redeemer of the family past. Chiron in Cancer at the MC suggests a wound in relation to his standing in the world, a wound inherited through the maternal line and linked with his family's social status. Chiron placed here implies that he suffered from a profound sense of himself and his family being unacceptable and inferior in the world in which he moved. The compensation for this kind of wound is often obsessive ambition - although the real motive is not material gain, but an attempt to assuage a much deeper emotional suffering. We may also view his treatment of his daughter in the light of this Chiron placement, for she must have seemed to him the living proof of his family's inferiority. That Joe Kennedy was determined to father the first Irish Catholic President in a nation which tends to like its Presidents unambiguously Anglo-Saxon and Protestant sheds light on how desperately important the religious issue must have been. What I believe this chart does not show is how Joe Kennedy elected to use the talents and energy he had at his disposal, nor with what ethics - or lack thereof - he attempted to fulfil the ambitions which were fuelled by something so much older and vaster than his own personal Virgoan dreams. Here is choice rather than destiny, and arrogance rather than an honouring of the enormous talents and life-force at his disposal. In light of this chart, the Kennedy family curse appears to have begun not with "Papa" Joe, but in the collective struggle of Irish against English, Catholic against Protestant, and the tragedy of the Great Hunger which drove his grandparents from Ireland to seek their fortune across the sea.

In John F. Kennedy's chart it is the 8th house, rather than the 12th, which carries the emphasis. This is, to me, no less a house of family ghosts. But the ghosts do not quietly and surreptitiously possess planets in the 8th;

...The Kennedy family curse appears to have begun not with "Papa" Joe, but in the collective struggle of Irish against English, Catholic against Protestant, and the tragedy of the Great Hunger which drove his grandparents from Ireland to seek their fortune across the sea.



Robert Kennedy
 20 November 1925
 2.48 pm EST
 Brookline, Massachusetts
 Geocentric
 Tropical
 True Node

their haunting is more precipitous and often enacted through ferocious compulsions and dramatic events. Here, too, is portrayed the unhappy family inheritance carried through the maternal line, reflected by Saturn in Cancer at the MC conjunct Neptune in Leo. This echoes Joe's 10th house Chiron in Cancer, and implies an enormous unease in terms of worldly position and acceptability, as well as a powerful messianic need to be the redeemer of his family and country. We might wonder how such an apparently confident and well-loved man

could ever have ever worried about being inferior and coming from inferior stock. But what do we really know about him? And what did he really know about himself? We are told that he was sexually driven, that he could not resist flirting with some of the darkest criminal elements in American society, that he could be ruthless and manipulative like his father, and that, whether he wished to or not, he was driven from the moment of his brother's death to aim for the Presidency and the fulfillment of the family dream. I do not interpret planets in the 8th as indicators of a "violent death". I have had too many clients who have lived to ripe ages with full 8th houses to interpret the subtleties of Pluto's world on such a literal level. But planets in the 8th suggest powerful unconscious forces of an impersonal or nonpersonal kind, usually linked to secrets in the family past, which erupt into the daylight world in the form of compulsions and crises which demand a relinquishing of control and an acceptance of the invisible dimensions of life. The 8th can convey great power, strength, and insight, if the conscious attitude is humble. But if there is too much arrogance and a refusal to look within, then planets here may sometimes behave like avenging Furies - or like "enemy action". Like his father, John Kennedy was disinclined to do any relinquishing of any kind, let alone engage in the kind of introspection the 8th house requires. Like Atreus and Thyestes, he followed faithfully in the family footsteps. We do not need to think in terms of a family curse to see that JFK's political activities would win him virulent and powerful enemies. But we may need to think in these terms if we wish to understand why he was driven to such activities. The Sun conjunct

Photo: Bobby on the campaign trail, Arizona 1968. David Hume Kennerly

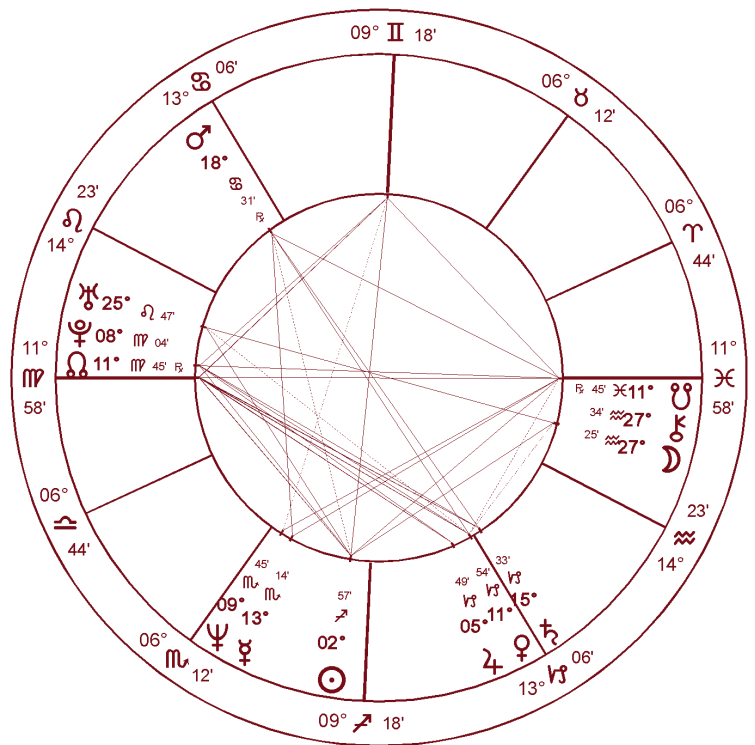


Venus in Gemini, with Libra on the Ascendant and the Moon in Virgo, all suggest a flexible, refined, and easy-going nature. This chart makes me think of a wolf in sheep's clothing; but the wolf is not the man himself. Rather, it is the family inheritance.

Bobby Kennedy's horoscope presents us with Pluto in a position of power, virtually exactly at the IC in Cancer. Here it is not diffuse ancestral ghosts so much as father writ large and archetypal - a dark Plutonian inheritance coming down through the father's line. The 10th house is heavily tenanted, but by a benign stellium of Moon-Venus-Jupiter. Bobby was probably far more comfortable enjoying money, power, and status than his brother and father. But Jupiter and Venus oppose Pluto, suggesting a ferocious inner struggle between his individual nature and his inheritance which turned him into a fanatical crusader against evil in the world. One wonders whether the dark forces he hunted in society, and which ultimately destroyed him, were really the dark forces at his own roots. On some level I believe Bobby Kennedy deeply hated and feared his father, but projected this Plutonian figure onto the criminal elements he perceived gnawing away at the roots of American society. Uranus and Chiron are in the 12th, although Chiron is close to the Ascendant; bitter family wounds as well as messianic family ideals drove him from within. More importantly, the Sun is close to the 8th house cusp, telling a tale similar to that of his brother. His individual nature and aspirations were constantly invaded by the unconscious compulsions of the past. Insight and humility are required for the Sun to shine its light from the 8th. But a Kennedy upbringing does not usually encourage insight and humility. As a Scorpio, Bobby may also have been driven by a spirit of personal vengeance, and this craving for vengeance, common to so many figures in Greek myth, is not conducive to making peace with a wrathful deity or easing the strictures of a family curse. But most of all, it is the angular Pluto which suggests the intrusion of the ancestral past into the present. Had the father not appeared as a figure of such compulsive power in this chart, much might have been different. Politics might well have been Bobby's choice as well as his family's. But he might not have invoked the enemy without quite so virulently if he had understood better the nature of the enemy within.

Finally, we can look very briefly at the chart of John F. Kennedy Jr. No compulsive flirtation with the darker echelons of power appears to have afflicted him; it seems he truly did not want to follow in his father's footsteps,

but was content to live the pleasant Jupiterian life of a playboy and dilettante. The 10th house is empty; evidently he did not feel impelled to change the world or make his mark on it in any mythic way. We might well hope that, in relinquishing the voracious demands of the family *daimon*, he might have avoided that courtship of a tragic end which destroyed his father and his uncle. Yet he had a tragic end anyway. What in the world made this man choose to risk his life, and the lives of three other people, in such a blind and foolish way? We cannot ever know what was in his mind - or perhaps more to the point, what was at work on the unconscious level - when he made this decision. Uranus and Pluto are placed in the 12th, with Pluto close to the Ascendant and conjunct the north Node. Once again the family ghosts make their appearance, colouring his perceptions of the outer world with the compulsions of the past. Pluto is also square the Sun, which is in the 3rd but conjunct the cusp of the 4th. It seems that even this likeable and exuberant *puer aeternus* was required to grapple with his Plutonian inheritance if he wished to fulfil his individual potential. Glenn Richter states in his article that JFK Jr.'s fatal flaw was arrogance. No doubt that is partly true; he, too, fits Criterion No. 4. But there are other factors in this chart (particularly Venus conjunct Saturn, Mars opposite Saturn, and Moon and Chiron exactly conjunct) that describe considerable inner pain, loneliness, and struggle - perhaps not entirely conscious, but all the more destructive for being so carefully denied.



John F. Kennedy Jr.
 25 November 1960
 12.22 am EST
 Washington, D.C.
 Geocentric
 Tropical
 True Node

5 All data for the Kennedys comes from *Internationales Horoskope Lexikon*, Hans-Hinrich Taeger, Verlag Hermann Bauer, 1992. "Papa" Joe's father, Patrick Joseph Kennedy, had, in a chart set for sunrise, Venus at 13° Capricorn, Moon at 16° Capricorn, Sun at 24° Capricorn, Mercury at 25° Capricorn, and Saturn at 24° Cancer. Joe's mother, Mary Augusta Hickey, had Saturn at 27° Cancer. "Papa" Joe had the MC at 5° 55' Cancer with Chiron at 10° 11' Cancer and the north Node at 29° 43' Cancer. Rose, his wife, had Chiron at 26° 41' Cancer. Rosemary, the daughter he consigned to the twilight, had Pluto at 6° Cancer and Jupiter at 11° Cancer. Joe Jr., whose death began the long series of family tragedies, had Saturn at 9° Cancer, Mercury at 16° Cancer, and Venus at 21° Cancer. Kathleen, who died at virtually the same age as her brother Joe Jr., had Pluto at 6° Cancer and Venus at 26° Capricorn. John F. Kennedy had the north Node at 11° 14' Capricorn, Pluto in 3° 16' Cancer, and Saturn at 27° 09' Cancer. Jackie, his wife, had Pluto at 18° 22' Cancer. Caroline, his daughter, has Venus at 21° 52' Capricorn. Bobby Kennedy had the IC at 13° 59' Cancer, with Pluto at 14° 29' Cancer, the north Node at 27° 14' Cancer, Venus at 15° 02' Capricorn, Jupiter at 20° 09' Capricorn, and the Moon at 28° 12' Capricorn. Ted Kennedy has the Ascendant at 10° 44' Capricorn with Pluto at the Descendant at 20° 16' Cancer. John F. Kennedy Jr. had Jupiter at 5° 49' Capricorn, Saturn at 15° 33' Capricorn, Venus at 11° 53' Capricorn, and Mars at 18° 30' Cancer. There are, of course, many more Kennedys whose chart placements might be included here. Amongst the younger members of the family, the Cancer-Capricorn axis continues its undeterred passage down through the generations. It is worth noting in passing that the Sun in the birth chart of the United States is at 13° 19' Cancer. The destiny of this family has been inextricably bound up with the destiny of the country over which they have exercised such enormous influence.

Pluto was transiting back and forth across JFK Jr.'s natal Sun in the year before his death, and it was square its own place and very close to the IC at the time of his death. Something inescapable was hunting him from within. The progressed chart is also eloquent; progressed IC was exactly conjunct progressed Jupiter, suggesting that the *puer* spirit longed for a way out of the conflict between his own personality and the inexorable demands of his inheritance. What is more peculiar is that this progressed MC-IC axis was in 14° 28' of Cancer-Capricorn, precise to the minute on his uncle Robert's natal Pluto at the IC - as though some strange identification was occurring between the living nephew and the dead uncle. Those who believe in simple tragic accidents may no doubt feel anger at the suggestion that there might have been something voluntary, something *chosen* about this sad death. I am not implying, if there were indeed a choice, that the choice was conscious. But the precision of such astrological contacts makes me wonder whether the family *daimon* - one dimension of which seems to reveal itself in the family charts through the Cancer-Capricorn axis - was at it once again. This repetition of planets falling within a few degrees in the same signs in so many of the family charts does not suggest a family curse. Rather, it suggests a family inheritance of a potentially creative kind, involving not only political shrewdness, tenacity, and leadership abilities, but also the profound emotional nourishment provided by close family bonds. However, it might also be said that the gifts of the Cancer-Capricorn axis⁵ were sorely misused in every generation of the Kennedy family. Global ambition that subsumes the personal happiness of individual family members, and a tyrannical clannishness that permits no freedom to move beyond the family circle emotionally, intellectually, professionally, or spiritually, may be interpreted as abuses of god-given talents. The Cancer-Capricorn axis, at its best, epitomises those values which preserve the loving container of the family as a basis for the structures of a lawful and stable society. If I were an imaginative ancient Greek, I might think of the goddess Hera, protectress of family and social bonds, incensed beyond bearing because her gifts were bestowed so freely and then used so irresponsibly.

Conclusion

The family curse is, when all is said and done, an inversion of a family blessing. That is what emerges from thinking long

and hard about how the Greeks portrayed it, and I am convinced that they knew far more about this unfolding of patterns over generations than many orthodox schools of psychology do today. Psychoanalysis and analytical psychology have, of course, always recognised the reality of the unconscious and the continuing power of family secrets. Family therapy acknowledges the generational repetition of critical events on specific dates and at specific ages; the analytical family therapist knows, too, that the "identified patient", like Orestes, is the recipient and mouthpiece, rather than the perpetrator, of a conflict much older than the individual. From a reductive perspective, the family curse may seem like a doom imposed on the innocent. Yet our own small family curses, whatever florid or subtle form they take, may be viewed, not as a future in which we are fated to re-enact the tragedies of the past, but as an opportunity to redeem something which was once the gift of a god, but which has been deformed over time through arrogance, stupidity, malice, or wilful unconsciousness. When patterns from the past make us shape our futures compulsively, we will solve nothing by either passively anticipating disaster or believing ourselves to be exempt. Any individual with a powerful Pluto or an emphasis in the watery houses is the potential recipient of enormous power and insight built on a profound comprehension of the past and the inner world. But there is no such thing as a free lunch, and one must find the courage to make the heartbreaking separation from the matrix of the family psyche in full consciousness, emerging as an individual - lonely, unique, and attuned to the needs of one's own soul. The luxury of blind identification with the family, or with any collective, is not an intelligent option for anyone with such placements in the birth chart. There is no room for either naivety or arrogance when the chart reveals the participation of family ghosts. One needs to reflect on the past as carefully and deeply as possible, for one is, in the most profound sense, a medium for the un-lived gifts of the family psyche and a vessel for all the energy and life that have been denied or abused and are now longing to be expressed in new creative forms.



The Golden Age

Nicholas Campion

One of the most persistent millenarian myths is that the new age, or the millennium, will bring a revival of the primeval golden age. In this extract from his book, *The Great Year*, **Nick Campion** looks at the earliest belief in ancient golden ages.

"Men always, but not always with good reason, praise bygone days and criticise the present, and so partial are they to the past that they not only admire past ages the knowledge of which has come down to them in written records, but also, when they grow old, what they remember having seen in their youth."

Machiavelli
Discourses, II, preface. (14)

The Age of Innocence

When the passage of time is compared to the growth and decay of earthly phenomena such as plants, animals, human beings and empires, it is very easy to read into particular times the qualities of the events with which they coincide, and which they measure. Even today the simple statements "times are bad" or "times are good" reflect a residual tendency to endow time with quality. This is perhaps at its most marked in the almost limitless capacity which we enjoy in looking back on our childhoods as a time of bliss, of endless summer. It also shows in our capacity, as we grow older, to complain about the increasing violence and lax morals of our times. The sum total of such individual feelings seems to be responsible for the collective myth that once, long ago, life was better.

The belief in a primeval springtime of innocent happiness is one which occurs in many cultures; the fact that it is so widespread suggests that it fulfils a vital psychological function. Perhaps this is because it provides a model of an ideal existence, against which current aspirations may be measured. It may also offer hope that the future might bring a restoration of the lost bliss of collective childhood. Such notions are easily adapted to theories of cyclical historical law, for they indicate a decline from an original high point while, thanks to recurrence, growth (culminating in the cyclical recovery of innocence) will soon be resumed. After 1000 BCE, the possibility that historical laws could be understood, through a combination of mathematics, astronomical cycles and astrological interpretation, offered hope that order could

be maintained, and the future controlled. Yet golden age myths have always resisted systematisation. The lost age is always in the distant past, and the future age, while imminent, is invariably always just beyond reach. Men have dreamt of and worked for future Utopias, but none have ever achieved their goal.

The term golden age itself is of classical Greek origin, but it is also now applied to descriptions of an original paradise which have been discovered in the cuneiform literature. Indeed, it seems that the primitive democracy of the pre-dynastic proto-literate period (the fourth millennium and earlier) before the invention of royal and priestly hierarchies, was remembered as a Golden Age in later Mesopotamian literature.¹ A Sumerian tablet from about 2000 BCE describes the blissful situation of the Earth's earliest inhabitants:

*'In those days there was no snake, there was no scorpion, there was no hyena,
There was no lion, there was no wild dog, no wolf,
There was no fear, no terror,
Man had no rival,
In those days, the land Shubur, the place of plenty
of righteous decrees,
Harmony tongued Sumer, the great land of the
decrees of princesship,
Uri, the land having all that is needful.
The land Martu resting in security,
The whole universe, the people in unison,
To Enlil in one tongue (gave praise).'²*

The final Babylonian description of the pre-historic age occurs in a third century work, *The Babyloniaca*, an account of Babylonian history and wisdom compiled around 281 BCE for the benefit of the Greeks by Berossus, a priest of Marduk, who was, in all probability, a court astrologer to the Hellenistic Seleucid monarch Antiochus I³. Berossus was clearly enthusiastic about the building of bridges between the Mesopotamian and Greek cultures, and persuading the colonising Greeks to respect the culture of the defeated "barbarians", the Babylonians. He was also, apparently, the first astrologer to begin formal tuition of the subject in the Greek world. It would be an exaggera-



Nick Campion's seminal study of apocalyptic beliefs, *The Great Year*, was published by Arkana in 1994 and was the winner of the Prix Georges Antares. He has also been President of the Astrological Association, President of the Astrological Lodge and editor of the *Astrology Quarterly*, and was awarded the 1992 Marc Edmund Jones Award and the 1999 Spica Award for Professional Excellence. His books include *An Introduction to the History of Astrology* (1982), *Mundane Astrology* (1984, with Charles Harvey and Michael Baigent), *The Practical Astrologer* (1987), *The Book of World Horoscopes* (1988) and *The New Astrology* (1999, with Steve Eddy). He is currently researching for his PhD on the extent and nature of contemporary belief in astrology and is working on a major new history, *Cosmos: A History of Astronomy and Culture*, scheduled for publication in 2001. He is also a member of the Clifton Poker Group.

1 Frankfort, *Kingship*, p 216

2 Samuel Kramer, "Man's Golden Age: A Sumerian Parallel to Genesis XI.1" in *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, LXIII (1943), 191 - 4. Words in parentheses indicate an uncertain translation. Twenty years later Kramer dated the tablet to around 2400 BCE - see *The Sumerians*, p 285. That this is the only such tablet so far discovered contradicts Frost's claim that golden age recurrent mythology was "orthodoxy in Mesopotamia from an early time."

3 See the recent edition of *The Babyloniaca of Berossus*, by Stanley Mayer Burstein, Malibu, 1978. The first major study of Berossus, upon which all later work draws, was Paul Schnabel's *Berossus und die Babylonische-Hellenistische Literatur*, Leipzig, 1923. See also additional comments in Van der Waerden, *Science Awakening II: The Birth of Astronomy*, esp pp 113-5. Isaac Cory, *Fragments*, 2nd edition, London 1832, includes the separate secondary accounts of Berossus's work in Alexander Polyhistory, Apollodorus, Abydenus and Josephus. Burstein's allegation that the *Babyloniaca* is not proper history is answered by Oswyn Murray, "Herodotus and Hellenistic Culture", *Classical Quarterly*, 66 (1972). See also the discussion in Robert Drews, "The Babylonian Chronicles and Berossus", *Iraq*, 37 (1975).

4 Ezekiel I. The four creatures also seem to be connected to the youthful appearance of Marduk in the *Enuma Elish*. Oannes emerged from the waters of the Persian Gulf, and was a late equivalent of the Sumerian Ea, the god of the waters and one of the four creators. In view of his

tion to describe this primeval epoch between the creation and the arrival of Oannes, who taught men wisdom, as a golden age. He describes the strange creatures which inhabited the earth in those distant days - some men with two wings, others with four wings and two faces, creatures resembling those in the Old Testament vision of Ezekiel.⁴

"Four were his eyes, four were his ears,...
Four ears grew large."⁵

There was no sexual differentiation amongst Berossus' primeval humans, the hermaphroditic population possessing both female and male organs - a primitive condition which in Jewish and Christian morality would be characterised as a state of primeval innocence. However, Berossus gives us no hint of moral judgment. Neither did he attribute the happy qualities to the primeval age that we find in genuine golden age stories. Unfortunately, by the 3rd century BCE it is impossible to distinguish indigenous Babylonian tradition from Greek imports following in the wake of Alexander's defeat of the Persians and conquest of Babylon in 331. Although Berossus' apparent aim was to teach the Greeks about the marvellous antiquity of Mesopotamian culture, his account of the primeval hermaphroditic beings bears a strong resemblance to an account given by Aristophanes in Plato's *Symposium*, from which it may have been taken. Perhaps Berossus knew of it at second hand, and thought it was a Babylonian story. Or, perhaps, Plato himself had taken the story from an earlier tradition. All we can say is the cultural cross currents often make it difficult to say with any certainty that one idea was Greek, another Babylonian and another Egyptian. It may even be misleading to try to distinguish one from the other.

In the Sumerian account, the Golden Age was thought to be under the direct rule of Enlil, the storm god, and the geographical locus was often assumed to be the fabled land of Dilmun, which may have been the island of Bahrein. A possible historical memory of a prosperous and peaceful land was interwoven with self-consciously mythical elements, including direct rulership by a supreme god and the absence of wild animals, combining a factual account of the past with allegorical elaboration. A universal faith and language represented the spiritual and intellectual unity under which humanity had basked before the current dreary times, and to which it hoped one day to return⁶. While it is possible to discern similar Golden Age ideas in Egypt, the theme of historical decline from an original high point is one which permeated Mesopotamian thought

and recurs in later Greek historical theory. This does not imply that these ideas were of Sumerian origin, for the earliest tablets may well represent only the earliest literary form of a far older and widespread tradition.

We have noted how the origins of Mesopotamian political and religious structures, especially the marriage of kingship and divination, lay in the chronic insecurity which afflicted Sumer and Akkad in the third millennium as the various city states began to vie for supremacy. This proposition is confirmed by the clear longing for a primeval age in which "there was no fear, no terror", when natural predators had not been created, and society was secure and united. There is also an interesting parallel between line 9 of the Sumerian Golden Age tablet and the description of the pre-diluvian world in Genesis XI, 1: "Now the whole earth had one language and few words".

Golden age mythology generally assumes that the present time is one of unprecedented moral decline and political and social disintegration. It is in the ritual condemnation of current conditions, the inability to live in, and accept, the present, that this myth sets its greatest trap. The great Babylonian flood myth, the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, bemoans the dismal state of the post-diluvian world:

*Since the days of yore there has been no
(permanence);
The resting and the dead, how alike they are!
Do they not compose a picture of death,
The commoner and the noble,
Once they have drawn near to (their fate)?
The Anunnaki, the great gods, foregather;
Mammetum, authoress of destiny, with them the
fate decrees:
Death and life they determine;
Yet of death the days are not revealed.⁷*

The question of recurrence, of a return to the Golden Age, is little attested in cuneiform literature, although we do possess a hymn which describes a coming golden age as:

*"Days when one man is not insolent to another,
when a son reveres his father,
days when respect is shown in the land, when the
lowly honour the great,
when the younger brother... respects (?) his older
brother,
when the older child instructs the younger child
and he abides by his decisions."⁸*

We should perhaps not read too much into this, for the longing for a more stable regime does not imply a full-scale theory of

cyclical history, featuring the inevitable return of original ideal conditions. Yet this passage does, at the very least, represent a literary precursor of such theories. The principle characteristic of this returning Golden Age is order, with obedience the major human virtue. Whether such obedience will hasten the return of stable conditions is not specified but, as we have seen, it was an essential prerequisite of political stability: people obey their king and he obeys his god.

Both past and future golden ages were considerably more than mere periods of human history. In that they represented perfect modes of being to which everyone should aspire, they also possessed a permanent reality which paralleled the ordinary, harsh world of death and the struggle for survival. It was therefore theoretically possible that the eternal atemporal dimension represented by the Golden Age might at any moment break through that which chained humanity to its daily cycle: liberation was a perpetual possibility.⁹ It is this simple paradox which was, amongst Jews and Christians, to inspire the belief that the dawning of the millennium, the end of history, the Last Days, the kingdom of God and the final battle were imminent. This was to be the psychological motor which underpinned the revolutionary fervour of European millenarianism for two thousand years. Even if there were cycles in history, they might be brought to an abrupt end at any moment by a supreme act of will, coupled with divine intervention. Central to the Babylonian theory of history was a tension between the world of infinitely recurring cycles, or waves, of success and disaster, and a finite one, in which the entire process might be brought to a halt, and cyclical time vanquished by eternity. In terms of the political process, while the monarchs of Babylon and Assyria knew that their empires would one day collapse, they nonetheless strove to make their states the embodiment of the true and final Golden Age. The myth becomes a means of applying the symbolism of time to the service of political power. The state which has restored the glory of the past must be obeyed now and in the future, for it has liberated its subjects from the chains of the present. Against the background of the great empires of ancient Mesopotamia, golden age mythology, exploited in support of the universal state, might therefore be seen as an ideology of imperialism.

Catastrophe Theory - The Fire and the Flood

Unless God, or the gods, were to intervene to bring the cycles of time to an end, the past and future ages of bliss would remain for ever beyond human reach. However, worse than this, they were separated from the present by the impenetrable barrier of two great cata-

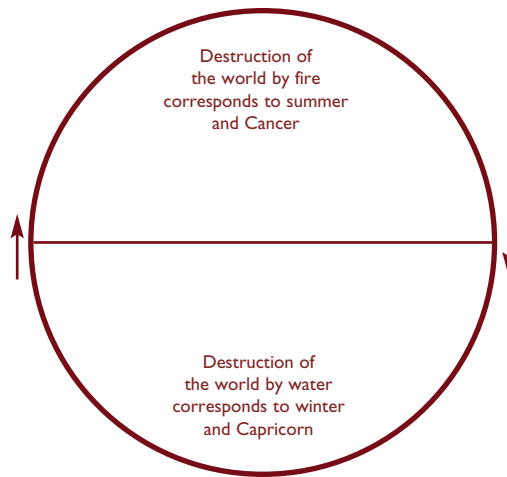


Figure 1 - Patterns of History

clysms which, in the Babylonian tradition of the third century BCE, were portrayed as a past global flood and a future world fire. From a modern perspective, informed by two thousand years of Christian millenarianism, it is almost as if the memory of past pleasure and the hope of future happiness could only be contacted through a barrier of pain and suffering, of collective self-denial. Of course, we cannot be sure that the Mesopotamians of the first and second millennia BCE thought in precisely these terms, but the literature they have left us, such as the *Lamentation over the Destruction of Sumer and Ur*, suggest that they did indeed see collective suffering as an inevitable part of the historical experience. Whether they regarded such experiences as collective cleansing is doubtful, for the question is, cleansing from what? "From sin" would be the Christian answer. On the other hand, to the Hebrews, God's punishment was provoked by disobedience, which they saw as sin. It is clear from the *Lamentation* that the Sumerians did see disobedience as the cause of their suffering, which they could then see as punishment, exactly as did the Hebrews. Historically such cataclysms fulfil a useful function by simplifying chronology and bringing a structure of fixed points into an otherwise infinite expanse of time. But in their all-consuming intensity they are clearly far more than mere historical signposts, separating past from present and present from future.¹⁰

The universality of flood myths in so many cultures suggests that they embody some mysterious element with a deep appeal to the human psyche.¹¹ The fact that floods were such a part of Mesopotamian life, and a potent cause of society's collective insecurity, has given rise to speculation that the deluge myth originated in the Tigris-Euphrates valley.¹² The widespread occurrence of such myths points to a psychological origin independent of local conditions, although no doubt the physical occurrence of

name, it is tempting to draw connections between him and the Hebrew John the Baptist.

5 *Enuma Elish* Tablet I, 95, in Heidel, Langdon.

6 Only Gadd is cautious of imposing modern Golden Age ideas on Sumerian tales, pointing out that even in Dilmun under the divine rule of Enki and Ninhursag, life lacked certain basic necessities. See *Ideas of Divine Rule*, p 68, 4. Dilmun is often thought to be the modern island of Bahrein, although Frankfort considers it more likely to be the Harrapan, or Indus Valley culture, which flourished in the 3rd millennium. See the discussion in *The Sumerians*, esp. pp 281-4. The poem *Enmerkar and the Lord of Aratta: A Sumerian Epic Tale of Iraq and Iran*, which incorporates the Golden Age passage cited above, describes the "spell of Enki" which was instrumental in bringing the rule of Enlil to an end. See Kramer, *Kingship*, p 270.

7 Epic of Gilgamesh, Tablet 10, col 6 in J Pritchard (ed), *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament*. Speiser, *op. cit.*, pp 68 - 70, develops the theme of Gilgamesh as the righteous sufferer resembling the Biblical Job and discusses the relationship between this theme and the possible Mesopotamian idea of history.

8 Cited in Frankfort, *Intellectual Adventure*, p 202.

9 H & H.A. Frankfort in *Intellectual Adventure*, pp 25 - 26.

10 This theory was proposed by A.W. Nieuwenhuis. For summaries of this and other theories see Frankfort, *Kingship*, p 397. Frankfort writes that the flood is "a device by which the primitive makes *tabula rasa*. Only by doing this can the inexhaustible stream of

imaginable past events be dammed up, and the existing world allowed to emerge at that point. It is as if he said: 'Whatever existed before, it was drowned and done with...'

11 The comparative study of flood myths deserves a volume of its own, and indeed, the available literature is extensive. For an excellent discussion of the Mesopotamian, Biblical and other flood myths, including psychological considerations, see the various essays in *The Flood Myth*, edited by Alan Dundes, Berkeley, Los Angeles, London 1988.

12 See for example, Kirk, *Myth*, p 225: "The theme of a great flood (which can only have originated in the condition of the Tigris-Euphrates valley, and certainly not in Egypt) is taken over by the Greeks".

13 A useful introduction to the Mesopotamian versions is to be found in *The Babylonian Legend of the Flood*, by Edward Sollberger, 3rd edition, London 1971. The Epic of Gilgamesh, which includes the flood story, is available in a number of versions, translated by N.K. Sandars, Middlesex, 1964, or by SN.Kramer and E.A. Speiser, in *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament*, ed J.B. Pritchard, 3rd edition, Princeton, 1969. Also see Alexander Heidel, *The Gilgamesh Epic and Old Testament Parallels*, Chicago, 1946 and W.G. Lambert and A.R. Millard, *Atra-hasis: The Babylonian Story of the Flood*, Oxford 1969.

14 This version, Book I.3, in Burstein's account is taken from John Clarke's 1910 translation of Seneca's *Quaestiones Naturales*, Bk III, ch. 29. Book II, chap 2:1 records that the deluge began on 15th Daisios, which

floods may have given the myth greater force amongst the Mesopotamians. There are also clear parallels with the Hebraic flood of Noah, which suggests diffusion of the myth from the Tigris-Euphrates valley to Palestine, carried along the trade routes by Semitic tribes.

The classic Mesopotamian flood myth dating in its final form from the second millennium, caused much excitement when it was discovered by George Smith in 1872, for it seemed to offer independent verification of the Biblical deluge. The story is included in twelve tablets (possibly representing the twelve months of the solar year) of the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, one of the greatest of the antediluvian kings.¹³ The Babylonian story is not exactly the same as the Hebrew, although the parallels are close. Like Noah, the Babylonian hero, Utna-pishtim, received a divine warning and escaped the world-cleansing deluge in an ark, constructed according to various sacred measurements. The only other reference to the primeval deluge occurs in Berossus' *Babyloniaca*. Berossus opened his astrology school on the isle of Cos sometime after 281, and his close contact with the Greeks is presumably a major reason why his work was preserved.

Berossus' work survives only in fragments. We are unfortunate in having no original, but are obliged to reconstruct whatever we can from later fragments, and the deluge myth is known only from a second-hand report in Seneca's *Quaestiones Naturales*, written almost three hundred years later. Berossus' account introduced two themes unknown in the previous Mesopotamian catastrophe myths. First was the concept of a future conflagration as a second destructive global purification, and second was the notion that these were to coincide with astronomical cycles, and hence were to recur in the future. He made no mention of a primeval conflagration, but, in Seneca's words, clearly infers a future flood:

'Some suppose that in the final catastrophe the Earth, too, will be shaken, and through clefts in the ground will uncover sources of fresh rivers which will flow forth from their full source in larger volume. Berossus, the interpreter of Belus, affirms that the whole issue is brought about by the course of the planets. So positive is he on the point that he assigns a definite date both for the conflagration and the deluge. All that the earth inherits will, he assures us, be consigned to flame when the planets, which now move in different orbits, all assemble in Cancer, so arranged in one row that a straight line may pass through their spheres. When the same gathering takes place in Capricorn, then we are in danger of the deluge. Midsummer is at present brought around by the

*former, midwinter by the latter. They are zodiacal signs of great power, seeing that they are the determining influences in the two great changes of the year.'*¹⁴

The prospect of a future deluge was regarded as a "danger", rather than an inevitability, and Berossus did not imply that future floods need recur indefinitely. There may be only one, and if the danger passes, none. Whether it was to recur or not, it certainly threatened a return to the disorder of which the Mesopotamians were so fearful. For they shared with the Hebrews and Egyptians the concept of water as the material substratum of the universe prior to the creation itself; a reasonable enough assumption for a people living in a country where life blooms in the desert after the annual rains, but where water is also regarded as a great destructive force. The *Enuma Elish* offers a vivid description of these primeval conditions:

*"When on high the heavens were not named,
And beneath a home bore no name,
And Apsu (i.e. fresh water) primaeval, their engenderer,
And the 'Form', Tiamat (i.e. salt water), the bearer
of all of them,
There mingled their waters together,
Dark chambers were not constructed, and marshlands were not seen;
When none of the gods had been brought into being,
And they were not named, and fates were not fixed."*¹⁵

The primary function of water as the only substance which existed before the creation was retained by the Hebrews. According to *Genesis*, "The earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep; and the Spirit of God was moving over the face of the waters."¹⁶

The worst fate that could be imagined was a return to such formless conditions. Ea, Sumerian god of the waters, makes clear in his final rebuke to Enlil, who had sent the flood to destroy human life:

*"Would that a lion had ravaged mankind
Rather than the flood,
Would that a wolf had ravaged mankind
Rather than the flood,
Would that famine had wasted the world
Rather than the flood,
Would that pestilence had wasted mankind
Rather than the flood."*¹⁷

Humanity was punished by water, and was also judged by it, as the agent acting on Ea's behalf. The second paragraph of

Hammurabi's law code, dating from the 18th century BCE, established the model for medieval versions of trial by ordeal, by ordering that those accused of sorcery be thrown into the sacred river.¹⁸ The return to watery chaos might therefore be seen as a punishment, and a major responsibility of the king and his priests was to ensure that no such action was necessary, to save both themselves and their people from potential divine wrath. It has been suggested that the Akitu festival was held at the Nisan new moon in order to coincide with the period when the flood threatened. It was thus an apotropaic measure designed to ward off the threatened evil for another year.¹⁹ The deluge myth may then be seen less as a quasi-historical account of the past, than a warning of what might happen in the future if the gods' cosmic order were disobeyed. If the Akitu ritual was successful, Marduk, it was hoped, would then give his guarantee of future prosperity, much as Yahweh gave his promise to Noah after the flood:

*"While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease"*²⁰

It is also possible that texts such as the *Enuma Elish*, the *King List* or the *Babyloniaca* represented theological attempts to systematise an

earlier pre-literate cyclical theory which had neither beginning nor end. Even within Berossus' scheme, there is scope for the individual rise and fall of states, and therefore for sub-cycles, just as the Sun's diurnal cycle was a microcosm of its annual journey. The fact that both Berossus' catastrophes take on a natural form clearly suggests the direct projection of nature into history, the divine element in human destruction being a function of the periodic death of the fertility deity, whether it were Tammuz or another god who took on similar attributes.

There are a number of theories which seek to explain the origin of water in the flood myths. Some assume cataclysm legends to be literal memories of past celestial events, or of past geographical ages. Water obviously possesses cleansing properties, but the flood is sent as a divine judgment and the only surviving texts emphasise punishment rather than the cleansing which we might expect. Nobody has yet explained why the deluge should lie in the past while the conflagration is yet to come, why water should be associated with the past and fire with the future. Conflagration myths may originate in dry or desert regions, explaining their relatively late appearance in Mesopotamian historiography as a Persian or Greek import. On the other hand, their origin

according to Samuel, corresponds to Airu, the second month, and hence the full Moon in the modern sign of Scorpio. See Alan E. Samuel, *Greek and Roman Chronology*, pp 143, Burstein, *Babyloniaca*, p 20, n 52. If this is correct, the Sun would have been in Taurus, the sign of the Bull, evoking connections with the destructive Babylonian Bull of Heaven which features in the Gilgamesh Epic and hence with Mithras' perennial battle with the bull. The conflagration would have taken place at the beginning of the fourth month, Duzu, the point of the year when the Sun and Moon formed a conjunction in Cancer. The deluge, on the other hand, would have taken place at the beginning of the tenth month, Tebetu, defined as the period of the Sun-Moon conjunction in Capricorn.

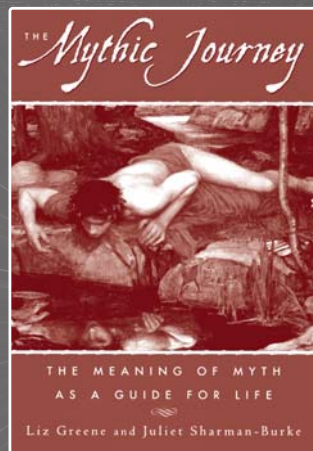
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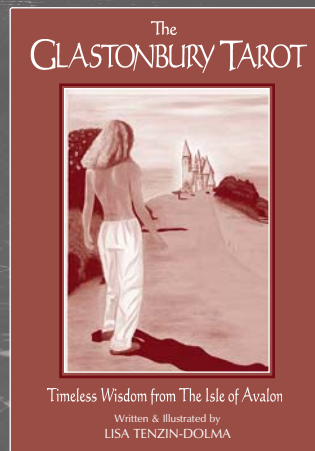
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may also be found amongst northern migrants or invaders who entered Mesopotamia with a tradition of slash-and-burn agriculture unknown to the farmers of the river valleys. That the concept of fire as judicial power was known to the Babylonians, is evident from the prayer of the man who believes he has been bewitched:

*“Scorching Fire, warlike son of Heaven,
Thou, the fiercest of thy brethren,
Who like the Moon and Sun decidest lawsuits -
Judge thou my case, hand down the verdict.
Burn the man and woman who bewitched me;
Burn, O Fire, the man and woman who bewitched
me;
Scorch, O Fire, the man and woman who
bewitched me;
Burn them, O Fire;
Scorch them, O Fire;
Take hold of them O Fire;
Consume them, O Fire;
Destroy them, O Fire.”²¹*

The savagery of this plea stands in contrast to the impartial tones applied to the judicial qualities of the sacred river in the second paragraph of Hammurabi's law code; yet both water and fire were to act as judges of individual crime in the Mesopotamian cosmic state. The *Babyloniaca* gives us the first recorded indigenous use of both as instruments of the cosmic control of human history.

Whatever the mythical ingredients of such stories, Mesopotamian history was rich in examples of historical cataclysms which did away not with the whole world, but with single states. One such is *The Lamentation over the Destruction of Sumer and Ur*, which commemorates the events of 2004 BCE, when the great city of Ur fell to a city from the east, bringing to an end an empire which was to be remembered as a golden age for the following fifteen hundred years. The lamentation describes the fate decreed for Ur by An, Enlil, Enki and Ninmah, the four creator deities, its consequent abandonment by Nanna, the Moon god, the city god of Ur, and its destruction by the Guti. The necessary celestial portents are accompanied by supernatural intervention, natural disaster and war in a combination which was to become the model, via Old Testament parallels, for all subsequent European millenarianism. The memory of the past disaster was to be transferred to a mixed longing for, and fear of, the future:

*“To overturn the (appointed) time, to forsake the
(preordained) plans,
The storms gather to strike like a flood...
To overturn the (divine) decrees of Sumer,
After Enki had altered (the course of) the Tigris
and Euphrates,*

*Enlil blew an evil storm, silence lay upon the
city.*

*Their (i.e. the Gutian's) advance was as the
flood of Enlil...*

*The dark time was roasted by hailstones and
flames,*

*The bright time was wiped out by a shadow,
On that day, heaven rumbled, the earth trem-
bles, the storm worked without respite,*

*The heavens were darkened, they were covered
by a shadow, the mountains roared,*

*The Sun lay down at the horizon, dust passed
over the mountains,*

*The moon lay at the zenith, the people were
afraid.”²²*

Most commentators assume that his devotion to Babylonian wisdom was such that Berossus' work is evidence of a tradition of recurrent world disasters at least two thousand years old. Thorkild Jacobsen has identified within the *Enuma Elish* creation myth a belief in periodic phases of confrontation and growth, although his regularised system strains the poetic vision of the original myth to breaking point.²³ By the 3rd century BCE, we can combine our three main sources, the *Enuma Elish*, the Sumerian *King List* and the *Babyloniaca* to suggest a coherent theory of history moving through waves and punctuated by at least three major cataclysms (if we include the supernatural battle between Marduk and Ti'amat.) (See Fig. 1, *Patterns of History*, p. 17; Fig. 2, *Seasons of History*, opposite.) Babylonian mythology certainly contained the ingredients for belief in endlessly recurrent cataclysms.

Until such time as the necessary tablets are found and translated, the existence of any such Babylonian myth must be treated as pure speculation, and it is quite possible that Berossus' ideas about a future world fire, and of astronomical regulation, were adopted either direct from Greek tradition, or from a tradition which was common to both cultures. In a sense, such quibbles are not important. What was significant is that, for Seneca, it was the stamp of Babylonian authority which gave the theory its significance. For later generations it was Seneca himself, with all his credentials as one of the foremost scholars of the Augustan age, who lent the story its credibility. The belief in recurrent disasters, especially of the astronomically timed future fire, dovetailed with the Christian doctrine of the future fiery return of Christ, and entered the mainstream of European historiography, where it retained its power over the historical imagination until the seventeenth century.



15 Heidel, *Enuma Elish*, Tablet I, 1 - 8.

16 Genesis, 1:2.

17 *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, trans N.K. Sanders, p 109 - 110.

18 Chiera, *The Code of Hammurabi*, 2., p 183.

19 Jacobsen, *Intellectual Adventure*, p 199.

20 Genesis 8:22

21 *Maqlu*, tablet II, 104-15, quoted by Jacobsen in *The Intellectual Adventure of Ancient Man*, p 134. Note also the description of Marduk/Assur in the *Enuma Elish*, 1.96: “When he moved his lips fire blazed forth”.

22 *The Lamentation over the Destruction of Sumer and Ur*, ed Michalowski, 1 - 3, 25, 28, 76, 79 - 84. The imagery suggests an eclipse, although this does not require that such an event actually occurred. Perhaps eclipse imagery would be used as a metaphor to describe destruction.

23 Jacobsen, *Treasures of Darkness*, p 184.

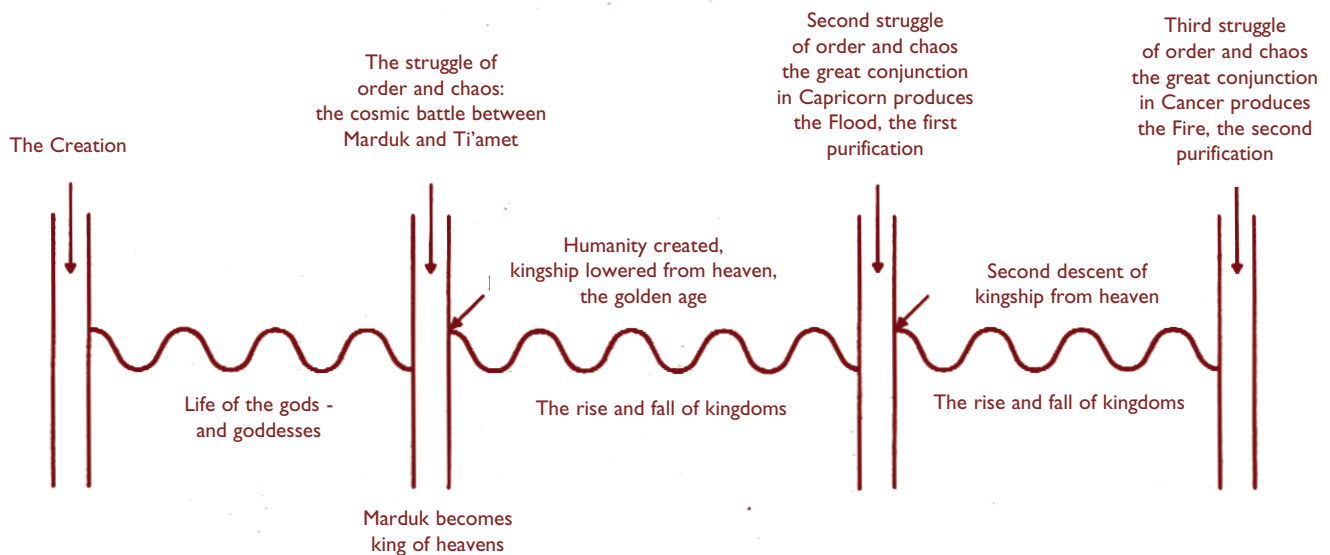


Figure 2
The structure of history in Mesopotamia, from the Sumerian *King List* and the *Babyloniaca*

Reflections: Breaking the Taboo on God

Melanie Reinhart

On December 30th, 1999, Chiron will be conjunct Pluto at $11^{\circ} 23'$ Sagittarius, making this aspect the main astrological signature of the Millennium. **Melanie Reinhart** has been contemplating this potent symbol of a faith that is both wounding and healing.

Chiron re-classified

Since the recent discovery of the Centaurs, the small orbit-crossing bodies that move between Saturn and Pluto, Chiron has been again re-classified. Its current status as "chief Centaur" clarifies Chiron's symbolism as messenger, emissary and escapee of the Underworld, to which he returned for his own healing. This is the terrain of the god Hades, our planet Pluto, who may thus be seen as presiding over the Kuiper Disk, the dense belt of matter which surrounds the Solar System.

Pluto nearly re-classified

Pluto itself was recently the subject of huge controversy in the world of scientific astronomy when Dr. Brian Marsden of the I.A.U. suggested that Pluto should be re-classified as a "Minor Planet", the largest of such in the Kuiper Disk. Although this

makes complete symbolic sense, a storm of outrage followed which quashed the proposal. Suffice it to say that if Pluto had been discovered more recently, it would not have been classed as a planet.

What a delicious piece of "live astrology". Pluto, as Lord of Transformation, enters the sign of Sagittarius, accompanied by a herd of newly discovered Centaurs, and asks us to reconsider his meaning! Pluto himself is an orbit-crosser, the only one used by most astrologers until the Centaurs were discovered. All these bodies move inward from the cold dark reaches of outer space, tending towards the light of the Sun, the heart-centre of the Solar System, the point of integration and individual consciousness. Pluto crossed to the inner side of Neptune's orbital path in February 1979,



Melanie Reinhart BA, D. F. Astrol. S. has been a professional astrologer since 1975, runs a busy practice, travels internationally, and tutors for the CPA and the Faculty of Astrological Studies in London. She is the author of several highly-acclaimed books, classics of careful research, intuitive and innovative thinking.

The estate of T.S. Eliot does not permit the quotation of excerpts from his work, and so permission to quote the relevant lines of "East Coker" was refused. The interested reader is referred to *Four Quartets*, the collection in which "East Coker" is included (see Stanza III in particular). Published by Faber and Faber. Alternatively, see the website: www.bath.ac.uk/~bspajs/labyrinth/EastCoker.html

reached perihelion in 1989 in the sign of Scorpio, and crossed out again in February 1999, just as this controversy was peaking! It's as if he was saying, "I'm not who you think I am."

Thus, the Centaurs seem to symbolise the contents which emerge from the deeper background of historical, political and ancestral issues, and which seek recognition, light and healing by impinging on our own lives. In other words, they mark out areas of enormous suffering, themes which are "bigger than us", which are not "our fault", but which we nonetheless have to work with.

The Chiron-Pluto Cycle

The last conjunction of Chiron and Pluto occurred on July 19th, 1941, at 3° 41' Leo, and thus we are at the end of a cycle that began during World War II. Many countries have a 50-year secrecy rule on classified documents relating to sensitive historical and political events. The last decade has seen the opening of many such documents concerning the beginning of the cycle, with powerful repercussions for many individuals, and a corresponding shift in collective opinion. There have been many heart-rending stories in the media of individuals trying to fill in the biographical blanks in their own lives, and their ancestry. Shocking discoveries have led to outrage, hostility, further trauma and feelings of betrayal as the truth emerges. However, there are also extraordinary stories of healing, reparation, forgiveness and peace-making with the past, on both an individual and collective scale.

The Dark Night of the Soul

If we consider Pluto to be connected with taboos, then Chiron/Pluto is perhaps about the breaking of taboos. A taboo may create a condition of frozen non-experience which itself is denied, and which attracts more of the same, like a black hole, and which also (symbolically through the Centaurs) needs recognition and release for healing to occur. Pluto's purifying activity in the Scorpio terrain is easily located... we all know what it feels like to be emotionally frozen, then to have that melt and gush forth in a *catharsis* of expression or discharge which leaves one feeling shaken, but relieved, empty and peaceful.

But what about Pluto in Sagittarius? To be frozen here is the "Dark Night of the Soul", the spiritual wasteland, the horror of meaninglessness, the absurdity perceived by the mind, breaking up under the weight

of its own preconceptions, and bereft of the capacity for reverence. It is the world of T.S. Eliot's exquisite poem *East Coker*, which was written in 1940, just before the last Chiron/Pluto conjunction, which is where we are now ... "Oh dark, dark, dark..."¹

The Wounded God-Image

Taboo exists in our relationship with God, and our own true nature too. This metaphysical emptiness or void, this lack of meaning and belief, this absence of aspiration, is intolerable; unless you have an unshakeable faith, which goes even deeper, and can encompass these states. In other words, it is a "loss of spiritual innocence", where we let go of our regressive wish to be taken care of by an omnipotent and benign parent-figure, who, we think, should make us comfortable and safe. To truly embrace the Divine is an earth-shaking experience. In Esoteric Astrology, Sagittarius rules the Earth, said to be a "non-sacred planet" in the process of becoming sacred.

Our contemporary culture protects itself by compensation and denial; the taboo is about admitting the depth of despair and meaninglessness. Therefore meaning, spirituality, religion, purpose and our highest aspirations also become taboo. Instead, we have "options", proliferating in everything from bank accounts to corn-flakes, flaunting the illusions of "choice" and "freedom". Speed, greed, excitement, consumerism and "more is better" are all negative Jupiter manifestations, like the Sagittarian Centaur run amok.

It is "not cool" to have noble aspirations, spiritual ideals, and high principles, and to try to live them. However, my "prediction" is that it soon will be. It is well known that near-death experiences very often result in a powerful spiritual connection for the individual, and this is the condition of our home planet today. We do not know whether the human race will survive, or how, as potential disaster looms simultaneously on several fronts - ecology, economy, world health, food and fuel supplies. Meanwhile, our god-image is wounded, in need of repair, and religious convictions become harshly fundamentalist to avoid destruction in the pit of meaninglessness - which may be the necessary prelude for a true rebirth of individual meaning. Sagittarian and Plutonian themes abound here - the vision of potential disaster in the future perhaps also holds the possibility for spiritual awakening.

Today, the emerging spiritual needs, and the vision from which they are emanating, are appropriated by the world of billboards and advertising, and become trivialised in catch-phases that encourage you to buy this or that product. In only one issue of *Time Magazine* (October 11, 1999) I found these phrases in the advertisements:

"Remember when something new gave you wings"

"Two more ways one world revolves around you"

"and then there was light"

"Because our corporate message is beyond words"

"Like guardian angels... (the GPS gets you and your rental car back to civilisation)"

"From here the big picture is clear".

However, turning this inside-out, I would see the "global mind" revealing an incoming vision through the most obvious channels available - the mass media. I imagine God saying "Well, most people are not reading the sacred texts any more, so I'll have to spell things out for them in places where they do look."

Watch that space! Someone once sent me a card on which was written: "HIS DISGUISE IS PERFECT".



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Measuring the *Daimon*

Lynn Bell

In this moving account of how vivid and poignant astrological symbolism can be, **Lynn Bell** reveals her insights into the *malus daimon*, or dark angel, of the 12th house - but also, by example, shows how we as astrologers can help our clients to be “awake to the possibility of something extraordinary.”



Lynn Bell has been an astrologer for 25 years, for much of that time in Paris, where she has an active consulting practice. She began teaching at the CPA in London in 1995. An international lecturer and teacher, she gives seminars in Paris and throughout France. Her first book *Planetary Threads: Patterns of Relating among Family and Friends* has just been published by the CPA Press.

I Mars and Uranus were exactly conjunct in the sky, in Sandy's 6th house, on December 26th 1997 - the date of the original stroke, opposite her Saturn/Pluto midpoint. In September 1999 Mars and Uranus would oppose each other across the 6th/12th house axis in her chart and very close to natal Pluto. She was disconnected from life support September 7 1998 at 2:55 pm PDT in Los Angeles.

Last summer, sleeping under a tent on the full moon, I had a dream, the kind of dream you don't easily forget. Death came for a visit, or one of her sisters, for somehow I “knew” she was a woman. She held something in her hand - a measuring tape. It shot up vertically and, just as quickly, she scampered up the metal ribbon and took something from above, a disk-like shape, perhaps a horoscope. I turned to the others and said, “Did you see that?”, not quite believing my eyes... And there she was, right across from me, smiling her death's head smile. She took out a lance, with a knife attached by cords to one end, and, very methodically, began to use it to pierce those present - one man under the collarblade, another in the thigh; it was quite precise, like acupuncture. Then she turned to me saying, “You didn't listen the first time,” and she cut me in the abdomen three times, from left to right.

When I woke, I was frightened, and the dream stayed with me. The measuring tape reminded me of something, niggled somewhere - of course! It was Lachesis the measurer, one of the three Moirae, the one who apportions time. One month later, I came home from a trip to find a message on my answering machine, saying Sandy had died. I had seen Sandy a few months before, during a trip to California, where she was recovering from a series of mysterious strokes. At fifty, she had to learn to walk and talk and read all over again; she'd made a remarkable recovery, and she was cheerful, determined and positive. During a reading, she asked me a question that astrologers shrink from - “Do you think I'm going to make it, or am I going to die?” I couldn't answer that question, but looking at her transits there was a tricky period, a time when the same configuration that had been present during her stroke would repeat.¹ I said that she needed to get through that time, to be especially vigilant around the lunar eclipse; only afterwards would things ease up. Sandy was hospitalized the day before the eclipse, which would activate her Ascendant ruler, Mercury, while the neurologists stood by helplessly,

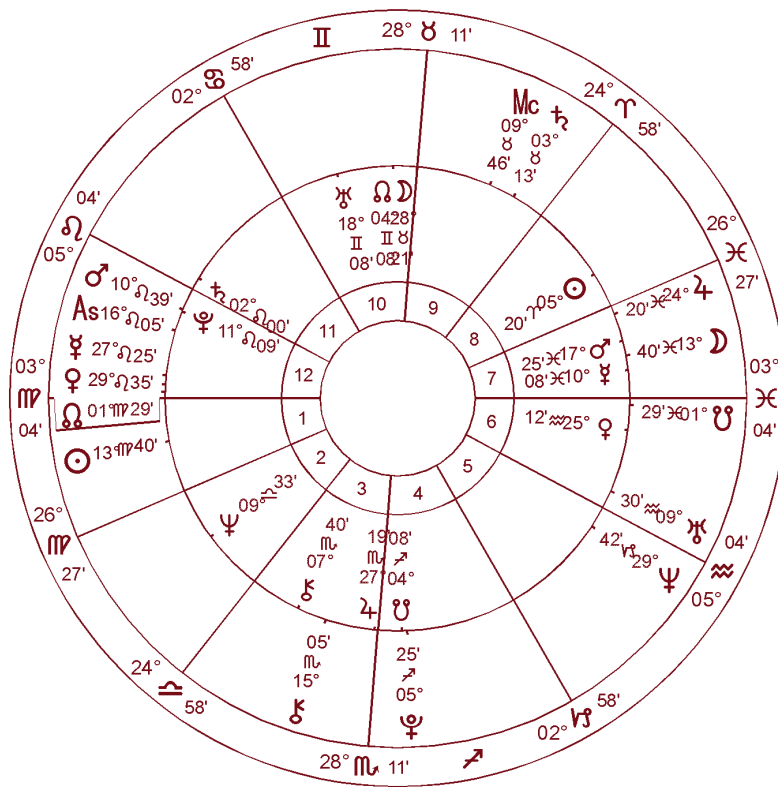
unable to stop a new series of strokes. She had left instructions not to take extreme measures; within forty-eight hours she was dead.

My dream helped me understand that it was time for Sandy, and I think she knew this somewhere too. We cannot solve the mystery of Sandy's death, nor would I wish to look too closely.

But another mystery remains, and that is the story of her partner Charlie. Although he is a Pisces, his chart is marked by a grand air trine, and a stellium of planets in Gemini, clustered on either side of the Ascendant. The airy emphasis is evident in a strongly idealistic temperament and a high-density social life with many contacts. Charlie has both a 12th house Moon conjunct Uranus, and Venus opposition Pluto, and his relationships with women have been particularly expressive of these aspects.

The *Malus Daimon*

In the old texts, the 12th house was called the house of the *malus daimon*; later writers speak of the dark angel. It was believed that every soul came into incarnation with a guiding spirit, a *daimon*, who remembers your purpose, and brings about events that will help it to be realized. The *daimon* could be good, bad, or in-between, and your well-being and happiness had much to do with the way your *daimon* intervened in the unfolding of your life's purpose. The *bonus daimon* belongs to the 11th house, traditionally one of the most fortunate places in a chart.² The *daimon* of the 12th house, though, is much more ambivalent - it often acts in mysterious ways, taking the soul along a path which can involve suffering, loss and pain. When Jonah refuses the call and attempts to flee, he is cast overboard, and ends up in the belly of the whale. Those with strong planets in the 12th house often have this experience of being taken out of circulation in some way. Sometimes this is simply a psychological prediction, a taste for retreat or withdrawal, an inner search that meanders far from crowded paths. 12th house energies are amorphous and irrational, over-



Biwheel (left)
 Inner Wheel:
Sandy
 March 26 1947
 3:26 pm EST
 New York NY
 Outer Wheel:
Lunar eclipse
 September 6 1998
 11:21 am GMT
 Los Angeles CA
 Geocentric
 Placidus
 True Node

whelming individual identity and taking us into fearful places. This often evokes a protective response, a desire to go back into the bud, to please, be left alone. Since Charlie's Moon-Uranus conjunction rules his Midheaven and falls in the 12th house, women are likely to play an important role in the more tortuous weavings of his lifepath and career, to perhaps take on the role of *malus daimon*.

Charlie's first wife Kathy was a passionate student of astrology, a vibrant extravert, and their house was always full of people. It was only after a number of years that Charlie realized his substantial earnings were being siphoned into his wife's cocaine habit, as she spiralled increasingly into a life of drugs, alcohol, and compulsive partying. For a long time, he saw without seeing, and enjoyed the fun, but then he realized that this exciting fun-loving woman he'd married was falling to pieces in front of his eyes. It is easy to see the Uranus-Moon symbolism at work here, a brilliant and vital woman gone completely out of control, and when she began to disappear for days at a time, Charlie gave an ultimatum. But the binges continued, and he left the marriage.

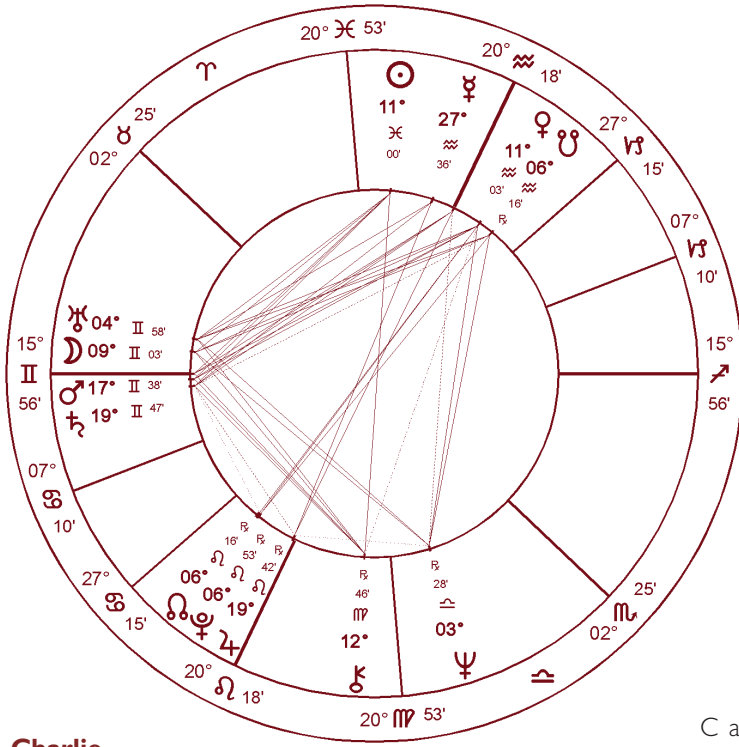
Soon after, he got involved with a woman who had two small children, and invited her to move in with him temporarily. When he saw the relationship wasn't working out, they agreed she would start looking for a place. Unbeknownst to him, Veronica had made a career of suing reluctant fathers; she stopped

taking birth control and got pregnant, moved out, and got a lawyer. Charlie earned a good living as a cinematographer - he still pays \$2000 a month in child support, for a daughter he rarely sees and did not wish to have, since years of lawsuits and genetic tests established his paternity. Veronica's calculated pregnancy smacks more of Venus opposition Pluto, a treacherous and untrustworthy woman. But her marginality, and financial dependence on men who have rejected her, speak to Moon-Uranus as well - in Charlie's chart the 12th house Moon rules the 2nd house, and women hurt him in the pocketbook as well as the heart. Veronica certainly qualifies as a dark angel.

Charlie has Saturn and Mars conjunct the Ascendant from the 1st house, which most of us would associate with a strongly controlling personality. In his work, he is technically brilliant, intuitive and perfectionist; his greatest happiness comes when he is behind the camera. And yet, like many people in the film business, he feels constantly out of control, waiting for the next job offer, wondering if the right film will ever come. He becomes single-minded and emotionally unavailable when he's working, and this may have been a factor in Kathy's drug use and his second wife's extended depression. The women in his life, consciously or not, have somehow made sure he is never in control emotionally.

Optimistic, as only a Pisces can be, Charlie fell in love with Laura, a promising and

2 For more on the *bonus daimon*, see *Planetary Threads: Patterns of Relating Among Siblings and Friends*, Lynn Bell, CPA Press 1999



Charlie
 March 1 1944
 10:44 am CST (birth cert)
 Chicago Illinois
 Geocentric
 Tropical
 True Node

beautiful
 Canadian
 actress, while on a
 film shoot in Toronto. They

had a whirlwind romantic courtship, and she followed him to LA, where she had been offered a leading role in a new series. All seemed well, and they married in a glow of spiritual and emotional well-being. But Laura's series wasn't picked up, and work dried up completely; she went from a hot property to just another face, in the blink of an eye. She fell into a deep depression, began to have nightmares, lost all taste for sex and recovered memories of childhood abuse. At first Charlie listened and held her, tried to comfort and understand, but, after three years, his feelings dried up, and he asked for a separation; he was haunted by the fear of having to sell his house, for California law makes all property in a marriage joint-owned, and he knew Laura could legally claim half of the house. Once again, a woman cost him money; he supported her for five years, even when she moved in with another man, in order to finally settle amicably, without having to give up his house.

Uranus-Moon often has tremendous ambivalence around dependency, and Charlie has always been financially independent, although cyclically anxious about money. Even when he chose women like Laura, who were earning well, something "happened", and they became dependent on him. How can we understand this? Perhaps unacknowledged under the nice guy *persona* is a determination that he will be stronger than any woman who may enter his life. Moon-Uranus needs change; it thrives on excitement; it's well suited to the irregularity of a career in film. But it is quite at odds with the Saturnian theme in his chart, and

perhaps things blow up in Charlie's face because he does not understand the dialogue between control and freedom inside himself. Is there a kind of fate at work here? Geoffrey Cornelius addresses this question of "fate-threads" in *The Moment of Astrology*:³

"It is the divinatory astrologer who has to take on the question of "mind forg'd manacles"; and I believe we have an adequate answer only if we presume our practice of astrology has as its origin or destination a genuinely spiritual dimension, and not simply a pragmatic usefulness. My answer is along the following lines. Firstly, we are conditioned one way or another by images and ingrained family and cultural patterns, and there is not some ideal bind-free human existence. Now, to the extent that astrology has any impact in "turning" the person, explicitly symbolic binds are being substituted for other, more conventional binds. These symbolic binds are available to language - the language of astrology - in a way that most of our mindsets are not, and allow a direct and creative participation." (p 292)

Just as 7th house planets often offer others a role they may choose to play in our lives, the 12th house whispers unconscious enticements. Moon-Uranus here may help to wake up issues that have been slumbering in another's psyche, especially when it is found in a man's chart and he meets a woman who has an unexplored feeling life. The connection between two people always has this uncharted territory, the unknown and unconscious contract made under the table by our *daimons*, while we are attracted, and fall in love, and "choose" the other for all the apparently right reasons.

Many of you may wonder what kind of mother is described by this lunar placement, since the strongly defined Moon-Uranus image is at odds with the 12th house placement - was she independent, or caught up in something beyond her control, overwhelmed by life? He describes her as "a force of nature," incredibly positive and determined, always "fine" and relentlessly unemotional, a description which corresponds quite well to the perkier side of Moon conjunct Uranus in Gemini. Her own mother, widowed at forty-five and instantly old, had moved in with the family and haunted everyone with her sorrowing manipulative presence. Charlie says she would take his shirt and wash it before it had time to get to the laundry basket, all the while murmuring a litany of health complaints. This grandmother emanated a thwarted neediness, while her daughter remained resolutely upbeat - they carried on a forty-year dialogue where neither listened to the other: you need me; I don't need you; no one can help me, but I can do every-

3 *The Moment of Astrology*
 Arkana 1994 London

thing for you. When Charlie speaks of this grandmother he brushes imaginary cobwebs away from his body, and tightens his face in distaste; for him, she embodied the manipulative love of Venus opposition Pluto, and a sense of victimization that we often associate with the 12th house. It's not surprising the Moon is confused in Charlie's psyche, but this hardly explains everything.

Charlie spent a number of years on his own, and went back into therapy to try to figure things out. He decided that, above all, he wanted a partner who was strong in her own right; he didn't want a woman to be dependent on him. After some time he met Sandy, an independent producer in commercials. She was savvy, successful, and upbeat; her humor and forthrightness impressed all his friends and she became a valued support, a partner in the truest sense. After three years she reluctantly decided to move from New York to Los Angeles - the transition was difficult, but they were working through it, they had spoken of marrying on New Year's Eve, but had decided to postpone a wedding date. The unexpected stroke changed everything, and during the last nine months of their relationship Charlie found himself once again with a truly dependent woman on his hands. After her death he wrote an email to friends:

"If Sandy had died the first time she got sick it would have been a tragedy for me, for us. Our relationship would have been unfulfilled... Unfinished. But she stayed with me. My gift from her was that she couldn't leave me unfinished. She had more to teach me."

Over and over again, Charlie's Uranus-Moon-Mars conjunction has taken him by surprise. Clearly, with Sandy, he had to look at what caring for another really entails. We might ask whether there is some complex knot that has needed to be undone, something that involves both freedom and caring. Charlie hopes that Pluto's opposition to the Moon and square to the Sun by transit, will have broken some pattern of difficulty in his relationships with women.

To go back to the notion of *malus daimon*, it may be that 12th house planets require more extreme circumstances in order to change. Rudhyar used to speak of this house in terms of de-conditioning, and I have come to understand that 12th house planets almost always need to break out of imprisoning beliefs. Planets more easily stray from their purpose, and get caught in the briars; the risks go up - an encounter with the wolf, a broken leg becomes more likely. But being lost also brings the possi-



Splendor Solis
Salomon Trismosin
British Library

bility of finding someone to save you, or stumbling into a new life. The fortunate *daimon* of the 11th house works through grace and helpful encounters, but both *daimons* are unpredictable, and both have serious intentions. We have things to accomplish, a destiny to fulfill, and, one way or another, through trial or fire or through kindness and luck, our *daimons*, say the myth, are trying to get us back on track. What the ancients experienced as misfortune or sorrow, the words most often used about the 12th house, may often be an obscure means to move a person closer to the right path.

James Hillman writes about the *daimon* in *The Soul's Code*:⁴

The daimon's "reminders" work in many ways. The daimon motivates. It protects. It invents and persists with stubborn fidelity. It resists compromising reasonableness and often forces deviance and oddity upon its keeper, especially when it is neglected or opposed. It offers comfort and can pull you into its shell, but cannot abide innocence. It can make the body ill. It is out of step with time, finding all sorts of faults, gaps and knots in the flow of life - and it prefers them. It has affinities with myth since it is itself a mythical being and thinks in mythical patterns.

Perhaps it is opposition to, and neglect of the *daimon*, to our purpose, which evokes the actions of the *malus daimon*. I know many 12th house people who have a special ability to find the meaning that comes from difficult events.

4 *The Soul's Code*
James Hillman
Bantam Books 1997
London

...The soul's path is not easy to describe, and rarely so simple to resolve.



Years ago some friends of mine, with strong 12th house planets, lost a court case - they were thrown out of an old depot they had fixed up and lived in illegally - they paid rent, but it was a commercial space. They had a baby daughter, and had imagined the French courts would rule in their favour, so the eviction came as a shock. Yet, as a result, they mobilized and bought a house at the best possible time, shortly before real estate prices shot up. They've often spoken of how lucky they were to have had that case go against them. The *malus daimon* of the 12th house also serves to move us back into connection with ourselves, even through difficult events.

How do we recognise the presence of fate in our lives? Several people have told me that they "knew instantly" when they met their life partners. One described a feeling of anticipation for several months beforehand, as if there was something extra - "an added jolt" - a sense of being more awake than usual. All of us have met people, by chance or design, who have changed the course of our lives, and perhaps we have also had the experience of being in that role for someone else. The ancients believed that one who made it possible for another to achieve his destiny played the role of the *bonus daimon*, and after death a benefactor was often elevated to the status of a god. We astrologers can often identify moments of special convergence in the lives of others, help them be awake to the possibility of something extraordinary.

Why did my unconscious send me a dream? As astrologers, it is important for us to know that we cannot always advise, that there are times when the outcome cannot be changed. The dream was a very clear indicator for me that I would be deeply touched by the workings of fate in people's lives. I began astrology during the heady days of the human potential movement, when consciousness was the key to change, and those who "woke up" could become creators and shapers of their own future, rather than automatons travelling destiny's path. But as I worked deeply with people over the years, I saw that some had a heavier portion of fate in their lives than others - good people who had reflected deeply, given to others, worked to bring things into awareness. I slowly saw that the soul's path is not easy to describe, and rarely so simple to resolve. The same day I got the news of Sandy's death, I learned another friend, the same age, was going into the hospital for tests. A year later, she is still under treatment for her cancer. And the knife had a message for me too - it was time to deliver something, to write the book that had been forming inside, perhaps a shade too long. Time was measured for me as well, as it is for all of us. Being reminded of this was helpful, if slightly scary. After all, it is Lachesis, the measurer, who presents us to our *daimon* before we are born.



The Progressed Moon:

Mnemosyne's Recollections

Brian Clark

Astrological textbooks delineate the movement of the progressed Moon through the horoscope and throughout the life cycle. In this article, **Brian Clark** commemorates her three phases, and muses on their meaning.

Juliet:

*O, swear not by the Moon, th' inconstant Moon,
That monthly changes in her circled orb,
Lest that thy love prove likewise variable.*

William Shakespeare
Romeo and Juliet, II. 1. 151-3.

Like Juliet, timekeepers could not depend upon the lunar cycle to accurately predict the regularity of the seasons. The ancients found that marking time by the Moon's cycle meant time drifted, and over generations discrepancies in the calendar were occurring. By the 4th century BCE, the Egyptians had mastered the art of using three calendars. Unwilling to relinquish their mensal calendar that marked religious festivals, the Egyptians learned to juggle both civic and religious calendars.¹

Astrologers are also used to mastering the art of working with a variety of calendars. Each astrological cycle is unique in the way that it measures out a different period of time, symbolises a particular set of themes and events, and constructs and reconstructs the personal narrative. Marking time by the Moon still offers an invaluable astrological calendar. While the Moon proved to be inaccurate at recording the civil year, its ability to reflect the religious festivals shone. Astrologically this is still a viable premise for the progressed Moon: inaccurate at defining and mapping the civic (the conscious, solar) landmarks of our life, but a perfect tool for recording the religious (the feeling tone) festivals of our life cycle. The progressed Moon's movement through a personal horoscope evokes the aspects of our life narrative that are pre-literate, sensual and unconscious; it is the continuing memorial to the feeling life. As it cycles through the horoscope, fragmented aspects of the self are evoked, remembered, and recollected.

Swearing by the Progressed Moon

The Moon's changing rhythm religiously records, reflects and reveals each heartbeat, every breath, and each nuance of primitive life. Dancing through the phases, she grows full then disappears, weaving her way through a labyrinth of impressions, feelings and senses. She is the

protector of the menagerie of wild feelings, the guardian of treasured memoirs, the wise blood of the internal mentor. From new to full to dark again, she waxes and wanes, changing shape with each phase. She has entranced and engaged us since conception. Astrologically we record this time with the progressed Moon as she circumvents the horoscope.

The secondary progressed Moon is the most appropriate astrological calendar for recording the emotional maturation and evolution of an individual. The progressed Moon's movement registers the full spectrum of emotional reactions, the impact of the feeling life of the family and the climatic changes that occur in the familial atmosphere. It is the record of the maturing, flowering and harvesting of our emotional life, our personal and experiential archives. The progressed Moon symbolises our continuous search to belong, to remember, to renew. It is also a continuous cycle of loss and recovery of our emotional attachments. As a cycle it measures the phases of family life from the birth of a sibling² through adolescence, leaving home and throughout the adult and old age phases until death. The progressed Moon operates systemically, responding and revealing phases in the family system as well as changes in the members in the family system to whom we are emotionally bonded or attached.

As an astrological symbol, the cycle of the progressed Moon is immensely important in defining initiatory stages in the life cycle. These critical points in the progressed lunar cycle occur most dramatically at the times surrounding the return, opposition and squares to its natal place. Due to the threefold nature of the Moon I have noted the significance of the trines as well, which occur on the average of nine years after and before the return. In the personal horoscope the Moon is important in its progression through the houses, and in its aspects to the other planets, as it rhythmically progresses through the chart.³ For me, the key to understanding the progressed Moon is in unravelling the ancient images and traditions that honoured her, and becoming familiar with the goddesses who personified her attributes. One of Luna's spheres is "feeling memory".



Brian Clark is one of the main tutors in the four-year programme in applied astrology, Astro*Synthesis. Brian facilitates two semesters on mythology, as part of that programme, as well as for the Nexus mythology programme. He is co-founder of the Chiron Centre in Melbourne, where he conducts his own private practice as an astrological counsellor. He has his Graduate Diploma in Classics and Archaeology from Melbourne University and frequently conducts tours to the sacred sites of Ancient Greece.

1 Approaching the millennium, the interest in the history of time-keeping and calendars is apparent.

2 In *The Sibling Constellation* (Penguin Arkana, London: 1999) there are examples of the progressed Moon synchronizing with the birth of a sibling and other nodal points in the family life cycle.

3 The progressed Moon's movement is between 12 – 15 degrees a year.

Mnemosyne was the mother of the Muses and the personification of memory: "lunar memory". Through the progressed Moon's movement, we encounter her weaving the threads of our personal myth.

"Memory is the seamstress, and a capricious one at that. Memory runs her needle in and out, up and down, hither and thither. We know not what comes next, or what follows after. Thus the most ordinary movement in the world, such as sitting down at a table and pulling the inkstand towards one, may agitate a thousand odd, disconnected fragments, now bright, now dim, hanging and bobbing and dipping and flaunting, like the underlinen of a family of fourteen on a line in a gale of wind."⁴

The progressed Moon flows through the horoscope carrying the feeling memory of the life experience.

Honouring the Threefold Nature of the Moon

Matrilineal tradition separates the lunar cycle into three phases, popularly symbolised by the maiden, the mother and the crone. Hera is an example of the phases of the goddess. She is associated with three phases of life, reflected by her epithets Pais, the maiden; Teleia, the fulfilled; Chera, the solitary. Lunar goddesses were threefold in nature: her first phase was the youthful and unattached maiden, represented by the emerging crescent of the Moon, which appears out of the dark after the New Moon. At the full Moon she shines as the woman of power, as mother and equal, in all her brilliance as the benefactor of life. The final phase of the Moon is personified as the crone, wise woman, elder; the guardians of the passage to the other world who held the mysteries of the Dark Moon. Lunar goddesses embraced the full round of life. The Moon became the symbol of the menstrual phases of a woman's life, which embraced maidenhood, before she bled, as well as her menopause, after she finished bleeding. Lunar blood is the mystery of the life force, which creates and restores, but also takes back life. For both genders the symbol of the menstrual cycle can be applicable in segregating the three phases of the life cycle.

The triform nature of the lunar cycle amplifies the experience of the progressed Moon. The progressed Moon throughout the life cycle has three separate, yet interwoven, phases. Circumventing the horoscope three times in an average life span⁵, the progressed Moon defines three distinct developmental stages: youth, adult and elder. Each cycle of the progressed Moon lasts approximately 27.3 years, charting important developments in the individual and family life cycle. During its first

revolution (from 0 - 27.3 years old), the Moon is absorbing, recording, gathering experiences, sensing, and participating in the feeling life of the tribe. This is the Maiden phase when the goddess Artemis reigns over this primal, wild, untamed and untethered time. She was the Mistress of Animals, serving as the symbol for the protection of primitive instincts. We could imagine this as the pre-blood time when life is wild, undirected and virginal. This is the first round of the progressed Moon through the horoscope.

The Moon has no personal container in the early years. Since the ego is unformed, the Moon is contained by Mother and the family, and therefore participates freely in their feeling life. Lunar boundaries are fluid. Through the *participation mystique* the child absorbs, senses and records the moods and feelings of the members within the family system. Aspects to the natal Moon are a helpful indication of what impact the familial atmosphere had on the child. When the Moon is aspected by the outer planets, the child's feeling experience may have been overwhelmed by powerful feelings lurking below the conscious horizon of the familial atmosphere. Lunar aspects also help to identify the child's attachment style, their experience of loss and grief and their ability to manage these feelings. The Moon registers and remembers the feelings in the family atmosphere as well as the emotional reaction to them. These remembrances become the record of the individual's feeling life, symbolised by the progressed Moon. The progressed Moon recollects and reawakens these earlier feelings and impressions. During the first cycle through the horoscope, the progressed Moon experiences and shapes the feeling terrain of the individual.

Emotional maturity is marked by the completion of its first revolution at age 27. By then, we have recorded every emotional experience available to us. Its second journey through the horoscope (from 27.3 - 54.6 years old) is the phase of adult life, when new emotional and personal attachments are formed. Life force is directed and creative. Giving birth literally, or to the creative self, initiates us into the adult cycle when the feeling life of child and adult co-exist. The child is internalised and the tentative mothering of the self commences. Remembering and reliving our earlier emotional experiences in an adult context begins. A greater choice about our emotional responses and an ability to differentiate our feelings from those of others is part of this maturation. Selene was worshipped as the goddess of the full Moon who drove her chariot, drawn by white cows with crescent-shaped horns, across the night sky. This second phase of life also evokes the goddess Mnemosyne, mother to the nine Muses.⁶ She is

4 Virginia Woolf, *Orlando* (Granada Publishing, London: 1977). 49.

5 Recent statistics have suggested that the average life span for a woman in Australia is 82, which is synchronous to the return of the third progressed Moon.

6 Nine is a lunar number, 1/3 of the lunar cycle. The lunar cycle can be broken down into three cycles of nine years each, which also create nine sub cycles in the three cycles of the progressed Moon.

the personification of memory, which is loosened during this time. Memory now is “not just of the past, a taped recording; it is constructive, evocative, poignant, and the beginning of musing”.⁷ Mnemosyne guides the progressed Moon’s movement in this second phase recollecting (re-collecting) the emotional experiences and memories of the first phase.

The progressed Moon represents the archives of all that we have tasted, touched, wanted, smelt and felt. Lunar memoirs are stored in the psyche as images, symbols, feelings, impressions and instincts; or they are imprinted upon the body. Lunar memory is not lineal, memorising dates and statistics, but revealed through dreams and senses. Mnemosyne finds her voice in poetry; her memoirs are stored in the fragments of a song, a story or fairy tale. She “uses the structures of narrative, epic, song or myth to preserve remembrances”.⁸ The progressed Moon is rhythmic and reflective. As the Moon progresses through the horoscope, she evokes dreams, images and songs which give continuity to our life’s narrative. Memory and imagination are woven together through Luna’s progression.

Lunar memory is also stored in the body, in the adrenal or olfactory glands, the tension in the muscles, allergies and illnesses. No wonder the progressed Moon often synchronizes with health issues. The body also remembers. Primal lunar responses may find their way into consciousness through particular eating habits, changeable moods, anxiety, obsessions and rituals, or excessive fluids which misshape the body. The progressed Moon’s movement during this stage evokes psyche’s bodily souvenirs. Emotional patterns repeated throughout our adult relationships that are evoked by the progressed Moon may have their origins in early feeling responses. The Moon is habitual and through her steady progression of the horoscope we become conscious of the feeling life that underlies our emotional responses.

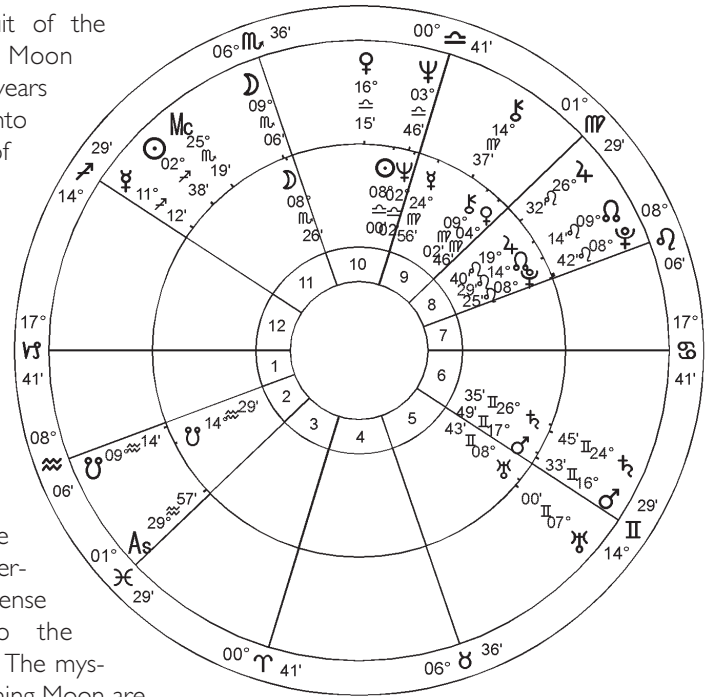
During this second phase of the progressed Moon through the horoscope, the same astrological territory is traversed as during the first phase. No longer virginal, the progressed Moon remembers the images and impressions of the last phase. The progressed Moon during this phase acts as a loosening agent, allowing buried complexes, taboo feelings, repressed memories to breathe again; to find some place in the sunlight reflected by the full Moon. The astrological cycle provides a tool to connect passages of time together. Links can be made back to times in the previous cycle which allows space for the process of reflection and musing.

The third circuit of the progressed Moon (from 54.6 - 82 years old) initiates us into the elder phase of life, the wise woman, grandmother, tribal elder and crone, when emotional experiences are more anchored and directed, less reactive and instinctive. Our emotional attitudes are more integrated and understood, adding a sense of well-being to the whole community. The mysteries of the darkening Moon are internalised. This is the menopausal phase when the wise blood is internalised and the introjected life force becomes wisdom. For women, the experience of menopause is a bodily symbol of this process of interiorization. Hecate Triformis is evoked during this life stage. As the triple goddess she embraces the spheres of heaven (Selene), earth (Artemis) and underworld (Persephone). All three phases are in her. She stands at the triple crossroads of life. The Roman epithet for her was Trivia (tri-via, the three roads) and at this junction all three cycles merge into one. Both mother and child are internalised and the cycle of mentoring commences. In this final phase Demeter is the custodian of the sacred mysteries of life, death and rebirth while her daughter reigns in the underworld.

During the mid-fifties, the second progressed Moon return occurs nearly a year before the fourth Nodal return, and stands at the midpoint of the Chiron return and the second Saturn return.⁹ So often it marks a turning point, an emptying, and a renewal. Quite often clients present at this time sensing a major transition.

Margaret’s first appointment was within the month of her progressed Moon return, four months before her 55th birthday. Margaret’s 11th house Scorpio Moon exactly squares Pluto in the 8th house and is quincunx Uranus in the 5th. Since the initiatory symbol of the return was so prominent, I asked her what she remembered at age 27, a full cycle ago. “That’s when it began,” she said. “When what began?” I asked.

At 27 Margaret was pregnant. Her husband ignored her, disliking her body and its new



Margaret
2 October 1943
11:43 am
Melbourne, Australia
Geocentric
Tropical
Placidus
Outer Wheel
Progressed to 16 June 1998

7 Ginette Paris Pagan Grace (Spring, Woodstock, CT: 1995). 121.

8 *Ibid.* 121.

9 The times between the progressed Moon return and the Saturn return are generally potent reorientation phases in an individual’s life.



shape. He wanted her to remain youthful, an attendant to his boyish needs and a handmaiden to his burgeoning career. She fulfilled the required role and became enormously successful at her profession of the attending wife (Neptune/Sun conjunct in Libra at the MC) with the help of anti-depressants (Pluto/8 squaring Moon/Scorpio). Now nearly 55, her aging body was re-collecting the feelings of abandonment, rejection and shame that had plagued her throughout this last cycle. But Margaret felt she had a stronger voice, a new wisdom, and began the journey of disentangling herself from these distorted images of herself. Margaret began gathering together some of the dismembered parts of her self through this remembering phase. The progressed Moon is often an initiatory symbol that reflects a new phase of life, which Margaret was ready to embrace.

These three phases also correspond with the contemporary family life cycle of child, parent and grand parent, which the ancients saw as the maiden or child, the mother or bride, and the crone or widow. The three generations of the family are continually part of the progressed lunar cycle, therefore the movement of the progressed Moon can also describe atmospheric changes in the family (either the family of origin or the family of choice, or both), and, specifically, mother and children. Systemically, the progressed Moon often symbolises the emotional atmosphere around the child or the mother. For instance, when Margaret was dealing with entering this new phase of life, her son and her mother were also involved in intensely emotional periods of their lives.

The Circle Game

*'We're captive on the carousel of time
We can't return we can only look behind
From where we came
And go round and round and round
In the circle game'*

Joni Mitchell, *The Circle Game*

These three rounds of the progressed Moon are represented in our personal horoscope by the Moon's movement through the houses and aspects to other planets.

The second cycle of the Moon through the horoscope religiously repeats the first round. Lunar progressions, after the completion of the first round at 27.3, recollect primitive or ancient feelings unearthed from the first cycle. In *The Sibling Constellation* I cite an example. When Carl Jung's sister was born, his progressed Moon was squaring Mars, which could symbolise competitive feelings, rivalry or the impression of an intruder. (Interestingly, Freud had the same progression of the Moon square Mars when his next sibling was born). Exactly 27.3 years later, when the progressed Moon was in the same position, Jung wrote to Freud calling him a "dangerous rival," referring to their mutual interest in the psychology of religion.¹⁰ Mnemosyne weaves the Martian themes of rivalry once again into the story of Jung's life, offering reflection and the space for musing. The artistry of gathering together our life story is the *opus* of the progressed Moon. However, the task is difficult, as lunar memory is not externalized, literalized or concretized. Working with the progressed Moon engages acute listening skills and the uncertainty of psyche's images.

Imagery imbedded in the houses of the horoscope is both complex and rich. As the Moon begins the second round of the horoscope, the terrain is somewhat familiar. As the Moon progresses through a house, she recalls the past associated with earlier experiences in that area of our life. She acts as an agent to loosen hardened complexes, often revealing the richness of the authentic self, buried under the rubble. As students we learn the potential meaning of the progressed Moon's passage through each house of our horoscope. However, with each round we link back to the primal, wild and virginal aspects of our self, and are offered an opportunity to gather the dismembered aspects strewn over the landscape (as symbolised by the house). Mnemosyne aids the remembering through images, dreams and feelings, which helps gather the narrative of our life together.

(continued on page 37)

10 Brian Clark, *The Sibling Constellation* p75

Throughout the book there are similar examples of the synchronicity of the progressed Moon.



The Centre for Psychological Astrology

Seminar Schedule - Spring 2000

23rd January

Karen Hamaker-Zondag

How to get the most out of Saturn transits

Although we tend to look at Saturn as a planet of pain and obstruction, if we can understand what Saturn really wants to tell us, we will be amazed at how rewarding he can be. In this workshop we will focus on what Saturn demands of us during his transits. We will see how Saturn transits through a particular house give us information about inner and outer events, but these events are not only limited to the house Saturn is in. Through the transit of Saturn we are connected with what has happened in the past, and what we are preparing to meet in our future. In my experience Saturn's transit in a house also points to what happened in the past, when Saturn transited the preceding house, the preceding 'element-house' and the preceding 'mode-house'. If we understand this system, we will have a powerful tool to make better decisions. And we will learn that 'Father Time' also tells us that it's never too late to start anew!

30th January

Darby Costello

Mercury, messenger to the Sun

The astrological planet Mercury translates the information picked up by our inner and outer senses. It organises our perceptions and interprets our experiences. In seeking to fulfil our destiny, as described by the Sun, we "listen" to what Mercury tells us, and although sometimes its messages are useful, sometimes they seem to be tricking us. This seminar will explore Mercury by sign, house and aspect. We will also look carefully at how Mercury's role is coloured by whether it is in the same or another sign or house to the Sun.

6th February

Liz Greene

The Oracle and the Family Curse

The mythic image of the family curse is relevant to our future as well as our past because psychological inheritance colours our choices and the ways in which we express our individual planetary picture. In myth the "family curse" is the punishment of an angry god on the descendants of someone who has transgressed natural law and abused a god-given gift. This seminar will explore the psychological dynamics of the "curse" as well as its astrological patterns, placing special emphasis on how we can work with a compulsive or destructive psychological inheritance in order to release its creative potential.

13th February

Liz Greene

Looking for God

Every individual has an inner impetus toward an ideal of what he or she perceives as the highest and best in life, and this might be called the "religious instinct". We do not necessarily call our god-image God, and it may be distorted by family background, the pressures of collective religious institutions, and our own internal conflicts. This seminar will explore the unique inner god-image each of us carries, from astrological, psychological and mythic perspectives, focusing on how we might better recognise and integrate our aspirations into our everyday lives.

27th February

Lynn Bell

Jupiter & Saturn in Taurus & the May 2000 line-up

In May 2000, Jupiter and Saturn will conjunct in Taurus, ushering in a twenty year cycle, the last conjunction in an earth sign for over 500 years. The "great conjunction", as it used to be known in ancient times, brings a major new focus in economic and political structures, but also works deeply on a personal level. The stellium of seven planets in Taurus in early May will highlight a particular area in our chart and we will explore how to bring a powerful new impulse to the houses activated by the conjunction. Even conjunct, Saturn and Jupiter sometimes function as adversaries, pulling in different directions, alternately contracting and expanding. We will look at our willingness to build for the long term. The square from Uranus in Aquarius brings a wild card energy that needs to be taken into account.

5th March

Juliet Sharman-Burke

How to apply counselling techniques to chart interpretation

This seminar will focus on the "how to" and practicalities of working with astrological clients. Setting up a practice and how to use techniques of psychological counselling will be discussed. Various different methods of conveying astrological concepts to a client will be focused on, including "how to" use imagery, myth and symbolism to enrich an astrological reading.

12th March

Anne Whitaker

The Moon's nodes in action

The Nodes, especially in their transit cycle and the eclipse seasons which accompany them, seem to appear as "watchers by the threshold" at points where vital threads are being woven into the tapestry of life, be it personal or collective. This seminar will explore the core symbolic meaning of the Nodal axis in the natal chart, with reference to Sign and House positions, and links with planets and angles. We will then observe some manifestations in the lives of citizens both public and private, when the transiting 18.6 year Nodal return cycle activates key chart factors, as well as when progressions and transits trigger the natal Nodal axis. This is an opportunity to evoke, through case material and participants' own experiences, some of the aura of numinosity and mystery which surrounds the Moon's Nodes in action. Please bring your own chart.

26th March

Melanie Reinhart

Everything you wanted to know about progressions & transits but were afraid to ask!

Using progressions and transits is essential for consulting work, but the art is how to avoid "information overload" when preparing a chart! This seminar will focus on how to sift information, integrate themes, and concentrate on what is most relevant. Please come prepared with your natal chart, current progressions and a graphic ephemeris (45 degrees). If you would like your chart used for demonstration, please print it on acetate.

Hans Baker will be running an intermediate class on psychological astrology for 10 weeks from 17th January 2000. Please contact him on 0117 940 5537 for all details.

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Name: _____ **CPA Diploma student yes/no** _____

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I would like to apply for ____ place(s) at the following events:

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| <input type="checkbox"/> | Sunday 13 February | Looking for God - Liz Greene |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> | Sunday 26 March | Everything you wanted to know about progressions & transits - Melanie Reinhart |
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If you do not include the mailing subscription, we will assume you no longer wish to be kept on the list and your name will be removed; this includes ex-Diploma students. However, this information is distributed free by email; see our web-site for details at www.astrologer.com/cpa.

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PLEASE NOTE: All one-day seminars are on Sundays between 10am and 5pm. There are two coffee breaks and a lunch break. You are welcome to bring all charts (preferably on acetate for use with an OHP) for discussion to all seminars. Fees are payable in advance and must be sent with your application form at least ten days prior to the seminar date. Late applicants cannot be guaranteed a place. The fee for each one day seminar is £38. Psychological Astrology Beginners Group is £150 for 10 weeks. If cancellations are received less than 10 days before the seminar, the fee may be forfeit, unless a replacement can be found. No acknowledgments are sent unless requested. Please enclose SAE. Venues: All one-day seminars are held at Regents College, Inner Circle, Regents Park, London, NW1. Nearest tube: Baker Street. Psychological astrology intermediate class is held at Quaker International Centre, 1 Byng Place, off Torrington Place, WC1

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About the Centre for Psychological Astrology

The **Centre for Psychological Astrology** provides a unique workshop and professional training programme, designed to foster the cross-fertilisation of the fields of astrology and depth, humanistic, and transpersonal psychology. The main aims and objectives of the CPA professional training course are:

- a) To provide students with a solid and broad base of knowledge, within the realms of both traditional astrological symbolism and psychological theory and technique, so that the astrological chart can be sensitively understood and interpreted in the light of modern psychological thought.
- b) To make available to students psychologically qualified case supervision, along with background seminars in counselling skills and techniques which would raise the standard and effectiveness of astrological consultation. It should be noted that no formal training as a counsellor or therapist is provided by the course.
- c) To encourage investigation and research into the links between astrology, psychological models, and therapeutic techniques, thereby contributing to and advancing the existing body of astrological and psychological knowledge.

History

The Centre for Psychological Astrology began unofficially in 1980 as a sporadic series of classes and seminars offered by Liz Greene and Howard Sasportas, covering all aspects of astrology from beginners' courses to more advanced one-day seminars. In 1981 additional evening courses and seminars by other tutors were interspersed with those of Liz and Howard to increase the variety of material offered to students, and Juliet Sharman-Burke and Warren Kenton began contributing their expertise in Tarot and Kabbalah. It then seemed appropriate to take what was previously simply a random collection of astrology classes and put them under a single umbrella, so in 1982 the "prototype" of the CPA - the Centre for Transpersonal Astrology - was born, with the administrative work handled by Richard Aisbitt, himself a practising astrologer.

In 1983 the name was changed to the Centre for Psychological Astrology, because a wide variety of psychological approaches was incorporated into the seminars, ranging from transpersonal psychology to the work of Jung, Freud and Klein. In response to repeated requests from students, the Diploma Course was eventually created, with additional tutors joining the staff. The Centre continued to develop and consolidate its programme despite the tragic death of Howard in 1992, when Charles Harvey became co-director with Liz Greene. Richard Aisbitt continued to manage the administration with great ability and commitment until 1994, when the burden of increasing ill health forced him to restrict his contribution to beginners' and intermediate classes. At this time Juliet Sharman-Burke took over the administration for the Centre. Richard himself sadly died in 1996.

For further information, including our full prospectus, visit our website at www.astrologer.com/cpa. You can receive email bulletins from the CPA by sending a message to listserv@astrologer.com with the words *subscribe cpalist* in the body of the message. For those without access to the Internet, please send a SAE to the administrator.

The CPA Press

Since the Centre's inception, many people, including astrology students living abroad as well as those attending CPA seminars, have repeatedly requested transcriptions of the seminars. In the autumn of 1995, Liz Greene, Charles Harvey and Juliet Sharman-Burke decided to launch the **Centre for Psychological Astrology Press**, in order to make available to the astrological community material which would otherwise be limited solely to seminar participants, and might never be included by the individual tutors in their own future written works. Because of the Centre's module-type programme, many seminars are "one-off" presentations which are not likely to be repeated, and much careful research and important astrological investigation would otherwise be lost. The volumes in the CPA Seminar Series are meant for serious astrological students who wish to develop a greater knowledge of the links between astrology and psychology, in order to understand both the horoscope and the human being at a deeper and more insightful level. **Apollon**, launched on October 1st 1998, is the latest publishing venture of the CPA Press.

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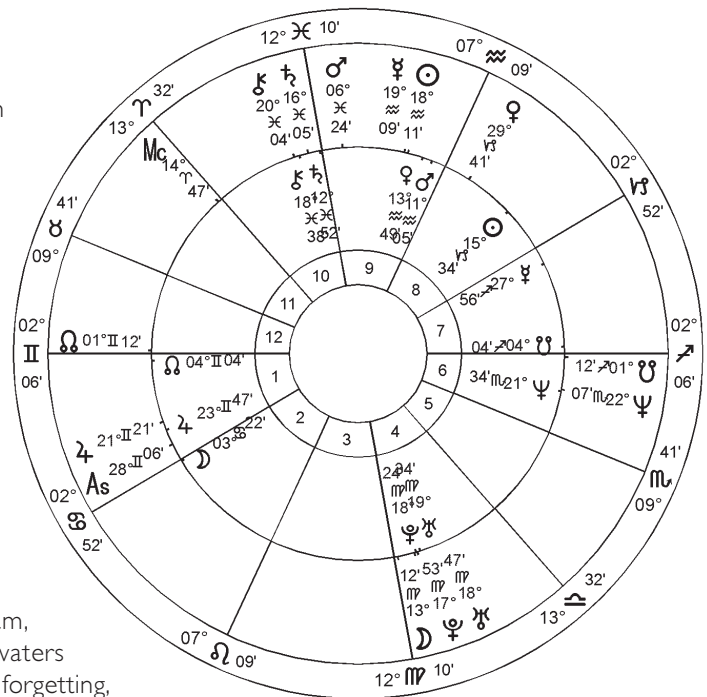
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(continued from page 32)

When the progressed Moon enters a new house of the horoscope, it evokes the complexes and issues within its jurisdiction, generally symbolised by the planets in that house. John said he was feeling extremely anxious, but was not aware of any reasons why he would feel this way. He was 32 when he came for the consultation and the progressed Moon had just crossed the IC, a powerful personal point in any horoscope. Pluto and Uranus were in the 4th house opposing Saturn and Chiron in the 10th. During the consultation I asked what happened when he was 5, a lunar cycle ago when the progressed Moon would have first traversed this territory. His face whitened. Then he said, "My mother died." We explored her death, his loss, his grief, but John's rational side could not connect his present-day anxiety to the loss that he experienced when he was a young boy. My experience of psyche's timing is that it is quite impeccable, so I continued listening. I asked about his relationship, work, and family. Two significant events had recently occurred. A close female colleague had just left the workplace after a close association of five years, and his dog, which he had loved for

five years, had been struck by a car and had been put down. "Is it possible," I said, "that the confluence of your colleague's departure and your dog's death remind you of your five-year-old?" He began to sob and it felt to me that the dam, which held the waters from the stream of forgetting, had opened.

A few weeks later John sent me a lovely card to thank me for the session. In it, he said he had dreamt of his mother, and that he felt he knew her. I imagined him sitting on the throne of Mnemosyne, the seat of memory, and gathering some of the fragments interred in his 4th house.



John
6 January 1966 4:09 pm
Perth, Australia
Geocentric
Tropical
True Node
Outer Wheel
Progressed to 2 February 1998

Thinking Magically and Critically

Contemporary Astrology and Divination

Erin Sullivan

It is always worthwhile to go back to first principles, to touch the bedrock of the philosophy that underlies the art of astrology. In this article, **Erin Sullivan** takes the reader on a simple, but not simplistic, tour of the philosophical roots of astrology.



Erin Sullivan is Canadian born and has been a consultant astrologer and teacher since the late 1960s. She has lectured worldwide and led workshops and symposia on many aspects of human development using mythology, psychology and the rich language of astrology. Her work took her to London, England in 1989, since when she has been a tutor for the CPA, and the Series Editor for Penguin's *Arkana Contemporary Astrology* Series. She is an adjunct faculty member for the Central American Institute of Prehistoric and Traditional Cultures at Belize. Erin is the author of: *Venus and Jupiter, Saturn in Transit, Retrograde Planets, and Dynasty: The Astrology of Family Dynamics. Where in the World?* has just been published by the CPA Press. Erin may be contacted for consultations, information on books, studies etc. by email: erins@azstar.net or visit her website: www.ErinSullivan.com.

The seeds of future events are carried within ourselves. They are implicit in us and unfold according to the laws of their own Nature.

Lawrence Durrell
The Alexandria Quartet: Cleo

Contemporary astrology has its roots embedded deeply and broadly in archaic, sacred rituals of prognostication and divination. From times long past, through today, prediction remains part and parcel of the astrologer's milieu. However, astrology has grown through the last two thousand years, and especially rapidly in the twentieth century, to become a vast, highly specialized field with myriad branches. The astrology we encounter now not only encompasses millennia-old knowledge, but also maintains a continual state of inquiry, upgrading, refinement and expansion.¹ For its survival into the next millennium, astrology has had to, and must continue to, move with the phenomenal changes in consciousness and perception that are rapidly altering our individual and collective world-view.

The general populace sees only an iota of what lies within the astrological material because either it is thought to be too simplistic and superficial for any thinking person, or it is perceived to be far too complex and incomprehensible to the average individual. This is not a modern split, but dates back to the earliest days of scholarship, when there was the polarization between the Alexandrian elitist scholar, educated in all the sciences, arts and languages, the *mathematicus*, and the *astrologus*, who plagued the Roman *populus* in the Forum with their mantic arts. Largely the *astrologus* was an *haruspex*, literally a "gut-gazer", and their application of astrology was loose, minimal and about the same level as today's sun-sign columns in the tabloids. The *mathematicus* was highly educated, politically removed and confined professionally to the academic realm. This philosophical division continues today, and likely contributes to the confusion in the general public as to what astrology really is.

Also, astrology has a long and tiresome history of suppression by prevailing world-views such as religious ideologies, scientific paradigms and established academia. This persecution continues in today's ethos to some degree; though burnings and exile are not invoked, minor laws against astrologers exist, and a persecution still persists via the media, the MacArthur Foundation, CSICOPS (Committee for the Scientific Investigation of Claims of the Paranormal), individuals like James Randi the magician, and various small witch hunts.

In 1975, Bart Bok, astrophysicist, spearheaded a manifesto called *Objections to Astrology*, to which 192 scientists signed their names. In the early nineteen-eighties I took part in an experiment created by Seán Carlson based at U.C. Berkeley, and co-headed with the NCGR (National Council for Geocosmic Research). This "double blind" experiment was supposedly designed to compare the MMPI (Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory) with astrological charts. To cut a long story short, after three horoscopes and their progressions were sent to me, and my responses returned, the fourth example sent to me had a calculation error in the progressed horoscope of the individual I was to assess. I immediately alerted this error to Mr. Carlson, and was told "it didn't matter". I suggested that the experiment was nullified by the error (an error in the "cold start" of the data base of the DR-70 computer used to calculate the horoscopes, invalidating all previous and subsequent material). I withdrew from the experiment. It went ahead anyway, and was later published in *Nature* magazine as a failure of astrology to prove itself. After investigating this so-called scientific experiment, I discovered it was funded by the Department of Nuclear Science of the US government. I wonder why?²

The relationship between the heavens and earth were considered sacred by ancient and aboriginal cultures, and religious observation of the heavenly activities were woven into tribal ritual and rites-of-passage. As far back as we can go in astrological history, from the

Chaldeans, Mesopotamians, Babylonians, the fourth and fifth century BCE Greeks, the subsequent Hellenistic period, the Roman tradition, on through the meso-American cultures and in our own history of western civilization, we find prediction, divination, prognostication and augury woven finely and tightly into the rich tapestry of astrology.³ That we have lost this connection to the sacred and the divine is part of the existential angst that grips the individual in this contemporary society.

Though contemporary astrology's foundations lie in the *participation mystique* of the archaic psyche, its technical advancement has brought it to a status never before achieved. Astrology now embodies all its magical glory and employs razor-sharp critical thinking. The atomist theory of Democritus and the ancient medicine of Aesclepius and Galen may seem quaint to us today; however, do remember that quantum physics and modern medical procedure have arrived from those archaic sources to its present place. Astrology is equivalent in growth and maturation.⁴

The Magical and the Critical

Astrology employs *both* the magical and the critical under its aegis. The numerous branches of astrology practised today among professionals demand a solid grip on the practical and mundane world. However, the more subtle and sensitive areas lie in the spiritual and psychological realms - astrology is a *pontifex maximus* between the human and the divine, and, by being that symbolic bridge, embodies both the sacred and profane, linking the physical to the transcendent through symbol, myth and numinous content. Both technique (critical thinking) and perception (magical thinking) are intertwined in astrological work.

Not only does it take a sharp, rigorous mind to compute a horoscope, to create and run the elegant computer programs and assimilate the masses of data and symbols, read the ephemerides, and fathom the techniques, but also it takes a magical mind to synthesize the material and render it useful to a person in need of counsel and timing structures. The astrologer has to keep in mind not only the practical needs of a client, but also the soulful longings for reconnection to the divine that we all have within us.

Today, we must take into consideration that, regardless of who our clients appear to be, they would not be in our office if they were completely unaware of a divine or cosmic link to their mundane, worldly life. The loss of the sacred in our modern society has been a long, steady process, but increasing numbers

of people who make up our "mainstream" society have thrown off the yoke of fear and superstition, and use astrology in its most profound sense under the guidance of a practising specialist. Analytical, archetypal and psychological astrology make up a great deal of the main practice today; and even within that field, we cover many areas of practical value: general business advice, vocational guidance, relationship improvement, relocation options, constitutional well-being, family guidance, personal financial cycles, *et cetera*. In short, nothing under the sun is ignored in the contemporary astrologer's work.

Sadly, we still run up against a tremendous anxiety not only within society, but within astrology itself - to prove itself against the tenets of other, completely unrelated disciplines and attempt to justify its validity against masses of historical fact and much fiction. Along with the collective, and the developing world, astrology has matured, and holds a professional place in society along with law, medicine, literature, classical sciences, and so forth. It will not do to marry models - astrology is beyond psychology, much more sophisticated and individualistic in its relationship to the individual and collective psyche, and, as elegant and appropriate as they are for their own systems, Cartesian hard-science methods will never prove anything astrological.

Indeed, it may be that astrology has matured even more than society has, because it incorporates more thoughts, more concepts, breaks more boundaries and includes vast cultural differences all under the same dome. We might now drop superstition, fear, xenophobia and bias around the practice of astrology. In our now seamless world there is no room for discrimination against perception and thinking. I once had a discussion with the Greek classical scholar, Dr. G.P. Goold, the Loeb Classical Library translator of Manilius' *Astronomica*, about his feelings about astrology.⁵ Since he had painstakingly translated the last didactic poem in classical scientific literature, I assumed he must have some sympathy. He had knowledge, and was thorough, but retained his right to be sceptical of Manilius' "inconsistent rules". At one point in our meeting, I asked him what he thought of astrology today, and he said not much, but he was not opposed to it - he said more people have died over ideology, more people had been killed for their beliefs than over territorial acquisition. As a result, he felt he should leave it to the experts, of whom he did not consider himself one. An enlightened man. Enough said.

I Project Hindsight. Born out of ARHAT, historian-astrologer Robert Hand's original project, Project Hindsight was conceived by Robert Schmidt, Robert Hand and team, subsidized through subscription booklist by the global astrological community. Project Hindsight took on the task of translating ancient texts into sympathetic and accurate language from Greek, Latin, Arabic and Catalan. For more information, contact Robert Hand via e-mail: RobertHand@prodigy.com or Fax: 508-255-0510 or mail: 217 Rock Harbour Road, Orleans, MA 02653.

Ancient Astrology Tamsyn Barton. Sciences of Antiquity Ed. Roger French Routledge London 1994. An amazing book - covers the social, political and technical ethos in Classical antiquity. Unbiased, thorough, enlightening and "a good read" too!

2 All this is documented. I have retained the records and files, currently in the hands of Geoffrey Cornelius. See *The Moment of Astrology*, (*op.cit.*) Ch. 3.

3 *Gnosis*. No. 38. Winter 1996. The Stars.

4 *De rerum natura*. (*The Way Things Are*). Titus Lucretius Carus (Lucretius) Trans. Rolf Humphries Indiana University Press. Bloomington/London 1969. An astounding read, this long, didactic poem tells of "the way things were" in the first century AD. His diatribe against romantic love in Book IV is well worth the price of the book.

5 *Astronomica*. Marcus Manilius Trans. G.P. Goold. Loeb Classical Library University College London 1977 Very likely written sometime during and shortly after the reign of Augustus who died in AD 14.

Through these millennial days of Pluto in Sagittarius, we will see the uproar in the world of religion, academia, politics and social reform bring us to the edge of civilization as we think we know it. All that is fundamental and thought to be secure in the realm of ideas will continue to experience sweeping changes. Increasing numbers of individuals are aware of this; some of the more fearful and rigid, rather uncomfortably. Those who have the desire to understand their lives in context of a bigger system than their own small system, take themselves off to the astrologer to discuss the larger framework of their lives and their role in the collective movement. The astrologer now acts more as a counsellor, advisor, shaman and guide, using highly specialized tools and a great deal of sensitive divination.

These questions always arise: How does astrology "work"? How does the astrologer today use or partake in divination? To what degree is prediction possible, and how reliable is it? What are the ethics surrounding some aspects of prognostication? Are there pitfalls, problems and perils in such work? If so, what are they? What is the underlying philosophy of knowing the future layout of a person, based on his or her horoscope? What are some of the techniques a contemporary, western astrologer uses? Let us now explore some of those issues.

The System

If I can have a relationship with another person, why is it not likely that a planet can have a relationship with another planet? If Gaia is considered to be an organic entity, then why is not Mars, or Saturn? People are part of a system of small collectives, constellating around an idea, a family, a cause, and so on - always in motion, always in flux, and continually shifting in stance. Following that, planets are also entities constellating around a *focus* - the sun - and are also in constant motion, changing their relationships relative to some fixed point - either the backdrop of fixed stars (as seen from our earth view) or the sun, from a solar system view. Either way, there is never a repeating constellated configuration. Also, there never is a repeating configuration of relationships between people.

The solar system is the ideal metaphor for the ever-changing, fluid interactions between individuals or groups of individuals. The system of parts is also reflected in the individual psyche, with its mysterious content and interaction within its own realm. With such "randomness" we have endless permutations on possible interactions. Astrologically, the measurements of planetary placement can

be finely calibrated to include all planets, a few planets, two planets or any combination thereof. Never in the calculable array of planetary arrangement do we find an exact replication of any given picture of whole solar-system planetary gestalt! This is very much like the condition of the psyche, and its relationship to the inner and outer world. The components remain the same, the arrangement of them is infinitely changing. Because planetary positions are measured with precision, using fine-tuned measurements by degrees, minutes and seconds of arc along the circle of the ecliptic (commonly known as the zodiac), we do not ever find the exact same pattern in the solar system as a whole-system entity.⁶

Any system is predictable within its own pattern of behaviour. The core of validity of horoscopic astrology lies in the fact that the system of planets is an active relationship between reliable components. A single planet is meaningless, but the organism of the horoscope is a relationship. A horoscope is a fixed-frame of spatial and temporal experience. It is an arbitrary starting point, from which a systematic and predictable set of planetary movements can be plotted. It is known that if a planet is in 1° of Leo that it will be at 2° Leo at a known time in the near future - if is the Moon, it would be within two hours; if the Sun, it would be in the next twenty-four hours, if Mars, then a few days, Jupiter in about a week, and so on. It is also predictable when it will be there again; for instance, if it is the Sun it will return to that point every year, the moon every 27½ days, Mars will return to the same degree of longitude every two years and two months, Jupiter will pass the same degree every twelve years and a few days, and so on out to the furthest known planet, Pluto, which returns to the same zodiacal degree every 245 years.

In this way, planets circle the Sun and pass across the same degree of the zodiac (ecliptic) in a predictable time-cycle. Each planet has a cycle of return to an originating point. The Sun, the Moon and all the planets have their own cycles. Those small, individual cycles are contained within bigger cycles and on it goes.

We are clever enough to predict when a planet will be in a particular place in longitude and latitude - to seconds of arc. But, are we then able to predict just exactly what will occur because of that position? We can quantify time and fix the planets in space according to geo-location, but the realm of divination in astrology is about the quality of that time.

6 Computers have calculated thousands of years back, and forward, to find that there is no replicated whole-system configuration between the components (planets) of the solar-system. Should there ever be, then who knows what will happen! The possible permutations for the solar-system are myriad - not only do we have to consider longitude, but also latitude and declination. The possibility of replication of exact repetition of arrangement (to the degree, minute, second) is unlikely.

Perception and Time

Time and perception are at the basis of astrological divination; therefore we must establish a basis upon which it may be possible to know the future. Perception, as distinct from vision, lies at the root of what we are capable of seeing or knowing. It is a known phenomenon that often we are incapable of seeing or experiencing something for which we have been completely unprepared. It is necessary for the thing which is to be seen to have first existed, and then for the "seer" to be prepared to "see" the new thing. Partly this is based upon the assumption that everything that comes into being already exists, at least in its elemental form, visible or not. Consistent focused attention on a subject, object or idea, will bring greater and greater detail and depth to the surface. We know this from the most rudimentary learning experience - the more attention placed on something, the more emerges to awareness, and we then see that which was once "invisible".

How and what we perceive outside ourselves - images, shapes, colours, movement and so forth - either is directly related to what we have already experienced or have been educated in, implicitly or explicitly.⁷ Along with this psychic reality, there also is selective perception based on an individual's innate priorities, and most people are only capable of seeing that which will further their own personal destiny - imminent or long-range, conscious or unconscious. This is not a flaw in a person, but a common characteristic, which gives us our individuality, or allows us to have a "shape", or areas of specialty. Keeping this in mind, it is easy to understand why a highly trained, gifted specialist in any area might be necessarily blind to something which counters or interferes with his or her focus - for instance, a rigorous scientist is likely to be incapable of "seeing" astrology, a frightened dogmatic religious might simply be unable to allow concepts outside the safety of his or her container of *credo*. Similarly, certain astrologers are incapable of seeing what others see - perception is so wholly subjective that it obliterates that which is not needed for the whole-person evolution. This is the mystery that remains unsolved.

In archaic and tribal societies, the shamans were the ones to introduce the people to a new field of vision, leading them into the future. It was the function of the rare few to step outside the common boundary and risk personal peril on behalf of the tribal collective. This role is not assigned in our western society, but is assumed by a rare few who dare move beyond the *status quo* and to the edge of heresy - and

beyond - to open the doors of perception for the many.

The astrologer can act as a divinatory agent by bringing an individual to a more conscious relationship between the workings of the cosmos and the role he or she plays in the vast scheme of things. In this way the astrologer can allow people to perceive themselves and their world in a new way, a way which exists already but awaits the individual's awareness to enfold the perception or way of being. In doing this the astrologer acts as a shaman, and in that domain, can assist the individual to perceive his or her already extant future - for already it is constellating, forming on the horizon, waiting to be seen.

Time: in astrology, time truly is of the essence. A humorist once said that God created time so that everything wouldn't happen all at once - the trouble is, everything is happening all at once, but we have become logical, sequential, linear and sequestered in time. All for convenience and productivity, but a temporal trap all the same. Without this delineated time, we would not have the horoscope.

The word horoscope, comes from the Greek *horoskopos* meaning "looking at the hour". To divine or predict an outcome requires a beginning, an origin, a basis. Ancient astrology had such a concept, which still prevails - *katarche*. *Katarche* is also a Greek word which, loosely translated, means an auspicious moment or a beginning - it is an *auger*, a valid point of starting. A birth chart is a *katarche*. An election chart for a business is a *katarche*, as are horoscopes set for an event, such as an avalanche, a plane crash, or an inauguration. It is from the origin of any system that its evolutionary behaviour and subsequent outcome can be divined or predicted to a fairly high degree. Because astrology is based in a moving system, which never repeats itself, and human beings are fluid and mobile, the uncertainty principle is rather high. In this way, an astrologer works with both perception and time as tools for divination.⁸

Why is it that something can not be seen or known until a mass of work has been done by individuals, often independent of each other, which brings it into public domain - that is, collective consciousness? For example, the planet Uranus was "out there" beyond the visual boundary in the solar system before Herschel discovered it "by accident" during a survey of the night sky on March 13, 1781.⁹ Aided by the telescope, this individual saw Uranus, and the whole of humanity stepped beyond the visual boundary of the solar system, and across the threshold into a new era.

7 *Catching the Light* Arthur Zajonc Oxford University Press 1993. An easy to read, gripping book on perception. Largely focused on light and colour, but the further implications are profound. Highly recommended. Has an excellent bibliography found in the footnotes for further reading on the subject of perception and its relationship to the evolution of consciousness.

8 *The Moment of Astrology: Origins in Divination* Geoffrey Cornelius. Contemporary Astrology Series. Arkana, Penguin. London. 1994. In Ch. 7, p. 135, Cornelius delves deeply into the *katarche*. Some of the finest thinking on the problem of divination in astrological history - and in contemporary use (controversial to some).

9 Herschel's horoscope and the horoscope of the discovery of Uranus are linked significantly.

The fact that we *could not* see Uranus before the invention of the telescope, does not mean *it was not there*. We might say that Uranus was awaiting the right *katarche*, the appropriate augur, for its appearance to us, and that we were *simultaneously in process of growing in consciousness toward the capacity to see Uranus*. The sighting of Uranus was a prelude to a far-reaching transformation in global consciousness and individual choice. Within days of the sighting all things Uranian began to shift dramatically, marking a new collective threshold and individual opportunity. This was a collective turning point in mechanism; ideologies; politics and religion; individualism; individuation; invention; liberation; phenomenal breakthroughs in travel, communications, and so forth. That one person, on behalf of the collective, took responsibility for a new concept and applied it, opening the door to a new era, a sub-age which is still unfolding and about to blow us into a new astronomical, scientific and astrological epoch.

The Big Picture

In my work with astrology I deal with immense concepts and minute details. In my book *Dynasty*, I discuss a meta-historic framework within which an individual becomes significant.¹⁰ In astrological work, one has to take into account the whole planetary view. That is: from our vantage point on earth, the planets as they are arrayed against the backdrop of the signs (sidereal or tropical, it is irrelevant here) are experienced by the entire world in the same way. This is a global situation - the entire collective "sees" this picture. This planetary array is the global *Zeitgeist*, the prevailing wind, the spirit of the world's ethos. It is this planetary world-view that we base our mundane prediction on (worldly, political, ecological) - we speak of the global *Zeitgeist* as if it were an organic experience in an individual sense. The world and its inhabitants are an organic entity and have a commensurate extra-terrestrial, solar-system environment, within which they enact their collective intent.

For the individual in all of this magnitude, we "localize" him, we place him in a freeze-frame that is specific to precise terrestrial longitude and latitude and time of day. From this, the natal horoscope is drawn. The individual then experiences the collective picture in an individual way.

Astrology and Prediction

Prophecy is a state of *enthos*, being filled with the gods: it is the origin of our word, enthusiasm - *enthousiasmos* - which, taken at root value, means to be in a state in which the gods have overtaken our psychic wholeness.

Prophetic statements are not temporally restricted and usually are riddling utterances by someone "filled with the gods" who has inadvertently become an unconscious channel for divine messages. Prophecy comes through the imaginal realm in dreams, trance states and visions. It is also associated with religious fervour and possession. Generally, astrologers are not prophets.

We have the capacity of prognostication - literally, from the ancient Greek *pro* (toward, in front of) *gnosis* (knowledge, wisdom) - to have knowledge beforehand of that which will happen. Divination, though implying "from the divine", is not the same as prophecy - one doesn't have to be in a trance, nor seized by the gods, but one does require a state of grace to divine a situation. Astrological divination doesn't have the connotations of oracular riddling, though it can be a difficult process to interpret the symbols, but is a process by which one comes to understand the divine cosmos, the order of things as they extend beyond the now.

Conscious intent underlies divination; skills, techniques, methods and preparation are always involved. There is usually a query at the base of the divining - and the resulting picture is based on conscious observation of established patterns. Now, prediction is "to speak of that which lies in the future", involving systematic, logical, organized methods of forecasting. Astrology in practice employs divination, but is *not always predictive*.¹¹

In predictive work, the consideration of ethics is paramount. For example, gratuitous predictions of death are simply not ethical. Underlying the ethic is a natural order of things, natural laws, taking into accountability areas of divination that are sacred and thus, sacrosanct. However, within that ethic, there are times when discussion of death is helpful and healthy, but prediction in almost *all* cases is borderline. A colleague of mine and I spent much time in the process of his preparation for death from AIDS looking at the possible times in which he would become weakened, and in critical condition. This was a healthy practice. We both knew astrology exceptionally well, we both knew the illness, we were very close and it was practical to look at timing for trips to make and work to be done. Also, it was part of the sanctified, spiritual preparation for death. And, the day of his death was marked by a specific aspect that tied in his closest companions and family - this confirmed the "rightness" of his death.

On occasion, I have consulted with a client about a death that has happened - one

10 *Dynasty: The Astrology of Family Dynamics*

Erin Sullivan Arkana Contemporary Astrology Series Penguin London 1996. Especially Chapter I "The Individual and the Collective".

11 *The Moment of Astrology: Origins in Divination. op. cit.*

woman found it incredibly profound to see the time of her twenty-one-year-old daughter's sudden death, and experience it in the astrological framework. It was a healing experience, assisting her in the grief process. Another family who lost their father to a lingering tropical illness, also consulted about the effect it would have on each child independently so as to personalize their collective grief process and understand the long-term effects of it for their own continuing lives. But, to state that an individual will die a "violent death" or "death by drowning" or whatever, and further, to postulate a time, is violating a sacred, natural ethic.

On Being Made up of our Future

Earlier I mentioned that when I was very young, I was drawn toward the future by already extant constellations. By this I mean: as we sit here now, we are made up of all that we have been and that which has passed. However, we are also made up of our future - we are drawn on toward that which is who we will become! Astrologically this is what happens:

Just as we can reflect back on planetary aspects that formed in our pasts, we can also project forward in the same way, and glimpse the future aspects as they form in any given moment in time. So, if I want to know how October of 2000 will be for me, and I am planning lecture tours, or writing a book, and wanting to plan ahead to work with the aspects as they symbolize both my inner and outer conditions, I will assess the best times as they present themselves. I look to the aspects ahead, knowing that I am already in formation toward that time, and will then work toward that time. There are many ways of using the formation of the future: one is to make your life "agree with the heavens" in the Ficinian fashion, which is to invoke the symbols of the horoscope and its transits and act upon them in a literal fashion; or to flow with time and seize opportunity or accept defeat as it arises; but most importantly to the psychological astrologer, looking at future constellations of planets related to the natal chart is to make a client aware when a future configuration is awakening a "sleeping" part of him- or herself. In this way, I see part of my work as an astrological counsellor as midwife to the psyche.

What is expected from the consulting astrologer

One of the main issues people bring to me is their feeling of helplessness in the face of what appears to be the collective inevitable. The existential dilemma abounds, especially these days where people are truly feeling individually responsible for the collective. The

epochal transition from Pisces to Aquarius is as fraught with chaos as the transition from Aries to Pisces was, back in the Hellenistic period. Whereas the motto for the 2100-year Pisces age was "the collective is responsible for the individual", the new Aquarian *dictum* is "the individual is responsible for the collective".

The degree of self-consciousness and self-improvement that we achieve in our daily life, is the degree to which each of us enhances the collective. If that can reach out to the community in some way, all the better. Part of the astrological work is divining what it is that a person can do to fulfil the greater part of his or her own nature, thus contributing to the world at large. Being truly one's own self, confident, ego-healthy and soulfully engaged in one's own path, is the antidote to the madness of modern civilization. This is what the astrologer must divine from the client's horoscope. Further, the astrologer must talk about timing and trends ahead, and how the person can use their own, unique, tailor-made inner clock to unfold more effectively, with greater promise, action and consciousness.

Fortunately, most people coming to see an astrologer today want to be more self-aware; to understand others and their personal relationships; to maximize their potential and realize their goals, dreams and efforts; to find the right location in which to activate their potential. But, most importantly, *most individuals want to know what is going to happen to them and when!* The areas of prediction that concern most people are archetypal - they are concerned about their relationship - will it last, is this the right one, will there be marriage? Will I have children? What is my family destiny? Also, worldly concerns: financial - when will money be more easily obtained; work: what is my vocation; when will I receive a promotion; when will I have a new job? Location: will I move; where should I move to?¹² And so on.

We could say that astrology falls into the category of fulfilment prediction. That is, based on the whole of a person's known being, his or her personal history, experience and current life potentials, a sensitive and experienced counselling astrologer can make highly accurate statements about how the timing and trends of that person's imminent future will unfold, based on the transits of planets and other minor calibrations of predictive techniques. The astrologer can assess, weigh and balance the odds of how the person will manifest the symbolic action in the horoscope based on traditional methods, used in unique ways.¹³

2 Astro*Carto*Graphy®
Created by Jim Lewis. This is a map of the world with all the planetary lines as they appear at the time of a birth or event, showing planets rising, setting, culminating or at the nadir. This map is the most brilliant tool for global perspective. No matter where you go, there you are, but this map shows what "part" of you is more accessible in various parts of the world.

*The Psychology of Astro*Carto*Graphy.* Jim Lewis & Kenneth Irving. Arkana Contemporary Astrology Series Penguin London 1997. How to read the maps and understand the concept of A*C*G and its progressions.

13 Good, professional astrologers are somewhat easier to find these days. Word of mouth, recommendation, and enquiry will find you one. As with a therapist, analyst, physician, barrister, accountant, hair-stylist, or any other professional, find the one who suits your needs and temperament.

Movement in the Horoscope

Considering that the natal horoscope is a fixed map of where the planets in the solar system were relative to the Earth coordinates (location of birth), it is important to realize that the chart is a freeze-frame, and, without a blip, the planets of birth *instantly* become transits - that is, they immediately begin to move away from the natal placements and become a form of external measurement. Just as the infant is cut from the *umbilicus* and begins its separate existence from the mother, the planets "separate" from the natal horoscope and begin to synchronously harmonize with the infant's experience of its new, external world. This is why the astrologer can see what the environment was presenting at the infant's arrival, and the psychological archetype upon which the adult psyche becomes formed. Archetypal or counselling psychological astrology is an invaluable aid in analysis and self-consciousness - it cuts to the core of problematic issues that disrupt a person's unfolding and creativity.

If natal astrology makes any sense at all, that is, being able to discern the deepest nature of a quality of time as manifest in an individual, and that moment's relationship to the soul, then the natural extrapolation from that also works. Every second is a new beginning; inherent in that *katarche* (beginning) or *auger* (beginning) lies the pattern of maturity and fruition of that origin - and a predictable sequence of planetary activity follows from any astrologically depicted beginning.

Some astrologers feel that, when a client wants to know what will happen, they are reverting to Stoic fatalism, and refuse to predict or explore future trends for clients. Paradoxically, it is usually the more extreme "magical thinkers" in astrology, that is the archetypalists and spiritual astrologers, who are more nervous about or against prediction and shy away from it, saying they refuse to pander to the client's apparent weakness. With this, I disagree, because I view astrology as a necessary blend of magical *and* critical thinking wherein technique and divination are one.

Having choice and creating one's own path are part of the new mind. However, I have had enough personal and astrological experience to be firmly rooted in the concept of fate - that which is written in the stars, spun, woven and cut by the Moirae. People do find themselves in situations which seem destined, fated.¹⁴ There are times when a series of apparent misfortunes or losses occur that lead directly to a circumstance which is wonderful. Negatively, shocks, tragedies and losses, espe-

cially if they are sequential and with little time to recover and absorb, can lead to such cumulative stress that it becomes somatized and embodied, creating a crisis in the soul and body - resulting in the inability to act on life's opportunities due to depression or anxiety. This is where the horoscope as an analytical and predictive tool is at its best.

The horoscope does not always relinquish the information we seek, but it does always portray the way in which we might uncover information that is secreted in the psyche. The horoscope does not tell us what *will* happen, but what *should* happen if we are living in accord with what is ordained for us. There are individuals who are more "on" than others; some people have a perfectly sound relationship with their inner self and transits act like clock-work. However, generally a human being is not a clock, and does not always tick off as the transits occur. This is to be expected. However, situations have arisen in my practice that have led me to some serious considerations and assumptions - if an individual is living in denial, is acutely depressed, or under the regular influence of a substance that interferes with natural unconscious to conscious communication, then the ability to forecast, to predict correctly, is arrested.

As mentioned, there can be problems in prediction when an individual is ill, depressed, living a dual life, or has become so disparate from their innate character that they are not "living their life". I have spoken with clients about this problem. When the astrologically predicted probability for change, growth or movement forward is simply not activating in their life, there has always been present an organic or psychic resistance which arrests the ability to undergo transformation. As with all cycles, this "stuck" experience shows in the horoscope and such a time of "frozen will" or liminality itself can be the trigger for change. Some individuals need extreme messages or long periods of psychic gestation to break out. But there are times when they may have been ignoring an urgent message from the deep inner self - in which case, it will almost always irrupt into the environment and appear as "fate".

What an astrologer actually does

The difference between prediction and assessing trends is clear: prediction is stating what will happen and assessment is pointing out the specific time periods in which an outcome is more likely to occur.

There are various techniques astrologers use for assessing timing and trends, or for pre-

14 *The Astrology of Fate* Liz Greene. Samuel Weiser Publications. York Beach, Maine. 1984. The concept of Moirae - the Fates - in astrology. A beautifully written treatise on the inexorable. *Character and Fate.* Katharine Merlin. Contemporary Astrology Series. Arkana. London. 1989. A good starter book for the novice and for those psychologically inclined.

diction. The most easily understood by the layman are transits.

Transiting planets are the positions of the planets in the heavens in current time. Thus if an astrologer says to you, "You have transiting Saturn conjunct your Moon", literally it means that Saturn in the heavens (transit) is in the exact same degree of celestial longitude now as the Moon was when you were born (natal). Transiting planets are looked at in relation to the natal horoscope as a way of divining what the environment is reflecting back to the individual, and how the whole system is arrayed in relation to one's personal system. The environment is an eventful mirror of the inner self, and when we embrace - within reason - the concept that the outer atmosphere of our life is an extension of that which we harbour in our deepest self, then we come a long way to resolution of conflict with the world. Our friends, lover, working conditions, domestic situation, family, events and so on are all part of our personal system.

Transits, progressions and finely-tuned techniques will show the astrologer when a process began and for how long it will be in effect. More importantly, the transiting planets' relationships with each other by aspect will give the whole picture or the backdrop of "big time", within which the individual experiences the global mood personally. The individualization and personalization of the collective ethos is done by looking at the natal horoscope as it relates to the gestalt of the transiting planets.

If any significance can be eked out from a crisis, the analytic astrologer can help the person see more clearly and objectively what it is that their psyche is trying to bring to consciousness for repair, clarity or civilization. The advantage of this kind of work is self-evident: if we can understand the situation now, as it arose from the past, then we can project its evolution into the future.

The transits of the Sun, Mercury and Venus are seasonal, establishing a yearly rhythm and focus; the planets Mars, Jupiter and Saturn are longer in their effective contacts to the natal horoscope and denote larger cycles of development. Saturn is the planet that calls attention to issues that may have been ignored, and need to be attended to before being able to move on to the future with greater effectiveness.¹⁵

It is the transits of Saturn or the outer planets that usually brings a person to the astrologer's office for the first time. The urgency for change is so acute that the individual feels a distant early warning that their whole way of perceiv-

ing themselves and the world around them is either about to alter dramatically, or has already done so - either through an inner shift or an outer event.¹⁶ The client is anxious to know when the crisis or ongoing pressure is going to stop and what will be the outcome of this soul- or life-threatening situation. This is where divination becomes a fine art - and the client is integrally involved in the process.

The outer planets lie beyond Saturn's orbit. They are slow-moving and are directly associated with extended generating processes and life-changing experiences. Within the long-term transits of the planets Uranus, Neptune and Pluto there are three distinct cycles which demarcate stages of development:

1. Insemination - the planting of a new seed;
2. Gestation or incubation - the secret interior development of an aspect of our inner nature that wants "out";
3. Birth - the emergence of the result of the long (nine to eighteen months) developmental process.¹⁷

Based on the experience of the first contact of an outer planet, the subsequent events and process, it can be predicted what will emerge at the end of the cycle.

Within those cycles are the more immediate transits that demarcate times most likely to bring a developing situation to consciousness and create crisis or opportunities. The fine tuning of prediction comes in at this stage. The astrologer then assesses the minor aspects within the major cycles and can outline, within days of accuracy, what can be expected to occur.

Call this process *maieutic* - where truth is midwived by "working" the situation, looking at the transits/progressions/directions, mid-points, various other types of horoscopes, and exploring with the client what greater meaning lies in his or her experience by describing the process as exemplified in his or her chart. The emergence of awareness, thus empowering the client, is done very specifically, using descriptive words, images, myth, and relating the planetary agencies to the client's own personal life. In doing this, we participate in a *mystique* with the client, and if both are in agreement, the outcome of the time emerges very clearly.

Along with the transits, there are more subtle, symbolic directions of planets. Secondary progressions, called "a day for a year method", are used almost universally by astrologers.¹⁸ This involves counting ahead from the date of birth the number of days one

15 *Saturn in Transit: Boundaries of Mind, Body and Soul.* Erin Sullivan. Contemporary Astrology Series. Arkana, Penguin. 1990.

16 *The Gods of Change: Pain, Crisis and the Transits of Uranus, Neptune and Pluto.* Howard Sasportas. Contemporary Astrology Series. Arkana, Penguin. London. 1989.

Chiron and the Healing Journey. Melanie Reinhart. Contemporary Astrology Series. Arkana, Penguin. London. 1989.

17 *Retrograde Planets: Traversing the Inner Landscape.* Erin Sullivan. Contemporary Astrology Series. Arkana, Penguin. London. 1992.

18 *Secondary Progressions: Time to Remember.* Nancy Ann Hastings. Samuel Weiser. York Beach, Maine. 1984

is in years of age (i.e. twelve years old is twelve days after the birth in the ephemeris). The planetary positions on that date symbolically are more aligned with deep, interior developments and do not always externalize in the form of events or experiences in the world. They will often act as a backdrop for the more lively and active transits.

The most dynamic times for secondary progressions are when a progressed planet is making an exact angular relationship (aspect) with a natal planet, another progressed planet or by moving into the next sign. The progressed Moon moves about a degree a month, so it is the most active of the progressions and, in the course of twenty-seven years of life, makes all possible aspects to the natal horoscope, establishing our creature-habits in the first third of life - thus creating a predictable response mechanism which is not only inherent in our nature but also a result of instinctual responses to nurture and the environment. Because it frequently makes strong aspects, the progressed Moon acts as a backdrop for more active, externalized

action. Knowing this, the astrologer can further determine the client's instinctive feelings about his or her needs, which in turn, point directly at a subjective source of perception. Which leads to the ultimate outcome of what the client can actually be brought to perceive through divination.

Discussing these multiple-level experiences with clients helps them divine their own place in life, their progress in their personal evolution, and alerts them to the deeper undercurrents of their innate nature, showing greater understanding of how they create their own lives. The greatest advantage of personal astrology is its unique ability to bracket the "now" - giving greater depth and meaning to it. By focusing on "now", we can learn from our past and how it got us here, thus being more effective in understanding our future self and how to get to it. From the combination of a life lived and a future to be had, the prediction of timing is reliable. In this way, "The seeds of future events are carried within ourselves".



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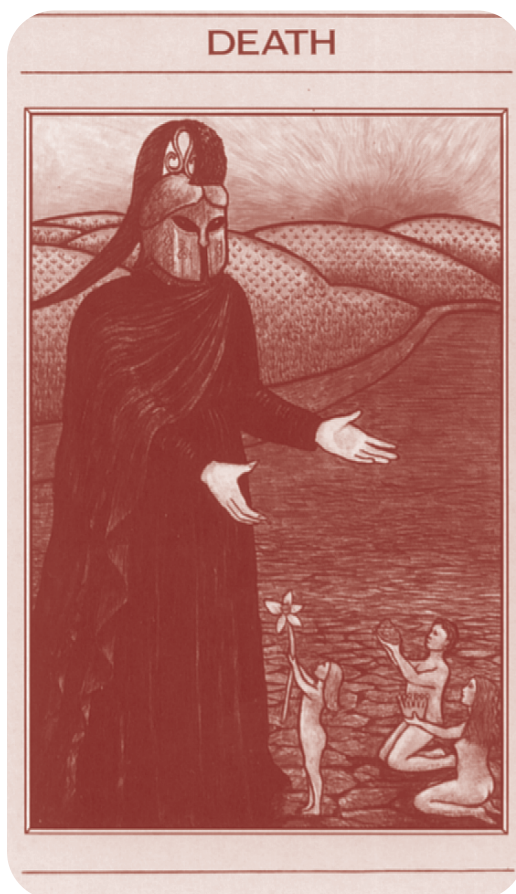
Prediction and the Tarot

Juliet Sharman-Burke

In this article, **Juliet Sharman-Burke** addresses the way the Tarot carries such powerful, often frightening, projections of doom, and asks whether the Tarot is fortune-telling or divination.

Tarot and foretelling the future are irrevocably linked in most people's minds. A common response when Tarot is mentioned goes along the lines of, "Ooh, it's scary and spooky! It has a Death card, and I don't want to know if I am about to die!" They are referring here, specifically, to death of a physical kind. It seems to be a very deeply ingrained notion that the Tarot can predict such events. And yet the truth of the matter is that we cannot consistently and accurately predict any event, including death, in a completely concrete way. There are many ways of divining the energies around certain times and situations, and these may indeed reflect a "kind of death", which could range from leaving school to the death of a relationship in divorce, to moving home or quitting a job. Such observations can prove to be useful up to a point, very interesting and helpful, or they become only really relevant long after the event, as an exercise in hindsight.

The older generation of writers on the Tarot seemed to distinguish between divination, which was approved of, and fortune-telling, which they condemned. Richard Cavendish says, in his book, *The Tarot*, "The distinction was strongly affected by social attitudes. Divination was a serious-minded effort to penetrate mystery by an enlightened few. Fortune-telling was a shoddy and mercenary activity, catering to women and the lower classes." Fortune-tellers could be found at fairgrounds, and dealt in dark strangers, journeys across water, rivals in love, and longed for changes in fortune. Serious writers such as Waite, Papus and Paul Foster Case felt that fortune-telling was like casting proverbial pearls before swine, and Waite said that the use of Tarot trumps for telling fortunes was the "story of prolonged impertinence." Papus assumed that his women readers would be too feather-brained to appreciate the profound spiritual significance of the cards, expecting them to be interested only in fortune-telling, so he adjusted and simplified his instructions for



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their benefit. Paul Foster Case believed that anyone using the Tarot for telling fortunes would be spiritually crippled, declaring that Tarot should be used only for the solution of serious questions, whether for self or others.

What is really interesting, however, is our constant flirtation with the idea that we really could know what will happen to us, and that it might help in some way, or that we might be able to avoid it. Greek myth tells us that such attempts are in vain; there are many many stories in which attempts to manipulate oracles don't work; yet we persist in believing that, one way or another, we will find a way of predicting the future.

An explanation for our unquenchable curiosity in such matters is explained

Divination is about extracting some sort of mystery by using the deep archetypal images and symbols of the cards as a springboard.

poetically in the story of Pandora, whose image is used on the Star card in the *Mythic Tarot* (discussed in Issue 3). Her story is part of the myth of Prometheus, who created man and stole fire from the gods to give to his creation. Prometheus knew that this crime held a cruel punishment, both for himself and his creation. He knew that if man was to possess that divine gift of fire, reserved only for the gods, he would suffer for it.

The gods did, indeed, punish man. They created woman! Zeus' vengeance on the creatures of Prometheus was to be a subtle, drawn-out affair. He ordered Hephaestus to create a woman out of the same clay Prometheus had used, and bade each of the gods to bestow upon her a special gift. Hestia gave her gentleness and generosity. Ares forced a touch of himself so that a savage fire smouldered behind the sweetness. Apollo gave her grace of movement, but his sister immediately added defensive quickness, modesty and virginity. Demeter disagreed with Artemis, and blessed Pandora with a fertile womb. Athene was alarmed as she divined the potential danger in this woman, composed, as she was, of so many conflicting passions, so she gave her wisdom so that she might use her gifts wisely. Zeus was annoyed, as this woman was turning out to be too powerful for his liking, so he instructed Hermes to give Athene's gift a double edge by adding curiosity and deceit. Lastly, Aphrodite laughingly bestowed upon Pandora a final gift, that of sex appeal, by lending her the golden girdle that kindled desire. And Zeus decided he no longer had need of thunderbolts as he presented Pandora to mankind with a final going away present - the famous box of spites.


Prometheus, who possessed that questionable gift of foresight, knew this would happen. When he first stole the fire and gave it to man, man too, had the gift of foresight. However, when the time came for Prometheus to face his punishment far away on the icy mountain, he feared that man on his own would be too fragile and feeble to bear knowing in advance what torment lay before him. He took away man's gift of foresight, and gave him hope instead.

So now we find ourselves in the impossible position of being incurably curious, that double-edged legacy from Hermes, yet if we were to know in advance every cruel blow that fate would dictate, we would likely be most tempted to throw in the towel! So, we constantly look for systems or people who can "tell our fortune", yet what we really seek is reassurance that "everything

will be alright". When people consult the Tarot in times of trouble, uncertainty, or darkness, they do not want to hear that things are going to get worse!

If the Tarot is not to be used for fortune-telling, what is it to be used for, then? If fortune-telling amounts to telling a client he will cross water with a dark stranger and inherit property, then divination is about extracting some sort of mystery by using the deep archetypal images and symbols of the cards as a springboard. Divining using the Tarot is like plotting an emotional or spiritual weather forecast. The cards can reflect times for planting, reaping, sowing and harvesting, but they will not be specific about the crop. For instance, to go back to Death - it can reflect a time of endings, of changes, of transformations, but the card does not specify whether the endings are welcome or dread, whether they refer to business or relationship, whether they are physical or spiritual. The client may need to reflect on his personal situation with the idea of endings in mind; thus gaining a deeper understanding of his own unique set of circumstances. The use of the images can improve and enhance his perception of his current state of affairs, in whichever direction is appropriate for him.

Most Tarot practitioners today agree that it is not sufficient to learn the meanings ascribed to each card off by heart, lay them out in a particular format, and then read them off by rote. In order to truly divine the meanings of the cards, there must be insight and intuition, which may cross over into genuine psychic ability. This kind of divination involves acquiring knowledge, without knowing how it has been gained, without having been told it, consciously or directly. The knowledge enters the conscious mind directly from an unknown source via the world of archetypal images, the language of the unconscious, and is not limited to knowledge about the future; it can also reflect the past or present.

They use this kind of information or knowledge can be put to vary enormously according to the capacity of the client to utilise such insight. Like the alchemists of old, for whom finding actual gold was secondary to the wisdom uncovered in the search, so the seeker who uses the Tarot to understand more of the inner soul or unconscious mind may not learn what the winning number is for the lottery - he may gain a far greater prize, but it will be invisible to the outside world! 

The astrologer's curse

Kim Farnell

Kim Farnell was asked to come up with a few words on prediction for this issue. Here's what she came up with. It's always wise to remember to be careful what you ask for...

My esteemed Mr D,

So you've dug that old chestnut up again. Prediction for modern astrologers - "We won't tell your future but we can give you some pretty good hints." Don't you remember what Aristotle said?

*"... that at some future time they would happen. Nor yet, let us add, does it matter how old the predictions may be. And, in consequence, if through the ages the nature of things has been such that a certain prediction was true, that prediction must needs be fulfilled; and the nature of all things was such that events came about of necessity. For any event anyone in the past has once truly predicted must needs in due course come about, and of that which has once come about it was true at all times to affirm that it would in due time come about. All this is, however, impossible."*¹

So what did Aristotle know anyway? But come on, prediction ain't like it used to be. The days are long gone when you could pop down to see your local oracle and get something like Aristophanes' offering:

"You will have to toil, to dig and submit yourself to all kinds of hard labour, so that your life would be more wretched even than it is now."

From what I've heard, Aristophanes did have a bit of a downer on Saturn transits. It's all very well asking, "What do you think of prediction then?" - but what is it? What are we talking about? I didn't want to get this wrong, so I looked it up.

Predict - *1 a: to calculate or predict (some future event or condition) usually as a result of study and analysis of available pertinent data; especially: to predict (weather conditions) on the basis of correlated meteorological observations b: to indicate as likely to occur*³

Weather. That's what it keeps coming back to. Not whether or not, just weather. Look the word up in a dictionary, search on the Net, and it's more bloody weather. No help at all. Why should weather forecasters have a monopoly on it? Call it forecast-

ing; call it spotting trends, call it dropping bloody great hints to those on an intellectual budget, the thing is: predicting is just one of those things that astrologers do. But they don't all do it the same way.

Let's keep it simple. What do you get asked about most often? - Well, OK - maybe you're different. Most astrologers get asked about relationships. Again and again. It's easier for horary astrologers...

My question is: "Does he love me?"
"The answer is no."
"Just no? Aren't you going to say anything else?"
"No, not in the slightest. Not a teensy bit. Not at all whatsoever. You see, you are Venus, he is Jupiter, and you're about as far away as you can be. Not to mention all that other stuff in the way. No, no, no."
"Oh."

But, you have to admit, the general population at large, I mean those who have yet to attain client status, aren't likely to know a horary astrologer if one bit them. So what do they do? Well, there's little option but to turn to their favourite sun sign columnist. Who has spent many Moons, working solidly, casting charts, having revelations and whatever else they do. Drink a lot of tea, if what I've heard is anything to go by. Of course, they don't sit there churning out sun sign columns in the hope someone will buy one. They get asked to do it like this.

"Hello, how are you?"
"Fine, thanks."
"We were wondering...we're doing a millennium special and would like predictions for the millennium. Could you do this?"
"What did you have in mind?"
"We're going to keep it very straightforward. Basically a giant version of the usual format but forecasting each sign's year ahead. In other words: overview, then friends, then men, then work. Plus, under each sign, specific days throughout the year that are good for work, blokes, partying, shopping etc. Don't bother doing more than 5,000 words or so. Can we have it by the end of the week?"



A London-based astrologer, **Kim Farnell** writes columns for a number of magazines and has been widely published in astrological periodicals. Her first book, *The Astral Tramp: A Biography of Saphael*, was published in 1999. She regularly lectures on astrological subjects and is presently researching the role of women in nineteenth century astrology for a future book. She has three cats and one hamster.

¹ *Aristotle On Interpretation 19a.1 (Loeb)*
² *Aristophanes Plutus 525*
³ *Webster's Dictionary*

"Oh...OK."

(The end of the week a slightly frazzled astrologer manages to send their copy in, an hour before deadline.)

"Let me know if there're any problems with it..."

"Well, I was expecting slightly more dates for each section. Would you mind adding a few, making sure there are at least two for each bit (men, work, etc)? - Don't worry about explaining what will happen on those dates! What we'd like is:

Aries. Men - the chance to start the romance of the decade is on 31 July. Other auspicious lurve dates include..."

The next day is spent searching for, and adding auspicious lurve dates. In fact *any* dates that don't look completely disastrous.

Popular predictions like this will reach tens of thousands of readers. They will be passed around in offices, talked about over the photocopier, auspicious lurve dates will be put in readers' diaries. The astrologer, often using a pseudonym (though most draw the line at false beards), will have worked through this as fast as possible, and will then be ready to devote many happy hours to detailed forecasting of the growth rate of their yucca plant. Or attempting to be transformed. Those astrology textbooks have a lot to answer for.

But there is the general population, and then there is the client. A special breed of being who is prepared to pay for the honour of sharing in the knowledge an astrologer has spent so long gaining. It does take a while for a GenPop type to reach full client status, though.

"I've been looking at what's going on for you in the next few months, and it does seem that things will be a little bit difficult in your relationships."

"What do you mean?"

"Well, the simplest way of putting it is that you're approaching a period of transformation. You're likely to make a number of changes in the way you approach your relationships. Things might be a bit difficult for a while, but other factors show that you have the strength to combat this. It's best if you remember that your problems are temporary, and although it might not seem like it at the time, you will be able to learn from this experience and become a better person."

"So you're saying I should dump him?"

"No, no."

"Isn't he the temporary problem you're on about?"

"No, I don't think you understand. I'm saying

that this is a difficult period in your life, as far as relationships go. You need to overcome the obstacles laid in your path. It will take some hard work on your part but by using the strengths you have available..."

"Look, he's waiting outside. He's not interested in being transformed. He just wants to know if he's dumped or not."

"I can't make your decisions for you. All I can do is tell you what the choices are, what could potentially happen. It's up to you to decide how to act on it."

"So if I open the door and just shout 'You're dumped!' then you can tell me what to do next."

"I can't make your decisions for you."

"So what am I paying you for, then?"

It doesn't take most people long. She'll soon get the hang of it. Once she's learned to speak astrologese, her astrologer will be more than satisfied. (But he gets dumped anyway.)

Timing. That's what it's all about. Anyone can make a prediction, but unless you give some idea about when, it isn't worth much. Things happen in the order they're supposed to, generally. Keeps life a bit more tidy.

*"A year went past. The days followed one another patiently. Right back at the beginning of the multiverse they had tried all passing at the same time, and it hadn't worked."*⁴

Astrologers can be a teensy bit sloppy when it comes to timing - nothing new in that.

*"Alexander welcomed the prediction of the seer, and made a splendid sacrifice to Athena, dedicating his own armour to the goddess. Then, taking the finest of the panoplies deposited in the temple, he put it on and used it in his first battle. And this he did in fact decide through his own personal fighting ability and won a resounding victory. But this did not take place till a few days later."*⁵

When it comes to the crunch, we're back to Fate every time. Three old crones, cackling away and cutting your life thread at a whim.

Clotho: "Go on cut it. I never liked him anyway."

Lacheis: "What do you mean, 'you never liked him'? He always liked you. *Everyone* likes you."

Atropos: "If you two don't stop arguing, he's going to be so tangled up his life won't be worth living anyway."

C: (In a silly voice) "If you two..."

L: "Oh, take no notice of her. She's still wound up" (nudge, nudge) "about the way you cut that one a bit short last week."

C: "He deserved it. Did you see what he'd been getting up to?"

L: "Yeah, but she had taken a bit of a shine to him."

A: "Had not!"

L: "Had too!"

A: "Had not! Hadn't, hadn't, hadn't!"

C: "Done it."

L: "What, just now?"

C: "Nah, not really."

It might be a little bit untrendy to talk about fate. After all, aren't we supposed to have given up all that mumbo jumbo in favour of... well, some new mumbo jumbo? But they're there, those crones. Every time you get a constellation of astrologers debating in the pub. Just wearing new clothes.

"You see, there wasn't anything I could do about it. Having that transiting Pluto conjunct Saturn square my Mars and Venus in the 8th... well, he had to die. By the way, how did the court case go?"

"Yeah, I know what you mean. I told them I couldn't help it, you know. What with Mars hitting off my Mercury in the 3rd like that. It was

lucky I was just driving the Mini."

"Oh, I know, I know. By the way, have you seen that Neptune-Venus transit she's" (pointing in a not too subtle fashion) "got coming up next month? Reckon I'm in there."

*"Most people live their lives as a sort of temporal blur around the point where their body actually is - anticipating the future, or holding onto the past. They're usually so busy thinking about what happens next that the only time they ever find out what is happening now is when they come to look back on it. Most people are like this. They learn to fear because they can actually tell, down at the subconscious level, what is going to happen next. It's already happening to them."*⁶

And this is the astrologer's curse, and my prediction. Astrologers will forever be looking in front of and behind themselves. Once they get the hang of seeing themselves in the mirror, maybe the three crones can take a holiday.

Ciao, Mr D 

6 Terry Pratchett *Wyrd Sisters*

The Future

Members of the Psychological Astrology Mailing List

The Internet is in its infancy, and yet already it has changed the way the collective mind communicates; ideas, feelings and experiences are shared in a way that has never happened before. The following article is an edited selection of responses to a question posed by the Editor on the Psychological Astrology Mailing List.

The question

I wonder what you all think about the future, and how you see it in your own charts? Have you found yourselves helped or hindered by this knowledge, or this apprehension? How have you dealt with times of crisis that you knew were coming? Have you found astrology helpful in those times? Or, as your life is disintegrating, just as you expected it to, with Neptune and Pluto hitting your Sun and Moon, have you felt angry at those astrological gods? What is your relationship to your own fate, as you know it from your chart?

Dermod apollo@astrologer.com

Thank you, oh thank you for asking this question. Currently I am undergoing a Moon Deluge. The results have been a totally disintegrated marriage, a budding self-employed business completely disintegrating, the marital home in dire possibility of foreclosure/sale, I have an 18-year-old in college, and a 2.5-year-old son with me. Now, I am desperately trying to maintain any remote encouragement from these transits. I know my home needs "cleaning up", while at the same time it's dangerously close to being lost altogether, so the impulse is to say "what the hell", give in to anger at my husband who has been despicably irresponsible in our marriage, hate, absolutely hate the gods at this... "Why me???" and all the other classic whines. But I can't stand that stance for long. I just can't stand it. Since I have a tool that has, for better or worse, changed my life, and altered

I Uranus opposition t-squaring Natal Moon in Scorpio in 7th. Transiting Saturn in 1st opposing Natal Moon. The natal Moon is currently going through secondary progressed lunar opposition, so Saturn is also conjunct the secondary progressed Moon while opposing the natal Moon. In my Solar Return, Saturn is exactly conjunct Nadir, squaring Venus/NN in 7th. Just finishing up: Pluto transiting 8th house, squaring Venus/Mercury conjunction in 5th.

2 Did I mention my Progressed Sun is now conjunct natal Neptune, and I am undergoing the classic Neptune square - it has a little more punch for me.... ayyyyyyyye - and these aspects are extremely close to being exact.

3 These incidents have occurred since Sept. 1998.

i Auto accident involving my brother, his wife and unborn daughter, and their four year old son. The wife was seriously injured and lost the baby.

ii My Mother was hospitalized with heart attack.

iii Another brother had heart attack and had to have triple bypass surgery.

iv My dog (who was like a member of the family) died.

v Mother had stroke ..has limited movement in right arm and hand.

vi Father hospitalized with pneumonia and difficulty breathing.

vii I am diagnosed with diabetes.

viii Aunt died.

ix Brother who had heart attack now diagnosed with hepatitis C and cirrhosis of liver.

x My Father is diagnosed with lung cancer and given approximately 3 months to live.

xi Sister-in-law who lost her baby in auto accident is now pregnant again, but was hospitalized over the weekend because the amniotic fluid is leaking. She may lose this baby also.

xii Dear friend died of cancer.

In addition to the Pluto transit in the 3rd House, I also have transiting Neptune conjunct progressed Sun and opposing natal Moon. Transiting Uranus is conjunct progressed Mercury and opposing natal Pluto. So, I can't say that the Pluto transit is the only culprit.

Birth data for Wilma: Dec. 1, 1947 23:55pm
Louisville, KY 38N15
85W45

my perceptions, I have to accept the responsibilities for that knowledge, limited as it is. I stare and stare at my chart, begging it to talk to me, to tell me how to find the way out of this maze...

I'm not asking for freebies, I know there's a price to pay, but I do want to maintain my hope and optimism. I firmly believe that just as the difficulty shows up in your chart, the resolution, the *process* to resolution, is there as well. I have been lamenting the fact that there are no encouraging transit books for me to read and reread, like a mantra, when things get rough and I forget, and give into despair.² When I start wondering if God is punishing me with this horrible domestic insecurity for exploring astrology, I know my Neptune stuff is kicking in.

I need to hear how people have undergone extremely difficult multiple transits where a specific point is disintegrated and restructured. It may be a huge factor in my keeping my spirits up during the next six months of my life. I've never been so scared before... the fear demands rigorous vigilance and control; or else it threatens to swallow me. Please share the support. Thanks

Diane Ogoian

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I have been going through several transits that have been extremely difficult. Pluto has been conjuncting my Jupiter/Sun conjunction for the past couple of years. I have had a lot of experiences that have caused quite a bit of misery.³ This year has been one of the worst I have ever had. The only good thing that has come out of these experiences is the fact that now I am taking better care of myself since the diagnosis of diabetes in March '99.

I sure hope that next year will be a little better, although I know I still must face the oncoming death of my Father. I would like to hear if any of you out there have had any similar experiences coinciding with the transits of the outer planets.

Wilma Crisler

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Hi Dermot, an interesting question for me at this phase of my life. We are, of course, expected to portend cycles in clients lives, and alert them to periods of potential opportunity or loss. So, why should it be so difficult to do the same in our own charts? It should be simpler, because of our own awareness of our own patterns, cycles, personal history; a picture of our charts written clearly in the back of each of our minds. But we also have to realize how impossible it is for one person to be completely objec-

tive about him/herself. The knowledge of astrology is a wonderful tool but difficult to wield on one's own behalf. A conundrum for many, I would think.

Personally, I have been helped by this knowledge, by using my own, albeit limited, knowledge to guide my own life. I attribute the ease of my life transition right now to my practice of looking ahead to transits, doing electional charts, charting times of important progressions and directions, coupled with an ability to be as blunt with myself as necessary. And I'm fully aware, looking forward, that I have another year yet in which to experience the apex of these changes. I will roll with the punches. And it's not important to me, personally, to try and portend exact events, or look at so many possibilities by gazing at the rulership book, and thus making myself apprehensive. No, what I find to be the most comforting and important factor is that, when challenges appear, or opportunities present themselves, that I am aware of the current aspects and how they relate to the rest of my life's cycles. I think, "Well, such-and-such event has happened, and I need to make a decision. How will my decision impact my life in future cycles? Will this decision allow me to fulfill needs in another area of my life, that may not appear obvious to me at this time of the decision?" *Etc.* What is obvious in the astrological chart is house rulership. How transits are activated in certain areas of our lives, but will impact "other" areas. That's a very important thing to consider when looking forward in your own chart. And it takes the sting out of making decisions for the immediate, and forces us into greater objectivity.

I feel grateful for my fate. I carry around the unfinished, condensed, abridged, dog-eared copy of it around with me in my back pocket. I find comfort in knowing that there's so much for me to do, to learn; clues about myself that unravel as the plot of my life progresses. I've never thought about shaking a fist at the sea or jumping into the volcano to end it all, though. After all, those astrological gods are not "out there". They lie within me. If I'm to be angry, it would have to be at myself, if I chose to withhold my own knowledge of them while living my life. I can't imagine doing so.

I've written so much [in another thread] about this Pluto transit I'm undergoing, that I don't want to bore anyone further with the details again. But it's been a wonderful thing. You're going through the Pluto-square-Sun aspect aren't you? Perhaps that's why you're asking this question? :) [Editor confesses to a degree of enlightened self-interest here.] At any rate, I went into this period fully aware of what might occur,

and mentally prepared myself for it. I physically and soulfully prepared as well. I made myself aware that nothing really matters in my life except how I live my life. I don't need things. People will come and go. I need to live for my soul and in a way that's important for myself.

Here in the USA, we had the Thanksgiving holiday on Nov. 25th. I had dinner with friends on a ship on the Bering Sea. The lights were turned low, candles were lit, food and drink were abundant, people sang songs and recited poetry, and just before dinner we each, in our turn, expressed what we were thankful about. All I could say, without going into great detail, was that I was thankful for my entirely "new life". And I am. And it is. And we can thank Pluto for some of that.⁴

Have Fun, Love,

Mary deMuth

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In answer to your questions, I'd say that I've always found it comforting to know I have a future and, more importantly, a Fate. I might not make it all the way. Futures, like clocks, continue telling time, with or without us. But it still helps to know that there is a point on the horizon that I am always heading for. I regard my Fate as being the primary intelligence at work in my life. With Saturn on my MC, I know that there will be many ups and downs. But that's not the most challenging aspect of this planet. It's the long plateaus in between that make me wonder if I've lost my way, missed my chance, or settled for something when I should have pushed. I'm hardly ever satisfied with what I have. And even when I know I finally do have something, I know that it won't last forever. That sort of self-consciousness never really goes away. But I have learned to work with it, live with it, and even create from it. Whatever planets transit my chart, I know that Saturn will always be there. I find Fate a comforting presence.

When it comes to events playing out as expected and/or feared, I would have to say that my Fate's imagination is much richer than my own. In other words: my Fate never seems to happen in quite the way I anticipated.

Sometimes I get off easy. Sometimes the road is much rougher and harsher than I expected. But like most people who go through a crisis, the crisis itself seems to operate by its own rules. It's like you enter a world that's totally different from the one everyone else occupies, but is immediately recognizable to those who have travelled the same path. Maybe my mind shuts off, or filters events through a selected lens, but the damage I can do to myself anticipating what

could happen always seems much worse than what I experience during the crisis itself. Afterwards, when I survey the damage, I may wonder aloud how I could ever have walked away from what I went through. I believe that our capacity to survive is as mysterious and as hard to pin down as our Fate. It makes me think of the old phrase: the Lord doesn't hand out any burden heavier than you can carry. And when the burden is heavier than you can carry, then it's over isn't it? It's not Fate anymore. It's *caput*. You've reached the end of the line, and it's up to those left behind to interpret for themselves what your life may (or may not) mean to them.

Recently I went through a very long and tedious Saturn transit through my 12th house. This is often referred to as a time of self-undoing, isolation, maybe even incapacitation. What I experienced was an enormous workload, that took up just about every waking hour of the day and left me with nothing substantial to show for my efforts. In fact, I didn't save a penny during the entire three-year transit! Yet there was still the matter of (1) how should I interpret what I went through and (2) putting that experience to use. I knew at the beginning that I was getting into a no-win situation. After all, Saturn passing through the 12th is just about as thankless as it can get. I also felt it in my gut. *But*, knowing that I wouldn't have anything substantial to show for my efforts, also prompted me to do some creative thinking that I wouldn't have done, if I wasn't faced with this dilemma. I decided to use the name of the company I was doing work for (which is quite well-known) to my advantage. My ruling planet is Saturn and it's in Capricorn which rules my 10th. Name and prestige, right? Well, I thought, why not use that name and prestige to open up some doors? And I did. And they opened. In other words, the accomplishments during this time may have been negligible; yet, knowing that Saturn in the 12th sets up new beginnings when it crosses the Ascendant (that is if you can sit through all the delays, false starts, bad timing, and procrastinations) is what spurred me on to call in favours and follow up on contacts. The end result? I'm looking at a whole new playing field from the one I was jogging across three years ago. I'm in a position to take my career to a whole new level, and to command a higher salary. At least that's what I'm looking forward to with the upcoming Saturn/Jupiter conjunction. I also suspect it will take about two more years.

All of this is to say that an astrologer's relationship to Fate has got to be more than opening up your Ephemeris and saying: Oh gee. Life's gonna suck for the next x-amount of years. Knowledge may be power, but interpretation is what makes the creative difference. If we wait

4 Just for the record, here are my current transits. Pluto/Chiron conjunction 33' from ASC, square Sun, Moon, Venus, Pluto and Chiron. Saturn square to Saturn (currently Retrograde and giving me a break while Pluto has its way with me.) Uranus conjunct Saturn. Neptune trine MC/Mercury. Saturn trine/sextile Sun, Moon, Venus, Chiron, Uranus, Pluto. Saturn opposing Neptune. (Uranus passed the square to Neptune some time ago.)

“if you're going to act like you're a Sitting Duck, then I think the planets will oblige by taking aim.”

for planets to confirm or upset our expectations, than we aren't really using astrology very effectively. It's not unlike going to the doctor to get your antibiotics after you come down with the cold or 'flu. Whereas if you take pro-active measures - like vitamins and herbs - or even set up a diet that keeps you in good health, then you're much more engaged in your own well-being and upkeep. I see Fate the same way. It's much more of a dialogue, or even a relationship with the planets, than people imagine. I don't believe in Free Will anymore than I believe in Predestination. What I believe in is making the most of what's in reach. But if you're going to act like you're a Sitting Duck, then I think the planets will oblige by taking aim. I mean: what do they care? It's your Fate, after all. It's up to each one of us to do with it what we can. As far as I'm concerned, Fate, like life, is a terrible thing to waste.

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We are all human. We cannot escape growing older each day, sickness, sorrow, pain and eventually death. I began my journey into astrology not realizing its full impact upon my life. I came face to face with knowledge that I immediately knew I must use in a positive manner. If I did not, and filled my life with fear over each difficult aspect in my future, then Astrology no longer was a benefit to me or my family or my clients. I had to reach an understanding within myself to create the most positive use of Astrology possible. I share with you my own personal beliefs and experience; a personal truth that works for me to strengthen my life.

First of all, I have "survived" Pluto conjunct MC, Saturn, Mars, then S Node, Neptune. I've survived its travels into the 12th House of Scorpio squaring itself in Leo, then conjunct Moon, then conjunct the Ascendant (Scorpio). It's still travelling in the First House toward Chiron. I'm surviving Uranus opp Pluto. Saturn square Pluto. I live with natal Uranus square Mars. Natal Sun and Mercury are in opposition to Neptune. I live with Scorpio Moon in 12th square Pluto. Everything that comes before 50 years of age, I've survived! The question is *how* I've survived, or better said, how I've *lived*. I've suffered through abuses, hardships, terror. But how much could have been prevented? Furthermore, how accurately would I have delineated my own chart, anyway?

I am a firm believer that there are so many possibilities of what each aspect can manifest, it is best to stay focused on the energies that may be or are being manifested instead of trying to figure out "exactly" what is going to happen. You'll probably miss "seeing" the most important

immutable *karma* anyway, and its exact manifestation (my belief is *karma*... but one can change it to unavoidable or unchangeable circumstances). The important question here is why we tend to imagine the worst. Human nature. It is so easy to "see" that we may die, our parents may die, our husbands may die, we may lose our jobs, we may get sick, we can so easily decide we are "helpless" with Neptune conjunct our Moon, or Pluto square Pluto etc., etc.

Is this true? *No*. We are never helpless. We won't escape the immutable *karma* anyway. But the *possibility* does exist that we can change our path. Can we delay the inevitable? Can we make things better? Maybe. How? It may be in our attitude. I will give you a personal example.

When I had progressed Venus and Jupiter conjunct natal Sun and Mercury, trine Pluto and Chiron... my husband of nearly 20 years died, in two minutes, of a massive heart attack. No one saw it coming. A very, very famous astrologer didn't even come close to "seeing" that event (in retrospect, no less!). Then transiting Saturn was soon to conjunct N.Node, then natal Sun etc. Natal Saturn sits in 10th in Virgo. Natal Aries Sun had progressed to 0° Gemini. I "felt" the depression. I struggled with overwhelming responsibility with a family business. I lost weight. I cried. I began a descent into hell. I almost ended up staying there. Then...

I changed my attitude. Each planet has a dual nature. "It", or is it not "we", can hurt or help ourselves. We can grow or wither. If we choose our paths (I have to believe we do), then, I decided, I must struggle to learn from what has happened. I decided Saturn was showing a possibility of health problems. I started to take better care of myself and eat. I forced myself to seek counselling for grief therapy. How could I use Jupiter's energy, instead of overindulgence in self-pity? Nately in third house with Venus (intercepted) in Aquarius, I thought and thought. Communicate. Progressed Sun in 0° Gemini. Write. My favorite thing. I got on the computer for the first time and "surf" the Net. I found a website for widows and widowers. I joined. I wrote. I communicated with people all over the world, and gave out as much love (Venus) as possible. I got it back, too.

Saturn. What responsibilities did I really need? What responsibilities could I release? What was most important to take care of first? Depression. *Out*. I must find the dual side of Saturn to help me. As I struggled through all this, a wonderful and sensitive man in the grief group wrote a post, telling me that no matter how wounded I was, I always kept trying to help others. I cried and cried and cried. I was so tired of trying to *win* over all these transits and aspects. But it was my life, my own personal journey. I was overcoming my

secretive Scorpio nature, and opening up, revealing my pain to virtual strangers. And someone noticed. I wrote this kind man back.

Saturn! Out, depression, I won't let you win! I had a responsibility to my own self... to my happiness. All else paled in comparison, if I let this all destroy me. I took Saturn's energy of responsibility and reality, and decided to use it for me. I flew 2,500 miles across country to meet my friend, despite a lot of "raised" eyebrows. Yes, Venus and Jupiter in Aquarius; easy to use a "who cares?" attitude!

This man and I had never stopped writing to one another, after my first brave-for-me personal email, thanking him for his kind words. The moment I saw him, I knew he was my soul-mate. We were married six months later. I have never been happier.

The questions I ask are: what would have happened if I had just wallowed in my depression and misery? What would have happened if I had continued on not eating and wasting away? What would have happened if I had not stabilized myself with outside counselling to get a perspective on my life? I think the outcome could have been very different.

Was this easy? *No!* I struggle *all* the time to employ the positive energies available. I do not imply that it is easy at all! It is not necessarily my nature to be optimistic nor proactive (sensibly anyway) in my approach to life. It is easier for me to wallow in despair and worry. *Poor me, look at what happened...* was my life motto a lot of the time!

I now have progressed Mars (which natively squares Cancer Uranus in 8th) square Pluto. Transiting Uranus is in opposition of Pluto. That Mars will soon join the Scorpio Moon and Ascendant. I have progressed Neptune squaring the MC, with transiting Neptune on Sun/Moon. I face my Chiron return. Transiting Pluto will hit Chiron first. Transiting Saturn is in my 6th House squaring Pluto. And the Taurus lineup in May? Enough to worry about? Yes. Am I? To say never would be an exaggeration. *However*, I refuse to misuse astrology to fuel my fears.

I plan to actively (aggressive Mars follow-through needed) pursue getting rid of the family business (Saturn). I have begun to actively work with the Southwestern Gestalt Center using my astrology (Uranus in Aquarius 3rd house determined to overcome Saturn in Taurus 6th to make money). I am going to have a symbolic "death" of the family business I was left with, when my husband died. (I plan to time this with Chiron, Pluto and other pesky transits). I will cut it out of my life! (Mars.) I forced myself to use some of this ener-

gy by having dental work done. As silly as it may seem, I think it's using some of the energy in a positive way. I'm also being very brave! (I hate the dentist!) I'm more aware of each day's enjoyment with my animals, knowing the aspects may bring changes. Instead of pondering that, I changed their diets (Virgo, small animals - 6th). I have completed my "work" with my parents, with no regrets or bad feelings. They are 88 and 85 years old.

We have control. We choose every day how to respond to our environment. We can use the aspects and our knowledge to make excuses as to why we're acting in a self-destructive, negative manner. We can fill ourselves full of fear and decide we cannot escape a Mars square Uranus car crash. We will probably fulfill the promise to ourselves, eventually.... but that's another subject.

But isn't it very, very probable that we could all decide a better way to use our energy and patterns... so we are happier?

My future? The things that are not in my control, I will struggle to handle with grace, and I will try desperately to learn from them. If others hurt me, I will try to recognize possible similar traits within myself, then be determined to never hurt anyone like that myself. The things that are in my control, I will take responsibility for, and change if I dislike what is happening. I will use my knowledge to create the most positive life I can manifest. If I am unhappy, I will search for ways to change the situation.

If I fail, I only fail myself; I can try again. I have chosen this path to learn. I am not a victim of the planets, but the active participant in how their individual energy is expressed in my life. This is my learning field. I have many lessons to learn. I always have a choice on how I respond.

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I'm currently having Neptune opposing my natal Saturn, 5th to 11th houses. This is one of the most difficult transits I have had to work with. I am having to learn so much trust, to hold onto my dream and my intuitions without actually expecting anything, so that nothing gets concretised. It's a process of having to build the future, while constantly having to let go of it at the same time. I'm actually working very hard, with not a lot of tangible results to be seen, yet, at the same time, having to live in a dream world, along with the real one, which often feels hard. This can be quite demoralising and depressing and, yes, I do feel angry at times, but also hopeful at times too. There is an underlying optimism (Neptune, yes Neptune) with a message (Saturn) that also says: just wait, take time, don't count your chickens,

The Psychological Astrology Mailing List started on 21st September 1995, 14:40 BST, (GMT +1:00), in London, England.

"Coincidentally" this was during the 24-hour period when statues of the Elephant God Ganesh, the Hindu god of astrology, were reported to be drinking milk in Hindu temples all over the world.

and advises caution. It almost feels like living in two worlds at once which, I believe, the Native Americans call the *tonal* and the *nagual*, the material and the dream world, both being equally valid. Feels nice though to be able to marry these two energies, with difficulty. The final hits 23 December, but I expect the effect will take a while to pass over.

Warm regards

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This is such a great question because I still don't think I've figured out how to answer it. Over all the years that I've worked with my chart, I have become intimately familiar with it and yet it is still an enigma, like my own psyche: sometimes clear, sometimes incomprehensible, but always evolving. It is like knowing someone, but never really *fully* knowing them. I bring this up because to me, knowledge of Self is really the window into one's fate and that is how I approach my chart.

Having said that, I will tell you that I have always (as far as I can remember) faced the future with great optimism. Maybe it's my Cancer Jupiter in the 11th, maybe it's all the mutability in my chart which makes me welcome change, or maybe it's an overcompensation for an inferior fire function that makes me strive for courage and adventure; but whatever it is, it makes me go through life with an unshakable feeling that there is a safety net under me and no matter how much I screw up or how "bad" things get in my life, that net is always there...and I'm OK. I guess you could say, I'm a little like the Fool in the Tarot (which by the way is one of my favourites). There is a tremendous feeling of liberation in being this "fool". Yet, it's not really that I approach my fate with rose coloured glasses. I actually welcome the hard transits of the "difficult" planets and look at them as worse case scenarios within the realm of my astrological possibilities.

It always seems to me, though, as if the exaggerated image is always far worse than the reality that follows...like the emotions of dreams are far more intense than the "reality" that we live. These hard transits inject emotional realism into our sedated lives and that I truly welcome. So bring on the May alignment opposing my Neptune... I'm not only ready, but eager!

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Over the next few months, transiting Saturn conjoins my MC and squares my Sun, while transiting Pluto sextiles it. OK, sextiles are generally seen as easy, but with Pluto, well, you never know. Is Pluto ever easy? Simultaneously,

transiting Pluto makes hard aspects to the Sun in the charts of my sisters (I have no brothers). Our father is 76 and frail.

Naturally, I've thought about the fact that he might die during this period. It's a possibility. As Maria wrote in this thread, we are prone to pottering through an over-sedated life emotionally, and this kind of thing is a wake-up call to reality. The Pluto transit obviously lends itself to *some* sort of deep shift in my relationship with my father, so I'm actively seeking that and seeing some benefit from this for us both already. I remember that when transiting Pluto squared my Sun years ago, my relationship with him improved a lot. I've also talked about this with my sisters, who have quite a lot of "unfinished business" with him. Here, astrology is flagging an imminent period of likely crisis and helping me to meet it with greater peace and presence of mind, rather than with more anxiety.

One can indeed feel hindered by what one sees astrologically, depending on one's general outlook and one's practical situation. Sometimes that's a good thing; if I'm about to do something very iffy, it's positively desirable for me to be hindered by astrological insight. If, however, we're hindered because our basic outlook is one of fearfulness, we have a real problem which could be fuelled by astrological perceptions - or, more likely, by misperceptions. Half-truth is always a dangerous thing; we may have got a particularly unhelpful half. The problem then is not essentially with astrology, it's with us and our inability to benefit from it. In that case, perhaps we need to find another kind of knowledge.

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I believe astrology is the most powerful tool I have ever encountered in order to become the person I am capable, destined, to be. We all have great potential for good or evil, we can all lean to the finer aspects of our nature, or to the baser. We can ignore our instincts, or sanction them with real power. Astrology gives me the power to accept that there are forces unseen at work in my life, it has let me believe in my intuition and flashes without rationalising them away, it has given me the power to be the master of my own destiny, rather than a passive victim tossed on stormy seas - to see the feelings that rise up unbidden within me not as defects, but as challenges, and my life not as written, but in the writing - creating and changing tomorrow right now!

Smiles,

Kylie Cardell

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To find out more about The Psychological Astrology Mailing List, see: www.astrologer.com. Thanks to all for contributing; many more words of wisdom were left out for reasons of space.

An encounter with “The Ambassadors”

Simon Chedzey

Take a look at the inside back cover - there you will find reproduced “The Ambassadors” by Hans Holbein the Younger. In this meticulously researched and intriguing article, **Simon Chedzey** explores the symbolism of the painting, and of the men portrayed in it, in the light of the *Zeitgeist* of the time, nearly 500 years ago, when Henry VIII broke away from Rome.

One day, a couple of years ago, I was wandering through the National Gallery in London, looking at the pictures, when an astrological symbol virtually leapt off a painting in front of me. No doubt, this experience was related to transiting Uranus opposing my natal 8th house Uranus, but my concern here is to test and examine my encounter by exploring the painting concerned, and the background to its creation.

Holbein produced wonderful portraits, which convey profound characterisation and strong physical presence. His unique talents were universally recognised, and eventually resulted in his becoming “King’s Painter” for King Henry VIII in England. At this time there was no real history of portraiture in England, and so Holbein seems to have inaugurated a tradition which has lasted ever since. This famous painting - “The Ambassadors” - widely regarded as one of the supreme examples of Renaissance art, exhibits a strange sense of mystery which has long puzzled art historians, fascinated the public, and provoked much speculation. As I am not a scholar or art historian, I cannot really elucidate exactly what it was intended to convey. But having a basic familiarity with Christian thought, and psychological, astrological and hermetic principles, and the impression that these are really the languages spoken by this painting, I feel compelled to try to decipher it according to these themes.

Introduction

The painting was regarded by Holbein himself as one of his most important, as indicated by the full and uncharacteristically prominent signature in the left-hand corner on the floor.¹ It was commissioned and probably designed by Jean de Dinteville, the left-hand figure in the painting, who arrived in London in January 1533 as French ambassador to the court of King Henry VIII. He was a moderate man, sympathetic to the reform of the Church which many people were calling for during the Reformation. Once in

England,² he found himself in a very difficult position, trying to maintain good relations between Henry, who was defying the Pope, and Francis who, as a good Catholic, supported Rome. By the time de Dinteville left in November, with this painting in his luggage, he had witnessed an extraordinary year in England’s history, during which Anne Boleyn had married Henry, been crowned Queen, and had borne a daughter, the future Elizabeth I. Most crucially of all, these events had caused a rupture with Rome and the Catholic Church, and would soon lead to the formation of an independent and Protestant Church of England. In this way England was drawn into the Protestant Reformation which had already overtaken Germany and Switzerland, and which Holbein would himself have witnessed as a German native, whose wife and children were based in Switzerland.

In May 1533, de Dinteville was secretly visited in London for a few weeks by his friend George de Selve, the Bishop of Lavaur, and the right-hand figure in the painting. He was probably conveying advice on the difficult problem of the recognition of Anne Boleyn. This idea is speculative, as little evidence is available on the visit, which may have been known only to Francis. He did not want the French Church hierarchy to hear of it as it would look as if he was encouraging the heretical Henry, and insulting Rome. Like his friend, de Selve always remained Catholic and yet was sympathetic to Protestant criticism of the Catholic Church. He had long hoped that internal reform of the Church and moderation on the part of its critics might avoid Europe being split into two. At the Diet of Speyer of 1529 concerned with the crisis, during which the term “Protestant” was first adopted, he drafted a speech:

“Having, furthermore, long felt within myself exceeding pain at the calamity of the times and an extreme desire to see it remedied...”



Simon Chedzey has an MA in Medical Sciences from Cambridge University, and studied Clinical Medicine at Oxford. He has studied and worked with computing, travelled extensively, and taught himself Psychological Astrology, while also caring for a family member. He has a particular interest in geographical and cultural variation.

1 Exhibition catalogue: *Making and Meaning, Holbein’s “Ambassadors”* by Susan Foister, Ashok Roy and Martin Wyld. National Gallery Publications Ltd, London 1997

2 *Hans Holbein – Portrait of an Unknown Man* by Derek Wilson. Weidenfeld & Nicolson 1996 p. 193-201

The Reformation

Between 1503 and 1517, Pluto passed through Sagittarius³ as it is doing again now, ruthlessly eliminating outworn and redundant ideas in the sphere of religion, and changing ideas about the image of God. During this period, Luther developed his religious ideas, and just as Pluto moved into Capricorn he nailed his critical *Ninety-Five Theses* to the door of the church at Wittenburg. In essence, he proposed that the Catholic Church, which had been the only form of Christianity practised in Western Europe for well over a millennium, had become corrupt, and could no longer fulfil its mission of acting as intermediary between God and man. All over Western Europe, people became split into two camps over this widely perceived problem. Traditionalists supported thorough reform of the Church, while others felt the whole structure was beyond redemption and the only solution was a whole new system - Protestantism - which proposed direct personal relationship with the Almighty. When, in 1524, all the known planets (and Neptune also) aligned in Pisces, it was widely expected that the world would end in flood, but instead Luther's Protestant Reformation swept across the continent shortly after. To many Catholics, this must have seemed to be the end of the world, while to Protestants it must have seemed to be its rebirth.

Jean De Dinteville's Experiences in England

In October 1532, Henry VIII, desperate to divorce Catherine of Aragon - who had been unable to produce a male heir - and marry Anne Boleyn, had travelled abroad to meet Francis, the French King. He needed an ally to further his cause with Pope Clement VII, and Francis agreed to take on this role. Francis chose de Dinteville, who had once served as cupbearer to his children, to become ambassador for a second time at Henry's court, and mediate the increased diplomatic traffic between London and Paris. However, on 25th January 1533, Henry secretly married Anne. In May, his marriage to Catherine was finally annulled, and his marriage to Anne declared valid by Cranmer, the new Archbishop of Canterbury. Events were very rushed, as Anne was already pregnant, and had not yet been crowned Queen. On 1st June her coronation took place in Westminster Abbey, which de Dinteville, as French ambassador, attended.

From his letters, it appears that de Dinteville found Henry very difficult; he left one audience trembling, saying that he had never seen him so angry. He was in a tricky position, trying to preserve the relationship between two kings who were pulling in opposite directions. Henry

was openly defying Rome, and the French clergy were trying to persuade Francis to take sides with the Pope against him. In April - the same month the painting was apparently begun - Parliament had passed the Act of Restraint of Appeals, which put an end to the Pope's judicial power in England, and prevented Catherine passing the problems on to him. Henry still hoped for some kind of understanding with Rome, and that Francis would help him achieve this. Not surprisingly perhaps, he was excommunicated instead. Francis had become alarmed by the events in England, worrying over the possible effects on his relationship with Rome, and the possible triumph of Protestantism in France and Europe as a whole. Like Henry, he regarded himself as an orthodox Catholic, but did not have a personal agenda which conflicted with Rome, and was concerned to keep France Catholic.

After a very difficult year, de Dinteville was anxious to return home, but had first - as Francis was to be the godfather by proxy - to await the birth and christening of Anne's child, the future Queen Elizabeth, which occurred on 7th September.

Content

A great deal of work has recently been carried out on the painting. Extensive cleaning and restoration began in January 1993, a major exhibition devoted exclusively to it opened at the National Gallery (London) in 1997, and more investigation has been carried out on the symbolism which it contains, in particular by John North, an expert in medieval philosophy and astrology.⁴

The two men stand on a red or pink coloured patterned floor, which probably represents the "lower" world of matter and instinct, which we would now also associate with the ego and its reality function. It is made up of circles and squares of a type known as "Cosmati" work⁵ (named after a leading Italian marbling family, called Cosmatus, who created these pavements), a 13th century example of which survives in Westminster Abbey. Such designs appear to represent the material world (squares) reflecting the invisible or archetypal world (circles) as a kind of mandala or symbol of wholeness. They portray the concept of the four elements and their macrocosmic source, as well as their expression in the microcosmic man and nature. A six-pointed star is found in the centre of this patterned floor, which probably represents the hermetic theme of "As Above so Below", and the Creation. A black lute case also lies upside down on the floor. The two men stand on either side of a double-tiered table, which holds instruments for celestial

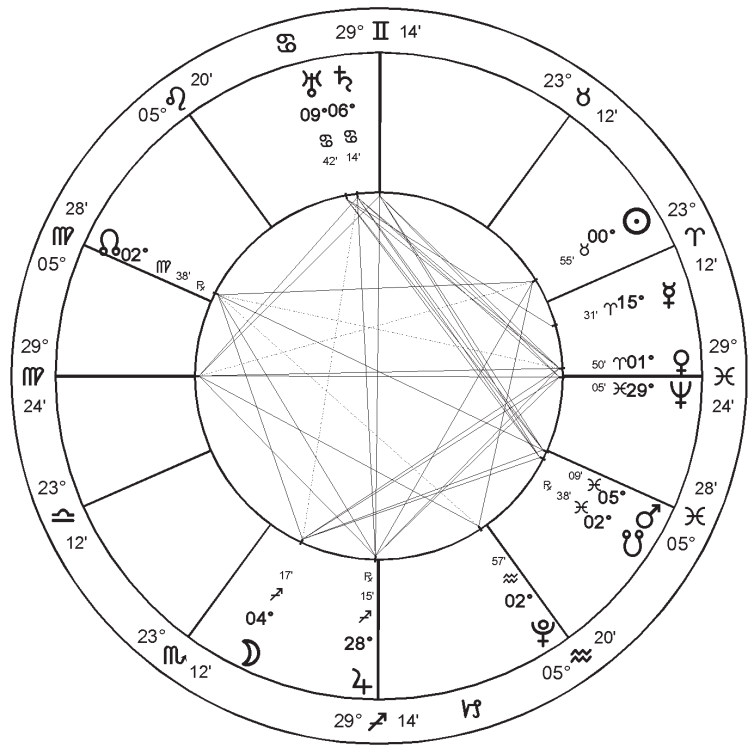
3 Carter Memorial Lecture by Liz Greene: *Fear, Fundamentalism, and the Changing Face of God.*

4 See Sunday Times article: 9th August 1998, News p8 - from unpublished book *The Ambassador's Secret* by John North

5 *Patterns of Thought, The Hidden Meaning of the Great Pavement of Westminster Abbey* by Richard Foster. Jonathan Cape, London 1991

observation on the top shelf. These instruments were probably supplied by Henry's astronomer/astrologer, Nicholas Kratzer, who was also a friend of Holbein's. Although there is some controversy over this, the cylindrical shepherd's dial on the left of this shelf is thought to show a date and time of 11th April 1533 - (Good Friday) - at 4pm; the time when Christ is thought to have died. The other instruments here appear to be miscalibrated, indicating imbalance on the celestial level. The carpet on this shelf contains swastikas, representing the turning of the heavens and the unfolding of fate through the planetary cycles. On the lower shelf we see a terrestrial globe showing the newly discovered eastern coast of the New World, and - unlike other such globes of the period - also shows de Dinteville's home of Polisy, thereby highlighting his significance. Other objects include a mathematics book opened with a set square at "Division", a pair of dividers, and a Lutheran hymnal opened at "Come Holy Spirit" and the Ten Commandments (not normally found next to each other). We also find a lute with a broken string (a common symbol of disharmony at the time) and an open box of flutes on this shelf. We might speculate that these lower shelf objects describe a state of division and conflict in the elemental worlds of earth (globe), water (flutes and lute), air (mathematics book), and fire (hymnal). Overall, the objects on the two shelves seem to be implying that things are out of synchrony, on both terrestrial and celestial levels. Behind the men and table is a green damask curtain turned back in the top-left corner partially revealing a silver crucifix. This curtain probably represents the "upper" world of God and the spiritual world, which we would now associate with the realm of the archetypes. Red and green are complementary colours, and so the pink floor is contrasted with the green curtain.

Jean de Dinteville himself is sumptuously dressed as a regal figure in clothes of velvet, satin and lynx, and wears a medallion of the Order of St. Michael on his chest, a skull design on his cap, and his elaborate dagger shows his age to be 29 years. The figure of George de Selve, dressed as a religious figure in a brown damask robe, leans on a book which shows his age to be 25 years. The strangest part of the painting is the distorted (anamorphic) skull in front of the men, which comes into focus like a holographic image when the picture is viewed from the right hand side, when it appears to lie in front of de Dinteville. The skull was a common feature in art of the period, representing mortality and the brevity of life.



Astrological Imagery

John North has also shown that when the time and date mentioned above - (Good Friday, 11th April 1533 at 4pm) - are drawn up as an astrological chart for London, Saturn is found in the 10th house opposite Jupiter at the IC. Both planets form a square aspect with the horizon (thus forming the shape of a crucifix). This is a similar pattern to a chart he plotted for Holbein's title page illustration for Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, which showed a date for Good Friday 1400, suggesting the same themes of crucifixion and mortality. In addition, North showed that when the painting is viewed from the right-hand side, so that the skull is seen in correct perspective, the silver crucifix and de Dinteville's right eye are seen to be in line at an angle of 27° above the horizontal. In this way de Dinteville and the Crucifixion are linked symbolically. From the same position the skull is seen at a similar angle of 27° but below the horizontal, repeating the mortality theme. The angle of 27° was also that of the Sun above the horizon in London at 4pm on Good Friday 1533.

The painting therefore seems to show Good Friday symbolism as a central theme. I think however, that this theme can be extended. The significance of de Dinteville's age of 29 years is suggestive to astrologers as usually being the time of the first Saturn Return (and as the outermost known planet at the time, Saturn then carried attributes we now associate with Pluto). In fact, when we examine de Dinteville's birthchart, we will see that he was not experiencing a Saturn Return at this time, but many transits to his natal Sun (including Saturn) in the

11th April 1533
4pm
London
Geocentric
Tropical
True Node

form of a t-square which made a cross design with his natal Sun. The effect overall of his many transits, and his own psychology, seems to have caused him to identify with his own Saturn. It seems that Holbein is alluding to a Saturnian theme rather than the Saturn Return itself.

Astrologers will also notice the Geminian duality in this picture - terrestrial and celestial - reflected by the two men with their clothing pronouncing their different worldly and religious roles, and the two shelves with their mostly dysfunctional celestial and terrestrial objects describing disharmony and conflict and the need for resolution. The Geminian theme also seems to be suggested by the composite figure of table and men resembling the symbol for Gemini itself - this is actually what initially struck me about this painting, causing me to look at it in more depth. The two men both stand with one foot within the large square on the floor and one within a circle outside it. This may hint at a dual level of interpretation - that the men are both real (square) and symbolic (circle) ambassadors, representing a foreign government or king in the world (Francis), and also one beyond it.

It seems that the architect of the painting (probably de Dinteville) is linking Christ's Crucifixion (and probably Judas' betrayal of Jesus) with the situation of de Dinteville. We are apparently being told that the Gemini myth - of the hostile brothers, and the attempt of one to destroy the other - is common to both situations.

The Perspective of Jean de Dinteville

My impression is that the painting is at heart a portrayal of de Dinteville's own perspective on, and response to, the dawning (English) Protestant Reformation of the time and his own involvement in it. It portrays a critical sub-text underlying the ostensible outer conflict between Henry and Francis. As we have seen, Henry had persuaded Francis to help him sway the Pope in his favour over the issue of divorcing Catherine of Aragon (so that he might still produce a male heir with someone else). Francis then chose the moderate and tolerant de Dinteville to become French ambassador to England for a second time, in order to function as go-between in this process. In April - when the painting was apparently begun - Parliament ended the Pope's authority in "this realm of England", shortly before de Selve was expected to arrive (in May) with communications concerning the recognition of the three-months-pregnant Anne. As Francis later became godfather to Anne's child, the future Elizabeth I, with de Dinteville representing him at the christening, we can see the direction

diplomacy ultimately took. I suspect de Dinteville anticipated this, and that it was also realised with de Selve's arrival in England.

De Dinteville seems to have imagined his situation as an enactment of the Geminian myth, and similar to the Christian story - with de Selve's communication perhaps showing that Francis was actually secretly supporting Henry (with his worldly dynastic concerns) by recognising Anne, and therefore in effect going against the Pope. As De Dinteville seems to have identified with the Pope, the established Church, and ultimately Christ, his friend de Selve is therefore represented as the Geminian traitor or shadow. This is because he (or rather Francis, whom he represents) has gone over to the "other" side (to Henry), just as Judas betrayed Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane. This, of course, led to the Crucifixion. De Selve is thus the other "ambassador" - connected with the other Son of God. The painting therefore shows what the transformation of the dominant religious structures during the Reformation really involved, and this was mirrored by de Dinteville's individual experience.

If this interpretation is correct, we can understand the presence on the table of the Lutheran hymnal containing the strange pairing of the Ten Commandments and the hymn "Come Holy Spirit" (usually sung at Pentecost.) We can also see why the terrestrial globe highlights de Dinteville's home of Polisy and also shows the coast of the recently discovered New World, and why the time of Christ's death on Good Friday of that year (1533) is shown on the wayfarer's dial on the top shelf. These factors point to an imminent enactment of a new crucifixion - on some level - relating to de Dinteville and the Protestant Reformation, and the New World to come, borne out of this ordeal. The old law is going to be replaced by a new one. In visualising his experience in archetypal as well as personal terms de Dinteville is, perhaps, becoming involved in what is now known as the individuation process, and beginning to encounter his own substance or psyche (even if unbeknownst to him).

The Christian Story

The painting shows us the sequence of events in the Geminian myth, and relates these from the time when it is beginning to be enacted in a Christian context - with Christ's terrible realisation in the Garden of Gethsemane of his inevitable encounter with betrayal and death. Hence perhaps the very direct, and apprehensive - or even frightened - underlying expression in de Dinteville's eyes. He also looks as if he is breaking into a sweat. His medallion of St. Michael (whose abode is



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the Sun) and his prominent dagger, proclaim him to be a solar and martial hero, probably about to have some kind of encounter with betrayal and earthly mortality, represented respectively by de Selve and the anamorphic skull (when brought into focus).

Both the dress and demeanour of the two men are telling here. De Dinteville stands in an open yet vulnerable way, while his worldly clothing with outer colours of black and white describe an encounter with death, albeit one illuminated with insight. But underneath these clothes he wears red and white, the colours of passion and life, and of purity and understanding - representing the new life to come after his encounter. De Selve is dressed in brown, an earth colour associated with the earthly devil of Christianity, and his stance and manner are closed and secretive. In contrast to his friend, de Selve also seems to be portrayed as a cardboard figure rather than a real person. This may be partly a consequence of his short stay in England (arriving after the painting was begun and therefore making it difficult for Holbein to portray him). It may also suggest his representing an urge or drive, rather than something human in itself.

The viewer is forced to move to the right - towards de Selve - to bring the skull into focus. (One can do this even with a small copy of the painting.) This also brings the encounter with betrayal and subsequent mortality into actuality. Thus we become participants in the drama as well as onlookers, experiencing it ourselves through de Dinteville, and perhaps representing the collective dimension of the shadow (de Selve) as did the "hostile multitude" - the crowd who shouted, "Crucify him!" Thus he dies for us each time we look at the painting in this way, as we trigger its dynamic action.

The black lute case lying upside down beneath the table describes the death of the physical body as the container for the ability to "make music". As it lies over the six-pointed star it describes the meeting of heaven and earth - an alchemical *coniunctio* - at the moment of Christ's death, but diagonally pointing towards the crucifix it also implies new life or resurrection to follow.

The silver crucifix in the top-left corner suggests the Resurrection and Ascension of Christ. As the green curtain is partly turned back to reveal the crucifix, there is a suggestion that these events are largely invisible processes, just as Christ was not recognised by many who knew him after the Resurrection. The silver colour - associated with the Moon and Mercury - describes the purity of the resurrected body,

while the fact that we can only see half of it shows that it is also being taken out of our world, and into God's world. These events were followed by Pentecost, which marked the birth of the Church following the descent of the Holy Spirit, whose colour is green - as is the colour of the damask curtain. Thus a new cycle begins, and in Catholic theology the earthly fate of the Church is thought to follow the earthly fate of Christ himself, thus moving towards a death when its task is fulfilled.

The painting may therefore be (to some extent unintentionally) indicating a process of cyclical incarnation of the Holy Spirit. It effectively links the Crucifixion and the Protestant Reformation (and the Saturnian experience of de Dinteville), as variations on the same Geminian theme. This echoes and prefigures Jung's idea of the continuous incarnation of the Holy Spirit as an evolutionary, sequential and cyclical process. This is exemplified by the change from collective religious experience (as in the group relationship of ancient Israel to God), to one of an individual man's experience of God (as with Job, and later Christ). Jung felt that following the period of the Church mediating the relationship between man and God, direct experience of God (or the unconscious Self - the archetype of wholeness within the psyche) would arise in individuals.

A Psychological Perspective

Understood psychologically, as is appropriate in our own time, the Gemini myth or process involves an encounter by the "light" twin with his "dark" brother, his enemy and shadow, representing those aspects of his nature of which he is unconscious. This leads to a descent into the unconscious, which is experienced by the ego as a kind of death. Thus the mythic process associated with Gemini can be taken as a kind of paradigm for an archetypal encounter of the ego with the shadow (usually symbolised by Saturn, representing unconscious contents), and subsequently the unconscious (or the Self). In the painting, therefore, de Dinteville represents the worldly earthbound human ego while de Selve represents the shadow, this being archetypal and representing unconscious components rather than something human in itself. Perhaps this relates to his lack of solidity as a character, in contrast to de Dinteville. As Edward Edinger describes these events in relation to Christ's life:

"The Ego must be relativised to make room for the Self. The totality of the Self brings with it the shadow, encounter with which is always a painful humiliation... The Crucifixion pictures the juxtaposition of opposites. It is the moment of intersection between the human and the divine. Ego and Self are superimposed. The human figure representing

the Ego is nailed to the mandala-cross representing the Self."⁶

Perhaps de Dinteville was experiencing an encounter with his shadow (usually represented by Saturn) and his unconscious. This was enacted in his outer life, and it probably mirrored an inner situation (although to what extent he was aware of having an inner life, or a psyche, I do not know). That he was having a difficult time is shown in his letters to his brother:

"I am the most melancholy, weary and wearisome ambassador that ever was seen." (23rd May)

"I am, and have been, very weary and wearisome." (4th June)

As Edinger interprets such feelings in the Christian context:

*"The Gethsemane experience is plagued by sleepiness... The emphasis on wakefulness indicates that the issue at stake is consciousness. Christ is going through... a contest or conflict between flesh and spirit. The message seems to be that to survive the conflict between the opposites one must either sleep or pray. As a psychological procedure prayer corresponds to active imagination, whereby one seeks to bring into visibility the psychic image or fantasy that lies behind the conflict of affects. The emerging image often has a redeeming or transforming effect which reconciles the conflicting opposites."*⁷

And:

*"In the suffering of Gethsemane the conflict between body and spirit is reconciled in the psyche, the medium that unites them".*⁸

Thus, the Gemini symbol lies in the middle ground between the curtain and the floor.

The Hermetism of Marsilio Ficino

This approach to images is echoed in the philosophy of Marsilio Ficino. He developed the hermetic idea that in the middle ground, where the two worlds - celestial and terrestrial - meet, an image or symbol can alter or transform the planetary fate experienced by man on the material level. Freedom can therefore be found in the midst of fate. In this way the painting shows not only the Christian or Geminian myth enacted in different contexts, but also places it as an image or symbol in the central location of the soul. Here it can change the way a situation is perceived and dealt with. It appears that in designing the painting de Dinteville was trying to make sense of his experience - as we do nowadays using active imagination and symbolism - by relating it to the

Christian story, seen with a Geminian perspective.

By the early 16th century, Ficino's ideas had spread all over Europe through academies set up to teach and disseminate them, and educated people at court may have been aware of them. For instance, Thomas Linacre, who became Court Physician to Henry VIII and also founded the Royal College of Physicians, was a friend of Manutius who presided over the Venetian Academy.⁹ He also tutored Sir Thomas More and Erasmus, both of whom Holbein was on familiar terms with, the former through having painted his family portraits.

At this time, the gods were still experienced "outside" and so it was sometimes thought desirable to orientate them as required. In this way Ficino felt that fate could be altered by channelling planetary influence through a magical talisman, made either physically or in the imagination, having appropriate correspondances with the planets, and being composed of mythic or archetypal images. This would draw down the ordered substance of the cosmos corresponding to the image, which would have a direct effect on the material world of the observer or wearer of the image, as the material world depends on, and reflects, the upper world. For instance, if one wanted to obtain intellectual gifts from Mercury, one should make his image on tin or silver, with the sign of Virgo and characters of Virgo and Mercury. Similarly to obtain long life, one would make an image of Saturn. Ficino also felt that if the material forms in the world have degenerated, they could be reformed or reconstituted by the use of an appropriate talisman to draw down the image on which they depend. As he puts it:

*"Thus, whenever it degenerates from its own form, it can be formed again by this middle thing next to it and through this middle thing it easily reforms."*¹⁰

My impression is that this sentence forms part of the hermetic inspiration behind the design and creation of this painting. De Dinteville is trying to create a talisman to counteract his "melancholy" and feelings of being "weary and wearisome" and help him through his ordeal.

A Renaissance Talisman

Ficino's proposal seems to be part of the hermetic reason for the portrayal of the Gemini symbol - to draw down Mercurial influence which would also counteract the Saturnian role de Dinteville was identifying with in this context. In addition, by forcing the observer to move physically to the right, to bring the

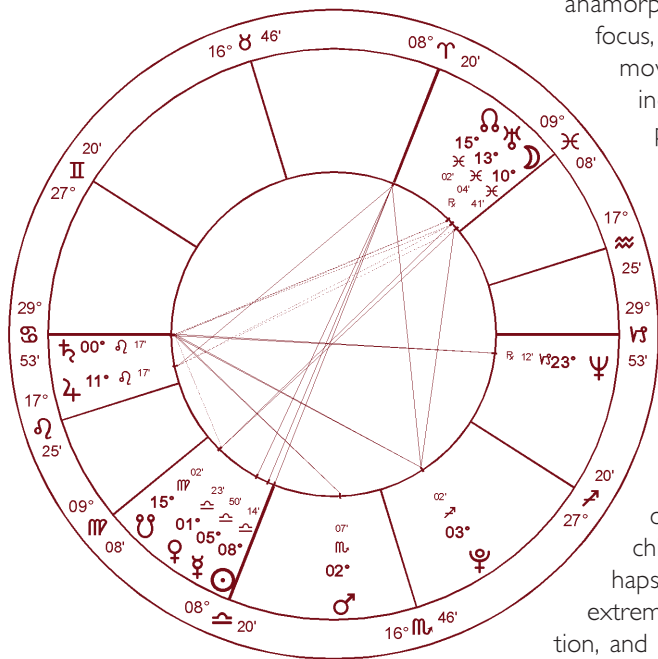
6 *A Jungian Commentary on the Life of Christ* by Edward F. Edinger. Inner City Books 1987 p. 91

7 *Ibid.*, p. 73

8 *Ibid.*, p. 76

9 *The Elixir and the Stone* by Michael Baigent & Richard Leigh. Published by Viking, Penguin Group p. 122, 123, 130, 131

10 *The Book of Life* by Marsilio Ficino (1489). Published by Spring Publications Inc. Book III p. 87



Jean de Dinteville
 Troyes, France
 21 Sept. 1504 11.50pm
 (speculative time)
 Geocentric
 Tropical
 True Node

Ficino thought that Saturn must not be avoided, but that one also needed to guard against Saturnian melancholy, and to that extent I think his talismans were anti-Saturnian. Francis Yates felt that Botticelli's "Primavera" and "Birth of Venus" were talismans of Venus, designed to draw down Venusian influences to the observer, and protect against Saturnian ones. My impression is that Holbein's painting differs in having being designed in part to serve a restorative function. We now need to look at de Dinteville's birthchart in order to understand why he should have found himself in this position.

Jean de Dinteville's Birthchart and Transits

De Dinteville's birthchart, for which I only know the date (21st September 1504), but not the time or place, shows the Sun in Libra in conjunction with Mercury and Venus in the same sign, and sextile Jupiter, Saturn and Chiron in Leo, and Pluto in Sagittarius. Pluto is also trine Saturn, Jupiter and Chiron. (He would have seen Sun, Mercury and Venus sextile Jupiter and Saturn.) Saturn - and to some extent Jupiter - link this configuration to another by forming a t-square with Neptune in Capricorn (which Saturn disposes) and Mars in Scorpio. (De Dinteville would have seen this as Saturn and Jupiter in Leo square to Mars in Scorpio.) These configurations, which also relate to the father image, describe a very diplomatic and thoughtful man, with a deep and philosophical nature, and at the same time a need to be actively involved in the transformation of imaginative or religious structures. In addition, Uranus is isolated in Pisces, quincunx Jupiter, and possibly in conjunction with the Moon. The fiery and airy elemental balance of

anamorphic skull into visual focus, the Mercurial need for movement and flow is incorporated into the painting. Mercury is thus drawn into the painting as a magical presence, to be imparted to the observer (de Dinteville). It seems that de Dinteville's mental functioning - clear thinking, nerves, state of mind, mood, powers of communication, psychic balance, sanity perhaps - must have been extremely taxed by his situation, and in need of support or regeneration.

the chart suggests he was an intuitive thinker at heart. De Dinteville of course would not have known of the planets beyond Saturn - but here they broaden the situation rather than fundamentally change it.

In April of 1533, he experienced a great concentration of transiting inner, social, and outer planets which formed a t-cross to his natal Sun, and therefore a cross design with it, as well as triggering the natal Mars, Saturn, Neptune t-square. He would have been aware of the transiting t-square configuration (as the known planets - transiting Venus, Jupiter and Saturn were in t-square formation, while Mercury and Saturn were in square). This cross is reminiscent of the crucifixion theme, with the promise of new life after. Unknown to de Dinteville, this t-square also involved transiting Neptune and Chiron in Aries, and Uranus in Cancer. In addition, Pluto, transiting in Aquarius, was triggering the whole natal Sun configuration; it was trine to his Sun, sextile its own natal position, and conjunct natal Neptune, opposite natal Saturn, Jupiter and Chiron in Leo, and square Mars. He was thus experiencing an extraordinary battery of planetary assaults - transiting Mercury, Venus, Jupiter, Saturn, Chiron and all the outer planets - to his natal Sun configuration in Libra, and transiting Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune and Pluto to his natal Mars, Saturn, and Neptune t-square.

It seems that these transits forced de Dinteville to profoundly experience these two natal configurations and that, to some extent, they were split and projected onto Francis and Henry respectively. Francis seems to have played the Sun, Mercury, Venus configuration in Libra (balancing Henry and the Pope), and Henry the Mars, Saturn and Neptune t-square (breaking away from Rome). De Dinteville himself ended up primarily with the natal Saturn, Jupiter and Chiron in Leo (the Pope, Christ, and the individual scapegoat), which links the other two configurations together by aspect. Liz Greene has explored the theme of triangles¹¹ in illuminating depth, and this is what we appear to have here - a drama between the betrayed (de Dinteville), the betrayer (Francis), and the instrument of betrayal (Henry). Thus de Dinteville's experiences are ultimately a reflection and discovery of his own nature, and probably to some extent a repetition of Oedipal themes experienced early in his life in relation to his father. This man seems to have been experienced as a person with two sides - diplomatic, kindly and philosophical, but also perhaps competitive, and even destructive or cruel.

¹¹ Apollon 2 April 1999
 'The Eternal Triangle' Liz Greene. p. 25-39

My impression is that the painting can also be seen as a representation of the natal Saturn, Mars and Neptune t-square. In this case de Selve as the Saturnian religious figure would be Neptune in Capricorn (although de Dinteville was not aware of Neptune), the skull would be Mars in Scorpio (Mars ruling the head, and needing to be actively brought into focus, and Scorpio representing transformation or death). De Dinteville, as the regal Saturnian (29-year-old) man, with his medallion of St. Michael (Leo) is therefore Saturn (and Jupiter and Chiron) in Leo. Appropriately for a work of art, at the time the painting was created the transiting Sun in Taurus made a grand cross out of this t-square (as did transiting Pluto). I think this idea supports the proposition that de Dinteville himself designed the painting. He seems to have been very personally identified with the Saturnian role, almost to the exclusion of all others, and I wonder if we can therefore speculate that natal Saturn was angular, and probably in conjunction with his Ascendant (which was perhaps at the end of Cancer.) I think such a chart also fits with his life and the events around him, and have therefore tentatively drawn it up for examination. The A*C*G for this chart has the Saturn/Ascendant line exactly through London, crossing the Pluto trine MC line, also through London. The related progressed chart for January 1st 2000 shows progressed Saturn at 11° of Leo, exactly conjunct natal Jupiter. (My natal Uranus, triggered by transiting Uranus at the time I encountered the painting, is also in conjunction with de Dinteville's Saturn). Marsilio Ficino had Saturn conjunct the Ascendant natively, and during the Renaissance both Saturn and the Ascendant seem to have been regarded as particularly important. The potential of Saturn in Leo is to discover a real sense of personal authenticity, and it is possible that in spite of - or because of - his situation, de Dinteville was forced to achieve this in some way. I think he looked at the square of Mars in Scorpio to Saturn and Jupiter in Leo, and realised he must undergo a death and rebirth of himself as a person, and this is what the painting portrays - according to his Sun configuration's artistic and philosophical nature.

The Charts of "The Ambassadors" and Jean de Dinteville

Talismans must be made at the right time (*kairos*), when the astrological factors are appropriate, and we have apparently been provided with this time on the shepherd's dial. There is some controversy here, but John North suggests a time and date of 4pm on Friday 11th April 1533 (Good Friday). This pairing of an astrological date and the exactly appropriate Christian festival and time of day, is

also consistent with the combination of Christian and hermetic themes which we have already explored.

Nicholas Campion has commented on this chart, which shows Saturn in detriment in Cancer in the 10th house, opposite Jupiter in dignity in Sagittarius at the IC:

*"It is the struggle between Saturn and Jupiter, showing the triumph of death but that death was about to be overthrown."*¹²

The Mercurial and healing function of the painting is suggested by the Ascendant in Virgo, with its ruler Mercury (also ruling the Gemini Midheaven - the portrayal of the "twins") in the 7th house (and conjunct Chiron, although obviously de Dinteville would not have known this). Its existence and purpose are therefore directed to another. This other was de Dinteville, since this Mercury opposes his natal Sun, which conjuncts his Mercury and Venus, all three of which are in conjunction with the Ascendant of this chart. Thus, he is personally identified with the painting, and healed by its Mercurial component. As far as I am aware, at this time the Ascendant was considered especially important, sometimes more so than the Sun. By clever timing, angularity of de Dinteville's Sun, Mercury, Venus and the transiting t-square to it has been achieved so as to emphasise benign influences, and transmit these to de Dinteville. Jupiter (the greater benefic) is strong (although retrograde) in its own sign of Sagittarius and exactly conjunct the IC, and exactly in square and opposition to the other angles of the chart. Venus (the lesser benefic) is similarly conjunct an angle - the Descendant - and in square to Jupiter (and conjunct Neptune), although it is also in its fall in Aries. It opposes de Dinteville's Sun, Mercury and Venus - thereby transmitting happiness and bodily strength to him. The Sun in Taurus is also in a stationary retrograde trine to Jupiter - thus the traditional beneficial factors of Sun, Venus, and Jupiter are all highlighted. Meanwhile, Saturn is conjunct the Midheaven, but with a loose orb, so that its effect is reduced while those of Venus and Jupiter are emphasised. The Sun also squares de Dinteville's Saturn in Leo, and opposes his Mars in Scorpio - stimulating his resistance and fighting spirit. We also need to consider the Moon, in Jupiter's sign of Sagittarius. Its last aspect in the painting's chart is a trine to Venus in Aries at the Descendant, and its next in de Dinteville's chart is a sextile to Mercury in Libra - hopefully the painting will settle his mind and give him happier thoughts.

I think this astrological analysis supports the proposition that the painting is a Mercurial tal-

¹² See *Sunday Times* article (1) above.

isman to heal de Dinteville, as well as a means for him to conceptualise his experience.

If the painting is a talisman, begun at the time the chart is drawn up for, then the chart is its birthchart. Support for this interpretation comes in two forms. In 1900 Mary Hervey published a book on the painting, which confirmed the identities of the two men in the painting, as these had been unknown. She had found an inventory dating from 1653, when the painting was moved by the family's descendants from the family chateau of Polisy to Paris, and probably taken from there to southwest France. This document identified the two men and the original location of the painting as Polisy. The stationary retrograde Jupiter in Sagittarius in the chart of the painting would have stationed direct about 120 years after the painting was created. This would have been sometime around 1653. In 1900, Saturn was transiting back and forth over the last degrees of Sagittarius (conjunct this Jupiter), as was transiting Chiron. In December 1900 and January 1901, transiting Jupiter joined them. These planets were themselves opposite transiting Neptune in the last decanate of Gemini.

Further evidence for this chart comes particularly from the secondary progressed chart drawn up for the present time showing a striking stellium of progressed planets (and asteroids). This stellium involves progressed Mercury (the Ascendant and Midheaven ruler) conjunct progressed Sun, progressed Saturn, and progressed Node, all gathered around the radical 11th house cusp (and in the progressed 8th house) in Leo. It generally opposes progressed Pluto and progressed Jupiter. In the mid-1990's transiting Saturn, Uranus and Pluto aspected this configuration, as Jupiter, Neptune, Pluto and Chiron are doing now. These transits and progressions could perhaps be interpreted as describing the recent extensive cleaning, repair and restoration of the picture (revealing previously unseen detail), its exposure to the public in an exhibition devoted exclusively to it, and also the work done to reveal the painting's underlying meanings. The transits and progressions appear to suggest a time when things are coming to a head. I think the evidence that this chart is the right one for the painting is convincing.

Summary

Holbein's extraordinary painting shows us an individual Catholic perspective on the events in England in 1533, as the last waves of the great planetary alignment in Pisces of 1524 reached its shores, and Henry, the King of England, began to break away from the Catholic Church. Jean de Dinteville, the French ambas-

sador at the cutting edge of these events who also designed the painting, appears to have personally identified with, and mirrored, the transformation which the religious structures were undergoing, according to his own astrology and psychology, his circumstances, and his religious orientation.

De Dinteville's identification with Saturn, captured in the painting, perhaps lays bare the inner meaning and purpose of the planetary alignment in Pisces - the sign of the soul or psyche. These were related to a closer individual relation with God, and in psychological terms with one's own substance. Thus he seems to have embodied the shadow side, or inner quality of the collective developments of the time, and his ordeal was not simply a re-enactment of underlying conflicts. In this way, by designing the painting according to his own understanding, he perhaps developed a more individual psychological awareness. The sophistication of his mind, and the creation of Holbein's unique painting which recorded his experience, suggest that there was an artistic and even spiritual motivation or purpose behind it. Looking at the astrological chart belonging to the painting, I wonder whether it tells a similar story to Jung's interpretation of the Book of Job.¹³

At the same time, however - and in complete contrast to its psychological perspective - the painting also shows us the dread and fear of astrologers in relation to this planetary alignment falling in the double-bodied sign of Pisces. They thought it would inaugurate the reign of the Antichrist (who is associated with the second Piscean fish) - which would last for 500 years - and, as Jung has shown, the vernal point was also moving into the second fish of Pisces during the Renaissance. Perhaps this also echoes the astrological chart. Thus we see the two "Ambassadors" of God, and we are caught in the middle between them.

The Present

The new era of the Antichrist begins to unfold when the observer moves to the right, in an attempt to bring the skull into focus. It culminates when the observer has moved approximately 90° - one quarter of a circle. I suspect this signifies one quarter of the Piscean age - in other words the 500 or so years from the time of the creation of the painting - which brings us into the present. The skull is therefore a kind of hourglass. My impression is that de Dinteville has projected the main action of the painting, and its talismanic function, onto our time. I think this is also suggested by the progressions and transits relating to the painting's chart, and that of de Dinteville. The painting's

¹³ *Answer to Job* by C.G. Jung. Ark Paperbacks 1984. See also (6) above, and *Encounter with the Self - A Jungian Commentary on William Blake's Illustrations to the Book of Job* by Edward F. Edinger. Inner City Books. 1986



progressed Saturn (the death theme) is currently at 0° Leo, and in conjunction with de Dinteville's natal Saturn (his sacrificial role). At the same time, his progressed Saturn is conjunct natal Jupiter (and Chiron), bringing release from his sacrificial role. Jupiter stations direct in December and passes through early Taurus again in early 2001. It is in square aspect to de Dinteville's natal Saturn and the painting's progressed Saturn (and progressed stellium), conjunct the painting's natal Sun, and trine its retrograde Jupiter at the IC in Sagittarius. The progressed Moon of the painting's chart is itself currently conjunct this Jupiter.

My impression is that this period is therefore when the crucifixion story, told by the painting, really takes place, but at the same time beneficial solar and Jupiterian influences come into effect, and new life is born. The painting is therefore not only a personal

record and talisman, but also one projected into the future (now) when its action is brought into being for the benefit of all.

Conclusion

With Pluto in Sagittarius, and the vernal point moving into Aquarius, we are experiencing a transformative period now, as people were during the Reformation. This marvellous painting may therefore help us to understand the collective and individual effects of this process, and the nature of our own lives.

I think we now have some idea of why Holbein's masterpiece is at the same time so disturbing and so mysterious. It portrays, and evokes in the observer, the mystery of psychic life, and when we look at it, we look into a mirror which reflects our own souls, and the soul of the world we live in.

Jean de Dinteville and Georges de Selve
 "The Ambassadors"
 Hans Holbein the Younger
 © National Gallery, London



Oedipus and the Sphinx
Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres
© National Gallery London