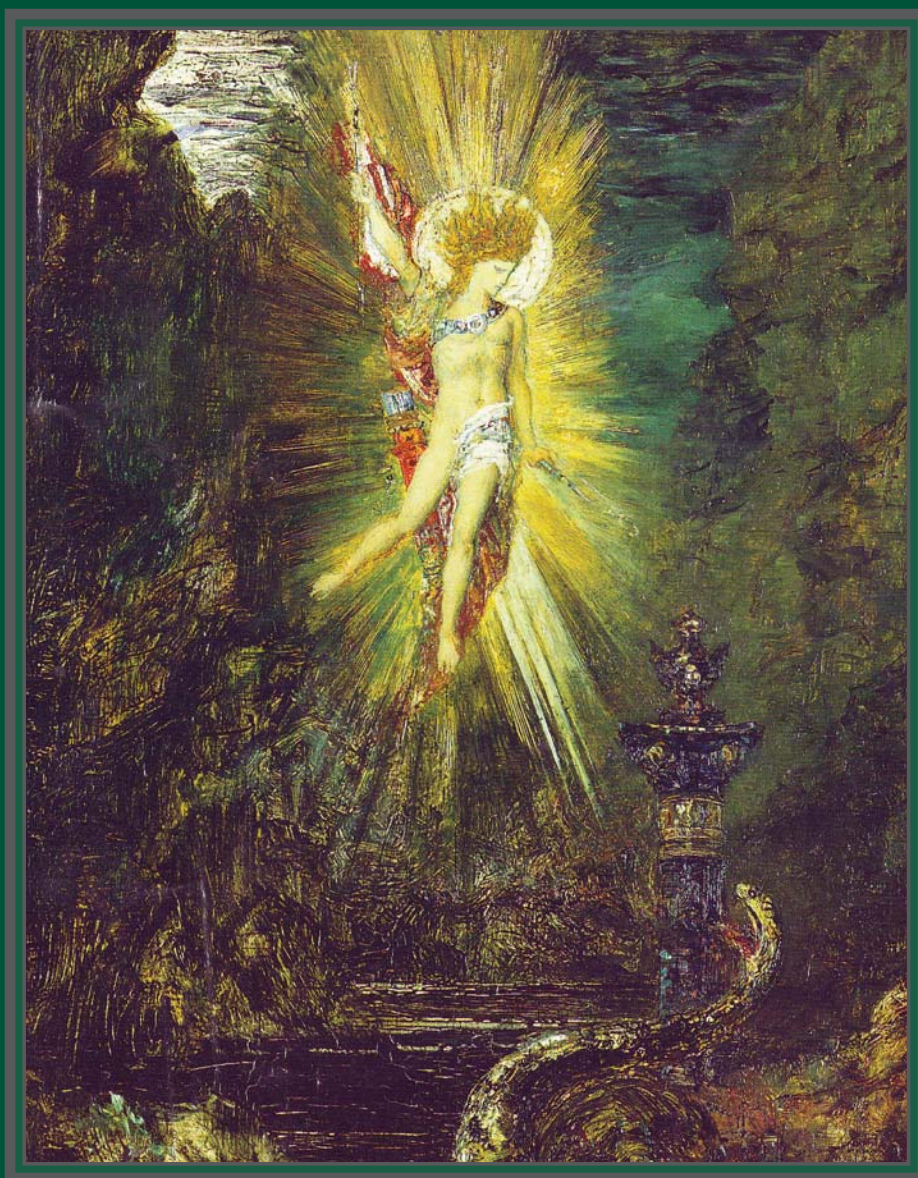
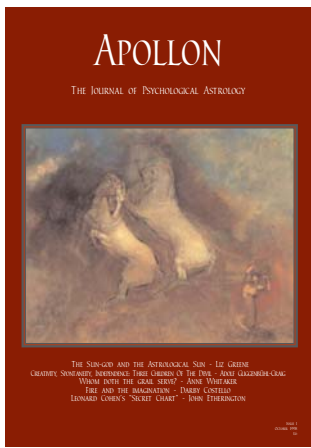


# APOLLON

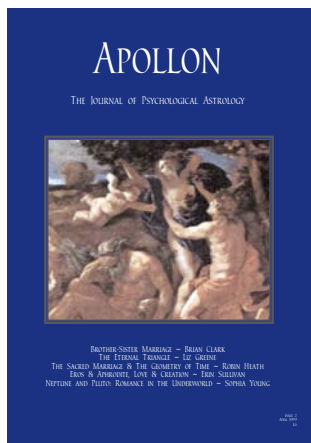
THE JOURNAL OF PSYCHOLOGICAL ASTROLOGY



WOUNDING & THE WILL TO LIVE ~ LIZ GREENE  
SPIRIT CHILD - MELANIE REINHART & ISABELLA KIRTON  
THE SATURN-URANUS DUET ~ CHARLES HARVEY  
WILDERNESS TRANSFORMATION TRAILS ~ MARILYN MCDOWELL & PHILOMENA BYRNE  
A FATAL VOCATION TO WITNESS ~ SUZI HARVEY



Issue One - Creativity



Issue Two - Relationships

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From the cover of Chiron and the Healing Journey by Melanie Reinhart

God grant me the serenity  
To accept the things I cannot change  
The courage to change the things I can  
And the wisdom to know the difference



Apollo Victorious over the Serpent Python

Gustave Moreau  
National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa

**Gustave Moreau** was born on the 6th April, 1826, in Paris - Sun conjunct Chiron and Venus, and Moon conjunct Pluto, all in Aries. Uranus and Neptune square the first three from Capricorn.

"I am dominated by one thing, an irresistible, burning attraction towards the abstract. The expression of human feelings and the passions of man certainly interest me deeply, but I am less concerned with expressing the motions of the soul and mind than to render visible, so to speak, the inner flashes of intuition which have something divine in their apparent insignificance and reveal magic, even divine horizons, when they are transposed into the marvellous effects of pure plastic art."

quoted by Jean Peladilhe, *Gustave Moreau*, p. 32

"No one could have less faith in the absolute and definitive importance of the work created by man, because I believe that this world is nothing but a dream..."

quoted by Jean Peladilhe, *Gustave Moreau*, p. 62

Cover Picture





# APOLLON

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**Published by:**  
The Centre for Psychological  
Astrology  
BCM Box 1815  
London WC1N 3XX  
England  
Tel/Fax: +44-20-8749 2330  
[www.astrologer.com/cpa](http://www.astrologer.com/cpa)  
[cpalondon@aol.com](mailto:cpalondon@aol.com)

Directors: **Dr Liz Greene**  
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**Midheaven Bookshop**  
396 Caledonian Road  
London N1 1DN  
England  
Tel: +44-20-7607 4133  
Fax: +44-20-7700 6717  
[midheaven@compuserve.com](mailto:midheaven@compuserve.com)

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**Printed by:**  
The Magazine Printing Company Plc  
Mollison Avenue, Enfield EN3 7NT  
England

### 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

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# Editorial

## This won't hurt a bit



**Dermod Moore** is a Dubliner. A former actor with Ireland's National Theatre, the Abbey, he is a writer and columnist, and spends a lot of time staring at a computer screen going blind. He is in training as a Psychosynthesis therapist, and practices as a psychological astrologer in London's Neal's Yard Therapy Rooms. He moderates the discussion group on the Internet on psychological astrology.

As I was putting the finishing touches to this issue, which takes healing as its theme, I had a telephone conversation with one of the contributors. We were talking about life, the universe, and everything, the way you do. "It stays the same, you know, you can't change it," she said, and she sighed. A world-weary sigh.

Yes, it stays the same. After all the healing work, the conscious intent, the poring over chart wheels on our computer screens, the psychotherapy, the support groups, the herbal teas and crystals - the part that hurts stays the same. That's not to say that we have to be a martyr about it. We can be more honest about our pain, and rid ourselves of the corrosive poison of shame. We can change the way we relate to it, over time, with help and support from others; it can bring compassion to our lives, deepening our sense of spirituality. We can focus our energy on scientific research, or political activism, or teaching, in the admirable endeavour to ensure that no-one else hurts in quite the same way again. What hurts us can drive us to inspired heights of creativity, touching the hearts of those who witness it. Or it can, of course, drive us to madness and despair. Or, and this is the tricky one, we can become healers, and help everyone else get "better".

As you may expect, Chiron makes his presence strongly felt in this issue; both Liz Greene and Melanie Reinhart explore the archetypal Wounded Healer, deepening our understanding of the principle that seems to strike a chord with so many of us working in the healing professions. In her elegant excoriating way, Liz urges us to abandon sentimentality when dealing with Chiron, reminding us that it was his animal half that was wounded, suggesting an image, not so much of a thoughtful teacher with a pained frown, but a frightened feral beast in a trap. She points out how easy it is to project this wound on to others, and examines the chart of Slobodan Milosevic. In her piece, Melanie introduces us to other Centaur myths, and, working with author Isabella Kirton, shares with us her wonder at the astonishingly literal way they make their presence felt in the horoscope.

Landscape, raw and peerless nature, features strongly here; Anne Whitaker, in her piece that explores how astrology has impacted on her clients and students, writes how important her contact with nature is in her life. Marilyn McDowell, writing from South Africa, takes us

on a journey to the Drakensberg Mountains in Natal, in which nature itself is consciously used to facilitate the healing of some deep tribal and national wounds, in ten war-scarred young men. Philomena Byrne adds her own gracenote to the story, describing how powerfully the experience affected her, and how it brought her new insight into her own ancestry.

Wilfred Owen's war poetry starts off Suzi Harvey's article, a sensitive and compassionate exposition of the battleground of one Scorpio woman's life, and what it was like to accompany her along the way for a while, a witness to her grief. Although the work was psychodynamic counselling, Suzi explains how her client's appreciation of astrological symbolism helped place her suffering in context. Pat Harris, currently researching her doctorate on the Applications of Astrology to Health Psychology, gives us an introduction to her work with chronic pain sufferers, showing how the split between the "scientific" academic establishment and the world of astrology may be narrowing. Speaking of chronic pain, Erin Sullivan offers her courageous story, of how she dealt, and is dealing with, the frightening prospect of radical surgery, to alleviate her painful condition; and describes how she chose the date.

Taking a broader view, Charles Harvey, in another one of his fascinating ruminations on the macroscopic metaphysics of world affairs, takes a look at the relationship between Saturn and Uranus, and how the theme of their conflict resonates in so many different ways, politically, financially, culturally and intellectually.

The ferryman must be paid, writes Juliet Sharman-Burke, writing about the Death card in the Tarot. There is no way of cheating him. We can invent many ways of avoiding pain, indeed, human ingenuity knows no bounds when it comes to devising them. But they only end up hurting us more. In the end, healing is a sacred mystery, as Brian Clark writes, to finish this issue, in his piece describing the ancient Asclepiads, or healing sanctuaries. That it happens every day, is not in doubt. But, in our heart of hearts, we know that it's not about getting someone else to fix us, or finding the right guru to bless us, or taking the right medicine to cure us. Or even about reading the right magazine to inspire us. It's about accepting ourselves for who we are; no more, and certainly no less.



# Astrology as a Healing and a Wounding Art

## Anne Whitaker

Once upon a time, a brave astrologer took a risk, and asked her clients and students what they thought of her work. She even invited them to consider the wounding aspects of her craft. Luckily for them, their astrologer is **Anne Whitaker**; luckily for us, she's here to tell us what they said...

"Teach me your mood, o patient stars  
who climb each night the ancient sky.  
Leaving no space, no shade, no scars,  
no trace of age, no fear to die."

R.W. Emerson

### Introduction

We do not know why we are here. This could be said to be the primary wound of humankind. In order to assuage it, and in attempting to heal it, we have spun around ourselves a web of wonderful richness and intricacy, woven of many bright threads of myth, poetry, religious belief, art, sacred architecture, storytelling, music, adventurous quests of mind, body and spirit. Wars have been fought, and countless millions of lives destroyed, in the clash of differing religious beliefs and socio-political theories, which have been created in our attempts to heal that primary wound by creating a sense of meaning and order.

However, despite the best efforts of the greatest minds throughout the whole of our history, we still don't even know what consciousness is. Far less do we know why we tiny creatures, wonderfully creative and terrifyingly destructive, cling to planet Earth, an insignificant speck of planetary gravel hurtling through the vastness of infinite space.

Chiron entered Sagittarius at the start of 1999, moving to join Pluto, and remains there until the end of 2001, thus midwifing our transition into the new millennium. At a time of unprecedented turbulence and change, its presence in that sign poignantly signifies our primary wound, and the urgency of our current need for the salve of some form of sustaining belief which will protect us from the crumbling of old certainties which seem increasingly unable to sustain us.

Genetic engineering and cloning technologies are currently advancing with a rapidity that is leaving ordinary mortals reeling, unable to process the physical, spiritual, ethical and moral implications of the recent Promethean strides of science with anything like the speed with which such developments seem to be taking place.

One alternates between being awestruck and wondering at our dazzling cleverness as a species, and feeling repelled and deeply disturbed by the hubristic way in which the most intricate and subtle mechanisms, at the core of both physical and spiritual life, are being dismantled and recombined, as though they were so many lengths of builders' scaffolding.

As Man takes the first steps towards assuming the mantle of the Divine, in presuming the right to begin re-weaving the very fabric of life to no particularly evident pattern, we need teleological frameworks more than ever. This need is reflected in the proliferation of paths on the quest for meaning which seem to be opening up as this millennium ends. The longest trodden of them all, about to enter its seventh millennium, is astrology. Not only has it survived the onslaught of contemporary science - but it may even be seen in some quarters to be making alliances with it!

### Wounding, healing and the art of astrology

Living out the contemporary context, I too have been reflecting deeply on what I believe in, what sustains me in coping with the primary wound identified in the previous section. After eighteen years as a student, then practitioner and teacher of astrology, the North Node returning to a 12th House Sun, and Chiron transiting the IC/South Node, has invited me toward reappraisal of my involvement with our great symbolic art. What healing has it brought, and what wounding, both for myself, my clients, and my students?

It is important, at this point, to stress that astrology itself neither heals nor wounds. Having arisen aeons ago from attempts to create a meaningful context to human life through observation of the physical movements of the planets in the heavens, whether such a framework is experienced as wounding or healing is heavily predicated upon the attitude of the individuals who choose to use it:

*"The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars,  
But in ourselves, that we are underlings."*

W. Shakespeare, *Julius Caesar*, Act I, Scene 2



Anne Whitaker is an astrologer, astrology teacher and writer based in Glasgow in Scotland. She has had many articles published in recent years, in a range of publications including *The Astrological Journal*, *Self and Society*, *The Astrology Quarterly*, *The Mountain Astrologer* (USA), *Considerations* (USA), *Astrolore*, and *Apollon*. She obtained her Diploma from the Centre for Psychological Astrology in November 1998, and will be teaching there in October 1999. You can contact her by email on [awhithall@aol.com](mailto:awhithall@aol.com)

It is easy enough to talk about the positive healing benefits of an astrological framework, providing as it does a major defence against meaninglessness and insignificance. Feeling connected at a personal level to loved ones and friends is recognised as a major factor in promoting and maintaining physical, emotional and mental health and happiness. Feeling connected at a more cosmic level lets us see that we are not random accidents in time and space, but threads in the weave of a greater pattern - very small threads perhaps, but contributors nevertheless. This awareness promotes a sense of spiritual well-being. There is also the sheer fun, excitement and intellectual discovery which the study of astrology brings.

The sense of wonder and significance which comes with realising, for example, that one transiting aspect can, and does, produce a range of observable manifestations, all apparently different, which spring from the same core, never quite stops being thrilling, no matter how long you've been a practitioner. Saturn in Scorpio squared my Moon during the Eighties. I don't especially recall what the emotional challenges of the time were. But I still vividly remember that my favourite silver chain turned almost black, for no reason, at the start of the transit, resisting several jewellers' attempts to clean it up. It was dumped at the back of a drawer. Just after the transit was over, I came across it again - as sparkling bright as the day I got it.

Every bright light, however, has a dark shadow; in the Promethean nature of our art lies its shadow too. It is all very well to steal the gods' fire, with the noble intention of liberating humanity from some of its bonds with the powerful enlightenment which that fire brings. But fire burns. It is impossible to light up the darkness of our human limitations of perception, without the hand that holds the illuminating fire being burned by it. It's not so easy to talk about that. But it does less than justice, in exploring the impact of the astrological model on human consciousness, to concentrate on the healing aspects of the interaction, whilst glossing over the wounding dimensions. Exposure to the model brings both.

#### From art to actual life - the client's view

Impetus in translating this essay, from inner reflection to grounding in the actual world of people's lives, came, fittingly enough, from a recent chance encounter with a former client, Lisa, now aged thirty-three. She was very excited about her imminent departure to live and work in California, and we talked about that. But then, quite unexpectedly, she brought up the subject of the one-off reading I had done for her, eight years previously. In common with most astrologers, I am always interested in feedback from former clients, especially those with whom one only has a one-off encounter, and, usually, no idea of what

the impact of the experience over time has been for them.

What she had to say was so clearly expressed that I invited her to email me with her comments, which she did. Here they are:

"It must be about eight years since I came to you for a reading, but there are one or two things that stand out in my memory about that visit. The first was how accurately you were able to describe aspects of my character - I can't pretend to understand it, but, for some reason, seeing it laid out in front of me was very reassuring. Perhaps, because it gave validity to my personality. That was who I was, and you encouraged me to feel good and confident about that.

However, I think that the main benefit of that visit was the discussion relating to my decision-making process. You said you imagined that I would find this quite difficult, as there were three equally valid, and contradictory, aspects to my character. The outcome of that discussion was that I no longer got caught up in my inability to make a decision, something that used to cause me unnecessary stress. What I do now is to allow each of the viewpoints to surface, until such time as the decision has to be made. It might seem like a simple thing, but it has had an enormous impact. Overall, I am less critical of myself. That's got to be a good thing!"

Lisa's feedback was pleasing and illuminating to have. If compared with feedback which other astrologers receive on the effect of their one-off sessions, I feel pretty confident that the core of it would be similar, although of course individual clients as Lisa did, would also emphasise individual themes peculiar to their own horoscope. Competent and sensitive astrological work, one hopes, has an impact on clients' lives where the healing dimensions are very much to the forefront of their experience.

In trying to establish a general guideline for the interplay of healing and wounding in people's response to exposure to the astrological model, one could use the simple image of light for healing, and dark for wounding, quite effectively. My feeling is, if we take a broad spectrum from very bright at one end to very dark at the other, that one-off consultations, well handled, with clients who are at the right point of readiness for the experience, would occupy a position very close to the brightest end of that spectrum.

Where individuals find themselves, of course, depends on a number of factors such as age, experience, maturity, sensitivity or otherwise, degree of stoicism, capacity for joy and faith in life, predisposition to depression, and so on. There is



also movement up and down the spectrum, depending on the same range of factors, combined with what life chooses to dish up at various points. So this image is only meant as a general reference tool!

However, experience and observation tell me that the more exposure there is to the astrological model, the more people's position begins to shift from bright to darker, as the Promethean implications of involvement begin to emerge. As I write this, I am thinking of a very bright and gifted male client, now in his mid-forties, who has been coming for astrological reviews every year or two, for over a decade. His horoscope is rich and complex; at its heart lies a grand cross involving the Sun, Saturn, Neptune, Uranus and the Nodes. This complex pattern links in with both his brightest gifts and his deepest pains, and we have worked with that pattern on sufficient occasions now for him to have developed a clear understanding of the paradoxes it brings.

On balance, he feels that having the framework which astrology provides is more healing than wounding. But it doesn't stop him, for example, fearing his Saturn transits, at the same time as he knows, intellectually, that the upcoming challenge of each one is to define who he is in the world more clearly, whilst jettisoning ever more of the painful old baggage which slows him down. He now knows that the problem with accepting Prometheus' gift is that, under no circumstances, can one give it back, even if one feels too vulnerable at times to be able to cope with it very well...

### From art to actual life - the student / practitioner's view

In further pursuing the exploration which my chance encounter with Lisa had begun, I asked my ongoing students for their comments. I was particularly keen to receive feedback from those in my monthly study/supervision group who have been students and practitioners for seven to eight years or more, feeling that they would have a more rounded perspective to offer, based on going through many different stages in their relationship with astrology.

They were asked to reflect on the healing and wounding aspects of working within the astrological model, from the viewpoint of the impact their involvement had had on their personal lives. Here is their feedback, which I found rich, eloquent and varied.

#### I Marie (52)

"I came to astrology when you read my chart in May 1987. Suddenly, after twenty-one years, old pain I had partly buried and, partly, learned to

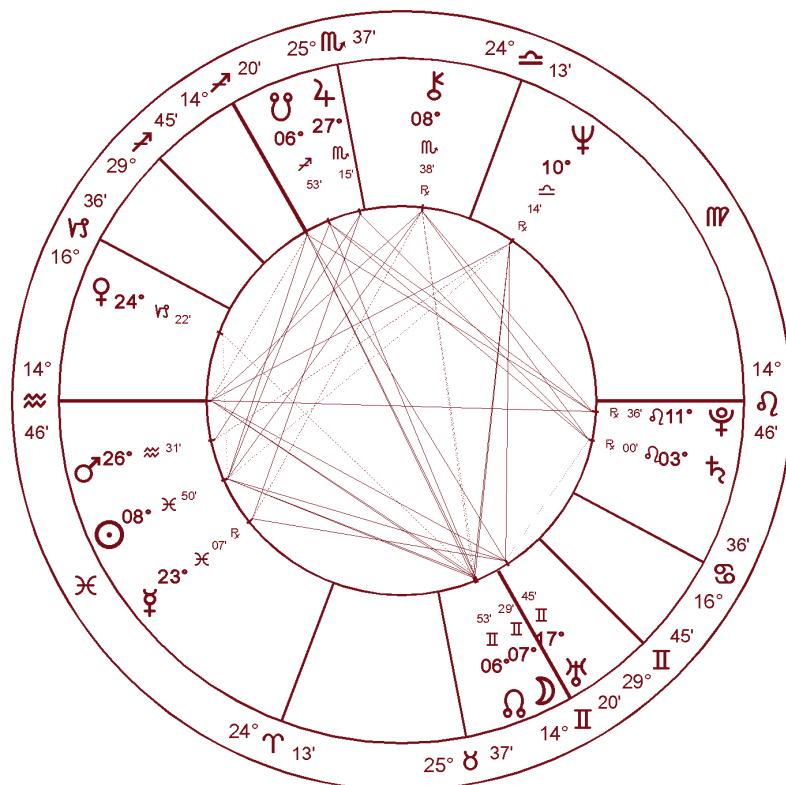
live with, resurfaced. I had to come to terms with it, heal it, if I were to live with myself. I had had a difficult time when I was nineteen. At the time of the consultation, Uranus was squaring the Uranus of those events in 1966, and Pluto was conjunct my Chiron - for me, astrology has always been a healing tool.

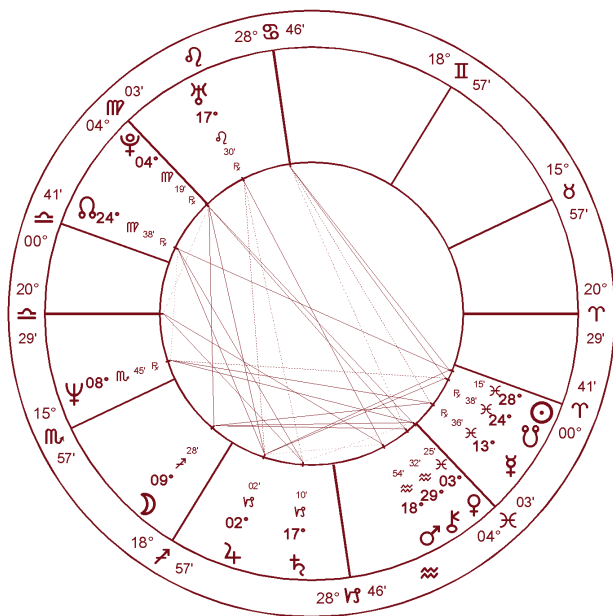
More recently, it helped me through the period of my father's death in 1993, by enabling me to detach and accept by understanding the process. The Uranus/Neptune conjunction was exact, squaring his 19° Libra sun. At the moment of his heart attack, the Ascendant was exactly conjunct my natal Chiron; Mercury was squaring my Chiron when he died.

For me, astrology is an invaluable tool. I trust more, now, in my own intuition, especially when the timing of events is concerned. I think we all subconsciously know when the time is right to take a decision, make a phonecall, accept an offer or whatever. I regularly run up charts for significant moments, and find the Ascendant reveals the flavour of the moment, the Moon the timing of the event, Mars the motivating force underlying it, and Mercury, often literally, brings the message.

An interesting example of this is when I began to realise that the house I lived in was playing a part in my healing process. Being convinced of the significance of certain moments in time, I ran up a chart for the exact moment my husband and I entered the house for the first time as owners. It was Hallowe'en 1984, and the Sun was at 8° Scorpio conjunct my Chiron. Not only that,

**Marie**  
Birth details for all Anne's clients are withheld by request. All charts are Tropical, Placidus, and use the True Node.





Andrea

the house's Chiron was conjunct my Moon and Node at 7° Gemini, the Moon was on my Ascendant, and Venus on my MC. Even more incredibly, the Ascendant of the house chart was 29° Cancer 27', which turned out to be the Jupiter of W.G. Morton, the artist who had had it built in 1912 - his Jupiter was 29° Cancer 30! Morton's ghost haunted the house; I felt I could help him let go and move on. My Pluto, at 11° Leo, is exactly conjunct his Moon and IC, at 10° and 11° Leo.

These amazing synchronicities prove to me how finely tuned our lives are, and what a gift astrology is in helping me interpret the meaning of my life, face up to the dark side of my nature, and co-operate, as best I can, with transits as they ebb and flow.

We don't always get what we expect. My Mum's Sun, Venus and Mars are at 2°, 6° and 10° Sagittarius, respectively. With Pluto crossing these degrees, and also opposing my Moon-Node conjunction at 7° Gemini, I was scared I was going to lose her. She is 84; when I looked ahead to these Pluto transits, it seemed a likely outcome. I'm sure you would agree that projecting fear onto upcoming transits is one of the most obvious facets of the wounding side of astrology...

However, as Pluto stripped away all that was unnecessary in her life, she began to give away her money and her jewelry and to talk about her death in a very matter-of-fact way. How could she see us enjoy our inheritance if she'd gone? Better still, she began, for the first time in my life, to tell me she loved me and was proud of me, words I had waited for all my life. I no longer live in fear of her death, but accept all our time together now as a bonus. During this period, Chiron was also busy. On the day she gave me, out of the blue, a large sum of money, Chiron was 2° Sagittarius, conjunct her Sun, and the IC of the moment!

I can only sum up by saying that, whenever I feel I'm stumbling around in the dark, astrology restores my faith in life, by reconnecting me to a sense of meaning and purpose."

## 2 Andrea (39)

“On the whole, I've been very lucky with the astrologers I've met. Almost all have been good people, good astrologers, and have definitely helped me on my way. From a personal viewpoint, astrology has helped me to open my heart and my soul to a way of being centred on self-acceptance and love; I'm not sure I would have managed that otherwise. I've learned to treat myself with a bit more sympathy and understanding - and hopefully treat other people the same way. My experience of astrology has opened me to the deeper mysteries of life - even if I can't put that into words or fully understand it, I know it's there. That's such a healing experience, because the sense of awe makes me want to try harder to be responsible for my life, to live it in a positive way.

Having said all that, for a while I didn't look at the Ephemeris, or any astrology. Partly, the reason is that astrology can turn me away from my own life. That seems a complete contradiction to what I've just said. Maybe, for me, this is the wounded/wounding side of astrology - being so busy reading astrology, looking at charts, thinking about aspects, looking at planets, transits, progressions, or midpoints, meant I was too busy to live my life in the present - I would be thinking about the past or looking to the future.

Recently, when looking at my transits, (which I hadn't looked at for months) I had a sharp intake of breath as I saw Saturn, Chiron, Uranus, Neptune, Pluto and progressed Moon all triggering off planets in my natal chart. The sense of trepidation was almost overwhelming. I have to work hard to just meet life as it comes. For me, that's a real challenge - astrology can help me to be more aware, but I have to resist the urge to think I know what it means before I get there."

## 3 Charlotte (35)

“I've never really been asked to consider the wounding aspects of astrology in such a direct way before. I did have a bit of a job focusing on the question, without the more positive aspects coming up all the time! I think the serious study of astrology knocked me out of the idyllic vision I had had of my family background. I had to accept that my parents weren't perfect, and the overall effect of this was enlightening, but, also, disappointing. It kind of knocked me into the real world, and showed me things as they were, which I found quite hard to come to terms with.

Seeing things in black and white on the astrological chart led to a lot of resentment on my



part, raising a lot of difficult questions, which I'm still working hard to understand. I think this can sometimes sidetrack me, and stop me getting on with things, and lead to some disasters which might not have occurred otherwise - although I would say I do have a natural tendency to analyse things anyway. Astrology just provides more scope for this.

#### 4 Alice (35)

“My first experience with ‘real’ as opposed to ‘Sun Sign’ astrology was at night school. My birth chart was not what I had expected. I was a true Sagittarian, adventurous, lucky, fun loving and optimistic, wasn't I? Oh yes - I was pleased with my grand trine in fire.

That made sense; but a meek, mild, service-seeking Virgo ascendant was not exactly me. Oh well, I suppose I could come across that way to some people.

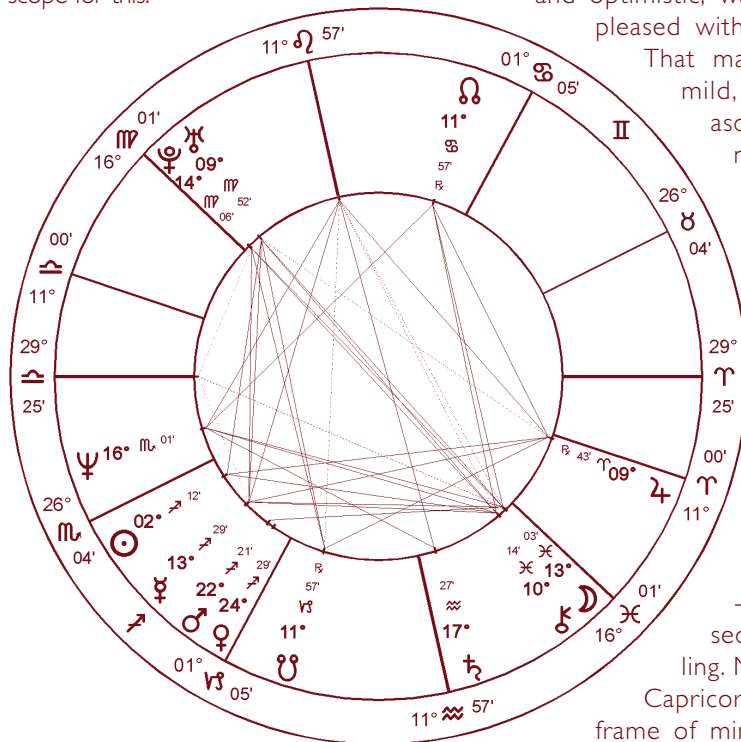
Then I see it - a small black glyph sitting right on top of my Ascendant. It must be a mistake. I feel like scrubbing it out. I don't want Pluto there on my lovely chart. I'm nothing like a Scorpion type - moody, emotional, secretive, jealous, controlling. My Venus sitting smugly in Capricorn does not enhance my

frame of mind. I take small consolation from hearing it is Earthy and loyal. I feel cheated, and continue to long for Venus in Taurus.

Gradually over the term, astrology stripped me of my pre-conceptions of myself, and left me exposed to the facts. I could no longer carry on in blissful denial of the deeper, darker side of my nature.

A significant turning point came when I was asked to explain the types of things which had been happening to me, since I was experiencing my Saturn return at that point. I couldn't explain. I hadn't a clue what was going on. Where did I start? My teacher then summarised, in a couple of minutes, the way I had been feeling and how it was all part of a process. The light had been switched on. It was an amazing experience. I felt understood, accepted, and not alone.

The more I learned about the interacting energies within my chart, the more I could accept myself, and stop having to put on an act. The energy I had previously been using to keep Pluto well at bay, could now be directed towards more constructive pursuits. I felt freed. The healing had begun.”

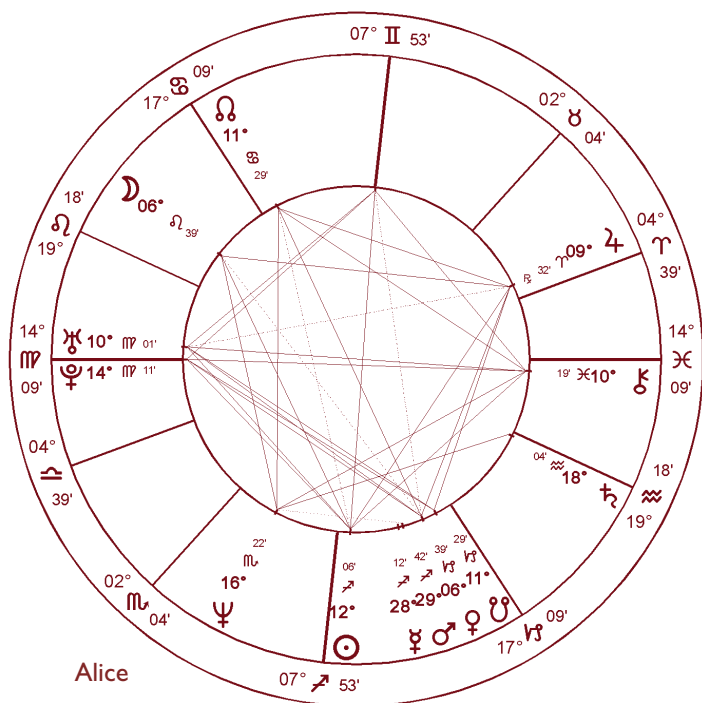


There is also the question ‘Why me? Why did I have to have this chart?’ which may be quite childish, but did lead, at one time, to some resentment at the apparent unfairness of it all. Especially when you are grappling with hard Pluto and Saturn aspects. You know you have your work cut out for you, and that life is not going to be easy. The prospect of living your life with these aspects can be quite daunting and depressing, and lead to a lot of despondency at times.

Another factor that's hard to take on board is that you are responsible for yourself. You can't go around blaming other people for your misfortunes all the time. You have to take responsibility for your part in the drama. It's your stuff, and you're the only one who can deal with it. This can lead to a lot of self-criticism on my part, and a good deal of depression if things aren't working out.

Looking at it from a Promethean point of view, Prometheus stole fire from the gods. He knew he would suffer for it, but he also, I think, knew on some intuitive level that he was doing the right thing. And in the end he was released from his suffering. Personally, I couldn't not know. Otherwise I wouldn't have pursued the subject as long as I have. I just hope it works out for me in the end too.”

Charlotte



### Healing and wounding - a close and intricate weave

#### The big picture

I had hoped, in asking for feedback from long-term students, that they would provide a range of responses, illustrating the main themes regarding both the healing and the wounding dimensions of astrology - they did not disappoint me. Andrea's "sense of awe", which inspires her to try harder to take responsibility for her life and live it in a positive way, is typical of the spiritual and soul healing which the study and practice of astrology can bring. This is well illustrated also by Marie's concluding comment, that "whenever I feel I'm stumbling around in the dark, astrology restores my faith in life, by reconnecting me to a sense of meaning and purpose."

However, there are also wounding dimensions to setting one's small individual life in the context of the big picture. The planetary energies are archetypal, and the further out you go, especially to the great collective powers of Uranus, Neptune and Pluto, the harder it is to hold onto any sense of personal identity or uniqueness. There is a cold inexorability to the unfolding of the planetary pattern through space and time, an utter impersonality. Being given a slice of that time and space as an image of one's all-too-fallible humanness, can be less than comforting; in fact, can be very threatening.

Sometimes get a gut sense of this whilst out walking in the Scottish hills, something I am addicted to doing, and will do under almost any weather conditions. Go to wild, remote places, and you will become aware of the archetypal forces of nature, their potentially destructive power, even as your soul is being uplifted by marvellous landscape and the utter peace of being, where the only sound is of the wind and

of birdsong. In these beautiful, peaceful places I have occasionally had fear descend on me, even on sunny days, accompanying an awareness of how implacably indifferent the landscape is to my existence. Its power could sweep my life away, given a sudden change of weather, or one slip on a hillside could turn me into yet another fatality statistic. As Shakespeare put it in *King Lear*:

"As flies to wanton boys, are we to the gods;  
They kill us for their sport."

Act 4, Scene 1

At times of personal bleakness, which afflict us all on occasion, looking at the horoscope doesn't always bring a sense of comforting connection to higher powers.

#### The individual chart

One of the most potent pieces of healing that astrology has to offer was, I felt, well summed up by Lisa, the one-off client:

"...how accurately you were able to describe aspects of my character - I can't pretend to understand it, but for some reason seeing it laid out in front of me was very reassuring. Perhaps because it gave validity to my personality. That was who I was..."

Over and over again, I have heard from clients that the most valuable thing about their astrology reading was just that validation commented on by Lisa.

But Charlotte's question "Why me? Why did I have to have this chart?" clearly illustrates where all but the most blithe of us have surely been, as the harder realities of certain chart configurations began to dawn with our more sophisticated understanding of the implications of the natal horoscope. Certain natal chart configurations may be wonderful opportunities for growth, but it's usually going to be bloody painful when they're triggered, and this is a lifetime's reality which even the sturdiest of us find hard to face and accept, especially in times of vulnerability. If there's anyone reading this who feels joyous at having been given an exact Saturn-Pluto conjunction, linked with most of their personal planets, could they please phone me, and reverse the charges!

The contrasts provided so humorously by Alice, who celebrated her Sagittarian energies as "adventurous, lucky, fun-loving and optimistic" but wanted to scrub out Pluto when she saw it sitting right on top of her Ascendant; who longed for Venus in Taurus, whilst being decidedly lukewarm about her actual Venus in Capricorn, is so typical of most students' reaction to initial exposure to their natal chart!

I think it's also fairly typical of most astrologers' starting position in their developing relationship with their own horoscopes over time. Ideally, one comes to the point of enjoying and utilising, for example, one's Sun-Moon-Jupiter grand trine in fire, without being too immodest about it, or too obviously pitying those lesser mortals not fortunate enough to have had this divine gift bestowed upon them. If it is also possible to come to an acceptance of difficult energies such as Uranus-Pluto rising - notice that Alice forebore even to mention Pluto's close companion on her Ascendant! - combined with finding some positive outward channel for its disruptive, wayward and potentially destructive power, then one is well on the way to living, in a reasonably positive way, with the unique challenges of the individual birth chart.

### The unfolding pattern

The intricate weave of healing and wounding is very obvious in considering the responses to transits and progressions of those of us who have trodden the astrological path for a while. Trying to second guess the universe's response to our presence in it, seems to be a favourite occupation of astrologers. This is trenchantly summed up by Andrea: "I have to work hard to just meet life as it comes. For me, that's a real challenge - astrology can help me to be more aware, but I have to resist the urge to think I know what it means before I get there."

Astrologers can be hubristic, arrogant and just plain wrong in their attempts to know what it means, before they get there - damaging to their clients as well as themselves. Astrology is a very powerful aid to awareness. It is also very useful in mapping out the terrain in broad terms, and in offering accurate timings. But life reminds us often enough, through our mistakes and errors of judgement of the planetary pattern, that the unconscious, by definition, is precisely that. It is not notable for an inclination to reveal deeper intentions beyond the ego's access, just because some astrologer is standing somewhere near the entrance cave to its mysterious terrain waving an ephemeris, shouting "I'm pretty sure this Venus/Uranus transit means..."

Alice's and Marie's differing feedback on their response to transits, I think, also sums up both ends of the healing/wounding continuum well, from a somewhat different perspective to that of Andrea. On the one hand, we have Alice describing her teacher's clarification of what was going on at Alice's Saturn return:

"...The light had been switched on. It was an amazing experience. I felt understood, accepted, and not alone..."

Marie's reaction to recent transits affecting her elderly mother was a lot less positive:

"... I was scared I was going to lose her. She is 84; when I looked ahead, to these Pluto transits, it

seemed a likely outcome. I'm sure you would agree that projecting fear onto upcoming transits is one of the most obvious facets of the wounding side of astrology..."

Yes, I certainly do agree! And we've all done it, no matter how spiritual, actualised, wise or mature we think we are. Most beginning students find their introduction to transits and progressions enlightening, evoking a powerful sense of meaningful connection to something greater than themselves, exhilarating - and scary. As a teacher, I find I have to work hard to strike the right balance: between giving information, setting a constructive context, offering honesty and realism, always trying to be aware of my own permanent and serious limitations by virtue of being human, avoiding projecting my own particular fears, and bringing in the tempering influence of humour. I also have to realise that students must negotiate for themselves, after all that, what the balance is going to be for them between the healing and wounding facets of the study and practice of astrology.

I always point out to them when they start expressing fears about upcoming transits - Saturn and Pluto being the favourite raisers of fear - that ninety nine point nine five percent of the human race has got through the whole of our collective history without knowing anything about astrology, despite the fact that one hundred per cent of us have always had every kind of transit from the start of life till its end. This usually helps! It is very important not to give the impression that astrological knowledge can protect us from life. Its great healing gift is that it can help us greatly to make some sense of it.

### Conclusion

I would like to conclude this essay by wondering why so few people, having penetrated such a complex subject to the stage of acquiring a reasonable degree of fluency, seem to give up the practice of astrology, despite its having a wounding as well as a healing dimension. I suspect a major reason is that once virginity has been lost, it cannot be regained. For most of us, the price paid for that loss of innocence is worth it, for the more complex and full, albeit more difficult, life that is opened up as a result. Once the gods' fire has been stolen, it cannot be returned. Furthermore, as Charlotte put it: "Personally, I couldn't not know. Otherwise I wouldn't have pursued the subject as long as I have."

Trust a multiple Sagittarian to put that into words for the rest of us! There is an incurable curiosity in human beings, and a relentless drive to create meaning, perhaps in the hope that one day we will be able to heal the primary wound of not knowing why we are here. Once we have held the gods' stolen fire overhead, and seen the intriguing, flickering, chimeric shadows it throws up for us, we become addicted to the quest to find what the shapes behind those shadows might be...





# Wounding and the Will to Live

Liz Greene

Since Chiron's discovery in 1977, astrologers have been experiencing and exploring his themes, listening to new tales that resound to his ancient myth, and coming to some understanding of his archetypal impact. Now, over twenty years later, **Liz Greene** sees Chiron as essential in deepening our understanding of solar consciousness; for in order to choose to live life to the full, we have to face that part in us that would rather seek death.



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The will to live is a great mystery. Every medical practitioner, with any experience of life-threatening illness, knows that the will to live can affect physical as well as psychological well-being, and survival often depends upon the sick person's desire for life, rather than on the doctor's ministrations. Nor is the will to live necessarily what we claim we feel. We may cry out that we want life; but somewhere inside, we want to go home, and this longing for oblivion may be more powerful than any conscious declaration of intent to "get better". Some people react to conflict, pain and disappointment with a creative response that transforms their perspective and even their circumstances. Other people become bitter and hopeless and live in a grey twilight world, or entirely lose their will to live. There are not only active suicides amongst those who have inwardly given up, but also those self-architected "accidental" deaths which, although unconscious, are nevertheless fuelled by a powerful yearning to bring an end to suffering and unhappiness. Self-destructive behaviour does not always involve the obvious gesture of the bottle of pills or the knife slash to the wrist. There is no easy formula to determine why some individuals rise to life's challenges, despite severe misfortunes and handicaps, while others turn their backs on the future, even if fortune favours them. Moreover, loss of the will to live may not always result in self-destruction. It may be expressed as the urge to destroy others, as though, on some deep and inaccessible level, the projection of hopelessness and victimisation onto another gives the suffering individual the illusion that he or she is strong and in control of life. Thus the individual who has, secretly, lost the will to live may, *in extremis*, try to deprive others of joy - and perhaps even of life - by finding a scapegoat who can be burdened with all the despair that is felt within.

This mystery may have its origin, as so many mysteries do, in the enigma of inherent individual character, and the birth chart can provide us with many insights into the patterns

which underpin that character. With any polarity in life, we, as astrologers, always need to look at a polarity of planets; and the polarity of hope versus despair, the will to live versus hopelessness, may be illuminated - at least in part - through the symbolism of the polarity of the Sun and Chiron.

I do not believe we can really understand either of these planets without considering the meaning of the other one. Although they are not in actual aspect in every individual's chart, nevertheless they are both present in every chart, and they form an energy dynamic within the personality. A direct aspect sharpens this dynamic and often becomes the focus of the individual's journey, but the polarity exists in each of us regardless. All the planets, up to and including Saturn, serve the development of the individual ego, best symbolised by the Sun itself; in fact, we might even say that the personal planets "serve" the Sun as the centre of individuality. But Chiron lies at the interface between Saturn and the outer planets, and therefore mediates collective issues which impinge on and wound the individual.<sup>1</sup> By its nature, Chiron's collective implications signify something collectively "unhealable", because the wound exists in the collective and is ancestral. By its nature, the Sun reflects each individual's sense of purpose and meaning in life, and these are intimately bound up with the will to live and to become oneself. Each of these planets needs the other; but if the balance tips too far to one or the other, certain psychological difficulties may ensue.

Following are a list of "keywords" which may be helpful in understanding the relationship between the Sun and Chiron. I would like to explore these in more detail first, and then look at what can happen when the Sun works against Chiron, and what can happen when they work together. After this brief assessment of the two planets, an example chart may help to illustrate the mysterious dynamic between the Sun and Chiron.

## Key Themes

### The Sun

Individual destiny  
Sense of meaning  
Hope for the future  
Self-confidence  
Generosity  
Individual identity apart from family  
and collective  
The power to create  
The ability to play  
The divine child

### The Sun working against Chiron

Depression  
Loss of confidence  
Sense of permanent damage  
Cynicism  
Expectation of failure  
Sense of victimisation or scapegoating  
Desire to victimise or scapegoat others  
Projection of inferiority on others  
Loss of the will to live

### Chiron

Collective failings and flaws  
Disillusionment  
Failed ideals  
Inescapable wounding  
Bitterness and cynicism  
Physical and psychological damage  
Acceptance of mortal limits  
Quest for understanding  
Compassion

### The Sun working with Chiron

Wisdom  
Patience in the face of that which  
cannot be changed  
Toughness and grit  
Understanding of deeper patterns  
Melancholy which leads  
to depth of thought and feeling  
Determination to make a contribution  
to the welfare of others  
Compassion  
Feelings of specialness tempered by  
an acceptance of human limits  
Activation of the will to live

## The meaning of the Sun

I will not spend too much time on describing the meaning of the Sun, as I have done this elsewhere.<sup>2</sup> In short, the Sun represents the essence of the living individual - godhead (or, if a less "spiritual" term is preferred, the life force) incarnated in human form for a particular lifespan, and expressing itself with a specific nature and purpose. Through the Sun we experience ourselves as unique, special, and born with something to contribute to life. To paraphrase a statement Charles Harvey once made in a conference lecture, the Sun within us makes us feel connected with the macrocosm, and we experience ourselves as part of something eternal. This inner experience conveys, not "happiness" in the ordinary colloquial sense, but the profound serenity and hopefulness which arise from a feeling of living a useful and meaningful life. We could call this an experience of "individual destiny", because the Sun reflects that in us which knows we are here to live a specific purpose. Apollo was, in Greek myth, the deity who dispelled the darkness of the family curse, and freed the individual from the burden of ancestral "sin". A sense of individual meaning and purpose can indeed free us from the feeling of entrapment in the family past. The Sun

also gives us a sense of an individual future, a faith in our purpose, and an inner conviction that we are "going somewhere". It is the Sun which allows us to fight free of feelings of futility and pointlessness, and which affirms our unique value even if our circumstances are painful.

The inner experience of individual destiny, meaning and hope, in turn, gives us confidence in ourselves and a belief in the essential goodness of life, and this can be a powerful healing force on both physical and psychological levels. If the expression of the Sun is blocked, stifled, or undeveloped for any reason - through childhood wounds, for example, or through internal conflicts reflected in the birth chart - the individual may find it more difficult to connect with this sense of having the right to be alive as oneself. Life's difficulties may then be amplified because there is no inner sense of specialness and hope on which to draw. The power to create depends on the Sun in the chart, because when we create anything we give ourselves over to something "other" inside us which we trust will bring forth fruit. Creativity requires an act of trust. So too does play, where we give ourselves over to a flow of imaginative power which makes us feel joyful.

<sup>1</sup> See Melanie Reinhart, *To the Edge and Beyond*, CPA Press, 1997, and also p. 20 of this journal  
<sup>2</sup> See my article, *The Sun God and the Sun*, in *Apollon*, Issue 1.

“In myth, Chiron did not become a healer because he was wounded. That is an optimistic reinterpretation, which attempts to make sense of life’s pain by assigning it a specific purpose and meaning ... Chiron’s pain serves no such noble purpose in the story”

The most ancient symbol of this creative and playful solar power is the image of the divine child, which personifies something eternally youthful and indestructible within us.

### The meaning of Chiron

In Greco-Roman art, Chiron is almost always shown carrying a child on his back. But despite this emblem of hope, the figure of the King of the Centaurs is a tragic one. It is worth reiterating the myth, which is often distorted or wrongly told because it is such a painful one.

In myth, Chiron did not become a healer because he was wounded. That is an optimistic reinterpretation which attempts to make sense of life’s pain by assigning it a specific purpose and meaning - to develop the compassion and wisdom to heal others because of one’s own pain. This reinterpretation of the myth is valid as a way of working with one’s own wounds. But Chiron’s pain serves no such noble purpose in the story. He is already a teacher and a healer, *before* he is wounded. It could be assumed that he is already wounded because he suffers isolation; although he is a Centaur, and therefore one of a tribe of creatures who symbolise natural instinctual powers, he is himself civilised, and has thus separated himself from his tribe. Chiron in this context represents the wise animal, a natural power which of its own volition has chosen to serve human evolution and consciousness, rather than remain blindly subject to the instinctual compulsions of the animal kingdom. Like the “helpful animal” in fairy tales, Chiron turns his back on the savagery of his instinctual nature, in order to serve the evolutionary pattern which he deems to be the way forward for the whole of life.

But Chiron is in the wrong place at the wrong time. He is caught between Herakles, the solar hero who personifies the strength of the human ego, and the wild, untamed Centaurs whom Chiron himself has left behind. While the battle rages, Chiron takes no part; he has sympathy for both. Perhaps because of this mediating role, which deprives him of his natural aggression, he is accidentally wounded by a poisoned arrow aimed at another Centaur, and the wound does not heal, no matter what healing methods he applies to it. Ultimately he retires to his cave howling in anguish, begging for death. Zeus and Prometheus take pity on him, and grant him the boon of mortality, allowing him to die in peace like any mortal, although once he was a god.

This terrible story implies a state of unfairness in life which is hard for any individual, and perhaps even harder for the idealistic individual involved in studies such as astrology, to

countenance. We want to believe that life is fair, and that goodness is rewarded and evil punished, at least in some other incarnation if not in this one. Here is a good creature who suffers through no fault of his own, a victim of the inevitable battle between evolution and inertia, consciousness and blind instinctuality. Chiron is an image of that in us which has been wounded unfairly by life, and by inescapable conditions which reflect failings and flaws in a collective psyche which is unfailingly clumsy in its efforts to progress. Because human beings are both solar hero and wild animal, and because our efforts to civilise ourselves over history have so often produced disastrous results, we have a legacy of unfairly inflicted pain which produces repercussions through the generations. Physical and psychological damage whose causes lie, not in any individual or even parental failing, but in genetic inheritance, or collective disasters such as the Holocaust and the present nightmare in Kosovo, belong to the realm of Chiron. In these spheres our individual strivings, fired by the Sun, refined and focused by the inner planets, and given form and strength by Saturn, are thwarted or damaged by forces in life, in history, in society, and in the collective psyche over which we have no control and for which, as individuals, we cannot be blamed.

Such collisions with the inescapable flaws of the collective can leave us full of bitterness and cynicism. We may punish others because we feel maimed, wounded and irredeemable. Or we may punish ourselves. But if we can progress beyond this black bile of bitterness, and if we are persistent enough in our search for answers, we may indeed find an answer - even if the answer is that there is no answer, and that we must accept the limits of mortal existence. Acceptance is one of Chiron’s gifts, and it is different from self-pitying resignation. Chiron’s boon of death may be understood as a symbol of the acceptance of being mortal, and it constitutes a transformation which, even if it cannot heal the unhealable or alter the past, can radically change our perspective on life. Through it we learn compassion, albeit of a limited kind. Chiron’s compassion is the compassion of one lame person for another. We may feel deep empathy for those who are wounded like ourselves. But without the Sun’s warmth and light, we may not find the generosity to move beyond the narrow circle of those whose specific pain mirrors our own, and see that life hurts us all, in one way or another.

### Chiron as scapegoat: the wounded becomes the wounder

There are many stages in the process which Chiron represents, beginning with his



wounding, and ending with his transformation into mortality and his release from suffering. These stages encompass rage, fury, the desire to injure others, bitter resignation, self-pity, feelings of victimisation, and, at last, the dawning of a wish to understand the universal patterns that lie beyond one's personal pain. At any of these stages, if we fail to face and comprehend what is happening to us, we may become stuck and act out some of Chiron's less attractive features. Chiron is, after all, wounded in his animal half, and animals are not known for their philosophical attitude when injured. Those which have the strength tend to bite back.

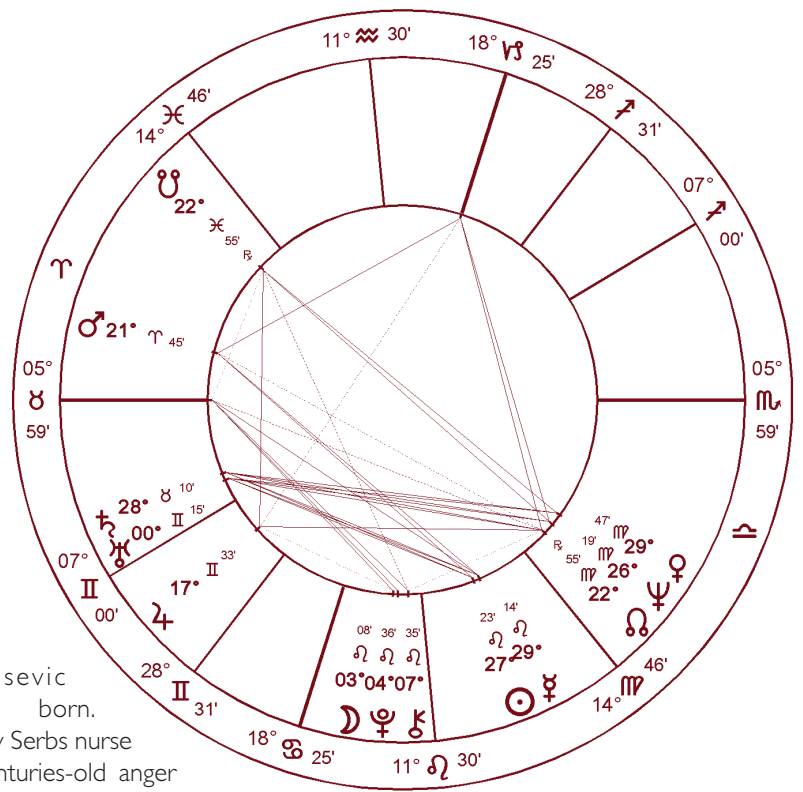
As it is so relevant to the present world situation, I have chosen to briefly review the relationship between the Sun and Chiron in the chart of Slobodan Milosevic, who, at the time of writing this article, bears the dubious honour of personifying all we find most abhorrent in human nature. Not long ago, Adolf Hitler had this honour; no doubt others, equally qualified, will follow in the future. Whether or not Milosevic is truly evil as some claim, or a human being damaged unbearably and thus transformed into a destructive force, is not a question I can answer. This question forms the subject of endless debate in the healing professions, and raises the impossible conundrum of whether the will to destroy is a matter of inherent character or a matter of childhood damage taken to appalling extremes. As with all such conundrums, the answer probably lies in a combination of both. But it seems to me, viewing this chart in the context of the present situation in Yugoslavia, that we can learn a great deal from it about what happens if the wounds of Chiron are not dealt with on an inner level. Milosevic has exhibited no obvious loss of the will to live. He is, apparently, quite the opposite: a tough survivor who will find any way to retain his position of power whatever the cost to others. It is others who, at his hands, have lost not only the will to live, but their actual lives. Yet the inner picture is rather different.

In this chart Chiron is not aspecting the Sun. It is, however, powerful through its conjunctions with the Moon and Pluto in Leo; all these planets are placed in the 4th house and square the Taurus Ascendant. The Sun is in the 5th house, in its own sign of Leo, and is therefore the dispositor of Chiron. The dynamic relationship between the Sun and Chiron in this birth chart is not through direct aspect, but through the polarisation of the self-expressive, self-mythologising 5th house Sun in Leo and the shadowed, injured Moon in the 4th, with its inheritance not only of death and destruction in the immediate family, but also of the ancient memory of grievances in the collective psyche into which

Milosevic was born. Many Serbs nurse a centuries-old anger toward the Muslim world because of the occupation of their land by the Ottoman Turks in the 13th century. The Muslim Albanian community is perceived as merely a continuation of this ancient outrage. 4th house Moons feel such things personally, as though they have ingested these archaic memories through their mothers' milk.

The oppression of Tito's communist regime is also relevant here, with its repudiation of Leonine individuality. Milosevic himself is, of course, a communist, and the only outlet for a double Leo with such a political agenda is power. But although power might satisfy the Sun's drive to create, it cannot heal the hurt of the Moon in Leo, longing to be special and loved. This individual, with no water in the birth chart and the harsh internal discipline of a Saturn-Uranus conjunction square the Sun and Mercury, is not likely to recognise or acknowledge the source of his suffering, because any emotions, especially those of the vulnerable victim, are frightening. One does not survive if one feels. One survives if one fights; the Sun is trine a dignified Mars in Aries in the 12th, itself a channel for a dream of collective ancestral heroism. The Pluto-Chiron power which injures the Moon is perceived outside, in a vulnerable people who are seen as a powerful enemy. As always when one projects bits of oneself outside, Milosevic lives in a hall of mirrors.

Analysing the motives of an individual like Milosevic can teach us a great deal about ourselves. It is, of course, easy, with hindsight, to say, "Ah, naturally he behaved like this, because his whatnot is in thingey aspecting ding-ding." This is a game all astrologers play, especially



**Slobodan Milosevic**  
 Aug 20 1941, 22.00 MET,  
 Pozarevac, Yugoslavia  
*Placidus*  
 True Node

Source: Hans Hinrich Taeger, *Internationales Horoscope Lexikon*, Band 4, Verlag Hermann Bauer, Freiburg im Breisgau, 1998. Taeger classes this chart as Group 2P, meaning it is fairly reliable and derived from autobiographical statements.

when it allows us to feel superior. However, the conjunction in Milosevic's 4th house speaks not of inevitable behaviour, but of a deep ancestral wound, transmitted and enacted through the immediate family. Milosevic's parents both committed suicide, a fact which has no doubt exacerbated, or played into, the dark flavour of this conjunction. This man confronted death and total abandonment in very early life, and survival cannot therefore ever be taken for granted. Chiron-Pluto is also a generation marker, as is



Slobodan Milosevic

the Saturn-Uranus conjunction, and both occurred during, and reflected, the chaos and horror of the Second World War.

Those children born with this pair of conjunctions know well, in their blood and bones, that life is not safe, and that innocence and goodness are no guarantee for survival. This applies even if one has been born in a relatively "safe" environment, outside the arena of war. Beyond the Saturnian skin of individuality, the collective psyche ensures that all of us participate in and embody, on some level - dark or light - the times into which we are born. That Milosevic is a deeply, savagely, perhaps irrevocably wounded man is beyond doubt. That he has always had a choice in how to deal with that wound is also beyond doubt; and we all know how he chose to express it. The savagery of the inner wound is proportionate to the wound he has inflicted on hundreds of thousands of innocent people. Chiron, its pain inflamed by Pluto's savage fight for survival, here suggests a profound conviction that only through the deaths of those perceived as destroyers can the individual's own survival be ensured. Hopefully the readers of this article are not inclined to take Milosevic's path. He is easy to despise and even hate. Yet we may be more like him than we think - in little ways which we deem unimportant yet which reveal the painful struggle we experience in facing our own wounds honestly, and bearing them, rather than finding someone else to whom we can feel superior and in whose suffering we can secretly take delight.

**3 Michael Balint**  
*The Basic Fault*  
Tavistock Publications,  
London, 1968

## Struggle and synthesis

The psychoanalyst Michael Balint<sup>3</sup> wrote that, at the core of every illness, physical as well as psychological, there is a fundamental wound - a struggle or inner conflict which seems insurmountable and which can generate bitterness and rage, and the loss of the will to live. While there is no implication in this statement of any individual culpability, there is a suggestion that, if the conflict could be brought into consciousness, there is a good chance that the course of many physical and psychological illnesses could be altered, or faced in a different and more positive spirit.

If Chiron works against and overwhelms the Sun, the result can be depression, loss of confidence, and a sense of permanent damage or wounding. One becomes cynical - as Goethe's Mephistopheles says, "I am the spirit of negation." One expects failure, and because one expects it, one may very likely find it. A sense of being victimised or scapegoated can be very intense; or one may project one's woundedness on others and victimise or scapegoat them. If we fail to acknowledge this inner sense of bitterness and wounding, we may become arrogant and bask in our greater spiritual achievement, looking down on those whom we deem to be less evolved than ourselves. We may also become intolerant, and even cruel, toward those who inadvertently remind us that we are hurting. And so the wound festers in the darkness.

Yet the Greco-Roman image of Chiron bearing the divine child on his back also tells us that these two antithetical symbols can work together. Chiron is the child's teacher in myth - the one to whom is given the care and education of the prince who will become king. This is a rich and hopeful image of the role our unhealable hurts can play in the education of the individual we are in process of becoming. We may find a quality of serenity and wisdom, which emerge from patience in the face of that which cannot be changed. We may also develop toughness and grit, and lose the sentimentality that makes so many idealists so utterly ineffectual in realising their dreams. We may also get a glimpse of bigger, deeper patterns - the slow, painful evolution of the collective, of which we are a part, and with which we have to share responsibility. Collective disasters and mistakes are not "their" fault - human messes belong to us all. We may revile Milosevic, and rightly so, yet each time we sneer with contempt at any racial, religious, or social minority group, or slyly try to make life more difficult for those individuals who remind us of our own imperfections, we are displaying a little bit of him ourselves. I

have known some very vociferously politically correct people who, when they retire behind the closed doors of their own abodes, transform into little Adolfs and Slobos toward their partners and children. And it may be wise to remember that collectives choose their leaders, and when these little bits of the maimed scapegoater in each of us aggregate together, then we are inclined to put into power an individual who will do the will of the wounded and wounder in all of us. Before we allocate the source of all present evil to figures like Milosevic, we would do well to look in the mirror.

The melancholy which Chiron can generate, warmed by the light of the Sun, may also lead us to have depth of thought and feeling, and stir in us a determination to make a contribution to the welfare of others. We may find a different kind of compassion - not just for those who have been hurt in the same way as ourselves, but for people whose experiences do not necessarily match our own, yet who merit compassion merely because we are all human. If one has lost an eye, it is easy to feel sympathy for those half-blind like ourselves, and to hate those who are fortunate enough to enjoy complete sight. The Sun working with Chiron can generate enough generosity of spirit to recognise that all human beings suffer merely because they are alone and mortal, and that one specific kind of wound is not more "special" or deserving of compassion than another. Those who are loudest in their declarations of compassion toward the Kosovo Albanians may also be those who have little compassion for their black or gay or Jewish or Pakistani neighbour, or who are prepared to kick the dog merely to alleviate stress. The Sun working with Chiron cuts through such hypocrisy to the shared essence of the human heart hidden within. Most importantly, the Sun working with Chiron can activate the will to live - not merely on a blind organic or egotistical level, but because one's sense of individual purpose has combined with a feeling of empathy for the slow and painful struggle toward the light which exists in every living thing.

### The Sun and Chiron in direct aspect

Those with the Sun in direct aspect to Chiron may know on a profound level how the unfairness of life can damage the spirit; and if they are able to take on the challenge of this combination of planets, they may also dedicate their considerable energy and strength toward leaving the world a much better place than it was when they entered it. There are many examples of "famous" people with Sun-Chiron aspects who illustrate this point; any compendium of birth charts, such as Taeger's

*Internationales Horoskope Lexikon*, is worth perusing to this end. But rather than dwelling on the famous, I would like to briefly mention two people personally known to me, both chart clients, and both with the Sun conjunct Chiron, who exemplify the very particular kind of pain Sun-Chiron may suffer. One of these also exemplifies the kind of creative resolution which is possible.

The first, a woman with the Sun conjunct Chiron in Capricorn in the 9th house, experienced Chiron's wounding first in the religious sphere (as might be expected with this 9th house placement), by being born into an orthodox Jewish family many of whose members had died in the Holocaust. She had inherited a profound bitterness and distrust of people and life, based only partly on her own experience, but also on an inherited perception of being a scapegoat in a hostile world. This wound also encompassed a prevalent orthodox Jewish attitude about the inferiority of women, exhibited in certain taboos about the body. An amalgamation of experiences highlighting life's unfairness had created in this woman a deep poison and cynicism, and an apparently immovable conviction that she was worth nothing. As a result, she victimised herself, through compulsive eating and a chain of destructive relationships. Identification with the scapegoat, the oppression of a ferocious inner persecutor, and the sense of a flawed and inferior body, were the chief areas in which she worked in psychotherapy over several years, occasionally "reporting back" to me for a chart update. It took a very long time before she could fight her way out from under Chiron's injury, and experience the self-respect and self-love of the Sun. Yet, clinging to the experience of victimisation can sometimes be a way of feeling special. It is the mute language of a secret, unacknowledged, unconscious Sun - which, if expressed in more honest ways, can not only provide healing for one's own wounds, but can also generate a deep recognition of the blindness and pain of a collective which turns on another collective to alleviate its own sense of woundedness. This lady has travelled a long road, and her innate grit, toughness, and lack of sentimentality about life have turned out to be not only among her greatest resources, but also one of the great strengths she has begun to offer others suffering from eating disorders, similar to that she herself once suffered from.

The second example is a failed writer, a man who has all his life dreamed of publishing novels yet who invariably "shoots himself in the foot" by producing unpublishable work. He has the Sun conjunct Chiron in Leo in the 5th house. His writing style is very fine, and he has



no discernible block in expressing his gift; but everything he produces is always too long, too short, too dense, or too incomprehensible, or the themes he chooses to write about are in some way politically incorrect and offensive to some specific group the publisher has reason to fear. Behind these failures in the outer world lies self-sabotage, and behind the self-sabotage lies a deep conviction that he is worth nothing, that he is stupid and inarticulate, and that if ever he does get a work into print it will be mocked, criticised, and dismissed as worthless. To date, he has not been able to utilise the insights a chart can offer, and has not fully recognised the real nature of his wound. The divine child within him was wounded by an early social and educational environment that perceived his vivid imagination as threatening and his intense self-preoccupation and self-expressiveness as selfish. His parents, so far as I can see, cannot not be held particularly culpable; all parents blunder in one way or another, and these were no worse than most and better than many. But the educational system in which he was raised did its best to turn the divine child into a socially acceptable automaton. Many people experience such pressures and frustrations. But those with Sun-Chiron in Leo may be particularly attuned to, and more readily injured by, the narrowness and fear of originality so often found in collective educational institutions, which may unwittingly destroy the very creative spirit they profess to encourage. Life, as Chiron knows well, can be very unfair.

Aspects between the Sun and Chiron are not guaranteed to offer a solution on a plate. Many individuals do not find their way through. Yet, although profoundly challenging, these contacts may also convey a special sense of how to bring wounds into consciousness, and how to teach this consciousness to others. Hard aspects between the two no doubt helped to drive Jung (Sun in Leo out-of-sign square Chiron in Aries) into formulating a psychology of the collective, and perhaps also helped to drive Dane Rudhyar (Sun in Aries opposition Chiron in Libra) into making astrology human-centred, and a tool for insight and enlightenment, rather than mere prognostication. No doubt both these men suffered, and both, on occasion, exhibited the less attractive sides of the wounded Centaur; I would not have liked to have been married to either of them. But they turned their wounds into creative power, and partook of the mythic Centaur's gift for teaching and healing. How did they get there? How do we avoid becoming a mini-Milosevic, and choose instead the path which favours the will to live?

## How do we get there?

The house and sign in which Chiron is placed tell us a great deal about where, and how, life has wounded us. This is the place where, no matter how hard we seek to find a specific object for our blame, we eventually discover that the blame lies in the gap between ideal and reality, and in the inevitable flawedness of human nature. We may need to rail against life, but if we are not to sink into a corrosive bitterness which can ultimately make us distorted and ill, we need to move beyond this phase of Chiron's rage into the quest for understanding which takes us beyond identifying with the scapegoat and the victim, and beyond the attendant inclination to play the scapegoater ourselves. This understanding may require us to dispense with previous spiritual and moral convictions, and find a broader base from which to view life. We may need to give up the idea that the good guys always ride white horses and the bad guys black ones, and we may also have to accept the fact that sometimes very good, decent people suffer unfairly, and very unpleasant, nasty ones manage very nicely and die in their beds rich, comfortable, and well pleased with themselves. Chiron and Walt Disney do not make good bedfellows.

How do we find this kind of understanding? How do we learn to genuinely forgive and tolerate, without that vastly superior turn-the-other-cheek smugness which masks deep unconscious resentment and rage? Chiron needs the Sun for this task. The Sun has the power to affirm the individual's specialness and lovability, and this alone can counteract the poison of self-pity. The house and sign in which the Sun is placed at birth reflect what we need to become, if we wish to feel truly alive. If the Sun is in Aries in the 5th, and we are busy being self-sacrificing and devoting our lives to others, then somewhere, something is not working, and a deep disloyalty to self may encourage Chiron's bitterness, rather than his understanding. If the Sun is in Sagittarius in the 1st, and we are busy pretending we don't wish to be noticed by anyone, then somewhere, something is not working. If the Sun is in the 10th in Taurus, and we claim we are uninterested in material security and collective recognition of our talents, then somewhere, something is not working. If the Sun is in the 12th in Cancer and we are busy pretending we do not believe in any mystical or invisible dimension of life, psychological or spiritual, then somewhere, something is not working. I believe we need to ask ourselves: Is the Sun shining in my life? Am I myself? Or is a fear of loneliness or not belonging making me pretend to be what I am not?



The Centaur Chiron instructing the young Achilles. Wall painting from the basilica of Herculaneum Larousse

Equally, we may also need to face Chiron, and ask ourselves: What is the nature of my wound? How has life hurt me, and whom do I secretly blame? What might I be doing to compensate, deny, indulge in, or project that wound? Can I feel compassion for myself, or only rage and self-pity? Where do I feel scapegoated, and where do I try to heal, or destroy, others in order to convince myself that I am not wounded? Where do I sabotage or even destroy myself because of bitterness? In order for the Sun and Chiron to work together, we need to be conscious of both. There is a profound and mysterious chemistry between these planets which, if it is working for us rather than against us, seems to mobilise the life-force, not only for our own expression, but also for the collective of which we are a part. Chiron's alien-

ation and damage keep the Sun from becoming arrogant and insensitive; the Sun's warmth and joy keep Chiron from despair. As with all chart factors, the degree to which these dimensions of our own souls give of their best depends on how aware we are of their reality inside us. This is not a cure for life. Life will still hurt us from time to time, in one way or another, and Chiron's wounds, although we may make peace with them, inevitably rob us of our innocence. The will to live is not mobilised by a belief that life is all roses, that all we need is love, and that some kind father-mother-god will reward us if we are good. It is constellated by tougher stuff, and needs realism as well as faith and vision, if we are to exit feeling we have done our best with the gift of life, however transient, which we have been given. ☉

# Spirit Child

## Melanie Reinhart and Isabella Kirton

Inherited grief, emotional patterning handed down from generation to generation, is often the most powerful, and least tangible, of wounds. **Melanie Reinhart** has been spending time with **Isabella Kirton**, author of *Spirit Child*, a moving account of coming to terms with her experience of abortion, and has traced the intricate mythic paths that Centaurs have trod through her chart and life, and down four generations of her family.



**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.

Isabella's story is an extraordinary one, illustrating in a powerful and poignant way the symbolism, qualities and transit process of Chiron and the Centaurs. Although more traditional planetary signifiers do provide some framework, it is by tracking the three named Centaurs that the interdimensional quality of her process is revealed and honoured. In the horoscopes of people who have suffered extreme and incomprehensible experiences, which may take years to process, heal or understand, the symbolism of the Centaurs often presents itself with a dramatic and astonishing literalness.

Before Isabella tells her story, which provides an eloquent illustration of their qualities, I will try to describe some major themes of Chiron and the Centaurs. To begin contemplating their meaning, the reader is invited to allow the astronomical symbolism to speak for itself..

### Centaurs in the sky

Chiron was discovered in 1977, and reclassified several times, as it did not fit neatly into any existing astronomical category. Since 1992, there have been discovered thirteen more bodies similar to Chiron, and the entire group now has the official designation of "Centaurs"! At the time of writing, there is an exciting process underway in cyberspace, where several astrologers are in dialogue with the International Astronomical Union, who are responsible for naming and cataloguing newly discovered celestial objects, and are currently taking suggestions from astrologers for Centaur names. The significance of this does not need overstating. It is breath-takingly congruent with the symbolism of the Centaur itself, half horse and half human - a linking of disparate opposites into one figure. The hoary old conflict between astrology and science is being laid aside, just a little, for a moment! Isabella's story, too, illustrates this linking of opposites, where the psychological perspective unfolds in tandem with the shamanic.

### And then there were three...

After Chiron, only two further Centaurs have been named so far - Pholus and Nessus. All Centaurs have very elliptical and rather unstable orbits, which cross the orbits of at least one planet, from Saturn to Neptune, but not Pluto. They are like the emissaries of Pluto, inhabiting what is known as the Kuiper Belt, a large disk of matter, also discovered in the early 1990s, and now the focus of much excitement in the world of astronomical science. So we have an actual extra-terrestrial "Underworld" out there, the planet Pluto presiding as its largest object, and the Centaurs weaving their exquisite elliptical trajectories as they journey towards the Sun, crossing the orbits of Saturn, Uranus and Neptune, then returning to the cold dark reaches of outer space. Thus they enlighten and integrate various dimensions of the Plutonic process of descent, healing and rebirth; this fits poetically with Pluto in Sagittarius, as our view of the shape and content of the far edge of the Solar System is being transformed.

The first three Centaurs - Chiron, Pholus and Nessus - seem to deal with the interdimensional aspect of life, the link between the everyday physical and psychological world and that which lies beyond it. Before life, they speak of the formative process in the womb, as the physical and other bodies are forming, when ancestral and personal karmic influences accrue to us via our genetic and energetic heritage on various levels. After death, when the body is released and the soul process continues "elsewhere", the Centaur process may reflect the coagulation and densification of that which is yet to be resolved, and pass it on to the next generation. Like a relay race, the baton passes from runner to runner, until someone transcends the whole game through consciousness.

As all Centaurs cross the orbits of other planets, they also symbolise that which ruptures, violates, crosses, invades or intercepts. Like the hole in the ozone layer surrounding the Earth, or like the breaching of barriers, the



invasion of a host country by terrorists, viruses attacking computers, or indeed the human immune system... they are aliens, outsiders, exiles, mavericks. From another perspective, they are impulses bringing chaos, seeding new beginnings, making innovation possible, shedding light. Insight dawns, energy is released, new pathways are taken.

### Chiron's wound

The sense of being wounded, that is often felt where Chiron is located in the personal horoscope, may have, at its core, something which is "not resolvable" by normal means, but requires a radical shift in perspective for healing to occur. Chiron and the Centaurs, then, illustrate the experiences which facilitate this opening... ranging from subtle to catastrophic, depending on our own unique journey. The Centaurs cross the paths of other planets, and likewise they symbolise experiences which cut across our ordinary perceptions, preconceptions and sense of reality, to reveal a world of non-physical energies which appear chaotic but which have their own logic. The apparently bizarre, disturbing, scary and incomprehensible cross our path.<sup>2</sup> In Isabella's story, you will see this process clearly.

Like their elliptical orbits, Centauric energy has a driven quality, which swings us "off centre" (eccentric), for the sake of self-realisation, picking up what has been left behind, unconsidered, unredeemed. Things are not what they seem, and we are not who we thought we were. Hence they speak of transition: in the mythology all Centaurs must die, often killed by Hercules. They symbolise, then, the kind of consciousness that develops only with the recognition of the poignancy of temporality, and from which we are usually protected by the rhythms, activities and pre-occupations of ordinary life. When this safety is ruptured, initially we may be fear-driven, but with acceptance we may heal the deepest splits in ourselves and thus our lives.

Very simply, there seems to be a Saturn/Uranus theme with Chiron, in that the "wound" of Chiron is one that may be relieved by the work of anchoring (Saturn) transpersonal insight and illumination (Uranus) in physical reality. In so doing, we may undergo repeated ego-death experiences, just as Chiron's suffering was resolved by him voluntarily giving up his immortality and descending to the Underworld. In astronomical terms, he "went home" to the Kuiper Belt!

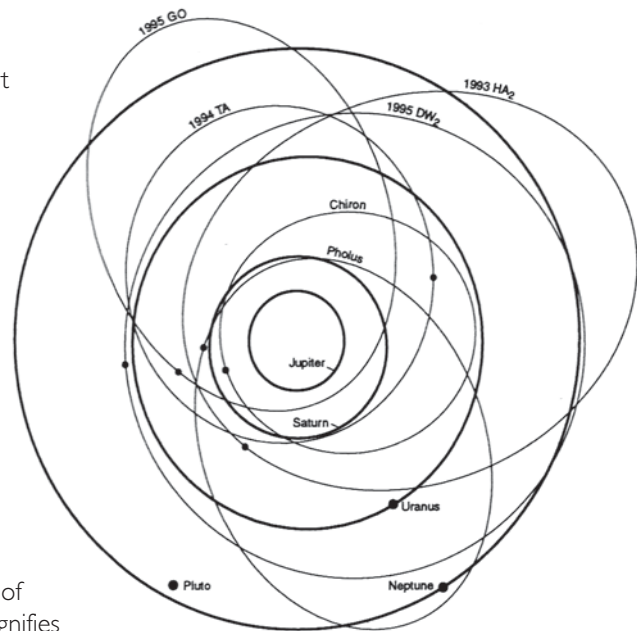
### Pholus and the Sacred Jar

Like Chiron, Pholus was one of the few Centaurs who served humanity, but unlike

Chiron, his story is not about the experience of long-term suffering. Pholus was a diviner, a seer, the priest of the gods, who would arrange sacrifices and read omens. He was also the custodian of the sacred jar of wine of Dionysus, which was not supposed to be opened for four generations, or until the arrival of Hercules. This wine - the Dionysian / Neptunian intoxicant - was the property of all the Centaurs. So Pholus signifies divine inspiration, a capacity for seeing, which must not be appropriated for selfish purposes, but which needs a strong ego (Hercules) in order to be contained and channelled. When the jar was opened, chaos broke out as the unruly herd of Centaurs outside the cave smelled the wine and wanted it. A battle ensued, and Pholus accidentally dropped one of Hercules' poisoned arrows on his foot, and died instantly.

Like Chiron, Pholus may link us with ancestral processes, often very specifically involving four generations.<sup>3</sup> The jar being opened, then chaos erupting, is a central image, and one that can be readily seen with transits to or from Pholus.<sup>4</sup> It moved slowly through Capricorn and Aquarius so anyone born between 1929 and 1971<sup>5</sup> will have conjunctions from Uranus and Neptune which are recent, current or forthcoming, and therefore easy to track. In addition, Pholus by transit signals the sudden release of energy, being catapulted into a new stage of life, facing the escalation of complex situations where the challenge is not to try and sort things out rationally, but rather to let go and ride the chaos, to recognise the need for discernment rather than control, mindful of one's instability. The arrow of understanding pierces the cloud of chaos... bringing us to a ground which "stands under" us.

Pholus signifies a Saturn-Neptune process, and also seems to bring in themes like addiction, the search for one's soul mate (thus "twin" themes, which also belong to prenatal psychology), poetic inspiration, the bardic impulse of story-telling and verbal magic (and lying), confusion, boundary issues, and the challenge of sorting fact from fiction. The jar can be the womb, the sacred container of an alchemical healing process like psychoanalysis, or the tomb of the ancestors, the form expressing artistic inspiration.



**Orbits of the Centaurs** from *To the Edge and Beyond* by Melanie Reinhart

For more technical information about the orbits of the Centaurs, and an extensive exploration of the mythology of Chiron, Pholus and Nessus, the reader is referred to:

a *To the Edge and Beyond* by Melanie Reinhart, CPA Press, London, 1996

b *Pholus* by Dieter Koch and Robert von Heeren, Chiron Verlag, 1996 (German language)

c Internet resources:  
[www.expreso.co.cr/centaurs](http://www.expreso.co.cr/centaurs) (The website of Juan Antonio Revilla, with downloadable ephemeris calculation routines, articles, and other gems)  
[www.robertvonheeren.de](http://www.robertvonheeren.de) (The website of Robert von Heeren - mostly German language, some English)  
[www.geocities.com/SoHo/7969/chiron.htm](http://www.geocities.com/SoHo/7969/chiron.htm) (The website of veteran Chiron researcher Zane Stein.)

<sup>2</sup> Note that in English, there is really no word to describe this terrain. We speak of the irrational, the non-rational - definition by denial.

<sup>3</sup> Note that with derived houses, four generations makes a complete tour of all the angles.

Hercules and Nessus at the river Evenus. Wall painting from Pompeii. Larousse

4 A current and tragic example: on 25.1.99 there was an exact Pholus-Mars conjunction at 29°27' Libra, and the first NATO airstrike on Belgrade occurred with this degree rising (24.3.99, 20.00 hr). Mars was conjunct this degree again on May 6th, and is again exactly conjunct Pholus during the station in early June, at 24°31' Libra. This conjunction activates the South Nodes of Milosevic and also the NATO alliance, which square each other, at 25°52' Capricorn, and 26°27' Libra, respectively. The Pholus-Mars conjunction stays within orb until the first week of July. Note also that Nessus is at 23°17' Libra in the chart of the Federation of Yugoslavia (27.2.92; 14.04 MES; Belgrade. Source: Champion)

5 This is approximate, not taking retrogradation into account.

6 Note that Nessus and Pluto were conjunct in 1995, around the first Ingress of Pluto into Sagittarius, so we are at the beginning of a new Nessus/Pluto cycle. Is this a period of "instant karma" where the timelag between thought, action and consequences is thus very short?



Nessus and the Burning Shirt

Thematically, Nessus signifies a Saturn-Pluto process, where the challenge is about personal integrity, authority and standing one's ground while the cascade of ancestral poisons threatens. Nessus was a self-appointed ferryman, shot dead by Hercules for attempting to violate his wife Deianeira. He made of his own blood and semen a potion which he gave to her, saying it was a love charm that would keep Hercules faithful. Once she applied it to a tunic of his, the poison corroded and burned Hercules' flesh and he was unable to remove it. Hercules died an agonising death, but his death also symbolises the end of a dynastic saga of suffering, huge effort, torment, guilt and reparation. He is truly an apt symbol for the suffering ego.

This poison was taken by Hercules from the Hydra, used to kill many Centaurs and returned to him in the end. So Nessus' story symbolises where deep ancestral and collective themes may boomerang back to reach final resolution, although we might burn for a long time with deep indignation, hurts, desire for revenge and other very dense and typically Plutonic feelings. The Nessus process seek to "stop the buck", to break the vicious circle of blame, guilt and punishment. Truth, appropriate responsibility and completion result in empowerment of Being rather than struggling to control, have, hold, or do.

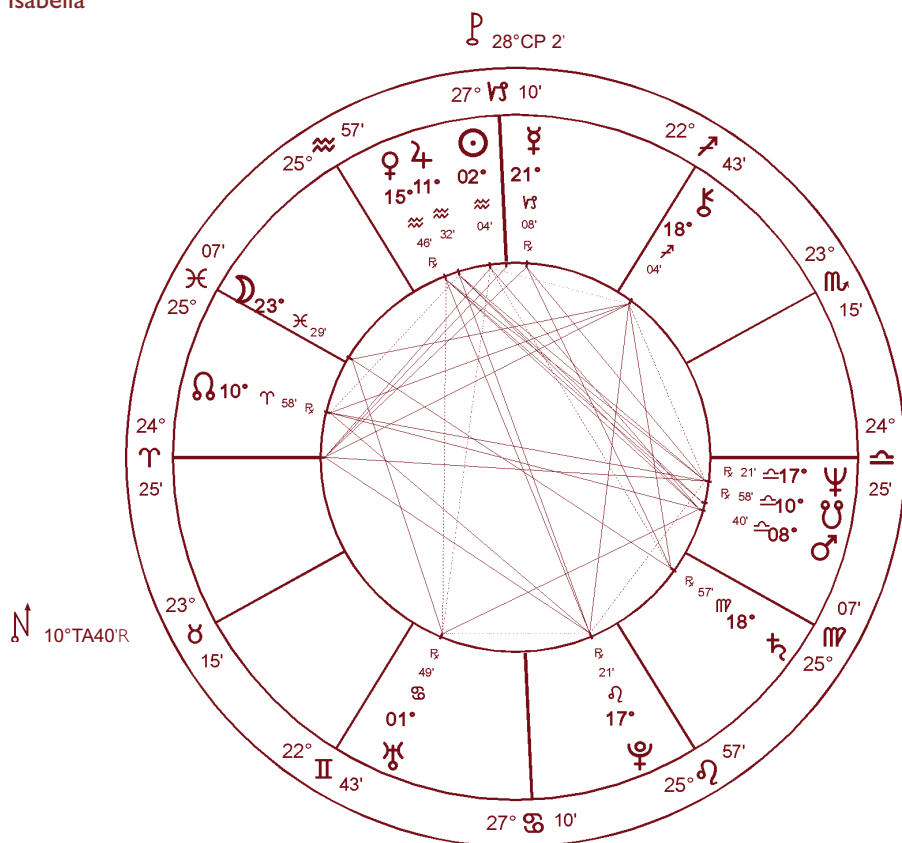
Around Nessus in the horoscope it seems we can't get away with anything, and may

be called to work for purification of that which is not only personal, but historical, racial, cultural or ancestral. The cycle of Nessus is about 124 years, half a Pluto cycle, and I think it is possible that the natal Nessus position "collects" and bring to closure, through consciousness, the historical and ancestral themes of the previous transit of Pluto through that sign.<sup>6</sup> In other words, we are released by understanding the collective impact of personal loss, betrayal, insult and injury which are handed down the generations - the personal grudge is finally released through forgiveness and compassionate understanding.

Nessus by transit may accompany a physical process of "burning", as rage, hot flushes, eczema, skin rashes, burning sensations on the body are experienced, or fiery passion erupts emotionally. It can also mean a deep letting go, a descent of Grace, a final transcendence of something that has burned noxiously for a long time, and which we may or may not understand. Letting go of self-punishment and negative judgement seems to be part of the Nessus healing process, which can sometimes be felt like a "return of soul", where something lost returns to us renewed and deepened.

### Isabella's Story

But now let us hear a fragment of Isabella's story. She came to me for a reading in October 1993, during which I did not mention her 8th house Chiron in Sagittarius, and I was only just beginning to work with Pholus and Nessus, but had no picture clear enough for interpretive use. Transiting Uranus and Neptune were conjunct Isabella's 9th house Mercury in Capricorn, which is in mutual reception with Saturn in Virgo, so our discussion concentrated there. The 8th house paradox of secrecy, yet longing to be revealed and released had already constellated, for although Chiron beautifully symbolises Isabella's story, she was not ready to speak it, so a taboo was operating. The 8th house is Pluto's house, one of the places where the dead live on, and where the Underworld may open through intense experiences of loss, death and rebirth on various levels. The spirit world may also present itself through this portal.



Isabella M. Kirton, BA (Hons.) Dip. Couns. is a mother, writer and traveller. She trained in person-centred, Gestalt and transpersonal psychotherapies, and for many years was a tutor on accredited counselling courses in the UK. Her first book, *Spirit Child*, was published by Findhorn Press in Scotland in 1998.

### Riding the Centaurs

Riding a horse has never been the easiest of experiences for me and yet here I am riding not one but three Centaurs ..... The closer I get to the actual writing of this article, the more I am filled with the same mixed feelings that I have had since childhood in relation to horses and their energy.

#### The Prelude

In November 1998, I did my habitual six monthly Sacred Path<sup>8</sup> and Medicine Card<sup>9</sup> spread, asking for Divine guidance for the approaching six months. The final card was Kokopelli, fertility, and the accompanying animal card was the Horse, which I had never drawn before. I was curious. It was described as indicating "a balanced Medicine shield: the gift of entering darkness and finding light ... the gift of power ... the gift of joy and wisdom in power ... true power is wisdom found in remembering one's total journey."<sup>10</sup>

Now, as I reach the end of the six months, I have spent three days in silent retreat to prepare to write, once again, about the spirit child. I was 42 years old when I became pregnant. I was a single parent, and already had three children so I decided to have an abortion. Nine months from conception, I had a powerful experience of phantom labour and birth that impelled me into a severe depression. I decid-

ed against turning to anti-depressants, but tried to truly understand what was happening, and found that my intuitive and spiritual sense developed to help and guide me. Led by the appearance of my spirit child, whom I named Helena Rose, I embarked on a profound inner journey that was to change my life on all levels.

#### Getting thrown

But to return to horses. I was born and brought up in Argentina, land of the Horse. Beautiful wild creatures, untamed power, polo ponies, gaucho horses. That I would ride was taken for granted; we all did. I remember the first time I saw a horse. I felt so small. The thought of getting up on the back of this huge awesome creature was terrifying. But I did. My feet left the ground and I knew that to begin this journey, I would have to trust this mighty creature: and I didn't. The horse was gentle, but the gentleness was deceptive. I could feel the power and strength of this great animal beneath me as I was walked around the paddock. Years later I was thrown. I didn't get back into the saddle right away, as I was told to do.

#### Back in the saddle

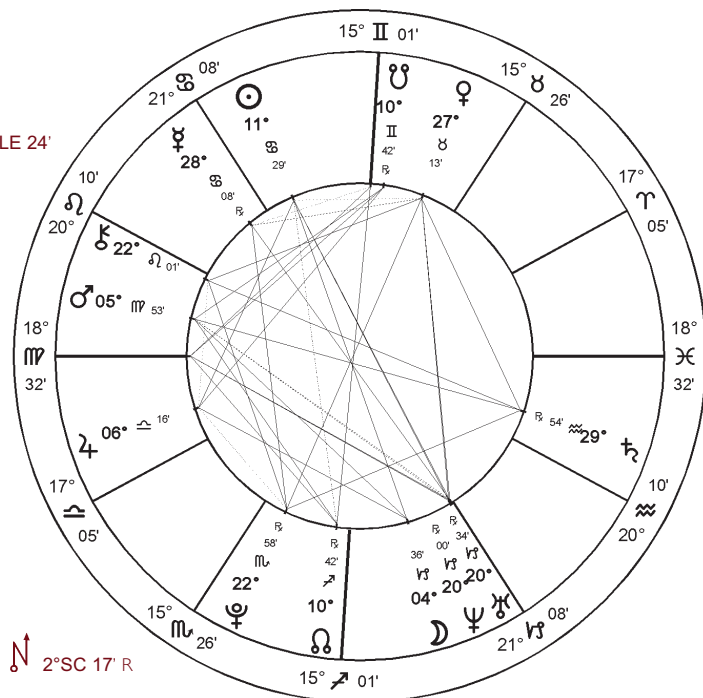
I didn't get back into the saddle for over 30 years. Not until after the birth of Helena Rose, when I took a sabbatical, trying to understand what had happened. I went to Chile. I rode a horse in the foothills of the Andes. I survived.

7 Data of Isabella and persons in her family is withheld at her request  
 8 Sacred Path Cards, by Jamie Sams, Harper San Francisco, 1990  
 9 Medicine Cards, by Sams and Carson, Bear and Co, New Mexico, 1988  
 10 *ibid.*, p. 177-8



♁ 18°LE 24'

♃ 2°SC 17' R



## Helena Rose

The following year I spent a week on horseback! (Transiting Pholus exactly conjunct Saturn.) I joined a women's shamanic retreat in the Andes of Chile. We travelled into the mountains to 3,600 metres by horse and camped among the spectacular lakes of the Piuquenes. Later, in the south, land of the Mapuche people and of ancient Araucaria 2000 year old forests, I had my Sun dream.

### The Sun Dream

I had spent the eve of my birthday in silence. This birthday felt special, falling on a Sun-day, my Birth day. I was among women, and had survived the terror of a week on horseback. Near dawn, I awoke from a vivid dream. In the dream it was dark, cloudy. I was lying on my back. Suddenly the clouds parted. The Sun came out. The Sun called to me. I looked at the Sun and I saw that the Sun had a face. I felt the golden light of the Sun enter my heart. Its warmth woke me. Outside it was still dark, the sky full of stars.

I returned to London fundamentally changed. I had gone hoping to find wisdom and great teachings, and I returned understanding that I carried these in myself. In May of that year Helena Rose, my spirit child, appeared to me for the third time, and stayed with me until I had written about our relationship in a prose-poem that was later to become my book *Spirit Child*.

### Return

The following year I returned to Chile. Uranus entered Aquarius and approached

my Sun as I travelled to the Atacama desert on a Vision quest. I returned from this third visit and dramatically altered the structures of my life. By the end of that year I had finalised a divorce, moved house, closed my psychotherapy practice and withdrawn as a primary tutor from two accredited counselling courses. I was making space in my life to write.

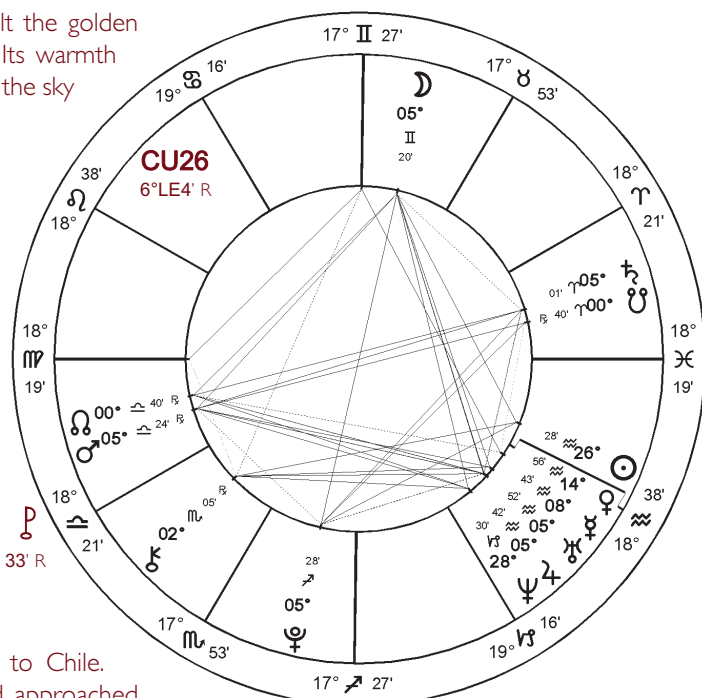
### The Vision and the Writing

It was Jupiter's turn to conjunct my Sun as I returned to Chile in January 1997. I headed for the Banos Colina hot springs in the shadow of the great volcano San José. I immersed myself in one of the six natural volcanic pools formed on the mountain side, at over 3,000 metres. I returned to my cabin, fell into a deep sleep, and awoke weeping copiously. Through my tears, I had a vision of how to write the book. Words appeared in my mind's eye, and as they flowed, I wrote them all down.

This experience occurred within a few hours of the discovery of the 7th Centaur, CU26, as yet unnamed.<sup>11</sup> So the discovery chart for CU26 and the chart for Isabella's vision are almost identical, and note the six pools! This is an extraordinary chart, which comprises a complete Star of David formation, which could be seen as the "conception chart" for the book.

I returned to London, found a publisher, and wrote "Spirit Child". As it rolled off my printer, I counted the pages as a mother would count the fingers and toes of her firstborn child! I felt a sense of completion and accomplishment.

The horoscopes of Isabella and Helena Rose, and the event charts for her vision (the



♃ 15°SG 3'

At the time of writing, the name proposed for CU26 is Chariklo, who was the wife of Chiron. In Isabella's chart, CU26 is at 13°30 Sagittarius, conjunct Chiron!

### Discovery of 1997 CU26

15th February 1997

02:51:15 (GMT)

31°N57' 111°W36'

Tropical

Koch

Mean Node



CU26 discovery chart) and the completion of the book are rich with intricate connections. We can pursue but a few here. Note that Helena Rose was born in the year when both Pholus and Chiron crossed Isabella's 4th house Pluto in Leo, ruled by her Sun, which was soon to have transiting Uranus, Jupiter and Neptune make conjunctions to it. Something from the deep past was opened to the light, as we shall see. The Mercury of Helena Rose falls exactly on Isabella's IC, thus opposite Pholus; her IC is conjunct Isabella's Chiron... speaking the story. Isabella's Nessus forms a Yod with Helena Rose's Sun in Cancer and North Node in Sagittarius... resolution and conclusion.

Further, the Ascendant degree of the discovery chart is the same as Helena Rose's Ascendant, within 13! The chart for the completion of the book *Spirit Child* shows Pluto exactly rising, followed by a stellium in Sagittarius, which conjuncts Isabella's Chiron, and the North Node of Helena Rose... birth of new meaning from suffering. The Sun-Moon square in Scorpio-Leo also forms a close T-square with Isabella's Sun, with Uranus conjunct her Sun... "spirit (Uranus) child (Sun)". The discovery chart for CU26 (the "conception chart" for the book) also contains the Jupiter-Uranus conjunction, exact within 10', symbolising the expansion of understanding that was required for Isabella to complete this journey.

### Publication of *Spirit Child*

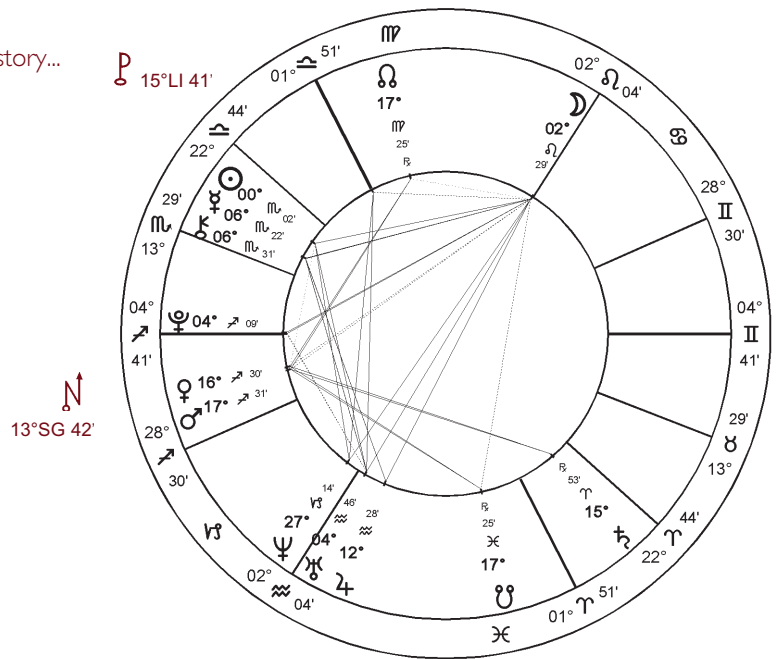
As Neptune enters Aquarius, I am again in Chile preparing in meditation and solitude for the publication of *Spirit Child* in the spring of 1998. My old persona dissolves and disintegrates. It is a harrowing few months as I imagine everyone I know and have ever worked with reading about an experience that was kept almost totally secret. I feel as if my old life is ripped apart. I get severe headaches, at the base of my skull... someone reminds me that Golgotha is the place of the skull. Christ was crucified at Golgotha. What is going on?

Note the importance of the Sun theme as regards the Centaurs. Chiron was fostered by Apollo the Sun god, and the mentor of the most famous solar heroes. The Centaurs come from the outer edge of the solar system, trying to approach the Sun, as it were. They symbolise split-off elements of the unconscious which are pushing for integration, which will otherwise obscure our inner light. Here, too, they poignantly symbolise the spirit children "missing" from the living family.

### Enter Pholus

I make a second visit to Melanie. I had asked her to collaborate with me on the astrological section of *Spirit Child*, so, by now, she knew the

full story...



"Pholus is conjunct your Capricorn Midheaven, and Neptune is passing it right now", she says. "Pholus was the Centaur who kept the sacred jar of wine of Dionysus for four generations. Could there be an ancestral theme in your story?"

### Four generations

My mind explodes. All along I had wondered what had propelled me into making public this experience of abortion. "I want this child to live", I had said to myself with such ferocity that I knew I was saying it not just for myself. The thought had crossed my mind that I might also be saying it on behalf of my maternal great grandmother: a woman who died young from breast cancer.

This question illuminated my sense of connectedness with my great-grandmother, who after giving birth to twins had contracted puerperal fever. The twins were given to wet nurses, and only one survived - my Uncle Jack.<sup>12</sup> Had she ever recovered from the grief of losing one of her babies? I think not. The story is that she withdrew into herself. I felt, looking at her photograph, that I was giving life to her child and to all the children that had not lived in my family.

This feeling was reinforced after a telephone call from my mother, who had just read *Spirit Child*. Needless to say, I was worried about her reaction to it. "I loved it, Isabella", she said. "I found it harrowing to read, but it was so beautifully written." She went on to tell me that she had once gone to see a sensitive called Madujez, to talk about her own mother's deep depressions. Her mother, my grandmother, spent the last seventeen years of her life in a mental institution. She died when I was seventeen. I never knew her.<sup>13</sup>

### The birth of the book *Spirit Child*

23rd October. 1997

11.00 (BST)

London

Tropical

Koch

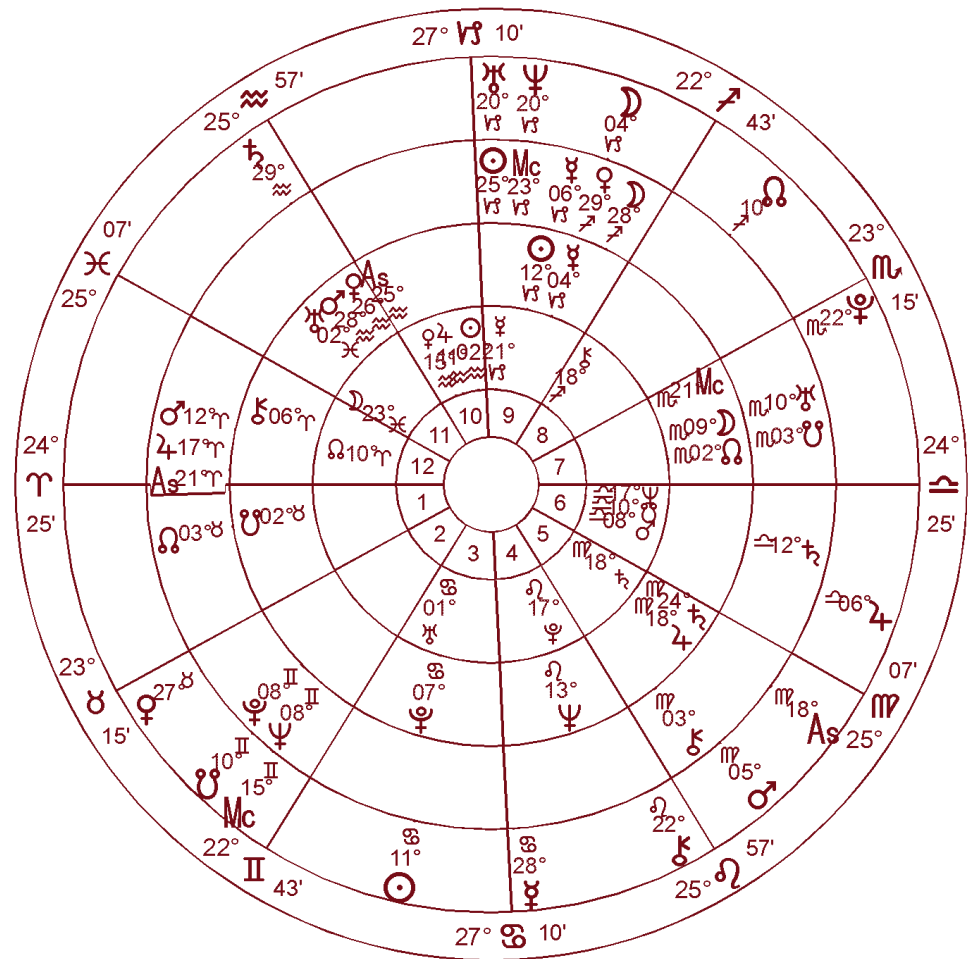
Mean Node

12 Uncle Jack died tragically when Isabella was 10 years old, as transiting Pholus in Aquarius was conjunct Isabella's Jupiter and Venus. Note that Jupiter is the general significator for uncle, and by derived houses the 9th house is the significator of Uncle Jack, being the maternal great uncle. This cusp is Sagittarius, ruled by Jupiter.

13 Grandmother died with transiting Nessus in Gemini almost conjunct Pluto - the unspoken? - and transiting Pholus conjunct natal Nessus in Aquarius. On April 28th, 1998, when Isabella and I were doing initial work on this material, we were thunderstruck to discover that this was the exact anniversary of her death in 1967. Transiting Pluto is currently opposing this critical Gemini point, as her story is being told.

Charts of Isabella's family; inner to outer, with centaur placements:

- 1: Isabella  
♌ 28° CP 2' ♎ 10° TA 40 R
- 2: Her mother  
♌ 16° SG 20' ♎ 8° AR 34
- 3: Her grandmother  
♌ 11° AR 19' ♎ 27° AQ 5'
- 4: Helena Rose  
♌ 18° LE 24' ♎ 2° SC 17' R



M adujez had seen a spirit child sitting on her mother's shoulder. "She had a miscarriage", Mummy said to me. "I remember asking the cook what had happened to Mummy's baby, and being told that it had gone somewhere else. Maybe that is why Mummy suffered such depressions". I sensed a softening in her voice. "You have probably liberated everyone with this book, Isabella," she added.

I wept with my mother, the telephone linking our grief over 7,000 miles. Had my grandmother gone mad with grief, as my great-grandmother had died of it, I wondered? An unrecognised therefore unresolvable grief: the grief that follows the death of babies: babies who die in the womb or at birth. Can this grief, if ignored, cascade down the generations, resulting in severe pressures and symptoms of emotional, mental or physical imbalance, as the "spirit world" impinges on the world of the living? I believe it might.

When Melanie talked about Pholus, I began to see deeper patterns at work, patterns to do with my place in the ancestral scheme. Had I, by naming, honouring and valuing my spirit child Helena Rose, by not ignoring her presence in my life, broken some "family curse"? Had I named the unnameable? Had I made the spirit world a reality? And how would

I now greet any future spirit children born into my family? And now it is time to let it all go, to release the story.

In addition to connections already noted, when we overlay the four generations of charts, some further areas of emphasis appear. They are listed below, noting only conjunctions, although there are other connections:

1. Isabella's Nodal axis, conjunct Mars: conjunct Mother's Nessus-Chiron conjunction, and Grandmother's Pholus-Mars conjunction.
2. Helena Rose's Saturn at 29°54 Aquarius: conjunct Grandmother's Nessus and Mother's stellium of Ascendant, Venus, Mars, Uranus. Isabella's Sun/Moon midpoint is at 27°46 Aquarius.
3. Isabella's Saturn: conjunct Mother's Saturn and Jupiter, and Helena Rose's Ascendant. Three of these show precisely the same degree, which is also the Ascendant degree of the discovery chart of CU26, and closely conjunct the North Node of the book.
4. The Taurus/Scorpio Nodal axis of Mother and Grandmother is conjunct the Nessus of Helena Rose, all within one and a half degrees. Four degrees Taurus is also the discovery degree of Chiron, recently activated by transiting Saturn in Taurus!

## Apotheosis

The horse enters my life again as I ride a muddy trail deep into the rainforest. I am in Ecuador. After spending a week in the Galapagos, volcanic islands in the middle of the ocean, I am heading for the interior.

I ride through an unknown landscape. I am a stranger in this land. Mud, mud, mud! Thick green foliage! Gentle persistent rain. I am terrified again. The horse slips and slides its way through the mud. Why am I here? Why have I come? I am numb with terror. The horse starts a steep descent. The ground falls away. I, in turn, descend into the Underworld of my own fear. "Turn the clock back! I want this to stop!" I scream inwardly. No one hears. When have I said this to myself before? I remember. It was while giving birth to my first child, my daughter. The same sense of "I've changed my mind! I don't want to do this! Put the clocks back nine months!"

In total terror I cling to the horse's mane. I am at the door of death. I close my eyes and in that moment I surrender to the horse. I become one with the horse. I feel our oneness and the descent into death becomes a symphony. I ride the waves of death, the waves of birth, the waves of music. Suddenly I feel exhilarated, free, beyond myself. The terror is behind me. I have become a Centaur.<sup>9</sup>

## Full Circle

I ride gracefully out of the rainforest. The horse and I are as one. I feel a sense of joy and peace as, for the first time in my life, I am not terrified on horseback.

A few days later I watch the moon rise over the city of Santiago de Chile. It is New Year. The Full Moon is in Cancer. I remember another Full Moon, in Capricorn, in a London night sky, when the spirit child was born.

A week later, I am in Buenos Aires working on the Spanish edition of *Spirit Child*. My heart is full of love, as I see this book translated into my mother tongue, the language of my first memories, my childhood speech.

Cancer and Capricorn, Mother and Father, North and South, released at the Equator. This transition is over. I come full circle.

## Astrological Postlude

Cancer and Capricorn are the signs on the Parental axis of Isabella's chart, the MC/IC, and also their planetary rulers, the Moon and Saturn, form a T-square with her natal Chiron!

Note the importance of long-distance travel, vision quests, and the hidden spiritual understanding which came to Isabella, all typical Sagittarian themes. The 8th house concerns deep transition: Isabella's Centauric journey was initiated through the experience of abortion, and followed the trail of ancestral motifs on her mother's side of the family. Her Chiron is square a Pisces Moon, in a Grand fiery Trine with Pluto in Leo and the Ascendant and North Node in Aries, which points appropriately into the 12th house, another place in the chart where deep ancestral themes may abide.

Composite charts for Isabella and her mother and grandmother are not shown, but they reveal an extraordinary number of Capricorn placements conjunct Isabella's natal stellium which includes Mercury, Pholus, Midheaven and Sun.

The charts for the time of the physical conception of the spirit child, the abortion and phantom labour show a transiting conjunction of Pholus and Chiron in Leo, conjunct Isabella's Pluto, and Nessus is in Scorpio, approaching opposition to itself, which usually seems to be a time of reckoning. The week of the abortion included stations of both Pholus and Nessus.

Pholus is the most angular body in the chart, being closely conjunct the Midheaven and the Sun. Isabella has "taken the lid off" a taboo area concerning motherhood (the MC), going public with her story. Her book has already been translated into Spanish, her mother tongue, receiving rave reviews in a Catholic country where overt taboos still operate about abortion. The spiritual implications are profound, and challenge the materialistic worldview which predominates in our technologically oriented modern society. Her Pholus is conjunct natal Mercury, in mutual reception with her Saturn in Virgo, symbolising her gift with words, and also "spilling the beans", or finding and telling the hidden story. During the final stage of her journey, transiting Pholus was conjunct Isabella's Neptune, and transiting Neptune conjunct natal Pholus.

Nessus is in the 1st house, in the Nodal Degree, soon to receive a conjunction from transiting Saturn. Isabella's Progressed MC was exactly sextile Nessus in June 1993, just before Helena Rose, her spirit child, was born. It thus made a Yod with the South Node, and the "release point" of this Yod is the North Node in the 12th house, an apt description of the process of release and redemption that was heralded.



From "The Centaur carries the dead poet" Gustave Moreau

<sup>9</sup> This was the very day of the exact square of transiting Pholus in Libra to Isabella's natal Pholus in Capricorn.

# Anima Mundi

## Astrology in the Theatre of the World



### Hymns Ancient and Modern - The Saturn-Uranus Duet

Ask not what the cosmos can do for you; ask what you can do for the cosmos. Here's **Charles Harvey's** rich exploration of the many levels of symbolism of one particular cycle, that of Saturn and Uranus, from the personal to the political.



**Charles Harvey** DFAstroI, is co-Director with Liz Greene of the CPA, where he regularly lectures. He also teaches on the annual FAS Summer Schools at Jesus College Oxford, at his Bath Astrology Seminars, and in Zürich and Slovenia. His company Consider has just published a new edition of his and Michael Harding's *Working with Astrology*. His *Mundane Astrology*, co-authored with Michael Baigent and Nicholas Campion, is the authoritative text on the subject. Charles is past-President (1973-1994) and now Patron of the Astrological Association. He is also Chair of the Urania Trust, the educational charity dedicated to astrology. Charles lives in Somerset with his wife Suzi, with whom he co-authored *Sun Sign-Moon Sign*. They have two sons. Their latest book *The Principles of Astrology* has recently been published by Harper Collins.

**I This theme will be reinforced and amplified by the all-important conjunction of Jupiter to Saturn in Spring 2000, a subject to which I will return in my next article.**

"Order without liberty and liberty without order are equally destructive."

*Theodore Roosevelt*

"The art of progress is to preserve order amid change and to preserve change amid order."

*A.N.Whitehead*

The dominant theme for the next twelve months is the outgoing square of Saturn to Uranus<sup>1</sup> which repeats three times (See the graphic ephemeris in Figure 1). What does this mean for us, individually and collectively? The time of the outgoing square in any cycle, as the faster planet moves 90° ahead of its slower companion, always marks a "Springtime" creative crisis of confrontation of the two principles involved. It is almost always uncomfortable, and seems often, even more than the opposition itself, to polarise issues into extremes of black and white. So with such an Oedipally opposed pair of principles at loggerheads, we cannot expect to feel especially comfortable in the coming months, or for the world to present an especially equable face.

The last issue of *Apollon* focused upon relationships. The present issue focuses upon healing. These two themes are intimately related, and ones which will, undoubtedly, be brought under the spotlight by the present square. In observing world affairs, we need to remember that international relations such as those over the war in Kosovo, between India and Pakistan, or the looming trade wars between Europe and the USA over GM food and hormone-treated beef (Saturn in Taurus!) are the same as personal ones, only writ large. The daily news tells us of the tensions and synergies, passions, loves and hates of the world's different cultures, belief systems, and their attendant political and economic imperatives, and how these are working out at a global level through nations, multi-national conglomerates, and their leaders.

"Out there" in the Big Drama, we witness the same issues as confront us in our

personal lives: the wooing of partners, the struggles for power, the family feuds, the secret deals, the betrayals, the agreements, collaborations, conflicts, compromises, threats, struggles for separation and divorce, rights of access, and custody of desired territories. War and Peace. And, as with personal relationships, the ebb and flow of the astrological ideas, unfolded by the planetary cycles, reveal the conflicting processes that are demanding to be honoured and accommodated at any given time.

The healing of these conflicts, as with personal ones, lies in being able to centre one's vision on the larger Unity. As Plato puts it, "Above all else keep your gaze on Unity". The more we can cultivate such an Apollonian view and see both sides, indeed all sides, of any conflict, the greater are the chances we can help resolve and heal the divisive and self-tormenting situations, into which Saturn-Uranus dilemmas can drive us.

#### Depending on your point of view

As with individuals, the truth of "world affairs" depends upon your perspective. One man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter. One nation's valued civilisation is, for another, the very image of the primitive and superstitious. Mahatma Gandhi, on arriving in the USA, was asked by reporters what he thought of American culture. "It would be a good idea", he suggested. By contrast, the average bourgeois Westerner set down in the Indian sub-continent, sees a "backward", "undeveloped" area, self-evidently in desperate need of the benefits of Western material welfare, rather than a different culture, with a different set of priorities.

So it is that each of us astrologers brings our own cultural bias to bear on the cycles we seek to interpret, all too easily forgetting that the astrological cycles themselves have no such prejudices. The planets provide us with particular potentials and possibilities and specific dynamics, not with pre-ordained outcomes and events. This is a fact that we will always do well



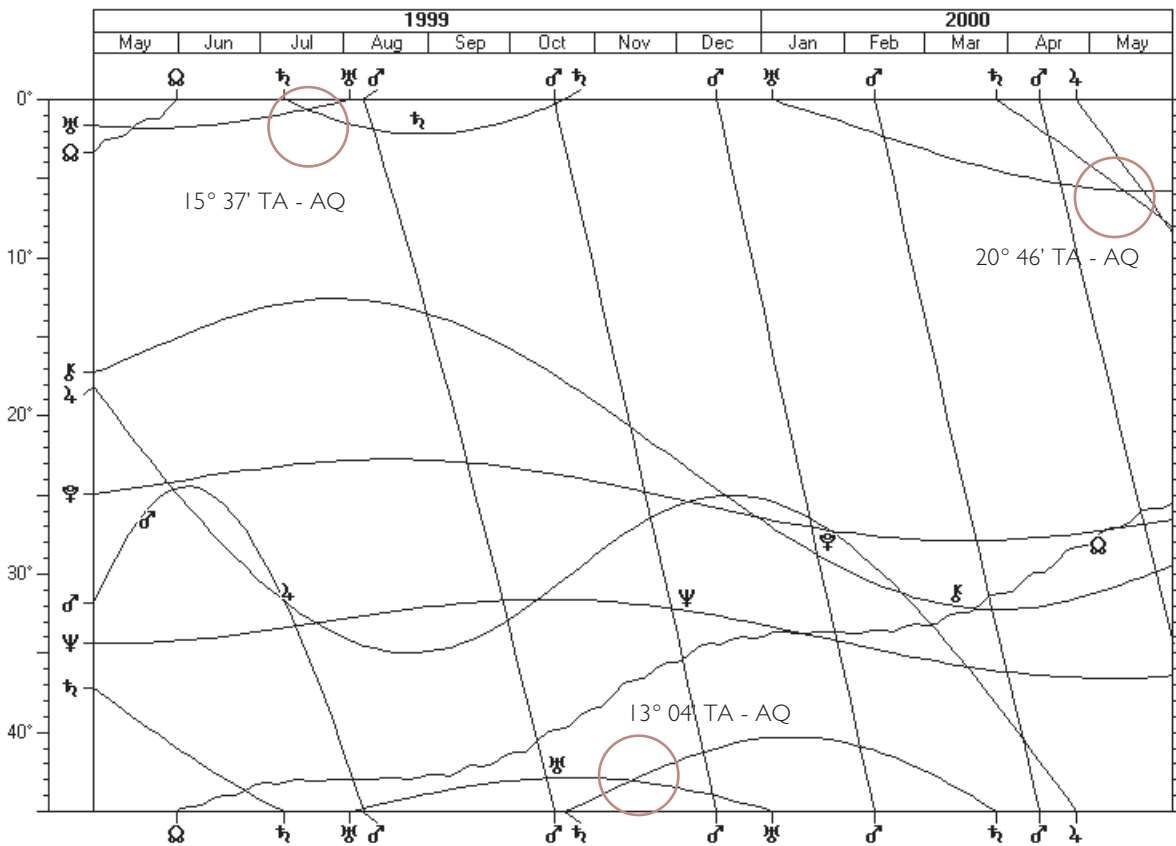


Figure 1  
Graphic Ephemeris

to keep in mind, when we are attempting to unravel something of the likely significance of the upcoming paragraphs of world history.

### The August Eclipse and Saturn-Uranus

The section of the cosmic drama that most astrologers are focusing upon at this point in 1999 is the Nostradamus<sup>2</sup> total eclipse of the Sun of 11th August (Figure 2) which, with classic millenarian panic, is being seen by some as the beginning of Armageddon and some kind of world melt down, and “the end of the world as we know it”. So what should we expect? What are the processes and issues that will be brought to the fore in the coming months? Are the Kosovo conflict, and the clashes of the Indian sub-continent, the beginning of something yet more sinister? Or will these, in turn, be sidelined by

renewed conflicts in the Middle East, of which we are currently blithely ignorant? Or can we, as a global community, use the current crises to work through some of our stark differences of viewpoint?

August's eclipse will be visible as darkness at noon over most of Europe. Whilst any total eclipse is always a dramatic and potent affair in its own right, and deserves our attention, it could be argued that the crux of this particular *conjunctio*, is that it puts under its black spotlight the long-outgoing, thrice-repeated square of Saturn to Uranus. This emphasis on the Chronos-Ouranos duad is further reinforced by Mars, who simultaneously completes the fourth arm of a Grand Cross. So, to understand the deeper significance of this eclipse, we need to try to understand the essential idea that the Saturn-Uranus sounds out in its 46-year cycle from its seed conjunction to the next conjunction.

### An Ancient-Modern Myth

Depending on your viewpoint, the Saturn-Uranus cycle marks out the “march of progress” or the “myth of progress”. More than any other cycle it expresses the remorseless building up and breaking down of ideas, nations, cultures and civilisations. It is the embodiment of Heraclitus' dictum, that the one certitude is Change, and that equal-

2 As I pointed out in the *Astrological Journal*, this eclipse is clearly the basis of Nostradamus' famous 1999 quatrain. Nick Campion gives a valuable exposition on this in the March/April 1999 issue of the *Astrological Journal*.

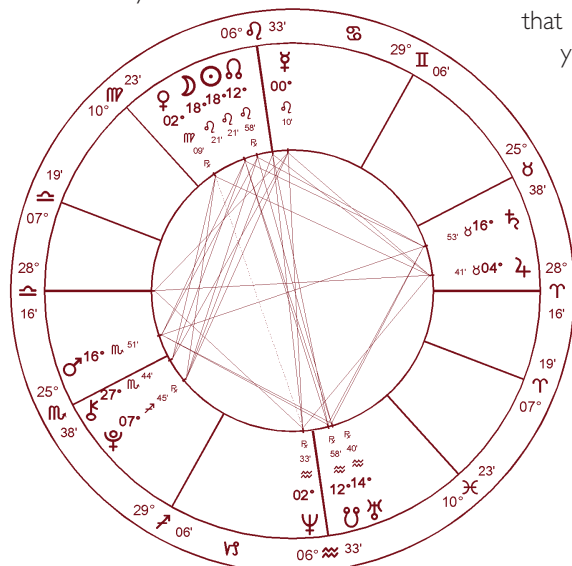


Figure 2  
August Eclipse  
11 August 1999  
11:08 (GMT)  
Paris, France  
Tropical  
Placidus  
True Node

3 I have not here gone into the very compelling relationship of the Uranus archetype to Prometheus which was originally put forward and brilliantly demonstrated by Richard Tarnas in *Prometheus the Awakener*, and, most recently, by Liz Greene in her invaluable CPA publication *The Art of Stealing Fire*. Just as the myth of Ouranos speaks to us of the heavenly, ideal perspective of this archetype, on its proceeding arc from Heaven to Earth, so Prometheus the Titan clearly speaks of this same archetype when seen from an earthly perspective, and of the returning arc of humanity aspiring to divinity and to read the secrets of the One.

Figure 3  
Saturn - Neptune mandala

Figure 4  
Saturn - Uranus mandala

ly *plus ça change plus ça reste la meme chose*. Everything reverses into its opposite. The volcano's Uranian erupting lava turns to Saturnine stone. Today's mould-breaking fashion becomes tomorrow's "old hat". The latest hot technological invention becomes tomorrow's industrial dinosaur. The political revolutionaries gain power and become the new reactionaries. The revolution, like Saturn, devours its children and its father.

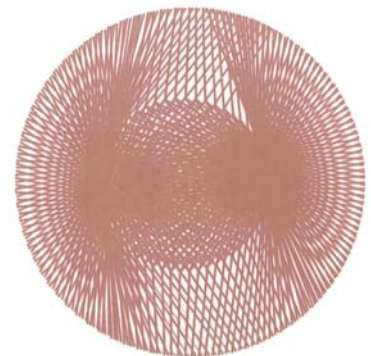
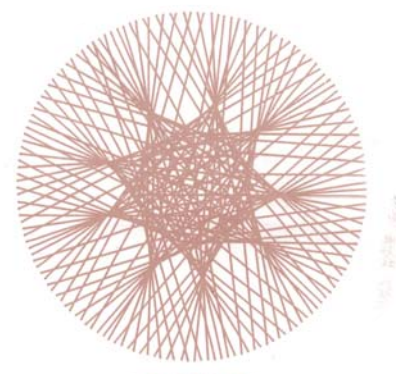
In the original myth, Ouranos<sup>3</sup>, god of Heaven, representing the abstract, nouminal world of archetypal truth, is constantly coupling with his mother-wife Gaia, the Earth goddess, representing the phenomenal world of the temporal and manifest. Whenever Gaia gives birth, Ouranos banishes his offspring, as they do not live up to his nouminal aspirations. In desperation, Gaia equips her latest offspring, Chronos, with a sickle, with which he castrates his father. Ouranos' member falls into the ocean of Time, giving birth to Aphrodite. The inexpressible potency of abstract, split-off, perfectionist Ouranos is thus brought into the imperfect manifest world of ever changing Nature, and can show forth something of his infinite, potential Beauty and Truth. By curbing the tyranny of the Absolute Truth, Venus/Aphrodite, through Choice and Relationship, enables these polar opposites of Heaven and Earth, nouminal and phenomenal, to be fruitfully mediated, and periodically reconciled, in the balance of Nature.

As with all great myths, this struggle between Heaven and Earth, Abstract Reason and Mother Nature, between ever-new possibilities and the *status quo*, continues to express itself every day, at every level, from the physical to the metaphysical. In personal relationships, we experience it as the acute tensions and anxieties of the "freedom-closeness" or "freedom-security" dilemma, where the need for familiar stability and certitude war with the urge to break free, live dangerously and experiment. For the parent and child, it is finding the balance between encouraging freedom of movement and expression and self-discipline, between rights and obligations. In national and world affairs, we witness it as the tug between tradition and the "good old ways" and the remorseless demands to change, develop and improve. It is the tension between freedom and responsibility, between liberty and constraint, between innovation and orthodoxy.

In the daily world, we hear the echoes of the clash of Ouranos and Chronos whenever we witness any kind of tension, of something, or someone, suspended between conflicting states of being. "To be or not to be?" That is the question, as Uranus demands that the status quo be challenged and tested. "Will he or won't he?

Will they or won't they? Did they or didn't they?" This is the stuff of cliffhanger situations and spontaneous explosions; as between Israel and the Palestinians, and the endless tensions of situations like Kosovo, India-Pakistan, Korea, and within the old USSR. Equally, it is in the stresses and strains within ageing nuclear reactors, and the tectonic plates of Mother Earth (Saturn in Taurus) herself, as the very body of the planet herself takes the strain.

The coming months of the outgoing square, through June 2000, will increasingly see such polarities emphasised, within the world and ourselves, as each side of this polarity struggles for supremacy and expression, and demands our - impossible to give - undivided attention.



### Just How Opposite are Saturn and Uranus?

Whilst all square aspects produce such polar tensions, the proclivity of Saturn-Uranus to the stresses and strains of opposition, despite their mutual rulership of Aquarius, is graphically depicted in their mandala, i.e. the pattern their orbits make in relation to one another, as they orbit the Sun. As we can see in Figure 3, the mutual interweavings of Saturn and Neptune create a nine pointed star, an appropriate figure for this most creative of combinations which, for all its sufferings, so often awakens the nine muses. By contrast, the harmogram of the interplay of Saturn and Uranus' orbits, Figure 4, reveals it to be a dance of constant tension and opposition, which only softens into a more rounded picture after many cycles.

This can be seen in another way by studying Table 1<sup>4</sup>, which shows the positions of the last 15 of the Saturn-Uranus series of conjunctions. As can be seen, these fall approximately 44-45 years apart, in a series of pairs. Successive pairs tend to be almost exactly 180° apart, followed by a forward shift in Zodiac of between 15° - 30° from one pair to the next.

**TABLE 1 - Saturn-Uranus conjunctions**

Date	Position
1442 July 26	14° 07 Gemini
1442 Dec 30	12° 24 Gemini
1443 Mar 12	11° 36 Gemini
1489 April 10	15° 25 Capricorn
1489 May 19	15° 05 Capricorn
1489 Nov 29	13° 25 Capricorn
1533 June 18	12° 24 Cancer
1580 Mar 25	13° 56 Aquarius
1580 Aug 18	12° 39 Aquarius
1580 Nov 26	11° 45 Aquarius
1623 Sept 29	15° 36 Leo
1624 Feb 21	14° 07 Leo
1624 May 20	13° 10 Leo
1671 March 5	10° 26 Pisces
1714 Oct 12	18° 54 Virgo
1761 May 14	7° 42 Aries
1761 Oct 28	6° 03 Aries
1762 Jan 3	5° 23 Aries
1805 Nov 1	21° 32 Libra
1852 March 15	2° 10 Taurus
1897 Jan 6	27° 40 Scorpio
1897 June 1	26° 26 Scorpio
1897 Sept 9	25° 35 Scorpio
1942 3 May	29° 20 Taurus
1988 13 Feb	29° 55 Sagittarius
1988 26 June	28° 47 Sagittarius
1988 18 Oct	27° 49 Sagittarius
2032 28 June	28° 01 Gemini

This pattern is repeated with positions of the oppositions in this cycle, and likewise with the squares. Table 2 shows the positions of the outgoing squares for the last six cycles.

### The Seeds of 1988

So, in greater detail, what can we expect of this current series of squares? To attempt to understand the significance of a particular planetary phase, and what issues it is likely to bring to the fore on the international scene, we need to study **the issues present at the conjunction phase**. So to gather our clues of what lies ahead we first need to study what was going on in the world at the time of the thrice repeated conjunction of Saturn and Uranus during 1988, and the seeds that were sown at that time. It will also be instructive to consider seeds sown at earlier conjunctions of this pair, in 1942 and 1897, for each planetary cycle does not occur in a vacuum, but builds from one cycle of that pair to the next.

**TABLE 2 - Outgoing Saturn Uranus squares**

Date	Position
1818 June 13	18° 01 Sagittarius-Pisces
1818 Aug 21	16° 10 Sagittarius-Pisces
1819 April 10	24° 28 Sagittarius-Pisces
1861 Oct 31	6° 18 Gemini-Virgo
1862 May 30	15° 59 Gemini-Virgo
1862 July 16	18° 40 Gemini-Virgo
1909 June 7	20° 23 Aries-Capricorn
1909 Nov 81	7° 51 Aries-Capricorn
1910 April 7	25° 00 Aries-Capricorn
1951 Dec 8	13° 02 Libra-Cancer
1952 April 18	10° 20 Libra-Cancer
1952 Oct 15	18° 30 Libra-Cancer
1999 July 18	15° 37 Aquarius-Taurus
1999 Nov 14	13° 04 Aquarius-Taurus
2000 May 13	20° 46 Aquarius-Taurus
2043 Jan 8	16° 32 Leo-Scorpio
2043 May 24	13° 49 Leo-Scorpio
2043 Nov 21	22° 09 Leo-Scorpio

Some of the landmarks of 1988 were:

- Faced with growing unrest and independence movements throughout the USSR, Gorbachev's policies of *glasnost* (openness) and *perestroika*, (restructuring) begin the breakup of the former rigid structures of the Soviet Union and its move towards democracy and a Western style economy. Anti-reformers are voted out of office; troops are withdrawn from Afghanistan, and a major programme of arms reduction gets under way.
- To build confidence after the October 1987 Wall Street Crash, the world economy "takes the brakes off" to encourage confidence and encourage the globalisation of world trade.
- The Middle East and Islam become the focus of attention: on 8th August, Iran and Iraq accept a UN peace plan to end their eight-year old war; riots on the Palestinian West Bank culminate on 15 November, with Yasser Arafat's Declaration of Independence of Palestine in Algiers; on 13th December Arafat's formal recognition of Israel brings the recognition of the Palestine Liberation Organisation by the USA on 14th. The increased tensions between the West and Islam focuses around Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses* and culminates on 21st December, at 7:19pm, in the Lockerbie bomb. By contrast, the importance of the Arabs to world culture is acknowledged in the award of the Nobel Prize for literature to Egypt's Naguib Mahfouz.
- On the scientific front, the year was notable for the inauguration of the genome

<sup>4</sup> The Table is based on data given in Neil F Michelsen's *Tables of Planetary Phenomena*, ACS, San Diego 1990, the indispensable reference work for studies of this kind.

5 See Theodor Landscheit's *Sun-Earth-Man - A Mesh of Cosmic Oscillations*, Urania Trust 1989, 194 The Butts, Frome, BA11 4AG; email [urania@globalnet.co.uk](mailto:urania@globalnet.co.uk)

project to map all three billion genes within the genetic code, as well as for various major breakthroughs in the technology of genetic cloning.

- At the physical level, the Armenian earthquake of 7th December is one of the most massive in many years, killing 50,000, and leaving half a million homeless.

### Fear triumphs over reason

We had a brief foretaste of the way these seeds are growing when, for the weeks around 3rd September 1998, Saturn and Uranus hovered close to 6° 17' orbs of square. This coincided with the major melt-down on world stock markets, starting with Russia's sudden default on its international debts on 17th August, and ending with the near collapse of Long Term Capital Management (LTCM was in fact a high risk hedge fund which traded very short term!) with losses of \$4.3 billion on the night of 20th September. Between these two dates, world markets were in a state of panic. Russia was confronting a testing of its new freedoms sown in 1988. The two Nobel Prize winning economists (Uranus) at LTCM, and their team, who had thought they had discovered an infallible formula to endless wealth, had been crushed by cold market realities and blind fear (Saturn), as the economic manipulations of 1988 and later began to be felt. By the same token, it would be surprising if the coming months do not see renewed turmoil on world markets, as high-tech and wildly inflated Internet stocks come down to Earth, and Russia and the old USSR again have to confront their economic dilemmas and instability.

### Volcanoes, Earthquakes and Atomic Power

Looking ahead, it is only appropriate with Saturn making its square to Uranus from Taurus, that most material of signs, that we look at its possible expressions in the physical. For the very heart of each atom combines the Saturnine centripetal forces of cohesion, which hold things together, with the Uranian centrifugal forces of dissemination, which would force things apart. So, likewise, the gravity of the mass of the Sun holds us in thrall, as we endlessly circle his magnificence. Yet, at the same time, the great Helios, timed by the planetary movements, as Theodor Landscheidt shows<sup>5</sup>, is constantly erupting with the force of millions of nuclear explosions, throwing out zillions of particles of his being into space, bathing us in radiations that impact our weather patterns and psychology. Whilst such solar flares are not the exclusive domain of Saturn-Uranus, it would be surprising if this aspect did not exacerbate such activity, and especially around the end of January 2000, as they become exact heliocentrically.

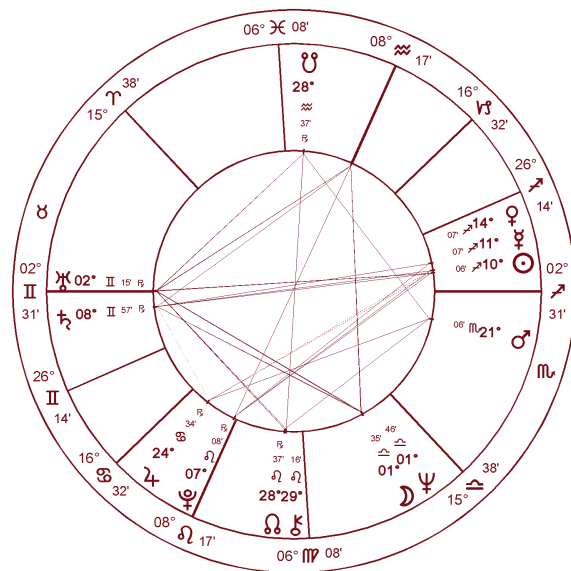
Returning to an Earthly level, the Saturn-Uranus process can be seen as the *breaking point* within matter, whereby something suddenly gives way, and long held-in tensions snap, as with sudden shifts of tectonic plates which create earthquakes, or the sudden fracturing of the earth's mantle at a volcanic eruption. At the even deeper level of the atomic, this Saturn-Uranus process represents the "quantum" leap by which an electron moves from one orbital state of being to another. Each electron state changes the essential nature of the substance.

For the Promethean scientists, it is getting atoms to change their orbital state which is at the heart of our ability to harness atomic energy. This was first achieved by a team of sorcerer's apprentices, under the football stadium in Chicago, on 2nd December 1942, as the Saturn-Uranus conjunction was rising, opposed the Sun (Figure 6). The outgoing square of 1952 was followed by the explosion of the first hydrogen bomb on Eniwetok on 1st November (19:14:58 GMT, 11°N30' 162°E15'). With this in mind, and the transits of Pluto to the 1942 chart, it would be surprising if atomic energy does not become an increasingly significant focus of renewed debate in the months ahead. The plans to decommission most of Germany's atomic power stations are already under way, and fresh calls for help with making safe the ex-USSR's rusting nuclear stations and atomic submarine fleet would seem likely to arise. At the same time, scientists working in atomic research may find the cosmic climate encouraging for fresh breakthroughs.

### Issues of Evolution and Consciousness

At the biological level, we can see the Saturn-Uranus polarity, at its simplest, as seed and earth, by which the basic black soil is transformed into bluebells and scarlet geraniums and radishes, yellow daffodils, pink roses or  
(continued on page 37)

Figure 6  
**First controlled nuclear chain reaction**  
2nd December 1942  
15:49 CST  
Chicago  
Tropical  
Placidus  
True Node







# The Centre for Psychological Astrology

## Seminar Schedule - Autumn 1999

**19th September**

**Melanie Reinhart**

### **The Angles: Asc/Desc, Self & Other, MC/IC, Parent & Child**

The four angular points of the chart orient our planetary patterns in time and space, revealing the quality of our fundamental relationships with our sense of self (Asc), other people (Desc), the world (MC), and our private inner reality (IC). Each angle will be explored in depth, including the elements, signs and ruling planets, and a guided imagery exercise will be included. We will examine the four angles of the horoscope, whose two axes anchor the planetary patterns of birth in the houses. The emphasis will be on what they reveal about these four different relationships, considered both from an inner and an outer point of view.

**25th & 26th September**

**Juliet Sharman Burke**

### **Beginners Tarot Weekend**

This two day workshop introduces the 78 Tarot cards in some depth. The first day will involve studying in depth the divinatory meanings of the 22 Major Arcana, examining their origins, mythology and imagery. We will look at several different decks, including the *Mythic Tarot* and *Rider Waite* to compare and contrast the symbolism as well as doing example readings in the group. On the second day, we will look at the Minor Arcana studying the remaining 56 suit cards using primarily the *Mythic Tarot* although also using other decks, linking suits to elements and court cards to astrological signs. As much time as possible will be given to example reading in the group.

**3rd October**

**Lynn Bell**

### **The Sun has its Joy in the 9th - discovering Planetary Joys**

For ancient astrologers, Mercury wasn't necessarily strongest in the third, nor Mars in the first. This recently rediscovered map of planetary strength has some surprising and satisfying revelations. We will discover this old/new way of looking at our own and others' charts and deepen our understanding of planets and houses and how they work together.

**17th October**

**Jane Ridder-Patrick**

### **From Illness to Wholeness- the Psychology of Medical Astrology**

The body is the interface between the outer and inner worlds. Symptoms can be seen as metaphors, relaying messages between the two realms. Illness may be the most efficient way to consciousness and wholeness. We will look at the basic anatomical and physiological meanings of the planets, signs and houses and link them with the underlying psychological processes that are ripe for emerging.

**24th October**

**Anne Whitaker**

### **Pluto**

In attempting to approach Pluto - the planet symbolising that raw, vital energy at the core of all life - having an appropriate attitude is vital. We need to be honest, and humble, for in contemplating Pluto we are facing the deepest of all paradoxes: that life depends on death. The energy represented by astrological Pluto is visceral, not cerebral.

Thus, in forming some concept of what Pluto represents which will be of use to us, we need to try to connect to that energy at a gut level, as well as using the light of reason to guide our journey. Myth presents us with valuable insights into the nature of Plutonian power and how to face and honour it, as do poetry and literature. The first part of the seminar will make use of those tools. The second part will use case material, and participants' own experience, to illuminate Pluto's natal placement by sign, house and aspect. Transits and progressions involving Pluto will also be explored, in our efforts to honour and understand the place of Plutonian power in individual and collective life. Bring your own charts.

**31st October**

**Karen Hamaker Zondag**

### **The Consultation Chart:**

### **How to use horary astrology in a creative way in psychological astrology**

In the first part of this workshop I will present a case to show how inner and outer events we encounter in life are related to our birth chart and transits and progressions. When applying the rules of horary astrology on the events, we can use these horary charts in a very meaningful way to understand what is happening to us. They mirror our inner situation. In the second part, I will focus on how we can use the chart of the first consultation of a client as a mirror of underlying themes. In presenting examples I will also give the basic rules of doing horary interpretation. Find out how revealing it is to work with the consultation chart!

**7th November**

**Darby Costello**

### **The Progressed Moon**

Today we shall discuss the progressed Moon in its capacity to reveal the direction of our emotional development over a lifetime. As it goes through its cycle we shall explore how it touches each planet in the sequence that is personal to your chart, and what this means in terms of your emotional journey through life. We shall also look at its seven year cycles, and its connection with the transiting Saturn cycle. Those who wish to attend this day will enjoy it more if you know where your progressed Moon is and where it was during key moments of your emotional development.

**14th November**

**Liz Greene**

### **How to Survive Neptune Transits**

The peculiarly subtle, "altered state" experience of Neptune transits often conceals the real meaning of the transit until a long time later, and we may blunder through a time of great confusion and suffering, or believe that we have finally found the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow. This seminar will explore what "happens" to us when natal chart placements receive transits from Neptune, and how we might be able to work with them with greater insight at the same time as being able to honour, on non-rational levels, the inner process which is occurring. At the best of times, we cannot dictate the course of outer planet transits, but we may be able to understand more about what is required of us, based on Neptune's natal placement as well as its archetypal meaning.

**20th November**

**Orientation Morning and Staff/Student Meeting**

The morning offers an opportunity for new students to meet with the directors and staff to discuss all aspects of the course. The afternoon offers an opportunity for all students, new and old, to meet and talk with staff and each other and a time to present well-deserved Certificates and Diplomas. All students are strongly encouraged to attend this meeting. It is restricted to CPA Diploma Students only.

**21 November**

**A Psychological Approach to Hard Aspects**

There are many approaches to the interpretation of hard aspects, and modern astrologers are less inclined to attribute malefic qualities to them and more willing to recognise their potential for creative energy and motivation. However, even with this enlightened attitude, we still fear the upcoming “bad” Pluto or Saturn transit, and perhaps need to look more deeply and with greater realism as well as optimism at the real psychological dynamics and underlying meaning of this group of aspects - from the perspectives of individual character, heredity, and teleology.

**Liz Greene**

**APPLICATION FORM**

**Name:**

**CPA Diploma student yes/no**

**Address:**

**Telephone:**

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

- Hans Baker - Study Group
- Sunday 19 September The Angles, Asc/Desc. MC/IC - Melanie Reinhart
- Sunday 25/26 September Beginners Workshop in Tarot - Juliet Sharman-Burke
- Sunday 3 October Planetary Joys - Lynn Bell
- Sunday 17 October Psychology of Medical Astrology - Jane Ridder-Patrick
- Sunday 24 October Pluto - Anne Whitaker
- Sunday 31 October The Consultation Chart - Karen Hamaker-Zondag
- Sunday 7 November The Progressed Moon - Darby Costello
- Sunday 14 November How to Survive Neptune Transits - Liz Greene
- Saturday 20 November Orientation Morning & Staff/Student Meeting
- Sunday 21 November A Psychological Approach to Hard Aspects - Liz Greene
- Mailing Subscription £3 [per 3-term year]

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 website for details at [www.astrologer.com/cpa](http://www.astrologer.com/cpa).

I enclose a cheque/postal order/money order in Sterling, drawn on a UK bank, for the sum of £ \_\_\_\_\_

**Post to: Centre for Psychological Astrology,  
BCM Box 1815, London WC1N 3XX, England  
Telephone and Fax: +44-20 -8749 2330  
Email: [cpalondon@aol.com](mailto:cpalondon@aol.com)**

**Hans Baker will be running a Beginners' class starting 27th September for ten weeks.  
Please contact him on 0117 940 5537 for all details of this course.**

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, except Tarot, are held at Regents College, Inner Circle, Regents Park, London, NW1. Nearest tube: Baker Street. Tarot will be held at 209 Hammersmith Grove, London W6. Nearest Tube: Goldhawk Rd or Hammermith Broadway

**Please do not turn up at a venue without booking in advance!**

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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 Saspotas, 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](http://www.astrologer.com/cpa). You can receive email bulletins from the CPA by sending a message to [listserv@astrologer.com](mailto: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.

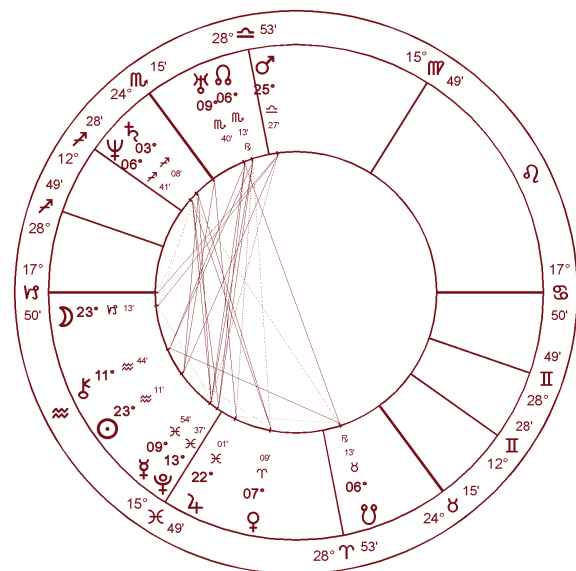
## The CPA Press

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.



(continued from page 32)

multi-coloured wallflowers. The seed is Uranus as the “seminal reason” which “informs” Saturn as the “pure passive potentiality” of matter. As such, Saturn-Uranus is at the heart of evolutionary development, of change and adaptation, as Uranian “ideas”, in the form of genes and their parent organisms, seek ever newer and more appropriate forms in which to survive and



develop. This is aptly shown in the natal chart of Charles Darwin (Figure 7), the father of evolutionary theory, by the framing of the MC by Saturn and Uranus, and the 24° aspect between these bodies. This reveals itself the more vividly in Darwin’s 5th harmonic chart, where Saturn and Uranus form a Grand Trine with Mercury. We may also note that at the Apollonian heart of the matter, Darwin’s Sun, is, simultaneously, almost exactly bi-novile Saturn and bi-septile Uranus, thus bringing together structural ideals and intellections (Sun - 2/9 - Saturn) with transcendent inspirations (Sun - 2/7 - Uranus).

We noted how the 1988 Saturn-Uranus conjunction saw an acceleration of genetic research, and the birth of the genome project for the mapping of all 3 billion genes in the human code. Now, at the square, such matters are coming to a point of crisis. Private industry has begun to create its own genome project, with a view to patenting key genes for commercial profit. At the same time, cloning is becoming the focus of ethical controversy, and the dangers of Genetically Modified (GM) crops for the Earth’s delicate eco-system are beginning to be recognised. These issues can only hot up, as the wisdom of Promethean assisted evolution for commercial purposes is challenged and opposed. However, in the longer run, this accelerating debate could prove deeply healing, as it brings to the fore ecological and ethical issues, and the unity of the Earth as a biological system.

## The Astrological Genome Project

It would be good to think that this phase of Saturn-Uranus, planets which have so much to do with traditional and progressive astrology, will encourage fresh creative energy for our own astrological “genome project”. I refer to that felicitous and inspired image of Robin Heath, the astrologer/astronomer, who has recently come on board as a CPA tutor, who writes of astrology as describing “our external DNA” .

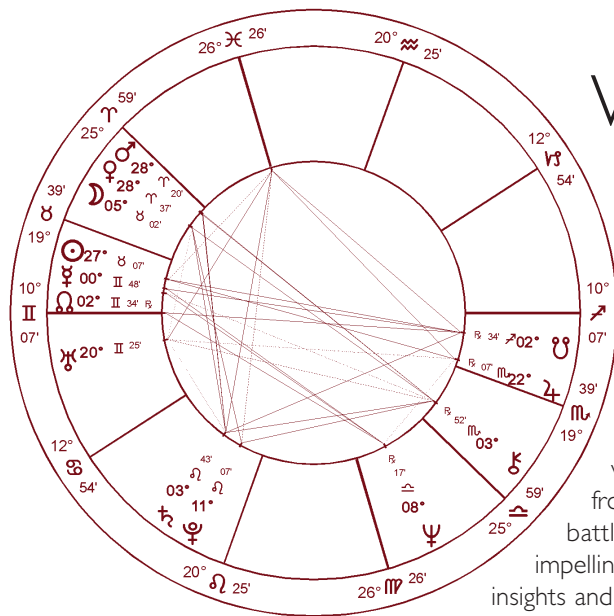
Whilst geneticists work on the unravelling of our internal DNA, we astrologers continue our work of unravelling the external DNA. This has been going on over many years. André Barbault has spent more than 60 years identifying the function and expression of different planetary cycles and their combinations, as we summarised in *Mundane Astrology*<sup>6</sup>. I hope this simple series on the planetary cycles in *Apollon* will also encourage more students to embark upon this huge work. Be that as it may, we are delighted to learn that Richard Tarnas, author of the best-selling work on Western philosophy, *The Passion of the Western Mind*, is even now finalising his own contribution to this mammoth task in his *Cosmos and Psyche-Intimations of a New World View*, due for publication by Random House, at the end of the year, or early 2000. This is a major analysis of the cultural correlates of the planetary cycles. Coming from such an eminent academic, it will, with any luck, help bring astrology back into the main stream of philosophical debate, and further accelerate work in this exciting area.

### Creative Strivings

The volcanic processes of Mother Earth are echoed by humanity in our own multifarious creative activities. The molten metal, plastic and silicon of the world’s foundries and workshops are constantly being transmuted and cast into technological wonders, artefacts and works of art. So, likewise, within the psyche of artists, the struggles and tensions of the human condition are given ever new expressions. For example, at the heart of that great astrological film *Shine*, which every astrology student should see, is Rachmaninoff’s third piano concerto. His music and life are the epitome of Saturn-Uranus, which stretches in opposition across his chart, (Figure 8, overleaf), like a fine-tuned string, taking us from crisis to resolution, and back to fresh tension again. Not surprisingly, the core of the film *Shine* is about breakdown and breakthrough, and we find that the pianist protagonist, David Helfgott, has (Figure 9, overleaf), Saturn 45° Uranus, with the Moon exactly square Saturn and 45° Uranus.

Figure 7  
**Charles Darwin**  
12th February 1809  
6:00 (LMT +0:11)  
Shrewsbury  
Tropical  
Placidus  
True Node

6 *Mundane Astrology*, Michael Baigent, Nick Campion and Charles Harvey, Urania Trust

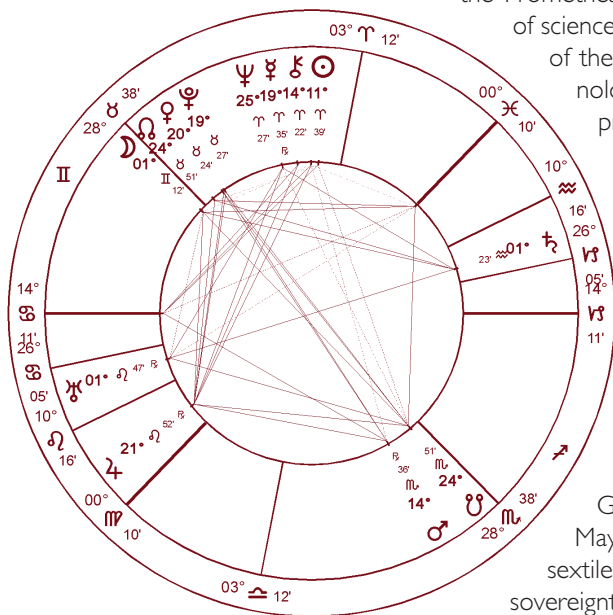


**Figure 8**  
**Sergei Rachmaninoff**  
 1st April 1873  
 9:30 LMT (7:25 GMT)  
 Oneg, Russia  
 Tropical  
 Placidus  
 True Node

With the current dynamic outgoing square of these planets, we can expect to see our contemporary musicians and painters, writers, poets and film-makers wrestling to give expression to this explosive tension between Heaven and Earth, between discipline and freedom. So we should be prepared for some controversial fireworks on all creative fronts, as Heaven and Earth do battle within the artist soul, impelling her to fresh mould-breaking insights and attempted resolutions of this archetypal tension.

### The Political Espousal of Technological Progress

In day-to-day matters, Saturn-Uranus has, for a long time, been the basic engine of Western industrial society. It expresses the "earthing of the Promethean", the practical application of science and invention. It is the cycle of the ebb and flow of new technologies, and of the free-enterprise culture which keeps the flow of innovations going. We may note that the three main motors of technology in the modern world were all born with a major outgoing Saturn-Uranus aspect: The United States' Independence, 4th July 1776, fell at the outgoing Saturn trine Uranus; West Germany was reborn on 24th May 1949, at the exact outgoing sextile, whilst Japan regained its sovereignty at the outgoing square, on 28th April 1952.



**Figure 9**  
**David Helfgott**  
 19th May 1947  
 8:24 (-10:00)  
 Melbourne  
 Tropical  
 Placidus  
 True Node

At the level of individual leaders, that arch-proponent of free-enterprise capitalism, Margaret Thatcher (b. 13 October 1925, 9 am, Grantham, 52°N55, 00°W29) has a dominant Saturn-Uranus theme in her chart. Her belief in the pre-eminent importance of market forces has dominated much of world economic assumptions for the past 20 years. She was born with her Sun at 19°30' Libra, square the mid-point of Saturn/Uranus at 18°08' Capricorn, and with the MC at 3°51' Virgo even more closely 45° to this mid-point. The importance of Saturn-Uranus in her chart is most vividly seen in her 7th harmonic chart,

where the Sun and Moon sit with Uranus opposite Saturn. The 7th harmonic has much to say about what inspires us, and our capacity to inspire others. The tension is between a faith in innovation and a desire to conserve, between self-reliance, free-enterprise and "family values".

Echoing this theme, Tony Blair (b. 6 May 1953, 6:10 am, Edinburgh) who now carries Margaret Thatcher's mantle from the other side of the political fence, and who has avidly espoused new technology (and GM food, in the face of public outrage), has his Saturn/Uranus midpoint at 3° 49' of Virgo, within minutes of Margaret Thatcher's MC. His Saturn/Uranus is, in fact, almost exactly 135° Mrs T's Saturn/Uranus, and it is made personal by the close square from his Mars conjunct Ascendant at 3° 27' and 4° 50' Gemini. This shared axis with Mrs Thatcher is, of course, lined up with the power-evoking, regenerative Pluto position in both the England 1066 chart, at 3° 53' Pisces, and the 1801 UK chart, at 2° 42' Pisces.

With this central commitment to a progressive Saturn-Uranus agenda, we can expect accelerating clashes in the UK between the Blair-championed technocrats and the more ecologically aware, over GM food, factory farming and other issues where technological development (Uranus) is given arbitrary priority over common sense and more traditional approaches (Saturn). For the world's technologically driven economy as a whole, the implications of the present critical square are that, despite the apparent upturn in industrial confidence, factors are likely to emerge which will challenge this seemingly unstoppable momentum. As noted, this may well be precipitated by a temporary, but severe collapse in the values of Internet and related stocks in the USA, with knock-on effects around the world. At the same time, this outgoing, "Springtime" square of Saturn and Uranus is also likely to see the bursting forth of new technologies, which shatter older ways of doing things.

### The Ugly Face of Saturn-Uranus

Uranos would have slaughtered Chronos, if he had not been tricked by Gaia. Saturn did not hesitate to castrate his father. So, perhaps, it is not surprising that "violent people" is the only sociological correspondence that Reinhold Ebertin is able to give for this pair in *The Combination of Stellar Influences*. And, alas, the stresses and strains of this warring duad do often seem to seek their resolution through extreme actions and the desire to destroy, cut out and castrate whoever is perceived to be the "enemy".

For many “the glorious march of technological progress” has come to seem increasingly like the rape and pillage of traditional ways, by an unstoppable mass commerce, totally contemptuous of the individual and Nature. This has, for some, encouraged the development of alternative life-styles (Uranus), espousing sustainable agriculture (Saturn), a life in tune with the environment. However, for others, the implicit violence of our Uranian, disposable, consumer society evokes retaliatory violence. This is neatly symbolised in the chart of one of the most virulent and articulate opponents of our increasingly technologically dominated Western society, the USA’s anti-technology “Unabomber”, Theodore Kaczynski. Over many years, Kaczynski, a former mathematics professor at Berkeley, managed to remain undetected as he waged a one-man campaign of violence against the remorseless industrialisation of all aspects of life in the USA. Kaczynski was born on 22 May 1942 in Chicago. His Sun is exactly conjunct the Saturn-Uranus conjunction, with Mars in semi-square. He is, understandably, depicted as mad by the press, yet, whilst deploring his means of protest, no astrologer can fail to witness the archetypal realities behind Kaczynski’s protest, and the compassionless violence built into the military-industrial foundations of Western society which he was reflecting.

As, “violent people” are not just “them out there”. This violence is potentially in all of us; for this remorseless intellectual pair, when in league, can be tough and ruthless operators. In the service of an Ideal this is a combination which quickly turns to “tough, uncompromising, no-nonsense air strikes” against Vietnam, Libya, Saddam Hussein, or other agreed “evil” threats to world peace, as well as to equally “tough, non-nonsense, guerrilla action” against the American anti-God which we call “terrorism”. Both, in their different ways, are acts of terror. Both are considered by their perpetrators to be acts of Reason and justice.

If we claim that moral right is on the side of the West in such matters, it is sobering to remember the US involvement in Vietnam which, in the name of “freedom (Uranus) from communist oppression (Saturn)”, accelerated into wholesale bombing under the Saturn opposition Uranus of 1965/66. Equally disillusioning is the consideration of a chart for 11 September 1973, the day that the CIA spearheaded the assassination coup against Allende in Chile. Here we see Saturn, conjunct the USA Venus (justice) was forming an exact 108° (3/10th) incoming aspect to Uranus in the sky, an aspect pattern which speaks of the conscious and deliberate repression of the Uranian. The USA

government could not accept Allende’s freely elected Uranian left-wing government, and felt, with remorseless Saturn-Uranus logic, the right to eliminate him and place the reactionary business-friendly military dictator Pinochet in his place.

Madeleine Albright, the USA Secretary of State, has this year publicly apologised for the Chilean episode, but we cannot but expect that the coming months will see “moral, upright, liberal” Western societies facing similar dilemmas, where events in the world seem intolerable, and we will feel “obliged” to intervene, in the name of freedom, reason and liberty.

### Saturn-Uranus and the Middle East

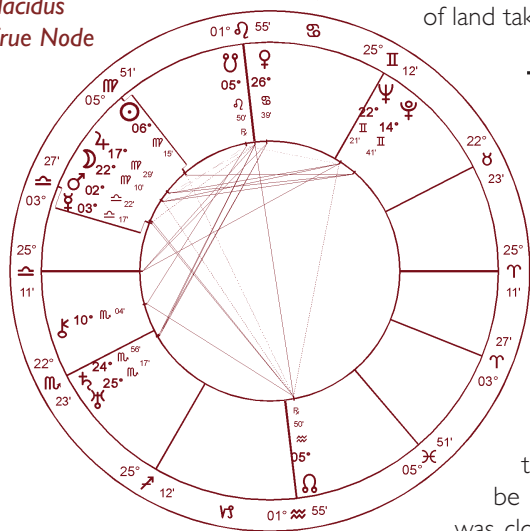
No study of Saturn-Uranus can ignore its epitome: the Middle East, which so neatly encapsulates all that this dilemma stands for in world consciousness, for good and ill. In the history of Western culture it is the Middle East which is seen as the crossroads, the crucible, in which ancient and modern worlds intersect. The Saturnine Old Testament of the jealous, vengeful, unforgiving Father, whose Commandments must be obeyed, gives way to the New Testament of the Word, the Truth that will set us free. Whilst Christianity has, over the centuries, repeatedly fossilised into a Saturnine traditional mode, its underlying emphasis on individual responsibility and personal redemption has, over time, proved to be a key factor in awakening Western consciousness to the ideals of universal brotherhood (provided of course you acknowledge the one Fatherhood of the Christian God the Father!)

The Middle East is a constant reminder of the radically different ways of being in the world. For whilst Christianity, and the secular liberal democracy that has grown out of it, has succeeded in imposing its values upon the West, the world of Islamic and Jewish fundamentalism serve as a constant reminder of other priorities. These cultures cannot accept that life is essentially about McDonald’s, Walt Disney, Coca-Cola and mass consumerism. They are predicated on the - not unreasonable - view, that there are higher and deeper purposes to life than feeding the latest transient appetites and fashions of a rapacious free market.

### Israel - The Old New Land

At the epi-centre of the Middle East situation, and somehow embodying and epitomising the essence of the Saturn-Uranus dilemma, is the ancient and modern state of Israel, born of European, intellectual liberal parents, yet equally sustained by arch-fundamentalism. Israel’s ambiguous role in Western conscious-

**Figure 10**  
**Herzl proclaims Israel**  
 29 August 1897  
 10:15 CET  
 Basle  
 Tropical  
 Placidus  
 True Node



I have as yet been unable to confirm the hour that the Congress was due to start, but it would seem to have been at 10 am. Contemporary reports indicate that “when Herzl himself rose to address the Congress, the delegates jumped to their feet in a thrilled ovation that lasted a quarter of an hour”. Hence I have set the chart for 10:15.

**Figure 11**  
**Israel**  
 14 May 1948  
 16:32 (EET -2:00)  
 Tel Aviv  
 Tropical  
 Placidus  
 True Node

lence of the region is not inevitable, but its resolution will require a heroic commitment to seeing the larger Unity which lies behind the seemingly irreconcilable opposites.

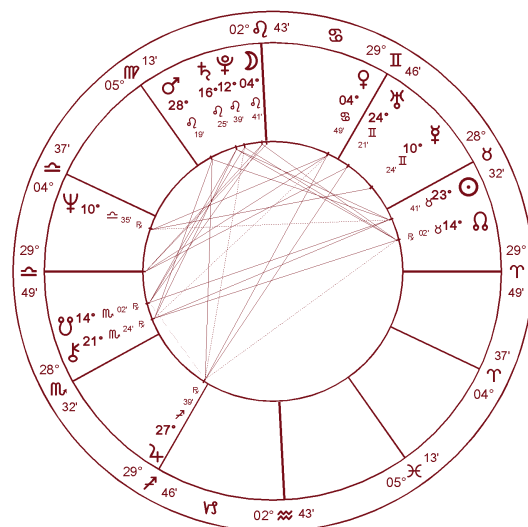
### The Great Disruption

The terms of the debate of the current Saturn-Uranus phase become increasingly apparent as this aspect moves to exactitude. Even as we go to press, the book causing the greatest stir amongst intellectuals is Francis Fukuyama's *The Great Disruption - Human Nature and the Reconstitution of Social Order*. It would be difficult to come up with a more appropriately titled book for the time. Fukuyama, born at the last outgoing Saturn-Uranus square in 1952, suggests, as he did in his previous work *The End of History*, that liberal democ-

ness today is of the very essence of Saturn-Uranus tensions and ambiguities. A natural sympathy for the long term security of the persecuted survivors of the Holocaust surrounded by enemies, is juxtaposed with a sense of outrage at Israel's resistance to recognising the Palestinians' right to nationhood, and the return of land taken in war.

This embodiment of Saturn-Uranus is hardly surprising, for Israel was first called into being on 29 August 1897<sup>7</sup> at the First Zionist Congress in Basle, Switzerland (Figure 10) by Theodor Herzl, with his opening words to the Congress: “We are here to lay the foundation stone of the house which is to shelter the Jewish nation”. As can be seen, this occurred as Saturn was closing to the exact conjunction of Uranus. The significance of this position is compounded by a comparison of this chart with the chart for the end of the Declaration of Independence of Israel, at 4:32pm on 14 May 1948 in Tel Aviv, when Ben Gurion banged his gavel on the table and declared “The State of Israel has arisen” (Figure 11).

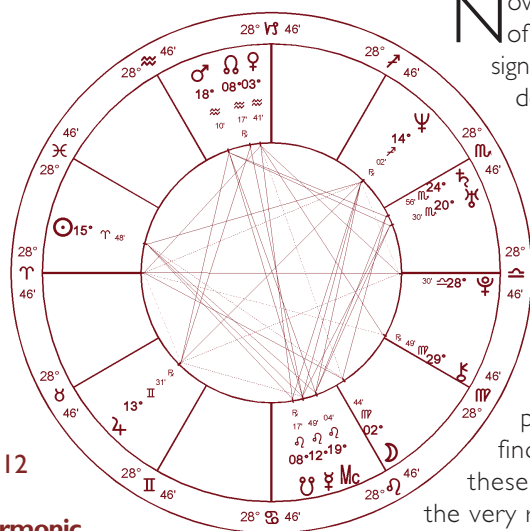
Where is Saturn-Uranus in this picture? In fact, they are in almost exact septile. The 7th Harmonic chart (Figure 12) shows them not only to be in close conjunction, but Saturn is, to the minute, conjunct its 1897 position, whilst of course Israel's 1948 Sun falls closely opposed to the 1897 conjunction. Since Palestine also formally came into being at 24:00 hours that same day, and declared its independence again with the Saturn-Uranus conjunction of 1988, in this sense Israel/Palestine is the embodiment of this process.



racy, and the ever-innovative globalised free-market economy, are a kind of culminating Hegelian end-point in human social and cultural evolution, which will neatly transcend all previous social contradictions. Whilst we may deplore the breakdown of traditional society, which has occurred with increasing speed since the early 1950s, Fukuyama argues that the society that is emerging is not only, self-evidently, the best of all possible worlds, but that it is already throwing up its own social order. It will undoubtedly prove a reassuring book for dedicated Westerners in what may well prove to be unstable times. Whilst there may be no going back, we may suspect that the quote from Horace with which Fukuyama starts may express itself in other ways than he himself would like to evoke. As Horace says:

*You can throw out Nature with a pitchfork,  
 But it always comes running back  
 And will burst through your foolish contempt in triumph.*

**Figure 12**  
**Israel**  
 7th harmonic



Now, at the outgoing square of Saturn-Uranus in fixed signs, as they approach these degrees, we can expect the “Ancient and Modern” seeds of 1897 to be increasingly brought to a head, demanding new developments and fresh thinking in this tragic, long running stand-off. We must pray that all sides will find ways of working with these energies to honour the very real but different needs of everyone involved. The habitual vio-





# A Time to Heal

Erin Sullivan

“Metaphysician, heal thyself,” writes Erin Sullivan in this personal account of the way she has dealt with a debilitating disease, osteoarthritis. With humour and panache, she offers us an inspiring way to work with the frightening challenges that affect us all.

About twenty years ago, an old friend of mine phoned me from California and asked me what his chart looked like for open heart surgery, a triple by-pass, on a specific date. I looked and saw a bunch of aspects that I didn't really like at the time. I suggested he make the surgery a month later. I was wrong. He had the surgery on the appointed date, with transiting Mars and Venus conjunct his natal Uranus in Aries, and the progressed Moon conjunct his natal Mars Retrograde in Cancer, and transiting Saturn in Scorpio coming to his natal Sun in Scorpio. It was terrifically successful and he is alive and well today - no further heart problems.

Aspects will play themselves out, no matter what we do. It is possible that my friend might have died under those aspects, had he not had the emergency surgery at the time. From that moment on, I have watched aspects apply and separate in times of great physical stress, at times of restoration through radical means, and, also, in times of death.

Now, I have much more confidence in the transits and the aspects, as they form to synchronize with physical manifestations. Part of my reticence to engage in so-called “medical astrology” is my own background. My father was a surgeon, and a staunch mechanist, a man who, although he received the highest marks in psychology in his medical training, did not believe in psychological, metaphysical or intangible manifestation. He believed in science. An old-style doctor. I have a healthy respect for the mechanization of medicine, as it saves lives and offers a panacea to heretofore crippling or terminal conditions.

However, I also have a very healthy respect for constitutional healing, for preventative and natural methods of dealing with our bodies. So far, though, I have not been convinced in any sensible way, of what is bandied about as “medical astrology”. Having said that, I do know that the *psyche/soma* balance is delicate and is unified. There was once a time when there was no such thing as a body/mind split, but now we live in a time when the body and mind are so vastly parted that it will take extreme philosophies to try to bridge that gap. Therefore, I support all the wand-waving, crystal-healing, aura-adjusting and ritual smudging that goes on in the name of healing, in this chaotic era of new horizons.

I think we are on the edge of a breakthrough, but it will take centuries before we arrive at the new medicine. At that momentous time, it will be amusing to look back at all the experimentation with techniques, just as we look back on Galen, and the ancient's thoughts and practices involving the four humours, bleeding, leeches and so on, as healing techniques. They may be weird to us now, but they are the foundation of our current astounding medical capabilities. Yesterday's heresy is tomorrow's *status quo*.

With Pluto in Sagittarius, we find ourselves on an ethical ledge in the medical realm. Because of genetic engineering, and experimentation, the healing world is up against some ultimate truths. We cannot deny the horror of Mary Shelley's vision manifest - the scientists are creating monsters, and what will come of that? The collective view of transits speaks very clearly about the healing issues we all face as a global entity. And, they also talk about the problems individuals will face, both in illness and wellness - and this is where I want to go with this article.

Firstly, art and science have become disparate. They were not always so, and indeed, in actual fact, are not. However, they are currently perceived as polarities. Astrology is the *pontifex maximus* - the bridge between the matters of Earth and matters of heaven. These realms are not divided, but are reflected, entwined and unified within each other, as is our body and soul. The god of the heavens and the goddess of earth are still united, even after the Fall. But, it takes the astrologer to facilitate the understanding of the meaning of the meeting on the horizon of heaven and Earth.

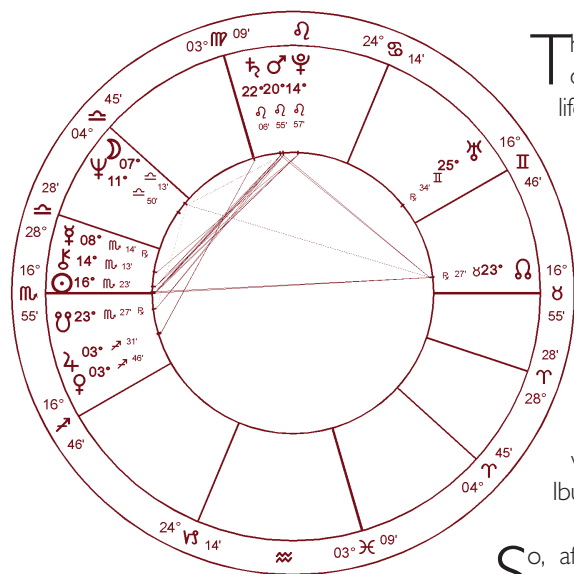
The natal chart is the inherent structure of the individual who owns it. There are myriad manifestations of the natal planetary array. The combination of the earthly, that is, the DNA and family physicality, and the heavenly, the divine destiny of one's soul, are combined in astrological patterns which define certain psychological predispositions to particular somatic reactions.

Having spent the last four years in a state of degenerating osteoarthritis, and having finally come to the realization that mechanical intervention would heal me, I did a lot of soul searching and ephemeris gazing to come to a decision about radical surgery.



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.

**I Frankenstein. Mary Shelly. Various editions. Written in the summer of 1816.**



**Erin Sullivan**  
 9th November 1947  
 7:21  
 Vancouver  
 Tropical  
 Placidus  
 True Node

**2 Retrograde Planets: Traversing the Inner Landscape** Erin Sullivan. Arkana, 1992. (In between prints, out of print in Arkana editions.) The station of an outer planet at a particular degree means it will station direct on that very degree exactly eighteen months later, completing the process of the retrogression. See the book for explicit explanation of this remarkable process.

The fact is, I had become so disabled, chronically in pain, that good quality of life was virtually gone. At the age of fifty, I was not ready to sit all day and measure the amount of time I could be on my feet, getting as much done as I could in a short space of time. It was to the level that I could not stand or walk for more than two hours out of twenty-four. I had to calculate how much time I could allot to buying food, getting necessities and so on. Not a very creative way to live, I assure you. And, all that Ibuprofen is simply not cool.

So, after almost a year of research and squaring and interviews with orthopaedic surgeons in the UK, Canada and the US, it became evident that I was a good candidate for total hip replacement. In both hips. Well.

Theoretically, it was good, in reality it was terrifying. It came to pass that my lifestyle of world-living and travel was coming to a screeching halt. The final realization came in the summer of 1998, when I had to cancel my planned return to London and work in Europe that autumn. By November, the surgeon in Tucson had said, pick a date, talk to your family, and let me know what you want to do.

I went to the Internet, got all the information on the surgical procedure, armed myself with expertise and knowledge, and, with that, gained power over the physical. Now, I had to understand the metaphysical. This was the most important for me, as the intellectual world of knowledge is far more limited than the spiritual world of wisdom. With both knowledge and wisdom, I hoped to be capable of comprehending the import of the experience.

By this time, I was profoundly awed by the transits, progressions and solar arc directions in my horoscope. Awed and rather alarmed. I sat with it, and allowed my deeper self to inform me, and basically, it said, "You are about to become confined, there is a need within you to stop doing whatever you have been doing for a long time, and change. This will take time, more than you would choose, but when you get to the other side, your life will be more appropriate for the future. Do not run from this, as it will happen, in some form or another." I responded, "But, does it mean having my leg off and put back on again? And, twice?" Naturally, there was no reply, as the deeper self, like any self-respecting oracle, does not like to be badgered.

The fundamentals of my life were in a state comparable to degenerative osteoarthritis, and my X-rays showed it too. I think my response to this situation is rather fitting of fixed signs. Dragged kicking and screaming into the future, I then come to full acceptance of it, and go into it as an adventure.

And, surgery of this kind is one hell of an adventure. I won't go into the gruesome details, but it is all done with saws and hammers, titanium and Teflon, lots of life-fluids flowing and so on. And, it hurts. But, it works! Now, exactly four months post-operative, I am walking, driving, swimming, sitting, sleeping and healing - pain free. Except for the right hip, which will be done on the first of October, I am regenerating, and half-way to optimum health.

So, thanks to the master of the knife, and the technical genius of our day, I am not an old crippled hag before my time. And, not thirty years ago, women, particularly, suffered from this early aging and degenerative condition, rendering them immobile and unproductive at too early an age. Now, we are not so unfortunate.

Building up to the surgery date, the movement of the symbolic directions was pretty clear. Total hip replacement makes me think of Mars, Saturn and Pluto. (With a dash of Uranus). I have MA/SA/PL in a stellium, in Leo, just to be dramatic about it all. My progressed Moon had begun the trek over those three planets, and at the time of surgery, was conjunct natal Saturn. (The genetics play into this, as both parents are Capricorn, Scorpio rising, and my father had osteoarthritis badly; but surgery was not an option, as it was too primitive then, as far as he was concerned.)

Total hip replacement also makes me think of Uranus - intervention in a most modern and drastic way. The astrology was fabulous: solar arc Uranus in 1998-9 was square my natal Sun, from the 9th house in Leo, and it would be replicated by the transiting Uranus in Aquarius exactly square my natal Sun in 1999 - 2000 (stationing retrograde, in fact, in May 1999, to spend an eighteen-month sojourn in orb of the square, until it stations direct in October 2000.)<sup>2</sup>

I began to think long-term, from a big picture viewpoint. In doing that, I realized that this was the break - so to speak - I had been longing for! Finally, I could be still, go nowhere, develop a new way of working, creating and being! How wonderful. How awful it had to be done in this way, but that is the Fate of it all. It became very exciting. Remember, I did not have a terminal illness, I do not have cancer, or tumours - I had a totally correctable disease, therefore, from the moment of surgery, I would be in a state of healing, there is no question of that. This is not a death sentence, but a life-giving procedure.

My first step to healing took place in the soul. I realized I was bone tired, weary of walking the planet, longing to be still, to stop talking, and think some more. The entire infrastructure of my life was not in harmony with the manifest outer structure. This would take time to deconstruct. I began to deconstruct my "normal" life, filled with commitments, lectures, activities and conferences.

I stopped making travel commitments, reduced the amount of responsibility I had for Saturnian things, like being in a place at a certain time to perform certain functions, and so on. I took my personal calendar, and created a huge space of eighteen months, where no commitments to mundane obligations would be made - until October 2000, when Uranus will make its final pass square the Sun, and Saturn will have left the 6th house, having truly moved above the horizon, where the "hero brings the boon to mankind".<sup>3</sup>

Lofty business, this bringing of boons to humanity, but when one survives the Saturn transit of the 6th house, going to the loo can seem heroic. And, frankly, that was a chore for a month or so! My soul was urging me to consider its intent and purpose. Certainly, I was physically compelled to turn inward, and take control of my external life, but my soul was banging on the door of consciousness to ask for recognition. Intellectually, I was, and am, in transition, so no stone is left unturned.

My second step was to come to terms with the physical reality of how disabled I would be, and for how long, and how to survive and be cared for, during the totally dependent period of about seven to eight weeks post-operative. I called on my daughters, who responded selflessly and immediately with their time, energy and love. I asked friends to help out a bit, I put clients off, and simply stopped my outer life, the night before surgery. In short, I became a helper who needed to be helped. Again, the horoscope relinquished some wisdom: me with my Sun/Saturn square, having it all broken up by Uranus, the progressed Moon on Saturn, solar arc Pluto on the natal Moon, solar arc Mars on the natal Neptune and solar arc Neptune on my mobile Jupiter/Venus conjunction... well, I struggled, and was furious, and angry, but in the end, I let go.

And, of course, the third step was to come to intellectual understanding of what was happening, and what I could do about it. As I mentioned earlier on, I did this through research, investigation, study and learning. I told the surgeon that, if I were not anaesthetized, I could do the operation myself! I needed to know exactly what was going to happen. Naturally, I didn't know that at all - the healing process on hip number one was filled with fear and vulnerability. I assume that the second operation will be less traumatic intellectually, as I will have the experience behind me. This does not help the outraged body to come to terms with the insult it has experienced in the operating theatre, by the way. The body will not forget easily the assault, but it will, and does, respond to correct rehabilitation and safety in the healing space.

As a wounded healer, I needed to understand all levels of the problem. And, right on cue, came Chiron to conjoin my natal Jupiter; and Venus, which, over the previous eighteen months,

had been scoured by Pluto. The build-up to lack of mobility had been operating for a considerable length of time, before the option of radical surgery arose as a reality. Interestingly, the final transit of Pluto over my Jupiter/Venus conjunction took place at its station in August of 1997, as I prepared to go to London for my CPA seminars and the AA conference. As it made its final pass, I began to experience the bone-tiredness while I was there, and it was then I first became conscious of my longing to change the working pattern. But, I didn't know how, and was simply walking in the old path. Life, as such, carried on for another year, until the decumbiture in the summer of 1998.

We have to take into consideration the duration of time that leads up to the actual awareness of an illness or a debilitating condition, and look back at the transits to see the "meaning" of the manifestation. The decumbiture, or the diagnosis horoscope, is revealing, in that it is the moment of truth, of conscious acceptance of a physical illness. But, it is the long, slow arrival at that decumbiture that is so terribly important when considering the astrological ethos of the healing of the condition. In that build-up, meaning can be found.

Once the facts are accepted, and the procedures are outlined and known, then it is often a time of relief for the ill person. At least one can feel empowered by knowledge, and participate in the experience wholly, and in that, some healing can take place on the soul level.

When it came time for me to select my surgery date - this can be done in the US under private insurance - I succumbed to the natural fear any astrologer has when Fate knocks on her door. When electing a time to do anything, I always take into consideration several pre-qualifying conditions, some of which are:

1. *Practical timing.* Can "it" be done at all? If so, how, when and under what mundane conditions? Assess the world around, the components, people, days of the week, and so on.
2. *Emotional condition.* How are you feeling? What are the fears, hopes? Seek expert counsel about the specifics of the situation, whatever it is, and balance it with your gut wisdom.
3. *Soulful intent.* What is the inner voice saying? Is the outer life mirroring the inner life? Is the "illness" or the "thing" we are looking at a radical place in life?
4. *Knowledge.* Do you know as much as you can about the situation or condition? Have you looked into all realms objectively? Have you facts, figures, times, dates, precedents and so on, at your fingertips?  
*Nota bene:* With step four, and including step five, it is essential to consider the recuperative time.
5. *Astrology.* Using horoscopes, timing, and as much symbolic material as you can muster, begin to look at the ephemeris with a "big-picture" mind. Here is

3 *Saturn in Transit: Boundaries of Mind, Body and Soul* Erin Sullivan. Arkana 1990. (In printing transition, currently out of print with Arkana). In this book, I outline the transits as a "heroic journey"... I found myself reading Saturn through the 6th house with great fascination. *Metaphysician, heal thyself.*

The beauty of astrology is that it is a truth, and the truth is always freeing. Thus, if it looks bad, and it feels bad too, then one is on track.

where I have confidence in electing a time for a surgery, or embarking on a restorative program. The post-event period (surgery, therapy or other interventions) must be considered in stages. In surgery, the first five days post-operative must be stress-free; the month following should be reasonably "good" by aspects; and the six-month post-event period should exemplify astrologically the "actual problem" and its "recovery"... as you will see, my own experience is astrologically literal.

In my own case, I emailed a colleague and friend, who validated my own thoughts generally on the matter. She was clear about one thing: the aspects will play out somehow, and therefore I should do what they are defining in the most constructive way as I see fit.

This was easy. The year, 1999, had a lot of explicit and literal transits, starting from transiting Pluto completing an eighteen-month cycle of retrogression, stationing direct in August 1999, exactly sextile my natal Moon. Neptune would hover around the sextile to my Jupiter/Venus conjunction, and the solar arc Neptune would be conjunct Jupiter/Venus through 1999. Now, I mentioned Uranus and its synchronous transit and solar arc aspects: Uranus promised to intervene. I had bought a house in April 1998 - an historic adobe house and was restoring it. By May 1999, I couldn't manage it at all. I sold the house suddenly, at a loss of money, but at a gain of freedom. Right on the station of Uranus, I moved to a simpler abode, on the 21st of May! Three months after the first hip replacement. That was part of the unconscious intent - I accepted the loss as a gain. And, indeed, it has proven to be a blessing in disguise, clever as the disguise was.

The Uranus transit was a kind of dark horse, it came out of nowhere, and jolted me from a mind-set and a body-set that was not working. But, Pluto had been grinding away on my Jupiter/Venus, and Saturn was now coming to my 6th house cusp. I resorted to reading my own book. One gets desperate at times. I was perversely gratified to read that I was in the precise space I should have been, according to my own lights.

Now, the most worrying aspect to me, amongst all of the above, was that Mars was to be retrograde (in the cycle of its retrogression) for half of 1999. And, being double Scorpio with an elevated Mars, this concerned me. I had just written an article on Mars retrograde for publication in *Dell Horoscope*, and thus was very, very familiar with its pattern in this rare cycle of time.<sup>4</sup> I was aware that Mars would spend the majority of the year in my 12th house, and its critical opposition to the Sun, mid-retrograde cycle, would occur from the 6th/12th house. Along with that, the transiting Saturn would be earnestly moving to oppose my natal Mercury, from the 6th to the 12th house. Confinement? Hospitals? Somatic issues? *Psyche/soma* balance? Quite.

I was concerned about infection, embolism and dislocation of the new joint, all of which are the big no-no's of the early stages of hip replacement recovery. Generally, I was afraid something dreadful would happen. Well, something dreadful did happen - I had total hip replacement, and I went into whole system recovery. The heavenly picture described my earthly condition. This is harmony. This is real. And, this is how I help my clients, by acknowledging what their process is, and translating it. The beauty of astrology is that it is a truth, and the truth is always freeing. Thus, if it looks bad, and it feels bad too, then one is on track.

The formulating picture was explicit, and so was the year itself. I decided to make the most of the transits, and embody them. I sincerely feel that, had I not done that, I would have suffered terribly - by impacting the joints, possibly breaking a hip or, at the very least, becoming a victim of something I actually could rescue myself from. And, depression is a clinical adjunct to disintegrating joints and bones. More Saturnian imagery. Victim does not appeal to me, whereas saving victims does... so, I had to save myself from myself, and thus, my expertise in astrology went into full gear.

I began to narrow down the time of surgery, now that I had moved through the levels of process to accept it. I went through the five basic steps I listed above, and came to February, 1999. I was looking at the 14th - 17th. I consulted with another astrologer friend, and he suggested the 16th... I went to the doctor on the 7th of January and said, "Ok, let's go - how about the 16th of February?" He was doing a teaching video of hip replacement on that day, so I set it for the 17th February, 1999, at 7:30 am.

Now it is four months to the day as I sit (on a pillow) writing this piece! And, I have witnessed my own self, from the inside out. There were some guardians about on that day, as well as my pregnant elder daughter who came for the first three weeks of the time. When I emerged from anaesthesia, in the recovery room, I slowly surfaced to a kind voice saying, "Mrs Sullivan, Mrs Sullivan, wake up now, the operation is over, Mrs Sullivan... hello..." And, a good Saturnian, I did as I was told, and looked into the face of the recovery room nurse, who then said, "Are you Erin Sullivan, the astrologer who wrote *Retrograde Planets* and *Saturn in Transit*?" I couldn't believe it, not only was I alive, but I existed. So, I said, "Yes, how odd". And, she asked if I was doing any lectures locally!!!! If I could have stood, I would have fallen over, but I couldn't stand up anyway.

Then, five weeks later, after I had resumed teaching my class at home, I discovered that one of my students, an RN, was the "guide" who walked me into the operating theatre! She "just happened" to be there, as I was wheeled in to go for the chop. I became deeply aware of how

4 *Mars Retrograde: Maverick on the Loose!* *Dell Horoscope*. February 1999 issue. This article is also available on my website homepage for downloading and printing, at [www.brookeline.com/sullivan](http://www.brookeline.com/sullivan)



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blessed I was, and very grateful for the divine guidance in the form of human contact. Oh, I did have a lecture for the Jung Society on April 9th, which the mysterious recovery room nurse came to - seven weeks after the surgery.

When I picked the date for the surgery, I made sure that the Moon would not form hard aspects to Mars, Saturn or Pluto for a few days afterward. I also took into account Mars' cycle, and how long the recuperation would take - about six months to feeling strong muscles, and nerve engagement - and saw that it would be in its retrograde phase through early August, repeating itself in aspects that were literal (like conjoining Mercury three times before reaching the degree at which it stationed). I also saw that transiting Jupiter was to make an opposition to my Moon in March, and trines to the Leo planets in the 9th (the arthritis stellium of MA/SA/PL in Leo) all through April into May. All of which are restorative aspects. And, in May, the Uranus square to my Sun, synchronous with the opposition of Saturn to my natal Mercury, was a concern, but I resolved to lay low. Ha.

That was a cosmic trick - that was when I chose (really, was forced) to move house! But, the leg was also forced to work... by the 20th of April, the day I sold the house, I was walking, driving and working hard. So, I had Saturn opposite Mercury, which translated as "work the muscles and discipline the self to reorganize the nerve synapses and muscular tension."

Throughout all of this was the background piece. Aspects of allowing help to come, to becoming dependent in a new way, allowing others to help in fundamental ways. My younger

daughter and grandson came for the last two weeks of my total dependency - and my two-year-old grandson learned to count by our repetition of my rehabilitative exercises! The funny thing was, he learned to count to ten by holding his leg up along with me, and then went back to infant school and impressed and amused everyone by this new accomplishment.

Find new ways of relating, creating, working, writing and living! This is not an event, but a process, and, having obeyed the laws of the heavens, and cleared the path into the future, I know October of 2000 will be the threshold crossing. Indeed, I shall be leading a troupe to Greece in search of the origins of western consciousness in that first week!

Meanwhile, the election of the second replacement is on the desk. Again, going through the five steps in all their levels, I favour the 30th of September or 1st of October, 1999. This is the first station of Saturn on my descendant and opposite my Sun. The inking of the threshold I will cross in April of 2000, when it emerges from its retrograde trek back into the 6th house... what boon might I bring? What new ego and persona shall I bear in the ensuing months and years? Well, we shall see.

But whatever it is, it won't be born on degenerated hips, but on New Age hips, very expensive hips at that! I shall have a lovely identity card that allows me to pass through airport security without setting off all the alarms, as the card shows the X-ray implant of titanium joints. What with my US Resident Alien card, and that little X-ray-card, I shall be ready for the millennium, hipper than ever.



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# Astrological enlightenment and the road to well-being

Pat Harris

A quiet revolution is afoot; academic psychology, traditionally hostile to astrology, has **Pat Harris** in its midst. Quantifying the effects of astrological insight and philosophy, using scientific methodology, her work offers the potential to develop a frame of reference that can be understood by scientist and metaphysician alike.

When I was reflecting on a way to sum up the effects of learning about oneself through astrology in relation to health, I settled for the word "enlightenment" because it seemed to be the only word which describes the process of self-understanding that we gradually build up throughout our lives, as students of astrology. This understanding is precious beyond all material possessions, because it truly does give us control over ourselves, and the freedom of choice to respond to stressful situations in which we face physical harm, in ways which can preserve our bodies, and protect and enhance the quality of life which each of us enjoys. Perhaps, it might have seemed more appropriate to choose a title about astrology and health which said "Astrological Enlightenment and the way to being well". They do not appear to be so very different. Is there any real difference in meaning between them?

Well, yes, there is an important difference, which is directly related to the process of enlightenment which astrology facilitates. "Being well" implies good health, whereas "well-being" suggests an inner state, which does not always depend on outer circumstances, and which can radically change our perceptions of the problems those circumstances might pose for us. People do look at their worlds differently - we all have different charts, no matter how close together in time and space we are born, and the subtle differences in our personality or individuality will show through the differences. Astrology, as far as I am aware, is the only system of language which is complex and flexible enough to be able to provide us with a structure for identifying those differences in our individualities, and utilising such understanding in order to make our lives happier. If we are happier, we have an increased sense of well-being; and if we have an increased sense of well-being, we automatically enable ourselves to improve our quality of life. So, astrological enlightenment, in this way, does lead to improvements in health.

I talked of the flexibility of astrology; I meant its endless applications to all areas of our lives. Each planet, as Dennis Elwell illustrates in his book *The Cosmic Loom*, has many layers of expression for the principle it represents. The balance and harmony of Venus can express itself through the need for a close relationship with the perfect soulmate, but it can just as easily express itself

through kidney problems, when the human body is out of balance. In fact, the quality of Venus in the charts of individuals may actually tell you something, not only about their relationships and their ability to succeed or not in them, but also how well their kidneys function, and what might be lacking which could contribute to their detriment. I will use myself as an example, here. I have Venus in Aries in a T-square to Saturn and Uranus, with only Uranus in a water sign. I need equal amounts of water to any liquid I might drink in a 24-hour cycle, in order to maintain balance in this area of my body. And I have had some very trying relationships over the years!

## But we can take this a step further

In my research for my Master's degree in health psychology, I used astrology and counselling to explore how chronic pain patients developed coping strategies to help them manage their everyday lives, in spite of great discomfort, and varying degrees of reduced mobility. These particular patients all had great difficulty doing even the very basic tasks of looking after their day-to-day needs, and had developed what is known as "maladaptive" coping strategies. They had created a lifestyle for themselves which dominated them and those they loved and, in most cases, exacerbated their chronic pain condition. For example, if you have back pain, and try to reduce the pain by refusing to move, choosing rather to lay down for most of the day, your muscle tissue will degenerate, and your pain will worsen. Sufferers of arthritis will often say that their pain is much worse in the morning, because their joints have stiffened up whilst they have been asleep during the night. Once they are up and moving, some of the pain will subside, and they will feel better. Taking this approach can be a very constructive way of managing pain which cannot be effectively treated, and which you know you will have to endure, to a greater or lesser degree, throughout your life. Taking the approach of virtually shutting down, because trying is too overwhelming, is a maladaptive approach, which leads to an increased sense of frustration and hopelessness, and more negative coping strategies. This, in turn, increases stress. Stress has a depressive effect on the immune system, lessening its capacity to protect us from disease and infection, and debilitating its effectiveness as a healing source for our bodies at all levels.



**Pat Harris**, DFAstroIS, M.Sc. qualified with the Faculty of Astrological Studies in 1982 and has been its PR Officer since 1983. She gained her Master's degree in Health Psychology at Southampton University in 1997 and is currently researching a PhD in the Applications of Astrology to Health Psychology at the same University. Her research is partly sponsored by the Faculty of Astrological Studies and the Astrological Association. This year she was appointed editor of *Correlation*, the Astrological Association research journal. She can be contacted at [harris@interalpha.co.uk](mailto:harris@interalpha.co.uk).



I Kobasa, S.C., Maddi, S.R., and Kahn, S. (1982) "Hardiness and health: a prospective study", *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* Vol. 42 pp168-177

My research, based in a south of England hospital, into the effects of astrological analysis on understanding the psychology of chronic pain patients, required that I spend between one and one-and-a-half hour-long counselling sessions with a group of patients during which they, individually and privately, told me the story of their illness and/or injury. When, with their permission, I later examined their birth charts, in conjunction with their personal histories, I began to see connections between certain planetary activity, the principles associated with those planets, and the links between psychological and event stress and the onset of the problem. Once these problems were explored openly, the patients were better able to cope with the idea of developing constructive coping strategies to manage their pain. However, while some benefited from the information, others were unable to put it to good practical use. A study of astrology in relation to individuality helped to provide an understanding for this, in a way that ordinary psychological approaches could not achieve. What became clear to me was that a particularly stressful experience, associated with a planet in the birth chart, was also linked with an injury or illness also associated with that planet, shortly before or at the time of the occurrence or development of such an injury or illness. Addressing the two different problems, and the possible link between them, was of help to the patient in gaining a better perspective on their individual health experiences and, in some cases, introducing a radical improvement in their lives, simply because of that discussion. Unfortunately, I was not allowed to continue monitoring the patients beyond a year, and was unable to make astrological counselling available to them beyond the initial session, although the clinical psychologist overseeing my research judged that his understanding of the patients and their situations was improved in a way not achievable through the use of conventional psychoanalytical techniques.

Using astrology and what it suggests about each individual, in conjunction with psychology, helped provide a clear framework for developing constructive coping strategies unique to each patient. What I discovered was that there was a distinct correlation between the nature of an individual's stressful experience, the nature of the injury/illness, the transits and/or progressions at the time of the event, and the nature of the planet in the birth chart that was being highlighted by the directions.

For example, one of the patients whom I interviewed suffered from severe back pain, originating in an injury she had sustained in her teens. She had not responded to orthodox treatment, and had gradually become less and less mobile. At the time of interview, she was unable to complete such basic tasks as making beds or washing up. She had resisted any encouragement from the hospital staff to try to complete these tasks, and had grown

increasingly angry and upset when pressed for an explanation. The astrological patterns correlating with increased bouts of pain, or further aggravation to the injury, were Chiron in Leo in close quincunx to Mars in Capricorn. The Chiron/Mars contact was always under stress from transits and/or progressions when her back pain became particularly bad. It was, in fact, the year of her Chiron return when she underwent four separate epidurals, in an effort to stop or lessen the pain. Analysis of these factors suggested that, at the psychological level, she had been wounded in the area of creative play. Coupled with having the Moon in Capricorn, the suggestion from her chart was that she had had to grow up too quickly, assuming responsibility from a very early age, and that she had little time being a child, when she was small. These observations were explored with the patient, who found them helpful to her own understanding. Subsequently, she ceased to have difficulty coping with the bed-making and washing-up chores. Trine aspects between the Sun and Jupiter in water signs suggested pleasure through interaction with water and, of all the therapies, she enjoyed swimming the most. So she was further encouraged to take pleasure in this activity, and learn to relax and enjoy being simply creative and childlike, through this involvement with water. She left the hospital in good spirits, and was able to thoroughly enjoy a holiday abroad with her family later in the year.

By addressing the nature of any particularly stressful natal configurations, and how the patient coped with the resulting stress at times when the issue was brought into focus by transits or progressions, the patient was able to gain a better perspective on his/her own health experiences. In some cases, the mere discussion of what was going on in his/her life gave rise to a radical improvement in his/her life.

Social science has a great deal to say about health and types and much research has been done into character/personality/individuality and its impact on an individual's health and well-being throughout their lives.

It is true that some people cope better, instinctively, in certain types of crises than others, and research appears to support this. Kobasa *et al.*<sup>1</sup> identified a characteristic which they call "hardiness", the strength of which is related to a person's belief in how much control they have in a challenging situation, and how "normal" they perceive that challenging situation to be. The implication is that the harder a person is, the better able they are to cope with the stress of life. Parallels to this, in astrology, can be seen in the many successful famous types, who have very dynamic charts, where the planets are in very difficult aspect to each other. At the risk of oversimplification, this means that, although such a person meets many challenges in their lives, they also possess the strength of charac-



ter to deal with them. Easy charts, with very easy aspects, do not always correlate with rich and fulfilling lives. For example, Jupiter in the charts of alcoholics has been found to occupy a position which is favourable to it, and in very easy aspect to other planets in the birth chart. No definite links between stress and cancer in humans have been proven in scientific research, but there are some observations which merit further study. A seventeen-year study of 2000+ factory workers in Cleveland, Ohio<sup>2</sup> indicated a possible connection between depression and incidence of cancer: people suffering from a high rate of depression were twice as likely to die from the disease.

Ineffective coping strategies which lead to distress can result in lowered immune system efficiency and, consequently, an increased susceptibility to infection and disease including, perhaps, cancerous illnesses<sup>3</sup> as described above. As indicated, various studies have been carried out to test the effects of stress in relation to disease. Regarding the function of the immune system under stress, it has been demonstrated that people suffering from bereavement respond less well in the body's defence than non-sufferers.<sup>4</sup> People suffering from marriage problems also show an impaired ability to resist infection and disease; among women, the poorer the marriage relationship, and the greater the state of depression, the poorer the functioning of the immune system.<sup>5</sup> The study of breast cancer patients<sup>6</sup> has also been illuminating in understanding the possible relationship between personality, or individuality, and susceptibility to disease. Women whose biopsies showed positive were unable to express their anger prior to developing cancer and, overall, the highest death rate occurred amongst those who had lost hope, or just given up. In astrological terms, we might hypothesise that Mars - the planet of aggression - would be constrained in ways which inhibited its open expression in the charts of these patients.

Incidence of Coronary Heart Disease has been linked, via various psychological studies, with people's characteristic behaviours. For example, people have been categorised into Type A, Type B and Type X, with Type A's being most at risk of CHD, although the validity of this theory has yet to be properly demonstrated.<sup>7</sup> It is suggested that an overdeveloped need to control events is central to the characterisation of the Type A person; and that self-esteem is very important to this type, in terms of what they can personally accomplish in life. One thinks, as an astrologer, of a lack of proper understanding of the Sun (which represents the heart in medical astrology, and the ego in psychological astrology) in one's personal chart, and the need to give it integrated expression in life.

So, reading through various social science research on individuality, stress management and illness, it is possible to find a rich field for the

application of astrology in gaining a clearer insight into what is going on in the mind-body relationship (or psychoimmunology) which can be helpful in everyday life to every one of us.

The value of the contribution of astrology to the development of a healthier way of living is set out thus:

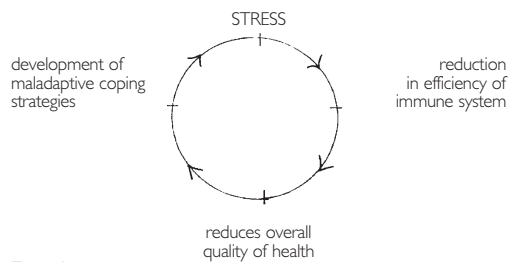


Figure 1

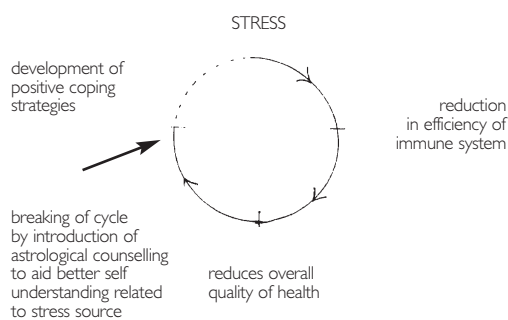


Figure 2

In Figure 1, you can see how the development of maladaptive coping strategies leads to an increase in stress and the cycle is perpetuated. The problem then becomes one of breaking this cycle, and what factor can be introduced to achieve this. Figure 2 shows that the introduction of astrological analysis relating to character and individuality can lead, under proper professional supervision, to the development of better coping strategies, and therefore a reduction in stress, which has a knock-on effect on the other links in the cycle, ideally causing a breakdown in the cycle and an improvement in health.

Man has always known, instinctively, that there is a relationship between our psychology, our individuality, and the way our body behaves at the physical level. In the last twenty or so years, much research has been built up, in an effort to demonstrate the link at the scientific level. However, for people who are simply trying to improve the quality of their lives now, in the hope of a better, healthier future, astrology may be able to offer valuable insight into the forging of a constructive relationship between *psyche* (mind) and *soma* (body). Indeed, in years to come, with the introduction of astrology into social science research, we may show, beyond doubt, that the inner man and the outer man are inextricably linked, and that our health and well-being depend singularly upon our understanding of that immutable relationship.



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# Wilderness Transformation Trails

## “The Beast Within”

Marilyn McDowell

Healing the wounds of war, in those whose lives have been defined by conflict and scarred by violence, is a complex and challenging task. Here, **Marilyn McDowell** writes about her experience as a transpersonal therapist, facilitating an encounter between ten young men, of previously warring factions, and the African wilderness.

In this article, I will be describing a recent wilderness transformation trail, with ten young commanders from a community east of Johannesburg, to give some sense of how this relatively new field in psychotherapy is a salve for trauma, and, very tentatively, to share my learnings and contributions as a wilderness therapist working in Africa.

Before exploring how nature has a healing effect on human nature, what seems important is to put the socio-political forum, out of which wilderness therapy intervention emerged, into a historical context. In the pre-election violence in South Africa (1992-1994), two fighting factions, the Amazulu and the Amaxhosa, took control of the Katlehong township. Fired by the promise of liberation at a poignant time in South African history - and as a reaction to traditional tribal discord - the militarised youth set up what came to be known as “no-go” zones, or boundaries between the Zulu hostels and the township community.

The slogan “every man on the street” propelled the young urban soldiers out onto the streets at night, to defend their communities. Petrol bombing, necklacing (being burnt alive in a tyre), burning of hundreds of homes, shooting and stabbing were uncharted territory for these young men, many of whom bolstered themselves with *muti* or witch doctor medicine to increase their battle power.

The militarised youth, and, more especially, the commanders, rose instantly to Hero status as defenders of their community. However, shortly after the elections, with the arrival of peace, they were marginalised by those same communities for their war crimes.

As a white South African working as a transpersonal wilderness therapist, I have been challenged to keep a sense of meaning in the face of human suffering; and to confront the persecutor in a white collective South African psyche.

### An Archetypal Approach

“The Bushmen say the human being has two hungers. There is the hunger for food, but there is also the great hunger; and that is to be part of the creation.”

Sir Laurens Van Der Post, 1995

Wilderness therapy intervention works with the trauma of township violence through archetypal psychology (collective and personal), by planning transformation trails, which mirror the psychological issues of the militarised youth, and evoke the archetypal symbolism of the natural landscape. Much the same as the Bushman say there are two hungers, the transformation trails are designed to call up two archetypal levels of psychological hunger. At one level, there is the collective archetype of our being a part of the creation, so gracefully described by the Bushmen as “a great hunger.” Furthermore, there is a more specific hunger, which is survival. In my understanding, the core psychological issue of the commanders was to survive urban warfare, thereby activating the central archetype of Heroism. Sadly, in an environment where the police had abdicated power, the qualities of the Hero in the untrained urban soldier had been perverted.

I have been challenged to think deeply about how our primary archetype, to belong “to a meaningful order of creation”, can be seen to clash with personal survival. As a wilderness therapist, I know that a wild and ruggedly charted wilderness transformation trail is designed to constellate the original township trauma, as the militarised youth face danger. However, it also evokes the possible shame of being a flawed part of the creation.

In traumatic urban experiences of war, where tribal conflict and political alienation had directed the militarised youths “into a cataclysmic clash of opposite forces” (Grof, S & C), it is not uncommon for the urban soldier to experience flashbacks of persecutory figures in the natural landscape, or of themselves, in the centre of the violence and the ritualised killings. The imaginary figures (or beasts) in the landscape are a response to the psychologically disturbing personal experiences of trauma, which become re-activated in the wild. This was amplified on this particular transformation trail, because members of two previously opposing military units were present.

The trail leader talked about his first wilderness night three years previously. “They were afraid of us, and we were also afraid that when we were sleeping at night, someone would come and slit our throats. It was very difficult sleeping with your enemy.”



**Marilyn McDowell** is a wilderness therapist working with trauma and the Katlehong township people in South Africa. Marilyn's training in London as a Psychosynthesis therapist has been relocated to the African landscape for the purpose of healing. Her individual practice in Johannesburg is currently in brief therapy, and as a psychological astrologer (CPA). Marilyn facilitates psychological and astrological groups in South Africa, England and Ireland, and has a deep interest in human nature.

"The individuals in this type of crises experience themselves being in the middle of the world process, as being the centre of things, which Perry attributes to the activation of what he calls the central archetype. They are preoccupied with death and ritual killing ...

Another important theme is return to the beginnings of the world - to creation, the original paradisaal state, or the ancestor."

Grof S. and C.

As much as the rugged part of nature correlates with the darker unconscious aspects of trauma, so, too, is the numinous dimension of the psyche present; neither can be separated from nature. As such, wilderness experience is a two-fold reflection of the psyche. When we encounter the treacherous ascent on the mountain pass, we are reminded of our human suffering. Similarly, in experiencing the ecstasy of the summit, we remember our connection with divinity. My sense on transformation trails is that the more sturdy part of the journey is comparable, on an inner level, to soul making. By soul making, I mean that the potential exists to recreate ourselves by interlocking with the darker forces of nature. To extend this standpoint, the lightness experienced in the ecstasy of reaching the summit, seems to free the personal spirit. For the commanders, it meant connecting with their ancestors.

Wilderness experience brings us back to the beginning, to "an area essentially undisturbed by human activity" (Webster's 1983). On the transformation trail, the therapeutic task was to hold the split psyche - the numinous and the wild parts of the militarised youths - in order to integrate the "forgotten territory" of being a part of the creation.

"Borderlands, the wild part of nature: The unconscious, everything which surrounds the conscious, its edges, its limits,

and which threatens death and extinction, can be a place of misery and exile, but may also be the occasion of new insights for the community or individuals."

Chertwynd, T. 1982 : 241

My evolving premise is that this type of healing experience arises as a natural consequence of being in nature, with both the collective and personal archetypal levels of the human psyche being activated by the symbolism in nature.

### A Healing Journey

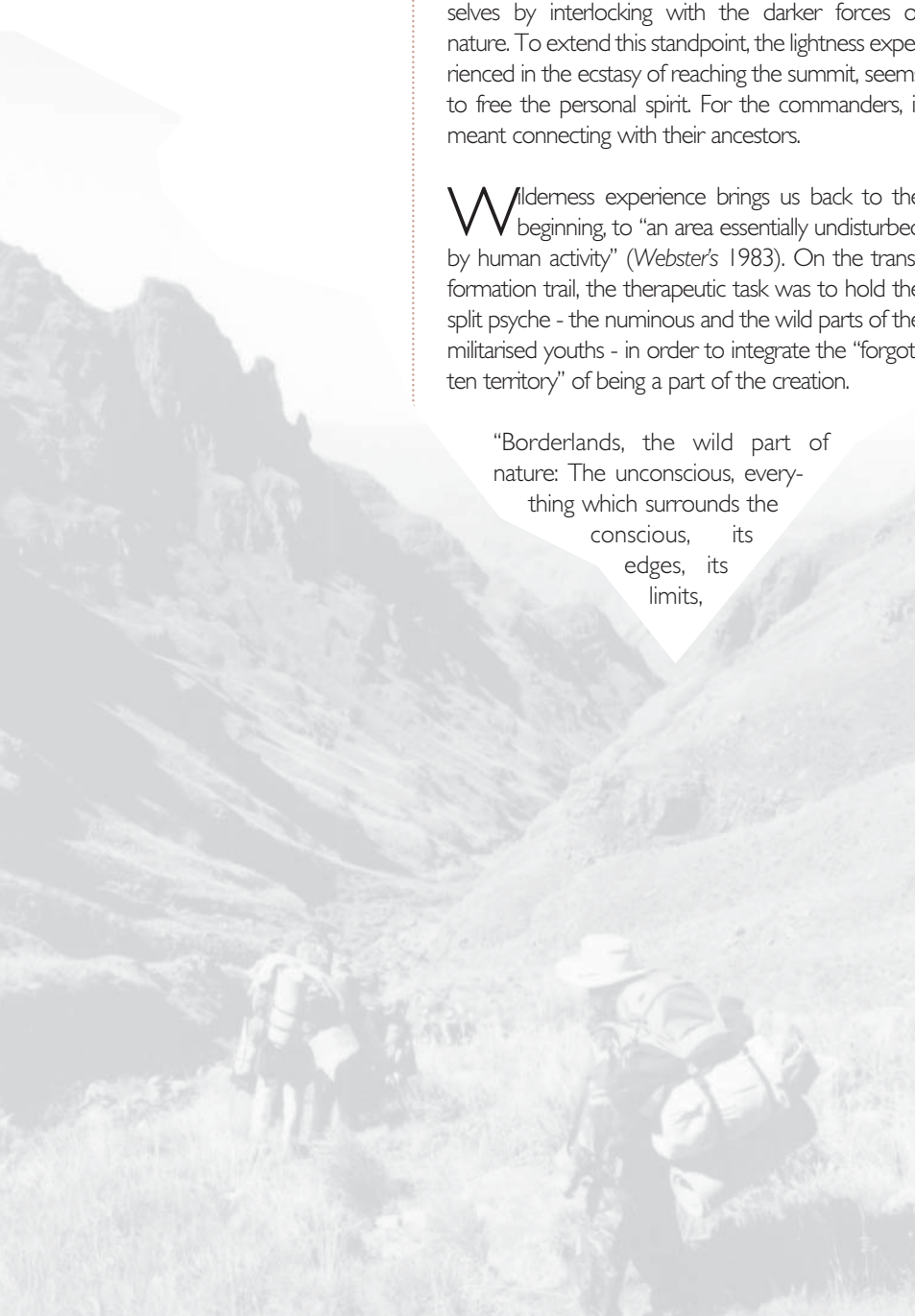
To bring the abstract level of archetypal psychology into a more specific form of human experience, we will trek alongside the ten commanders, and explore the persecutor/victim dynamic in urban warfare. It may also make the journey more interesting if we follow the wilderness process of a commander, whose militarised name was "Saddam Hussein". Saddam's psychological renewal was the most externalised on the trail. Having said that, it does not undervalue the more subtle internal changes made by the other commanders.

I would like to make a distinction between wilderness therapy intervention, and "doing" therapy in a wilderness environment. On a trail the therapists' function is to hold the core psychological issues experienced in trauma as the youths come face-to-face with largely imagined danger in the archetypal landscape. The intention is for the psychological process to unfold naturally without a planned therapeutic programme.

On the commander trail, the wilderness area chosen to activate the Hero and his fall from power, were the great "dragon" mountains of the Drakensberg. On an archetypal level, the dragon symbolises the ultimate enemy of the hero (Chertwynd, T) as it devours the conscious ego. The great mountain, on the other hand, symbolises a transcendent experience of "reaching the unreachable." The two symbols represented in nature, the dragon and the mountain, are analogous with the psyche. "So that the transpersonal is now co-operating with the Ego's development." (Kalshed, D. 1996)

Saddam experienced the beast (or dragon) as a projection onto the mountain pass, marked by hidden dangers and hazards.

"Aiy, the beast was very strong on that day. My knees they were shaking. I said no man this is difficult! I am used to going face to face with people carrying AK47's and not worrying, but you can't shoot a mountain flat with an AK47. And there on the mountain path, just a simple challenge to go forward... aiy, it was difficult. What I realised was I am nothing, not only on the mountain but on Earth."





With a psychologically resistant group of men in a vast landscape, where "beasts" lurked in craggy comers on the mountain passes, we charted the territory so as to encounter danger and to face fear in wilderness. This gave the urban soldiers an opportunity to integrate unperverted qualities of power, strength and bravery, by meeting wilderness challenges and obstacles. We purposely journeyed rapidly to the mountain summit, so that the trail mimicked the commanders' elevated Hero status in the township.

I had a sense of the dragon quickly devouring the transcendent, or peak, experience (the still fragile Ego) as, not long after our arrival, the young men were restless to descend. Mythologically, to linger on divine territory is fraught with retribution. Unconsciously, the need to descend, and the fear of punishment, could be connected with the past governing system of apartheid - and the commanders' fear of reprisal for their township war crimes.

"Thus the ascension of the great summits is a profanation, a negation of the difference between God and man."

Einarsne, J, 1995 *Mountains and Mythology*

To equal the Hero's defeat in his fall from power, the journey which followed was a long, slow and physically arduous descent into the foothills. Memories of trauma and violence began to surface in fragments, along with the pain of being marginalised by the township community. This was the crisis, so to speak, of descending into the unconscious, where the therapeutic team required a certain psychological robustness to consciously hold the commanders' anxiety. There was also a need to resist the impulse to rescue the commanders, by changing the trail route and "softening" the experience. This was in order to avoid taking up the rescuer as a third party in the persecutor/victim dynamic of the urban soldier, and so allow the necessary psychological re-experience of a fall from power.

After seven days, the trail ended with an icy watercourse in the Nhdodema Gorge; and a re-birthing process in nature. This meant swimming through a dark water tunnel and cavern, supported by a symbolic tyre, which marked the death of many victims of violence. Saddam's personal crisis occurred when he got trapped and tangled in a supporting rope, at which time he experienced his victims' helpless terror. It seemed, in this movement, that Saddam psychologically made the reversal from being the perpetrator to becoming the victim.

A trail psychologist said: "when I looked into his eyes I saw pure terror. He could have killed me, literally. He has killed people for less intensity than that."

The perceived risk of danger on a transformation trail is, psychologically, far greater than any phys-

ical risk. However, risk is what helps to facilitate the re-enactment of trauma, through confrontation with the natural environment. Simply said, the neutral and mighty force of wilderness matched the commanders' aggression, stimulated by township violence.

"The greater the perceived risk, the greater the potential for personal growth."

Cumes, D. 1998

Empathy and support are not part of an urban war ethos. What was different in the militarised youth, surviving a hostile environment in nature, was their evolving sense of brotherhood, as they witnessed and acknowledged each other's fear, knowing how tenuous being alive could be! I believe, that in reconnecting with existence - their own and that of others - through interacting with the landscape, tribal healing took the place of tribal conflict.

### Archetypal Symbolism

"The symbolism of nature relates nature and man."

Chertwynd T.

The question in wilderness therapy intervention is: how does archetypal symbolism facilitate the unintegrated and unconscious material of trauma in the township violence? Nature is seen as the recipient of the urban soldiers' projection of all the psychological elements of violence, and its corresponding war images. What was important was the meaning the young men brought to the images in nature. A Bushman painting of a beast chasing man was an image used on the commander trail, to carry the psychological projection of high levels of post-traumatic anxiety and fear.

Throughout a pre-trail program, the commanders were familiarised with the symbol of "the beast within" and its various profiles in the landscape. In a sense, by identifying the symbol of the beast externally in nature, the commanders could borrow a picture of their personal trauma, and bring their inner and outer landscape into sharper focus. This was a first step towards psychological integration.

Saddam was initially identified with being the urban soldier, rejecting the concept of an inner beast by denying that he had a beast at all. Therefore, for Saddam, relinquishing the Hero would mean an identity crisis. To affirm his false identity, Saddam sang his war songs at imaginary enemies looming ahead on the mountain passes.

The beast was a constant presence during the transformation trail. Often referred to with a certain amount of respect and a bit of humour. Who was chasing the beast? Who was being chased by the beast? These were the general conversations in the persecutor/victim dynamic. A

member of Saddam's military unit, Shadow, regularly had four urban soldiers return to him at night, asking for their lives back. Shadow, like Saddam on the watercourse, experienced the reversal of opposites. Saddam and Shadow had become the victims of persecution.

“I am Saddam Hussein. I remember those people that I had as enemies. But on that day (on the mountain pass) I even said sorry to them. I called them by their names, as if I could see them. Talking as if I could see them, I said, ‘No man, it’s over, man, don’t fight anymore. I say I am sorry, no more fighting. They must forgive me as I forgive them. All of us, let’s start a new life.’”

In a psychological encounter with his enemies, on the hellish contour paths to the summit, Saddam faced the beast within with “a conscious choice to face danger.” (Herman, J.L.) Furthermore, in identifying with the helplessness of his victims, Saddam began the internal process of relinquishing his war persona; to mourn and to grieve his part in the township violence. Saddam returned to his authentic name, Isak, in an exemplary withdrawal of the projected beast onto the landscape.

Use totem wild animals (made of wood) to re-establish the link with the psyche's capacity for symbol formation, so seriously affected in trauma; and to create a compensatory figure of protection on the journey. What I have come to realise, for integration and wholeness, is that the power animals are the ambivalent bearers of both the light and dark aspects of the psyche. From the outset, Saddam refused to wear his totem lion, as he said it made him depressed. However, as we approached the steep mountain pass, he said “Hey, bring back my animal!” For Saddam, the animal symbol became a positive projection to support his transformation, as he attuned himself with nature. In a post-trail integration program, Saddam said the lion “brought me back my dignity.”

### The Travelling Staff: A Self Symbol

In the township, the militarised youth are surrounded by the destruction of homes and neighbourhoods, with no connection to beauty or mother nature and her creation. I consider it a primary need for the liberation of the human spirit to participate in the creation. It was with the thought of how the human spirit survives in an urban environment affected by violence, that I introduced the creating of a travelling staff, to emphasise the commanders' uniqueness, as one way to make themselves known to their journeymen. So “fresh from the hands of who created them” (Van Der Post, L.) came the carved, painted and adorned travelling staff, as a symbol of the personal self. One commander described his travelling staff as the ultimate negotiator of the contour paths and rocky outcrops, an

acknowledgment of his power in resolving his conflict with the physical terrain.

In Saddam's personal process, the travelling staff became a healing staff. Initially filled with urban aggression, he made a fighting stick - cross-hatched at the top. What he hadn't expected was to create a thing of beauty. With patience, (a quality previously foreign to Saddam), and by using a simple mountain stone, he carved the diverse landscape into his travelling staff. He carved the mountain pass and summit, the Bushman cave we slept in, the giant gorges, the icy watercourse. “It is too beautiful to be a fighting stick. I will show it to my mother so she can know where I have been.” Saddam got a fuller sense of himself through the introspection it took to carve his staff. In a sense, he recreated himself in nature, and wanted his internal changes recognised by his mother when he returned to the township, as someone other than Saddam.

Much like Saddam, my travelling staff was a symbol of personal healing. Before climbing the dragon mountain, I remember a vague feeling of awkwardness, as I trekked across the foothills with my staff. Yet, I too, had spent days attending to its adornment. I began to understand the significance of my staff, as we negotiated the massive boulders in the Nhdodema river crossing. Throwing my staff ahead of me, I leapt across the chasm - and watched it plummet into the burgeoning river below. I remember the immediate fear of being left vulnerable without my staff (or false self) to depend on. Inadvertently, I had offered up a part of myself to the river gods. This experience of personal loss seemed to be the forerunner to a moment of inclusion, when I pulled three terrified men out of the gorge to safety. It was in this seemingly impossible physical feat, yielding for the well-being of others, that I became congruent with my fellow man in nature.

To conclude. In coming to the end of our wilderness journey, it seems appropriate to return to our two psychological hungers; the personal and collective need to be a part of the meaningful order of creation.

Another commander described Saddam's impatient reactions during the violence. “As a leader, Saddam didn't have control of himself, and it made him more powerful, everyone followed his decisions to shoot.” On his last night around the campfire, Saddam shared his healing in wilderness.

“You see, the thing that I learnt from those mountains was that I am not sick. Mountain showed me that I could take control of my body and my mind.”

The body-mind split, which is a common psychological response in trauma defence, was consciously acknowledged by Saddam, as he strug-

gled with being in the physical terrain. In wilderness therapy intervention, this kind of integration is understood as an unconscious bid for psychological wholeness. For Saddam, his physical, psychological and spiritual existence was confirmed by nature.

On a collective level, archetypal healing or transforming trauma came through the challenges of surviving a seemingly destructive environment; to discover a healthy environment that works! What I think needs to be emphasised, once again, is that wilderness therapy intervention uses the natural conditions of the physical terrain, and its archetypal symbolism, to evoke the psychological issues present on a transformation trail. The therapeutic task in

wilderness therapy is to hold and contain the psychological effects of trauma, on behalf of the militarised youth - while they make personal meaning of the universal symbols in the great dragon mountains.

For me, there remains the inexplicable puzzle of what constitutes the nature of man when thrown into conflict? I do not hope to answer this question, but would rather look for ways of working with human nature in a healing environment - nature!

By including the opposing forces on a transformation trail, the intention is to reconnect, for the purpose of healing, tribal - and perhaps even national - wounds.

**Wilderness Transformation Trail**  
- Commanders -  
September 1998  
Drakensberg Mountains  
Natal  
South Africa

*Psychologist*  
Gavin Robertson  
*Transpersonal Therapists*  
Marilyn McDowell  
Philomena Byrne  
*Trail Leader*  
"Scotch" - Moses Mandhlophe  
*Trail Assistant*  
"Punna" - Phinda Khumaio

## The Wilderness Trail: Ancestral Healing for a Westerner Philomena Byrne

Marilyn had company, along the trail; someone who found that the challenging contact with the rawness of Mother Nature affected her deeply, helping to bring her into new relationship with her femininity. Here, **Philomena Byrne** writes intimately of her journey to healing her own ancestral wounds.

When my grandmother's mother was handed her fourth child, her first and only girl, she looked at the infant and said, "She's not a boy." When my mother's mother was handed her fifth child, her first and only daughter, she looked at the baby. "I prefer boys," she said, and looked away from the child.

I was the first-born in my family. A girl. I don't know what my mother said, when she first saw me. But later, she used to repeat, like a mantra "There'll be no favourites in this house."

Tom was born a year after me. He was a brown-skinned baby, and grew into a wiry, agile little boy. I tried to copy his movements and mannerisms. He climbed trees and walls and rocks, and so did I. I was afraid of heights, and afraid that anyone would know this. So Tom climbed higher and faster and better than me. He was a better boy than me.

When I was twelve, I was much taller than Tom. I hunched my shoulders over, feeling huge and obvious, trying to be as small as him, panicking at the sight of my changing body, trying to find ways to hide and disguise myself. I was a girl, and I was ashamed.

I have Venus in Taurus in the 12th house, on a grand cross with Chiron, Pluto and Jupiter. All

my life I have struggled to emphasise my Arien Sun, also in the twelfth, to pass myself off as heroic and singular and wiry.

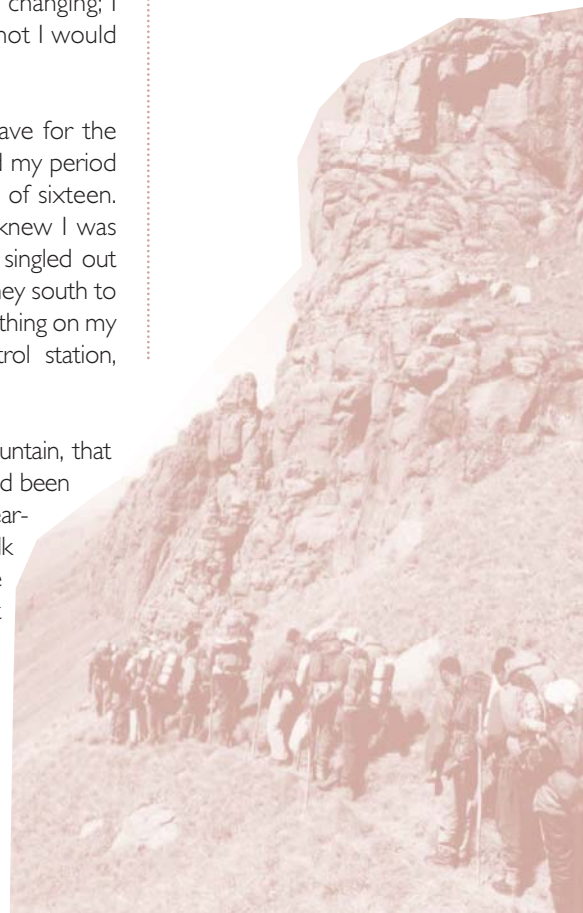
When Marilyn invited me on the seven-day Wilderness Trail, the first thing I did was check my diary. The trail dates kept changing; I became obsessed with whether or not I would be menstruating during this time.

The morning we were due to leave for the Drakensberg Mountains, I started my period - four days early. We were a group of sixteen. Three women and thirteen men. I knew I was the only woman menstruating. I felt singled out and vulnerable. On the long hot journey south to the mountain range, this was the only thing on my mind. I used the loo at every petrol station, whether I needed to or not.

We slept at the base of the mountain, that first night. The range, which had been in view for hours as we drove, was rearing up behind me in the dark. Its bulk and intensity pressed into me. The next morning, I was heavy with a silent kind of dread. I felt suffocated by the enormous, brutish presence of the Drakensberg on the outside, and by the sodden weight of my lower belly on the inside.



**Philomena Byrne** is a Psychosynthesis Therapist and an Astrological Consultant.





“Please don't take  
me” I repeated,  
over and over,  
praying to the  
mountain.

The morning was sunny. Marilyn was working her particular magic with the commanders. They were dotted around the clearing, these fully grown men, absorbed and intent, carving and painting their trail sticks, adorning them with beads and feathers, pausing every now and then to congratulate themselves and each other on their efforts. My normally nimble fingers were lumpen and clumsy. I picked up a carving knife, and immediately cut my left thumb. It bled and I tried to wipe it on my trousers. I was embarrassed and lonely. Marilyn gave me a plaster. A half an hour later, attempting to use a simple tool, I took the top off the index finger of my left hand. There was more blood. The men said “Aiel!” and “Aish!” and looked at me with concern. A number of them were already offering their help. “That’s my second accident,” I said, as brightly as I could muster. They looked at me seriously. “You must pray to the ancestors,” Pious said. The others nodded. “What do they mean? Why did they say that?” I pestered Marilyn anxiously. I couldn’t think of a single ancestor to call upon, the legacy of an unsuspected Uranus conjunct my IC. “The Africans rely on the ancestors to keep them safe,” Marilyn said with her customary economy of bromide, adding, for good measure, “They never undertake a journey alone.”

Before we set off, we chose totem animals to hang around our necks, little wooden creatures, whose animal energy we could call upon on our journey. I chose a hippo with her mouth open. She felt solid and strong and heavy. We began climbing. It took the whole day to get to the base of the mountain. I spent the time fighting back tears. My back-pack towered like a lead-filled high-rise behind me, pitching me from side to side on the narrow track. We

were still in the foothills, and already this was the highest I’d ever been in my life.

The next morning, when we stood in a circle, each waiting to choose a card from a divination pack, a symbol for our individual journey to the summit, Marilyn said to me, “I’ve had a thought about you.” “What’s your thought?” I asked her. “I’ve never seen you look more feminine,” she said, “I think you’re probably carrying the feminine energy for the group.” I put my hand out, and drew a card from the fifty or so in the deck. It had “Feminine” written at the top.

The group was moving off. Gavin was aiming to get us to the summit as quickly as possible. Within an hour, the route had become so high, and so precarious, that I was blind with terror. I had my trail stick in my right hand and I inched along behind it, unable to feel my feet, incapable of controlling the muscular tremors gripping my legs and arms. I could feel, rather than see, my left hand, and knew it was cut and bleeding again. “Please don’t take me,” I repeated, over and over, praying to the mountain. I had a monstrous conviction gripping me. This mammoth, brooding presence needed, or would demand, a sacrifice; it was already taking my blood. It had sniffed me out, the bleeding female in the pack. My lifetime of feigning strength and heroism was over. This monumental beast, her spine thrusting skywards, her belly welded to the hot core of the planet, she was about to claim me as her own, to toss me, arms flailing, down one of her great sides and crush me between her stony thighs. My breath was dry and fetid with fright.

The ascent took all day. There was no way back. I couldn’t speak about my terror, or



anything else, but Gavin stayed close to me, and Punna's outstretched hand hauled me across impossible overhangs. On one of the rests, about halfway along the route, someone spoke about Mother Earth, about how, when we push down with our feet, she pushes back for us. "When you are climbing," Punna said to me, "Push down with your feet and Mother Earth will push back for you."

We did the last piece of the climb to the snow-covered summit in darkness. "Mother Earth wants me to live," I said, over and over to myself. "If I push down she will push back," I recited, shakily pressing my numb feet into her rough hide.

There was a spring at the summit, clear and cold. "This is the Source," Scotch said. We stood in a circle in the morning Sun for a cleansing ritual at the source. We each chose a card from the pack. Once again, I received the "Feminine". My voice was shaking when I said into the circle that, all my life, I had been afraid of being female, afraid of allowing my feminine energy to be visible. During the night, my left hand, battered and bruised, had swollen to twice its normal size. I held it up for them to see. "I want to let this hand lead me down the mountain" I said. I took the animal totem hanging around my neck, the hippo, and I turned her so that she faced my left side.

The descent took five days. With each day, I felt more confident of my right to be alive. My feet were still clumsy and unsure on her craggy back, and leading with my left side was unfamiliar, but I began to trust that if this majestic, primitive Dragon hadn't snatched me on the way to her summit, that she might hold a wish for me to live.

Nevertheless, the closer we got to sea level the happier I became, and the more I realised that being born on an island, being an islander, has meant being shaped and formed from its soil and waters.

On the fifth day, we descended below sea level, deep into a gorge where the boulders were each as big as a house. The last part of the trail involved a symbolic rebirth, wading neck-deep through the thrashing waters, under the green shadows of these intractable monoliths, and, finally, swimming through a dark cavern, without knowing the location of the far shore. Halfway to our destination was an unfeasibly steep descent, down the sheer face of one of the boulders, exiting through a small cleft. I don't know how the others made their way down and out, but when I sat at the top, I saw Punna far below me, his arms stretching up into the chasm between us. I have no sense of how I reached him, or him me. I know I let go, and I know I felt

him, like a snake beneath me, guiding me down. It took perhaps a few seconds, or perhaps it took forever. When I landed here in the world, I could feel my feet again, I leapt nimbly from rock to rock, laughing somewhat maniacally. I threw my arms around Marilyn, squealing about the deep masculine resonances of Punna's voice, and the miracle of him being a midwife.

We stood again in a circle at the end of the trail, and the pack of divination cards was held out to each of us, face down as usual. This time I knew that wherever I put my hand, that is where "my card", the card for the Feminine, would be. I reached out for it and then held it to my heart for a moment before putting it back in the deck.

My primary relationship on the trail was with the Mountain, and what she came to mean to me. (Throughout this time transiting Uranus, retrograde, was conjunct my MC, while transiting Neptune, also retrograde, trined my Venus in the twelfth. Retrograde transiting Jupiter was squaring my Natal Moon). In my case, though the trail had certainly not been designed with me in mind (!) I, too, was in the grip of an "archetypal hunger to survive and be part of creation". This took the form of an ancestral issue around femininity. I carried the struggle that my mother and her mother before her carried - to be female, and to have a place in the world, in creation.

As I indicated earlier, I have never had a sense of ancestry - why would I want to when there was an archaic ambivalence around my right to be here? It took some time, post-trail, to understand that I had uncovered a line of women who hated themselves. Paradoxically, it was this that was to link me powerfully with my roots. To have seen my un-lived life, my beleaguered and shamed feminine, as part of my heritage, and have the opportunity to include what was, by necessity, excluded, has been the deepest healing of my mid-life crisis. I needed to be in the presence of some of the toughest, most wounded warriors in the world, surrounded by the most injured masculinity, before I could yield to the experience of my own femininity. However, what made my surrender inevitable, was my struggle with one of the planet's most unspoiled and rugged mountain ranges.

Collective and ancestral issues may need the kind of containment that only Nature can give. It seems that, where the human containers have been so badly damaged, certain levels of healing require us to be in relationship to more universal symbols of Wholeness, to be in relationship to the planet, and beyond. Neither my mother nor her mother before her could wholeheartedly wish life for the feminine. But Nature can and does...

...I began to trust that if this majestic, primitive Dragon hadn't snatched me on the way to her summit, that she might hold a wish for me to live.



# Death and The Star in the Tarot

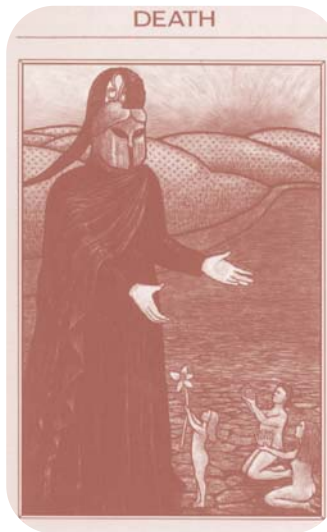
## Juliet Sharman-Burke

Juliet Sharman-Burke has been practising astrology and Tarot for the past twenty years. She has been teaching and supervising for the Centre for Psychological Astrology since its inception in June 1983, and also runs the Centre's administration. She is also a qualified analytic psychotherapist with a private practice in London. Juliet is the author of *The Complete Book of Tarot*, *The Mythic Tarot Workbook*, and *Understanding Tarot*, and is co-author of *The Mythic Tarot* with Liz Greene. She has also written *The Barefoot Book of Stories from the Stars*, a book for children. *The Astrologer, the Counsellor and the Priest*, with Liz Greene, and *The Family Inheritance: Parental Images in the Horoscope*, have both been published by the CPA Press.

When considering the subject of healing, the main concern of this issue, the two cards which spring to mind in the Tarot are Death and The Star. When thinking about which planetary energy can be connected with these images, the immediate link is with Pluto and Neptune. After all, in order to heal there must first be a wound; and in both cards, one is found.

In the Tarot, the Death card represents the permanent and final end of a cycle of life. When we change, a new attitude or new circumstance may enter our lives, and so the old ways move out and never return in their original form. When Pluto makes a significant transit or progression to a natal planet, we can be sure that we will be irrevocably changed by his passing over that area of our life. We tend to look with a degree of dismay when Pluto inches towards a personal planet in our chart, in the same way that when the Death card turns up in a Tarot spread, we often experience a shiver of apprehension.

In the *Mythic Tarot*, the Death card portrays Hades or Pluto, lord of the underworld, king of the dead. He is evoked whenever anything has outlived its usefulness, and is therefore bound to die. Yet whenever anything or anyone dies, what follows is a new existence without that thing or person; and this may be more or less painful, depending on the circumstances. At best, we experience gentle sadness and nostalgia, at worst, wrenching pain and grief. What is certain to follow, however, is a period of transition or mourning, signified by the river in the card. The river is the Styx, which flowed between the daylight world of the living, and the twilight land of the dead, and, in order to cross from one land to another, a coin had to be paid to the ferryman. Without due payment, the soul would be doomed to remain forever in the in-between land, neither living nor dead, which is what happens to us when we refuse to mourn a loss, or refuse to accept that things have changed. We wish to avoid the pain of mourning, the pain of loss, and the pain of being out of control; and if we refuse to accept that something has changed, we fool ourselves that we can cheat Hades out of his due. And yet, when we do, we only hurt ourselves more, until we finally accept that we cannot beat the inevitable. Hades, although his realm was accorded less status than that of his brother Zeus, possessed greater power, because his law was irrevocable. Once a soul had entered the kingdom of Hades, nothing could bring it back.



"The moving finger writes,  
And having writ moves on,  
Not all your piety nor wit,  
Can lure it back,  
Nor all your tears,  
Can cancel out a single line".

When Death appears in a reading or Pluto makes his inevitable movement across a natal chart, things will change. Of course, change is not always a "bad" thing. The experience of irrevocable ending can accompany such joyful events as weddings or births. But the ending of one way of life, and the beginning of another, are inextricably linked. The joy which is present

when, for example, a baby is born, is often accompanied by other feelings, less acceptable ones, such as depression, very often because there has not been an acknowledgement that a phase of life has died, at the same time that a new thing has been born. The coin must be paid to Hades, in the form of mourning, because he presides over all endings and beginnings. That the ending is as important as the beginning must be recognised, and truly experienced. Thus, the card of Death, and the transit of Pluto, are not a description of physical death, necessarily, but rather an image of the inevitable changing cycles of life, which always contain endings, and therefore new beginnings.

Life can be seen as a constant procession of deaths, beginning with our birth, leaving the comforting waters of the womb for the harsh reality of separate physical existence, after which we can never again live in the blissful paradise of the mother's body. Childhood must die for adolescence, and youth must die to make way for middle age. Every relationship, even the best, has its cycles of endings and beginnings, for our feeling change as time passes and our understanding of another person grows. We leave our single state behind in marriage, and our eternal youth behind with the birth of children, who remind us of our own mortality. Thus Pluto, lord of Death, is our invisible companion through life, to whom we must pay our due.

The card of The Star embraces something else which we need to accompany us on our journey through life, namely hope. The Star can be linked in some ways, although by no means all, with the planet Neptune, which can signify our most dearly held ideals, and that part of ourselves which takes us out of mundane reality towards the realms of possibility, which beckon from on high. The Star is an image of hope, that part of us which, despite disappoint-

ment, depression, and loss, can still cling to a sense of meaning, and a future which might grow out of the unhappiness of the past.

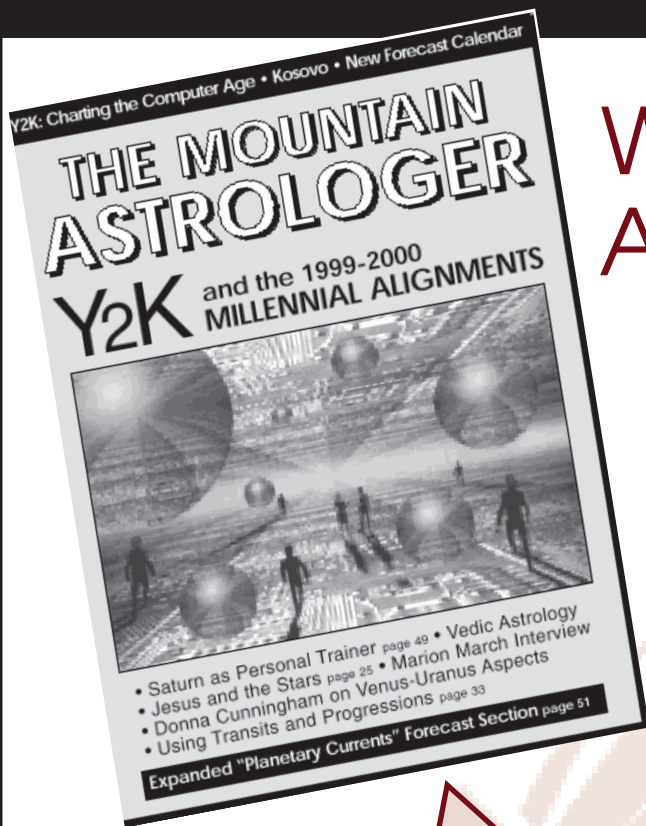
*The Mythic Tarot* depicts the Star as Pandora, who, according to Greek myth, was the first woman. Prometheus made man out of earth moistened with his own tears, and having made this creature, he loved him dearly, and wished his creation to possess divine fire, like the gods. Prometheus stole this precious fire from Hephaistos' forge, and, hiding it in a hollow fennel stalk, brought it to Earth and bestowed it upon mankind. Zeus was enraged, as the supremacy of the gods was potentially challenged, and in his fury he ordered Hephaistos, the smith-god, to fashion clay and water into a body, to give it vital force and human voice, and to make a woman, Pandora, whose dazzling beauty would

equal that of the immortal goddesses. All the divinities heaped their special gifts on this new creature; Demeter gave her a womb, Hestia a love of home and hearth, Aphrodite gave her beauty, but Hermes put perfidy into Pandora's heart, curiosity into her mind, and lies into her mouth. This woman Zeus sent to Epimetheus, brother of Prometheus, along with a great chest, which she was instructed not to open under any circumstances. Prometheus was banished by Zeus to a high cliff in the Caucasus mountains, where an eagle devoured his liver by day, only to have it grow back by night, and this torture continued for thirty years. Meanwhile, his brother married Pandora, who could not resist the temptation of opening the forbidden chest.

No sooner had she lifted the lid, then the terrible afflictions of Old Age, Labour, Sickness, Death,



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Insanity, Vice and Passion escaped and spread over the Earth, infecting all mankind. However, before his banishment, Prometheus had slipped Hope into the chest, and she alone did not fly away. The *Mythic Tarot* shows Pandora gazing at the Star of Hope, while in the midst of the noxious swarm of Spites. Hope is depicted as a female figure, because it represents the intuitive irrational side of us.

Hope does not make the Spites go away, nor does it undo the vengeance which Zeus has unleashed. But somehow, in some mysterious way, it offers faith; therefore, in the image, Pandora's eyes are fixed not the unhappiness of the human condition, but on the vague, irrational,

inexplicable sense that soon there will be a dawn.

This quality of hope has nothing to do with planned expectations. It is connected with something deep within us, which has been mysteriously locked in the chest, along with all the woes, and if we can perceive its delicate glimmering, then our response to difficulty is radically altered. In astrology, the planet Neptune offers visions and imaginings beyond an Earthly realm; creative, idealistic certainly; illusory, deceptive, these things too. Yet without Neptune's vision, and The Star's message of hope, where would mankind find the strength to carry on through the dark times?



# A Fatal Vocation to Witness

## Some thoughts on Scorpio problems and passions

Suzi Harvey



**Suzi Harvey**, B.A., D.F.Astrol.S., came to England from California in 1977 to study with Charles Harvey and John Addey on the first "Harmonics in Astrology" Summer School at Cambridge. She has for twenty years worked as a consultant astrologer, writer, and tutor for The Faculty of Astrological Studies, and for the last five years as a psychodynamic counsellor. Editor of *The Astrological Journal* from 1985-1995, she is also co-author, with her husband Charles, of *Sun Sign, Moon Sign* and *The Principles of Astrology*, both published by Harper Collins. She has a therapeutic and astrological practice in Somerset.

In this moving article, psychodynamic counsellor **Suzi Harvey** describes how the symbolism of astrology offered her a key to understanding the journey of a woman who had endured unimaginable loss, and with it, facilitated a powerful Scorpionic regeneration.

The title of this article comes from a description of Wilfred Owen, the best known of the World War I poets, whose powerful verse has been called "a poetry of mourning and a poetry of warning." Owen believed that a poet's purpose was to warn, and to articulate the truth, no matter how catastrophic that truth might be. Owen witnessed the terrible truth of war, and gave it poignant expression. Of the terrible despair he saw on the faces of his fellow soldiers, he said, "It will never be painted, and no actor will ever seize it. And to describe it, I think I must go back and be with them."<sup>1</sup> Owen did go back, and before he was killed, at the age of 25, he wrote the poetry that immortalised him, and told the terrible truth about the horror and waste of the First World War.

Witnessing, in the way that Wilfred Owen did, seems to be a distinctly Scorpio/Pluto thing. All twelve Zodiacal signs, or dimensions of life experience, could be said to hold a unique "truth" which is an essential part of the human condition. One feature of Scorpio's truth is about the very act of truth-seeking itself, the will to descend to the underworld and to feel and observe the hidden urges, passions, and workings of the instinctual self. As with Wilfred Owen, the urge within Scorpio is to be unafraid of our most powerful, terrifying, and ravenous feelings, and simply to "go back and be with them". Scorpio's

intensity has been said to "serve as a searchlight to illuminate the workings behind the scenes in every situation."<sup>2</sup> But the courage of that Scorpionic searchlight often leads down into dangerous realms. If, like Owen, they do not return, they may leave behind a kind of Orphic voice which enriches the world with its wisdom.

Wilfred Owen was not a Sun Scorpio (he was born March 18th, 1893, in Owestry, Shropshire, time unknown), but he did have Uranus in Scorpio as a handle (with Saturn) to his chart, with Uranus exactly on his Mercury/Pluto midpoint (his Sun is also with ME/PL, a configuration shared by two other souls who witnessed the depths, Freud and Jung), a powerful signature for the capacity to witness<sup>3</sup> and describe the suffering and despair of the ordinary World War I soldier.

"These are men whose minds the Dead have ravished.

Memory fingers in their hair of murders,  
Multitudinous murders they once witnessed.  
Wading sloughs of flesh these helpless wander,  
Treading blood from lungs that had loved laughter.

Always they must see these things and hear them,

Batter of guns and shatter of lying muscles,  
Carnage incomparable, and human squander..."<sup>4</sup>



Owen also had Mercury exactly with his Mars/Pluto midpoint, the two rulers of Scorpio. This is an exquisitely apt configuration for someone who observed and wrote about extreme violence, and the “carnage incomparable” of war.

### Mars and Pluto

That Mars and Pluto share important affinities with Scorpio highlights the sign’s courage, its will to fight, to cut through to the truth, and its connection with the primitive animistic force which pulses through all life. In its most ancient role, Mars is a deity of nature, causing the sap to rise, and the mating instinct to continue the species. This natural, lusty substratum fuels our distinct egoic selves. Pluto, however, relates to a deeper phenomenon to do with survival and the very ground of our being. Pluto, like Scorpio, has a kind of inarticulate hunger which makes us suffer our aliveness. To live, we must feed on life - this is Pluto’s message - and so we devour, and in devouring we transform the sacrifice (be it food, love, ambition) into life-giving energy. But with Pluto’s hunger for life, also comes a fear of death, and sometimes a fascination with death, and of being the sacrifice instead of he who gains from the kill.<sup>5</sup>

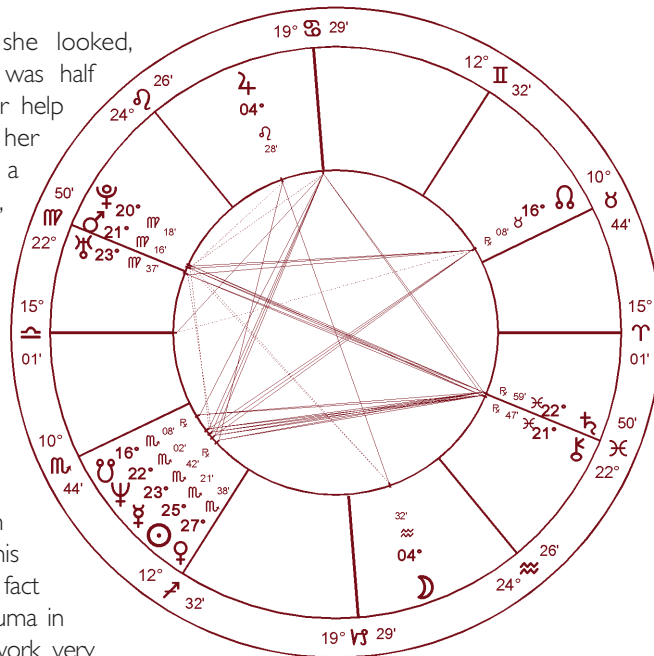
Scorpio is deeply in touch with this life-death dialectic, and the powerful instinctual responses that result from its hidden presence in our psyche. And because of this attunement, Scorpio has a natural capacity to witness this deeper realm, and to facilitate the transformation that must go on in our lives, over and over again, in order for life to remain fresh, open, full of possibilities. Whether we work as astrotherapists or psychotherapists, one thing we do is *witness with* another in the truth-finding process. Of course, every astrologer and every therapist brings his or her own unique personality into the work: they may be more Aquarian (finding a larger pattern to a life story) in approach, or more Sagittarian (emphasising the meaningful journey of a life story), or more Piscean (revelling in the mythic dimension of a life story). Nevertheless, without some element of Scorpio’s courage to witness and confront, we may miss an opportunity to facilitate *real* transformation for our clients.

### A Story of Tragic Loss

My training and work as an astrologer and psychotherapist has, over time, educed from my 8th house Sun a vocation to witness. And one particularly Scorpionic client tested this vocation to the full - and taught me a great deal about the processes which Scorpio must master, in order to be truly empowered by her exceptional qualities. The experience also instructed me about the ways in which astrology and psychotherapy can enrich and strengthen each other.

When I first met Cara, who came for therapy (and not astrology), I noticed how pale

and generally unwell she looked, almost as though she was half alive. She had come for help with a terrible loss: her mother had died after a long, debilitating illness, and two days later her father and brother had committed suicide. She was 30, living contentedly with her partner and young son, and suddenly the sole survivor of her family. What I saw in her face was frozen shock and horror, and this was confirmed by the fact that I registered her trauma in my body and had to work very hard to contain myself, and not dissolve into convulsive tears. After the first session, I did just that, and wondered how I could carry the horrible grief that she was hoping one day to be able to feel.



As astrology has always been part of my meaning-making process, I allow it to inform my work with therapeutic clients. As a kind of background presence, the astrological chart helps me hold the innate unity of the person in my mind, it connects me with the “native soil” of the individual, which stimulates the imagination, and encourages a respectful intimacy. It reminds me that, despite the confusions and pain a client may bring, there is a deeper purposeful intention to her life which she is seeking. Knowing that all the gods are there within the cosmic mandala allows the therapist to carry the needed hope, when what a client presents is hopelessness.

Having my client’s birthdate, I knew that her astro-makeup contained a lot of Scorpio: Sun, Mercury, Venus, Neptune. I later reflected on the story of Perseus and the Gorgon, whose terrifying countenance was the frozen expression of trauma and rage. Liz Greene identifies this myth as a particularly Scorpionic theme, and writes that Medusa’s face “...is a portrait of feminine anger and hatred, and her effect upon anyone who happens to look her way is paralysis. As a psychological picture, this is an exceedingly pointed one, for this enduring hatred towards life, and the bitterness which leads to inner apathy, are both problems which many Scorpions must sooner or later face.”<sup>6</sup>

A deeply imbedded cynicism is indeed a cruel wound to carry. Some have even named it the only sin.<sup>7</sup> And this reluctance to return to life is what I faced in my work with this extraordinary woman. I say extraordinary because, despite her numbness, throughout the many months of our work, something radiated from her which I can

### Cara

The subject of this article (whose real name has not been used) has granted permission for her case history to be used. Birth data withheld.

- 1 *The Works of Wilfred Owen Wordsworth Poetry Library, 1994*
- 2 Lindsay River and Sally Gillespie, *The Knot of Time* The Women’s Press 1987 p. 182
- 3 Erin Sullivan has looked at Uranus as “witness” in recent lectures; see her *Dynasty* p. 351
- 4 From “Mental Cases” *Works of Wilfred Owen, Wordsworth Poetry Library 1994* p. 30
- 5 See Gaila Yariv’s article “Fear of Being Potent: A Life/Death Confusion,” in *The Astrological Journal*, Nov/Dec ‘95 Vol. 37 No. 6 for in-depth discussion of this theme.
- 6 Liz Greene *The Astrology of Fate* Allen & Unwin 1984 p. 229
- 7 Philip Wayne, translator of *Faust* by Goethe, Penguin 1949 p. 22

only call *pistis*, or a kind of natural faith or wisdom that was literally in her body. Esther Harding writes about *pistis* as “the wisdom of that inner spark which speaks and functions of itself, apart from our conscious control.”<sup>8</sup> Harding describes the ancient ritual of *drinking the soma*, a drink of the Moon, which allowed the initiate to be filled with the gods, who then speak a deeper and more ancient truth about one’s being. This truth is not one’s conscious thoughts, but a more instinctive, feminine truth, which is not under the sway of logic. I think this feminine, radiant “knowing” is one of the most valuable of Scorpio’s gifts, and is what so often attracts people to them, makes others feel accepted and safe, and allows them to face realities that others (understandably) try to avoid. It seems to express in a wordless language the conviction that all things, all feelings, all situations, however ugly and painful, have their truth and can be revitalised and regenerated. I believe Cara was only dimly aware of this part of herself, and needed another pair of eyes to see it with her.

### A Pattern of Rejected Rage

Whatever version of the story you take, Medusa’s ugliness was a reaction to extreme violation, a stuck rage that got directed against the self. As in the story, to look directly at the rage that paralysed Cara’s heart would be overwhelming. The myth presents a cunning way forward: Athena gives Perseus a shining shield, which he uses to capture the Gorgon’s reflected image, and he therefore can trace her position and place himself accordingly. As Greene points out in her exposition of the myth, here is a symbol for thinking and reflection, for witnessing what lies lurking in the depths, the very activity that is needed to eventually transform, rather than destroy, the Medusa. The end of the story is especially hopeful: the divine steed Pegasus springs out of Medusa, signifying the bridge that has been built between the earthly and heavenly realms, the body and the mind. Thereafter, Perseus is able to use the power of Medusa’s head as self-protection which furthers his ultimate goal. When it has been acknowledged and understood, redeemed rage can liberate and empower.

Cara’s chart revealed a striking pattern, one that confirmed for me a sense that she had inherited a very powerful family fate which involved, in her case, an exceedingly problematic relationship with aggression. A Mars-Uranus-Pluto conjunction on her 12th house cusp, opposing Saturn-Chiron on the 6th, suggested a repressed collective rage which, it now seemed, she was called upon to face for the family and transmute on her own. Her father’s history involved a tragic loss of his own mother. Cara’s mother was a depressive, and had suffered ill health for much of Cara’s childhood. Her mother’s illnesses were a focus of the family’s attention, and kept father,

mother, and brother, who had stayed at home after a mental breakdown, in a jealously closed unit. Throughout her childhood, her mother and father had indulged in morbid ruminations on death, and a hope that they could all die together. I was reminded that Howard Sasportas referred to Pluto in the 12th house as *death anxiety*, or an obsessive preoccupation with the fear that comes from change and the unknown.<sup>9</sup> Her parents could not understand her desire to travel and, eventually, to move away from home to start a life of her own. She had felt shunned, even punished, in covert, subtle ways, from the time she had moved to another city, her current home. When her mother died, the centre of the group’s cohesion had gone, and there appeared to be no alternative to her father and brother, but to end their lives. Cara remembers feeling, when the phone call came, that it all made sense, that a part of her always had known this would happen.

### Embodying the Work

The sense of violent rejection was overwhelming for her, and as so often happens when pain is beyond words, it lodges in the body. Paradoxically, it lodged itself in my body much of the time while she, thin and waif-like, seemed to float in the room with a vacant, white stare. Her 6th house Pisces Saturn-Chiron expressed as a sense of unreality, invisibility, no container. Feeling that she was no longer a “normal” person, and that exposure of her tragedy would bring further ruin, she harboured a position of shame and guilt. She was corpse-like, had difficulty sleeping, would sometimes suddenly vomit if she was dealing with the affairs of her deceased family. As Cara’s words of depressed disbelief filled the room session after session, much of the work was going on at the level of body. A beautiful line from John Donne’s “Progress of the Soul” captures the power of the somatic communication and the importance of being alert to this unspoken dimension:

“her pure and eloquent blood  
spoke in her cheeks, and so distinctly wrought,  
That one might almost say her body thought.”<sup>10</sup>

My role was simply to be there to witness, to endure the feelings, to help her find her own words, and to allow the therapeutic container to serve as midwife to her grief.

Body played an important part in another way. During the period of the tragedy and therapy, she was breast-feeding her baby. This was something that came very naturally for her, and she had enjoyed the entire process of pregnancy, giving birth, and mothering. The immediacy of her baby’s needs and his beautiful aliveness grounded her in her own life, affirmed her instinctual responses, and reminded her of her creative self. She was also a sculptress (although she had no impetus to create during this time). I could see that Venus in

8 Esther Harding  
*Woman’s Mysteries*  
Rider 1982 p. 230-232  
9 Howard Sasportas  
*The Twelve Houses*  
Aquarian 1985 p. 335  
10 John Donne  
“Progress of the Soul”  
H.J.C. Grierson, ed.  
*The Poems of John Donne*  
Vol. 1 Oxford Univ. Press  
1912 p. 245-6

Scorpio with her Sun was alive and well, affirming the transformative, life-engendering power of love. This Venus part of her was innately passionate, and as the ruler of her Libran Ascendant, it would be vital in her re-finding of beauty, in her journey back into the world. Scorpio's affinity with the instinctual world is well captured by Rob Hand: "Rather than deny the physical universe in order to transcend it, Scorpio will immerse itself in physicality and even drown in it in order to go beyond it."<sup>11</sup> Later, it was with poignant sadness, but also mature understanding, that she responded to her eighteen month-old baby's desire to be weaned. He was moving on; the question was, could she?

### Mourning and Melancholia

The long work of mourning for Cara was difficult, because whilst one part of her could name the destructiveness of various family behaviours, and of her father's decision (she assigned little responsibility to her brother, whose self-motivation had been crushed for years) and, at times, could begin to feel a twinge of anger, another part of her desperately missed them, and longed to bring them back to life. We soon discovered that, for her, this meant choosing to identify with their death wish, it meant negating her anger and her wish to live as a distinct individual in her own unique way. Her deepest fear was that if she moved on by choosing life, she would leave them behind, and cut off the roots of her identity.

Cara's Scorpionic pull to witness inwardly, to go back and be with them, brought her to a stuck position. The mourning process took her into their minds, over and over again (she began to speak of "them", as a unit, rather than as three different individuals), where a part of her found it almost impossible to relinquish intimacy with their death-embracing selves. The wounded, and now cynical, part of her did not want to come back from the trenches, did not believe that, in a world where such "carnage incomparable" could happen, she could ever hope and trust again. Many dreams depicted the leaden weight of the rage-turned-into-guilt she struggled with. In one dream, she was with her father, both of them dead, but discussing burial. He told her forcefully that she must be cremated like him, but Cara maintained her desire to be buried intact, as a whole person. This is a powerful image of the Plutonian urge towards disintegration, self-destruction, the desire to return to the basic stuff of life. It told my client that in the underworld of her unconscious self lies a dilemma: to lie with her beloved father, to be close to him or "like" him, would mean annihilation of the self. To be "buried whole" was her present state; she was separate from him, but in a kind of shadow world, not very alive. Clearly, the dream had a sexual theme, too, whose meaning Cara began to explore and understand as an unresolved love and fear of her father.

A paper by psychoanalyst J.R. Pedder, "Failure to Mourn, and Melancholia", helped me to understand the struggle Cara was facing. Pedder wrote that the basic work of mourning involves an individual in internalising the lost loved person but, quoting Melanie Klein, he states that the mourner

"...is not doing so for the first time but, through the work of mourning, is reinstating that object as well as all his loved internal objects which he feels he has lost. He is recovering what he had already attained in childhood.' (Klein, 1940, p. 330) It is the rebuilding of this inner world that characterises the successful work of mourning. The depressive and the person who fails in the work of mourning have been unable in early childhood to establish their good internal objects and to feel secure in their inner world when threatened with external loss."<sup>12</sup>

My client suffered from morbid grief, and an inability to tolerate her ambivalent feelings towards her mother and father. I believe this was due, in part, to a deeply entrenched family pattern of loss and rejected aggression so that she had not, in her early years, internalised a mother and father who were strong enough to take her own wild aggression, and therefore to love all of her. The mourning process for someone like Cara will take much longer, for **the therapeutic relationship must afford her another chance to internalise and re-establish something new.**

The birth chart supported my own hope for the mourning process immeasurably. The strong Scorpio theme, in a grand trine with Saturn-Chiron in Pisces and the Cancer Midheaven, and sextile the Virgo power-house of Mars-Uranus-Pluto, represented not only a dramatic life-changing encounter with violent rage, but also symbolised a strong potential **to be reborn through devastating sacrifice.** I remembered that during the Scorpio phase of the year (in the Northern Hemisphere) the night forces are stronger and gaining ascendancy, the pull is to become something greater than the distinct egoic self. Dane Rudhyar speaks of this in *The Pulse of Life* when he sees that, in Scorpio, "the desire to be a separate individual is being overwhelmed with dramatic intensity by the need to be more than oneself."<sup>13</sup> This is the crucial challenge for Scorpio: the urge for a fuller, greater sense of life - which she may sense is her birthright - is granted only through sustaining a kind of ego death. The Sun's close conjunction with Neptune made this challenge all the more problematic, giving her a desire to give in to her depression, to avoid the arduous path of healing and ego development. However, Neptune's creative energy was very evident in her active dream life. Scorpio seeks to feel the heights and depths of the universe; the essence of her truth, her *telos* or purpose, is to do just that. But it involves an encounter with the

- 11 Robert Hand  
*Horoscope Symbols*  
Para Research 1981 p. 228
- 12 J.R. Pedder "Failure to Mourn and Melancholia"  
*British Journal of Psychiatry*  
1982 141
- 13 Dane Rudhyar  
*The Pulse of Life* Shambala  
1978 p. 90

14 C.G. Jung (1966), as quoted in "A Multiplicity of Psychotherapeutic Relationships" by Petruska Clarkson, *British Journal of Psychotherapy*, Vol. 7 (2) 1990 p. 152

15 Christopher Bollas, *Forces of Destiny* Free Association Books 1989 p.10.

Bollas further describes this concept as: "More complex than an animal's instinct, which is another manifestation of an unthought knowledge, how much of this knowledge is ever to be employed and brought into the subject's being depends entirely on the nature of this child's experience of the mother and father. If the mother and father have a good intuitive sense of their infant, so that their perception of his needs, presentation of objects for his 'use', and representation of the infant (in the face, body gestures, and language) are sensitive to his personality idiom, then he will experience the object world as facilitating. When this happens, we have children who take joy in re-presenting themselves, celebrating the arts of transformation because they have experienced transformative mothering and fathering and know from the authority of inner experiencing that latent knowledge can be given its life."

mystery of death; it demands a passionate embracing of that experience, and then a cathartic release into a more vital, meaningful way of life.

Chiron's involvement in this picture, it seemed to me, emphasised the crucial importance of choosing her ultimate response to the tragedy. For Cara, Saturn-Chiron in Pisces seemed to present a conflict between the urge towards self-immolation, through carrying the heaviness of family guilt, and the need to transcend old, unhealthy family forms of living through forgiveness, compassion, and rebirth. Jung tells us that the process of individuation consists of three phases: insight, endurance, and action; in the last two phases, he emphasises that it is *moral strength* which plays the crucial role. True change comes from the moral strength to choose, to act.

### "Drinking the Soma"

Cara's Aquarian Moon represents a part of her that could be fed by ideas, a part that hungered for an understanding of coherent principles and patterns. This is where the door to thinking opened, to bring a glimmer of Promethean light into the darkness of her morbid inner world. She often mentioned her Sun sign, and could identify with what she understood about it. She wanted to understand more, and knowing that Jupiter was transiting through Aquarius (and that my own Jupiter was conjunct her Moon within 12'), I felt she had given me an important signal about what could be helpful. Our conversations about her astrological make-up were casual, always related to the feelings she had brought, and the musings which absorbed her mind. It opened up a new way of thinking about herself and what had happened to her family and to her. I was cautious about this endeavour due to its potential impact on the transference. But in the work of mourning and reparation, it is important to follow the lead of the client as to what may be nourishing and what may foster curiosity about the self. (Interestingly, the root of curiosity is *curare*, which means "to cure".) I was also reminded of something Jung wrote: "The great importance of the transference has often led to the mistaken idea that it is absolutely indispensable for a cure, that it must be demanded from the patient, so-to-speak... Anyone who thinks that he must 'demand' a transference is forgetting that this is only one of the therapeutic factors..."<sup>14</sup>

That that the astrological symbol system could become part of her own meaning-making process was further suggested by the fact that Jupiter rules her Sagittarian 3rd house, and is in opposition to the Aquarian Moon, ruler of her MC (which itself partakes of the water grand trine, and therefore a crucial connecting pattern is formed). The Moon-Jupiter opposition, from the 4th to the 10th, suggests the pivotal role that her mother's emotional power played in her life. This Moon-Jupiter is semi-square and sesquiquadrate the Pluto

(it is closest to the Pluto, although also configured with the whole pattern), and this gave me a valuable warning about what she could easily project onto me, but also what she wanted to live for herself.

Much later, after the anniversary of the deaths (at which time Cara expressed her feelings somatically by becoming terribly ill with stomach pains), another dream emerged which seemed to be psychically and prophetically linked with her Moon-Jupiter. In the dream, she and her great aunt were in a theatre audience, waiting for her great grandmother to come on stage. They were simply waiting, happy, expectant. At first, she linked this to the state she now felt she was in: beginning to relate more positively to a space that was opening up inside of her. To me this seemed to reflect the therapy, for she was waiting with someone, the great aunt (Moon-Jupiter - her therapist), for something good. But a week later, she very excitedly related to me some astonishing news: her *real* great aunt (of whom she was fond and spoke to occasionally on the phone - one of her few remaining relatives) told her that her great grandmother (on her father's side) at one point had actually been an accomplished actress on stage. This seemed to be a very hopeful message from her unconscious self, for not only did it indicate that she was healthy enough to register such a positive ancestral memory, but it was a memory that was being used by her psyche to affirm her own fragile, but very real, desire for a creative life, for something "great and grand" within herself. Psychoanalyst Christopher Bollas writes about "the unthought known"<sup>15</sup> as a kind of self knowledge, sometimes genetically based, which has not yet been thought, although it is deeply present and very much at work in a person's life. Her dream was thinking this "unthought known" in dream language, in preparation for it to become more conscious.

### The Importance of Beauty

Suddenly a more beautiful side of her psychic inheritance began to open up. A real desire to understand her family and past generations began to enthuse her. Slowly but surely, Cara began to change visibly: her face now had colour, she was more animated, her interest in sculpture returned, and a new interest in writing emerged. Her capacity to witness, *to truly be with* the dysfunction and pain of her family inheritance, as well as to slowly ingest a new experience through the therapeutic relationship, allowed her to find her own voice in her family story. Indeed, it is a kind of Orphic voice for part of her new identity is being "the survivor" now seeking to bring the threads of her experience together so as to redeem her family story and to give it meaning. It is a story of mourning, and a story of warning - especially for her, for the tendency to repress her own aggression and power will always be, as it were, waiting in the wings (MA-UR-PL 12th house opposed SA-CHIRON), ready to fill up the psychic tributaries of her soul.



Psychoanalyst Donald Meltzer has written at length about the aesthetic experience and its crucial importance for psychological integration. In his fascinating book *The Apprehension of Beauty*, he uses the poetry of Keats to demonstrate his ideas:

“...he [Keats] was not extolling death but rather the way in which the idea of death is central to the experience of life and beauty, as he explained shortly after: ‘She dwells with Beauty - Beauty that must die; And Joy, whose hand is ever at his lips bidding adieu...’ (*Ode on Melancholy*). The tragic element in the aesthetic experience resides, not in the transience, but in the enigmatic quality of the object... The aesthetic conflict is different from romantic agony in this respect: that its central experience of pain resides in uncertainty, tending towards distrust, verging on suspicion... but is rescued by the quest for knowledge... the desire to know rather than to possess the object of desire.”<sup>16</sup>

One of Cara’s main struggles was with her distrust and suspicion, a central Achilles’ heel for Scorpio, but I believe she was rescued by her growing capacity to understand, by her “desire to know rather than to possess the object of desire.” This is a real challenge for Scorpio; **it entails putting Athena’s reflecting shield to work, so that one can know, rather than be completely emotionally identified with.** Meltzer’s ideas are relevant for the mourning process, for when mourning is successful, the individual has a clear memory of the loved one rather than a morbid attachment to them, and this memory evokes a sense of poignancy and thankfulness about what is now inside them. Cara’s survival of her confrontation with death gave way, at times, to a sense of confrontation with unsurpassable beauty and value. “Sometimes now I feel so deeply peaceful... I heard a bird singing the other morning, it was indescribably beautiful... now, very small things bring me happiness... and I think, maybe good things could happen again...”

## Conclusion

The healing aspect of Cara’s Scorpio Sun was slowly brought to life by the “making conscious” activity of psychotherapy. Not surprisingly, her Sun-Mercury-Venus-Neptune conjunction responded to the work through her vivid dreams, which so often lead the way to breakthroughs. This reminded me of the importance which the “dream as guide” played in the Asclepian healing centres of the ancient world. A dream, which signalled that Cara’s mourning phase was nearing its end, came as a joyous surprise. In the dream, she was, or was with, a dolphin swimming in the sea, feeling a great sense of elation and freedom. Then a thought comes to her mind: can a dolphin and a human mate, she wonders, and her concluding thought is that the gestation in a few years could work. Cara had talked about her love of dolphins, and in one

of the happiest times of her life had had the experience of swimming in the sea with dolphins. To explore the symbolism further, I turned to J.C. Cooper’s *Dictionary of Symbolic and Mythological Animals*, and read:

“The dolphin is a saviour, a guide to souls in the underworld and to the Isles of the Blessed... The Sun God Apollo... is closely associated with the dolphin, which was sculptured on the walls of his temple at Delphi; he could assume its form. In this aspect he is known as Apollo Delphinos, founder of the Delphic Oracle. Delphi was regarded as an *omphalos*, the World Centre, with the Greek words *delphi* (dolphin) and *delphys* (womb) bringing in the symbolism of the masculine, solar Sun God and the feminine watery power of the womb as the centre of life... Early Christianity was symbolized by the fish, with Christ as the saviour of souls bearing them across the waters of death; the dolphin can take the place of the fish in this context also of the whale that swallowed Jonah; in this it takes on the significance of the death and resurrection of Christ... The dolphin is *par excellence* the helpful animal; it is the ‘peak of creation’, symbolic of virtue, otherworldly wisdom, joyousness and playfulness. It was said to have had human form until it took to the sea.”<sup>17</sup>

Indeed, a mating and a mending, a real resurrection had been taking place. This dream expressed a new inner playfulness and hopefulness, coming from a re-connection with her true inner self. The healing process was firmly in place.

Finding a personal language for her experience was also a crucial part of her healing path. As John Stuart Mills once wrote, “language is the light of the mind.” I believe a measured use of astrological symbolism facilitated a deeper self-exploration for Cara, and enabled her to begin to see the shattered threads of her life come together in a meaningful cosmic family loom. Cara’s Scorpionic “vocation to witness” was strengthened, in a self-affirming way, through the understanding she gained of herself, and through identifying the choices she could make for herself, which were different from her family’s way. My own ability to survive this work, which often was very arduous, I believe is a testimony to astrology’s invisible presence, not unlike a special daemon at work in subtle ways within my own mind. In a mysterious way, the astrology of this work helped to hold us both, as we trudged our way through the trenches, finally surfacing with a sense of renewed life, a sense of renewed seeing, and a sense that something had been redeemed - and laid to rest.



16 Donald Meltzer  
*The Apprehension of Beauty*  
Roland Harris Educational  
Trust 1988 p. 27  
17 J.C. Cooper *Dictionary of  
Symbolic and Mythological  
Animals* Thorsons 1992 p.  
76-77



# Reflections: Healing, A Sacred Mystery

Brian Clark



Brian Clark recently led a tour, *Myth and the Medicinals of Ancient Greece*, with herbalist Tracey Potter, revisiting many of the Asclepiads throughout Greece. In 1997 Brian, Demetra George and Melanie Reinhart visited these sites on their tour *The Healing Sanctuaries of Ancient Greece*. Brian is the co-founder of the Chiron Centre in Melbourne, a multi-disciplinary centre which also houses *Astro\*Synthesis*, the four year program in applied astrology. Every few years Brian conducts tours to the sacred sites in Greece through *Odyssey*.

## The Contemporary Asclepiad

Having returned recently from standing on the sacred ground of some of the ancient Asclepiads as well as visiting Chiron's Pelion region, I have been constantly reminded of the healing legacy carried by both Chiron and Asclepius. Jung once lamented that "there are no longer any gods whom we can invoke to help us" as the modern world has driven the "helpful numina" away.<sup>1</sup> However I wonder if the *temenos* of the consulting room, where dream images and astrological symbols are shared, is not a contemporary extension of the ancient Asclepiad.

## Asclepius' Legacy

Hippocrates, the "father" of modern medicine, was born on the island of Kos. Legend tells the story of Asclepius, the god of healing, bringing his healing tradition to the island. Hippocratic medicine had its roots in the ancient Asclepian traditions and rituals, now eclipsed by the new paradigm/myth of science. At the heart of the ancient tradition of healing was the honouring of the divine; illness was a sickness of soul visible through the body. Disease was a sacred visitation: the god's message was to attend to the split between body and soul. The voice of the god spoke through the disease as the pain alerted the patient to the rupture between the embodied world and the ensouled world. The body revealed the illness, but its source was the sickened spirit, the unattended soul,

the ignored god. The ritual of healing realigned the spiritual priorities so the incarnate self was no longer ignorant of soul.

Still today, you can enter the Asclepian sanctuary on Kos, pass through the *propylon*, enter the sacred ground and climb up the tiers of the sanctuary. The view at the top is spectacular. Standing on the Western extremity of Europe, looking across to Asia Minor, the ancient world is as present in that moment as it was two and a half millennia ago. At a crossroads, you experience an intersection of culture, of time, of space. Embraced by the stillness and the beauty, two hemispheres co-exist without a split down the middle.

## Who Was Asclepius?

Diachronically, we first encounter Asclepius as a physician from Thessaly, trained in many of the healing arts, including homoeopathy, herbal medicine, music and surgery. His healing mentor was Chiron, the wise centaur whose cave sanctuary, originally on Mount Pelion, was located high over the port of Iolcus and the plains of Thessaly. Here Iason (Jason, whose name means healer) returned from Colchis with Medea, the herbalist and magician. Medea brought the ancient feminine traditions of herbs and magic from her home on the Black Sea in Asia Minor to this northern area of Greece. By the 8th century BCE, Homer's epic *The*



*Iliad* introduced Asclepius' sons, Podalirius and Machaon, surgeons and psychiatrists, healers of both body and the soul.

After the death of the hero, Asclepius, he was apotheosised and became a god. His spirit became aligned with both chthonian deities, whose emblems included the snake, and medicinal practitioners. From the depths of the earth, the Asclepian-inspired earth daemons released both cures and prophecies, and the Asclepian tradition began to embrace the ancient art of divination. By the classical period, Asclepius became aligned with Apollo, the god of healing, as his mythical son. Being a son of Apollo, the god who presides over the spheres of healing and divination, healing sanctuaries and divination sites were aligned. Healing and divination, twin aspects of the urge to repair a fractured relationship to the god, were now linked. Astrological counsellors, whose symbolic and divinatory work evokes the archetypal "gods", are working near the territory of the ancient Asclepiads. Similarly, as with their ancient counterparts, one of the most commonly asked questions metaphorically is, "How have I offended the god?" and "How can I repair my relationship with this deity?"

From the 5th Century BCE, the healing sanctuaries throughout Greece dedicated to the god Asclepius, prospered. The benefits from the cult practices of Asclepius were so successful and tangible that his worship became pan-Hellenic, blossoming into one of the main religious forces of the Hellenistic world. The profound beauty of the location of the healing sanctuaries, the Asclepiads, as well as the pilgrimage to these sites, aided the suppliant's healing process. What actually took place in the healing rituals is a mystery (as is the process of healing); however, what we do know of the process is a powerful metaphor for what could potentially take place in the contemporary healing exchange between counsellor and client.

Asclepius was born on a funeral pyre, extracted from the dead body of his mother, by caesarean section. The future god of healing is born heroically of death, yet also dies because he interferes with the natural life cycles by resurrecting the dead. The healer's vocation straddles the fine, invisible thread of life and death, and the subtle confusion between who is the healer and who is to be healed. Called to the vocation of healing by his own near-death experience, Asclepius reminds us of the healer's intimate experience of death and loss. This legacy reflects the vulnerability of those in the healing profession.

## The Healing

By the time the pilgrim finally entered the sanctuary, the healing process was under way. Journeying to the sacred site, prompted by the disease, created a space for honouring the god, and ignited the healing process. The invitation to heal was being addressed; the god was being honoured. After cleansing rituals, the suppliant entered the *tholos*, an underground labyrinth with healing springs and snakes. Whatever procedure then took place, the underground journey had begun. When the client finally arrives for the consultation, the process is already under way.

Healing came via the god who appeared in the patient's dream as they slept in the *abaton* on the *kline*. The incubation or 'sleeping in' the temple prepared a sacred interior space in the patient, which invited the dream to appear. Into this inner world of dream came the healing images, restoring the patient's well-being. The god spoke through the dream images and the body awoke, renewed from the contact with the world of soul. The healing was witnessed by the temple priests, or *therapeutae*, who then helped record the healing without prescriptions, antibiotics or future workshops! The healing power of the image was enough.

Healing is a mystery, a magical rite, facilitated by the counsellor's training and knowledge, as well as the ability to have prepared a sacred precinct for this mystery to unfold. It is not a product of either the counsellor or his training, but a divine mystery constellated through the intention of both parties. The healing is a third force, constellated in the exchange between the two, belonging to the mystery, profundity and sacredness of this ancient tradition.

When a client arrives for an astrological consultation, I try to ascertain what ailment may have called them, what god demands recognition, or what threshold is about to be crossed. The astrological model, through transits and progressions and a myriad of other symbolic techniques, conjures up a vivid image of what god could be calling or what bridge is being crossed. Astrology is a sacred art of divination that, at the right time, also promotes healing. As astrological practitioners, we often witness the mystery of healing when the client's intention is to seek a greater understanding, and, also, when we are as open as possible to the experience. But we too must prepare the space in the *abaton* for the healing power of symbols and images to take place.

## Glossary

**abaton** the innermost sanctuary in the temple where the patients slept awaiting the healing through dream revelation.

**Asclepiad** healing sanctuaries of Asclepius where dream incubation took place. These healing sites were located throughout the Hellenistic world and some references report as many as 400 sanctuaries.

**kline** a couch or a sleeping mat upon which the patients lay. "Clinic" is derived from this word, and perhaps even the Freudian couch!

**therapeutae** priests who served in the cult of Asclepius.

**tholos** a circular building; in the Asclepian tradition it contained a labyrinth in the "basement".

### Opposite:

*Votive relief to Asclepius*  
National Museum, Athens  
*Larousse*

I C.G. Jung, "Healing The Split", CW 18: 598.







*The Isle of the Dead*  
Arnold Böcklin  
Kunstmuseum Basel