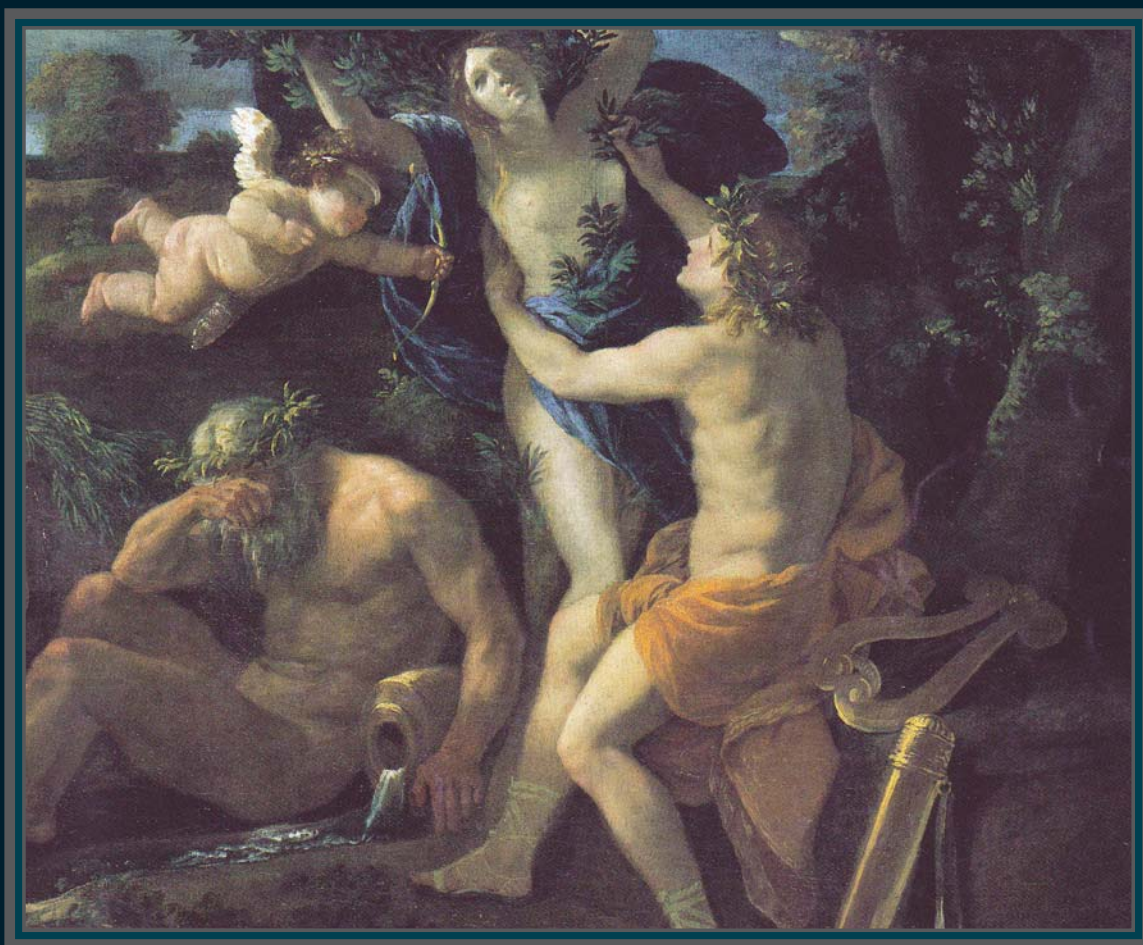


# APOLLON

THE JOURNAL OF PSYCHOLOGICAL ASTROLOGY



BROTHER-SISTER MARRIAGE ~ BRIAN CLARK

THE ETERNAL TRIANGLE ~ LIZ GREENE

THE SACRED MARRIAGE & THE GEOMETRY OF TIME ~ ROBIN HEATH

EROS & APHRODITE, LOVE & CREATION ~ ERIN SULLIVAN

NEPTUNE AND PLUTO: ROMANCE IN THE UNDERWORLD ~ SOPHIA YOUNG

Two illustrations from C.G. Jung's *Collected Works*, Volume XII, Routledge & Kegan Paul. The first is entitled "The artifex at work with his *soror mystica*", and the second, "The artifex and his *soror mystica* making the gesture of the secret at the end of the work". Both are from *Mutus Liber* (1702). See Brian Clark's article (page 13) for an exploration of the sibling archetype.



## Cover Picture



### Apollo and Daphne

Nicolas Poussin  
Alte Pinakothek Munich

**Nicolas Poussin** was born, it is thought, in June 1594, in Les Andelys, France. A chart for the middle of June carries the beginning of a Uranus-Pluto conjunction, as well as Saturn-Neptune. By the time of his first Saturn return, he had moved to Rome, where he built his reputation as one of the great painter-philosophers of the 17th century. He died November 19th, 1665.

"Poussin based his painting style on the example of classical art, on controlled method, and on carefully conceived doctrine. At the heart of his aesthetic doctrine was the belief in reason as the key to beauty. Poussin viewed painting as a fundamentally rational discipline, whose ultimate, poetic goals could be achieved by penetrating the underlying logic of nature. He sought an ideal, harmonious beauty through moderation, control, and dignity of subject. Relying on meditation and theory, Poussin was able to transform the raw material of nature into superbly abstract and philosophical visions."

Ulrich Hiesinger, *Grolier Multimedia Encyclopaedia*



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## THE JOURNAL OF PSYCHOLOGICAL ASTROLOGY

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#### APOLLON

*polon*  
*haploun*  
*iēpaieon*

he who causes the heavenly bodies to move together in harmony  
the simple, a euphemism for the complexity of the oracle, which is also honest  
to heal, also to throw or strike (with consciousness)

from *Greek and Egyptian Mythologies*, compiled by Yves Bonnefoy, transl. Wendy Doniger  
University of Chicago Press, 1992



# Editorial

## This loving feeling



**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. He moderates the discussion group on the Internet on psychological astrology.

This journal is full of so many kinds of love, so many different ways of relating. The theme for this issue is relationships and sexuality. Each of our contributors has come up with something original and refreshing on the subject. Perhaps, when you've finished reading, you may also agree with me, that there's a quality that they all share, too. It may be, in a journal named after the Sun god, that his story informs the stories, flavours them with the poignant whiff of a sigh. Apollon, never the luckiest in love, chose the laurel as his symbol; it's all he has left after Gaia spirits his beloved Daphne away from his grasp. The laurel, renowned symbol of excellence, is the love that got away.

Our journey begins in a café in rainy London, as Darby Costello's teacher and student are playfully musing on the nature of Platonic love, and the life and loves of one man in particular, the Renaissance philosopher Marsilio Ficino. Brian Clark then takes us back to our mythological roots, and reminds us of the oft-forgotten fact that the archetypal marriage at the apex of the Olympian pantheon was between brother Zeus and sister Hera. With deceptive simplicity, he presents his thoughts on the sibling component of relationship, in a way that is both challenging and enriching. Robin Heath then takes a different tack, but one no less intriguing. With the panache of a magician, he treats us to a dazzling demonstration of the way mathematics, geometry, astronomy and myth interlink, in the relationship between the Sun and the Moon. Once the implications of his argument sink in, you may find yourself, like Robin, in awe at this most sacred of marriages.

The Pythagorean triangle gives us one of the important clues to the mathematical relationship between the luminaries. Liz Greene, in her lucid and compassionate article, addresses another sort of triangle: a less clear-cut,

more painful arena of emotional entanglement, the eternal triangle between The Betrayer, The Betrayed, and The Instrument of Betrayal. Her elegant and clear explanation of Oedipal conflicts is masterful.

We then take leave of Olympos for a while, in John Green's entertaining exploration into the many reasons why body piercing has gained in appeal in the West over the past few years. Decoration or mutilation? A counterculture rite of passage, undertaken in a society that no longer offers such rituals? A means to a better sex life? A magickal act? You decide.

Sophia Young then takes us back in time to the romantic era of the troubadours, in her graceful foray to the Underworld, using the myth of Orpheus and Eurydice as her theme. She tells the moving story of a survivor of childhood abuse, whose path to recovery includes the healing experience of a modern-day courtly love. Following on from that, Juliet Sharman-Burke reminds us of another tradition, the Tarot, as she compares the Lovers card with the astrological Venus, and retells the myth of the Judgement of Paris.

“Creativity is discovery - not design” Erin Sullivan writes. “This follows for love, as well,” she adds, in an article that looks deep into the relationship between love and creativity, examining the archetypal forces at work when we experience an “Erotic attack”. John Etherington then looks at the life of the late poet laureate Ted Hughes, and his relationship with Sylvia Plath. I then finish this issue, with my reflections on Ganymede, putting myself in his shoes in a flight of fancy.

We hope you enjoy reading. We are delighted to have some original artwork, by Ira Kiourti, which, we're sure you'll agree, adds a wonderfully Venusian touch to this issue. ☉



# Remembering Eros

## A Ficinian Response to Love in the Nineties

### Darby Costello

The setting: a café in a rainy London. The time: the present. The cast: an astrologer and her student. The inspiration for this dialogue: a fifteenth-century philosopher called Marsilio Ficino. Let **Darby Costello** gently guide you through his life and loves.

**Sylvie:** Vita, hello! How unexpected to see you here in this café, in the middle of a rainy Friday afternoon. I didn't know you lived in this area! But I won't intrude, I see you are working on something.

**Vita:** Not so much working, as musing. Please, sit down and join me for a coffee. How have you been? We last met at Erica's dinner, I think. You were with that interesting Russian man.

**S:** Yes. I was. No longer, I might add. This business of falling in love. I wish I could stop it happening. I begin to think it is some kind of trick. I fear that there is something I must figure out, or I'll keep getting tricked forever. Somewhere, I hear the gods laughing - it's as if I keep missing the point; I don't know the secret! If only I could find the secret of this trick I'm sure I would be able to laugh with them.

**V:** Yes, wouldn't that be delicious! But *what* happens?

**S:** I seem to be caught in a loop and I have no idea how to break out. After the end of this last affair, in which I invested more of myself than even I imagined possible, I wanted to die. Day after day I thought of suicide, how I would do it, what it would mean to the various people I knew. For months I was numb with pain. I kept telling myself I was already dead, so what was the point of killing myself? There had to be another solution. Actually, I remembered something you said once, about the secret of love being only given to those who had faced death in some way. It keeps coming into my mind, so isn't it a fine coincidence that I've met you here, and today?

**V:** It is. Tell me more about this feeling of death.

**S:** I don't know quite what to say. I'm so numb. This seems to always happen after the end of my love affairs. I've come to recognize it. But this time it's more profound, more prolonged. And I've resisted coming out of it because suddenly I found it had its own landscape - grey, dark, cold, but not featureless. I wouldn't want to stay here forever, but I am still watching it,

and I keep remembering what you said about the secret of love.

**V:** Ah, that secret!

**S:** Because I cannot go on falling into the madness called love, and out of it into the hell called disillusionment. I do not want to be enchanted again, for that is what it feels like. I don't know what I do want but I don't want that. It makes me too unhappy, and it seems a terrible waste to suffer it again and again. I've begun to realize there's something else I want, only I don't know exactly what it is. Peace. Joy. Beauty. Somehow.

I seem to be falling in love with a dream each time, and after a short while my dreams turn to nightmares. There must be something bigger to discover - there must be something more than this endless round of ecstasy and torment which seems to have no meaning, and teaches me nothing. I want to love and to be loved, but I think I would even give that up now if I could find the 'something' I can sense in all this turmoil but cannot identify. Maybe it's hidden in this secret you spoke of - can you tell me about it?

**V:** There is an old tradition. Have you ever come across the concept of Platonic love?

**S:** *Platonic* love. You can't be serious! That's love without sex, and I can't believe you are offering that as a solution to heartbreak! I don't understand.

**V:** That's because there's rather more to it. You may be surprised when I say that Platonic love, in fact, is *erotic* love.

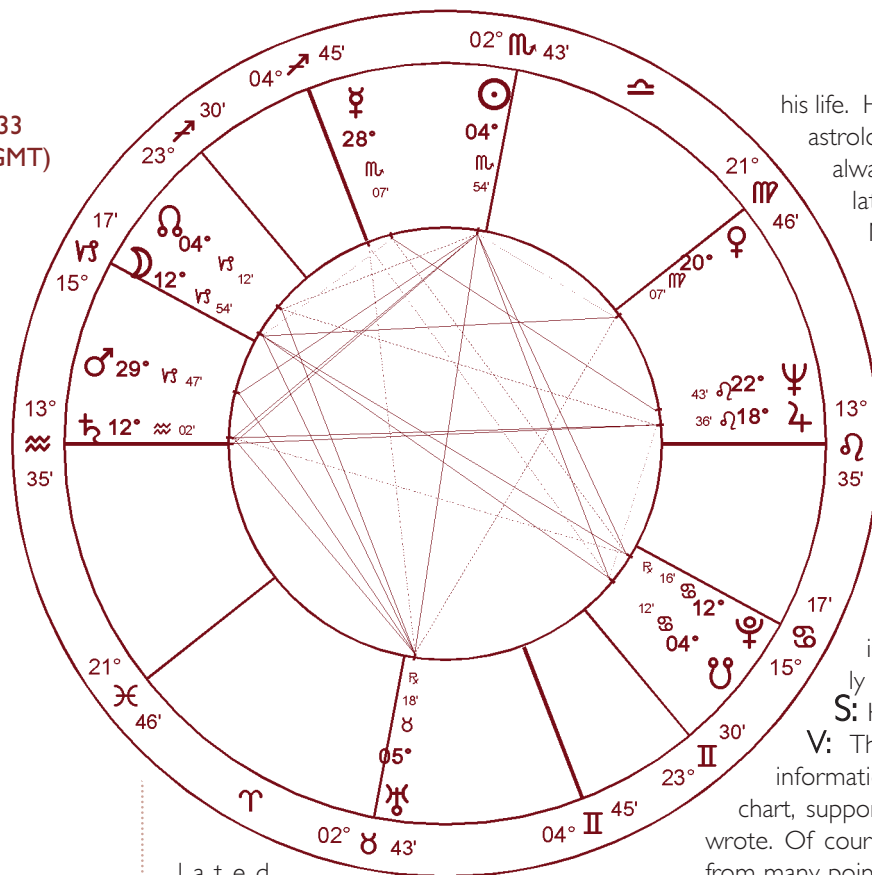
**S:** I certainly am. I thought that Platonic love was *sexless* love and that *erotic* love was *sexual* love.

**V:** Yes that's what I thought too for a long time, until I was introduced to the writings of the man who coined the phrase "Platonic love". And then I found his astrological chart and worked on it with a friend. She was writing her PhD on certain aspects of this man's life and work. We were invited to give a talk together, in Florence, on his chart. We used his writing to illustrate various aspects of his chart, and as he was an astrologer himself, and commented on his own chart in letters to friends, this was fascinating work. We followed his experiences of life through his letters and writings. We corre-



**Darby Costello** studied psychology, philosophy, and theology at university in the mid-1960's. She then went on to study astrology with Francis Sakoian and Louis Acker, and also with Isobel Hickey in Boston. In 1971 she went to South Africa for a brief visit, and stayed twelve years. During that time she worked recording the art and practices of the *samgomos*, the priest/priestess healers of Southern Africa. At the same time she began practising astrology, developing a wide clientele over the years. In 1983 she came to London. In 1988 she joined the CPA, where she has been teaching and supervising students ever since. She also teaches for the Faculty of Astrological Studies, and teaches and lectures regularly throughout the UK and Europe. In 1996, Dorling Kindersley published *Astrology* in their "Pocket" series, written with Lindsay Radermacher. The CPA Press published *The Astrological Moon* also in 1996, and recently published *Water and Fire*.

**Marsilio Ficino**  
 19th October 1433  
 near 2pm (1pm GMT)  
 Figline, Italy  
 43N36 11E15  
 Geocentric  
 Tropical  
 Koch



I a t e d  
 them with transit-  
 ing planets as they moved through his  
 birthchart and came to some interesting  
 conclusions. We began to see, as we explored it  
 over the months, how he must have come to  
 this sense of a love he called "Platonic". In fact  
 that's what I was reflecting on when you came  
 in. Several people have been speaking to me  
 recently about their unhappiness in love. This  
 man's experience of love, and its pain, led him  
 to a profound transformation. His coining of the  
 term "Platonic love" was part of it. Shall I tell  
 you his story?

**S:** Yes I'd like that. And, after all, today is Friday,  
 and Friday is "Venus Day". And, it's pleasant sit-  
 ting here in this café looking out at the rain. If  
 you have the time, I do. My astrology may be a  
 bit rusty, but I'd love to get that part of my mind  
 working again. And I have a feeling that in telling  
 me about this man, you might be telling me  
 something I might need to know at this point in  
 my life. So, do carry on. But start at the begin-  
 ning. Who was he?

**V:** His name was Marsilio Ficino and he was  
 born near Florence in 1433. His father was  
 Cosimo de' Medici's physician. Marsilio was a  
 clever young man who had discovered Plato  
 quite young. His father insisted he be trained as  
 a physician, but Cosimo recognised him as pri-  
 marily "a doctor of souls". During Ficino's Saturn  
 return he was commissioned by Cosimo to  
 translate all of Plato's works from Greek into  
 Latin. These books had just come into Cosimo's  
 hands along with many of the Neoplatonic  
 texts which Ficino later translated as well. He  
 was set up in the beautiful Villa Careggia, just  
 outside of Florence, where he stayed the rest of

his life. He was a practicing physician, an  
 astrologer, eventually a priest, and  
 always a philosopher. Besides trans-  
 lating numerous Platonic and  
 Neoplatonic texts, he wrote  
 commentaries on them and a  
 prolific quantity of letters. He  
 was passionate about astrol-  
 ogy which he struggled to  
 reconcile with his  
 Catholicism. In fact his life  
 seems to have been a  
 struggle to reconcile irrec-  
 oncilables: Plato and  
 Neoplatonic thought and  
 Christianity; pagan polytheism  
 and Judeo-Christian monothe-  
 ism. And personally: his intense-  
 ly sexual nature and celibacy.

**S:** He was intensely sexual?

**V:** That comes primarily from the  
 information given by his astrological  
 chart, supported by some of the things he  
 wrote. Of course, we could look at his chart  
 from many points of view, but for our purpose  
 here let's concentrate on it from the point of  
 view of his struggle with love and desire.

Here is a copy of his chart. We can see he took  
 his passionate nature from his father's side - he  
 had Sun and Mercury in Scorpio, and Mars in  
 Capricorn. From his mother's side he had a  
 strong instinct to repress his own natural desire  
 for love and intimacy - his Moon was in  
 Capricorn and Venus was in Virgo.

**S:** Yes I see... The Sun in Scorpio and Mars in  
 Capricorn - powerful, hungry and unrelenting in  
 seeking satisfaction from life, and highly sexual.  
 The feminine planets, Moon and Venus, both in  
 Earth, but in the two more "self-controlling"  
 signs of Capricorn and Virgo. So he inherited his  
 mother's controlled and controlling emotional  
 nature through the Moon in Capricorn, and her  
 desire to be valued for her service and her  
 goodness through his Venus in Virgo. All of this  
 together could have indicated a harsh and  
 demanding nature, intensely controlled, natural-  
 ly inclined to self-repression and self-control  
 and, of course, sexual abstinence. Isn't it true  
 that Scorpios are known for transforming, or  
 rechanneling, their basic human instincts into  
 talents which win them power on one plane or  
 another?

**V:** Yes, and these traits are deepened through  
 the aspects and house positions. His Scorpio  
 Sun is in the ninth house, square Saturn on the  
 ascendant in Aquarius. His Venus in Virgo was  
 just entering his eighth house, trine to Mars in  
 the twelfth.

**S:** Yes, I noticed that Saturn: on the Ascendant  
 in Aquarius - his idealistic approach to life, and  
 his need to embody his ideals. I remember you  
 prefer to use the old rulerships when looking at

the personal character in the chart. That Saturn placement must also indicate an awkward relationship to his body, a deep self-consciousness in the most uncomfortable sense, as well as in the most self-developing sense. The struggling, square aspect to his Sun suggests he had to work very hard to achieve his goals. As his Sun was in the ninth house, could you say it was a struggle to achieve his own philosophy?

**V:** Yes - to achieve the mountain-top awareness of the philosopher from living his passionate Scorpio life. If you remember, the higher goal of the ninth house journeys, whether they be of the body or the mind and imagination, is the goal of philosophy - to find eternal truths and meaning in the constantly shifting patterns that we see in time and space. And so the Saturnian Ascendant squaring his ninth-house Sun indicates a great struggle to achieve this goal. He had to embody his high ideal of Saturn in Aquarius, standing as an example to others, and he had to transform his own, given passionate nature into wisdom. His Sun was also strengthened by the trine to Pluto in Cancer, which was opposite his Moon in Capricorn in the eleventh house. So in driving towards his goal of achieving his aim of transformation into true philosopher and educator, he came into intense encounters with various groups and their aims too. Even though Pluto had not been discovered yet, this Lord of Death and Rebirth was secretly facilitating his urge to break through his own nature - to *die* to his own nature in order to achieve something profound. Of course, the opposition of Pluto to his Moon shows us how easily he could feel suffocated by too close an emotional contact, and yet his personal intensity created situations with people which must have been in themselves claustrophobic. His Venus on the cusp of the eighth house repeats that theme - intense desire to be loved, to be mirrored in the beloved's eyes. This is enflamed further by the earthy Mars in Capricorn, hidden away in the sacrificial twelfth house.

**S:** Sacrifice. Is that the key to his story? If his Mars was, as you say, hidden away in the twelfth house, was he inclined then, to sacrifice his desires? Perhaps he never let himself fall in love at all! Perhaps celibacy was easy for him.

**V:** Remember, he was a Scorpio Sun. I like Dane Rudhyar's description of Scorpio: he says that their essential character is "the urge in the individual to merge in absolute union with other individuals in order to constitute together a greater organic whole."<sup>1</sup> That is one way of saying that Scorpio is about sex first, no matter what it later transforms itself into. He also says it's not simply that Scorpio is about procreative sex but about "mystical sex... which is a yearning for self-forgetfulness and union *through another* with a greater whole, and even with

'God'".<sup>2</sup> This is not a simple or straightforward nature. But there's one other factor in this chart that we must consider here, and that is...

**S:** It must be Jupiter! We've not mentioned Jupiter. Everything is so difficult and dark and struggling in his nature so far. Where was his Jupiter? Where was *relief*?

**V:** You have the key. His Jupiter was in Leo, in the seventh house - the house of 'the other' - the house where we give away parts of ourselves and look for them in others. And his Jupiter in Leo was in opposition to Saturn.

**S:** And so he gave away the shining, royal Apollonian part of himself and kept the harsh taskmaster, Saturn.

**V:** Precisely. He saw in others the best and happiest part of himself and identified with Saturn. In fact, he said in a letter to his friend, the Archbishop of Amalfi:

*You have divined, I think, how much I have wanted to live my life with someone of a Jovial nature, so that something of a bitter, and as I might say, Saturnine element, which either my natal star has bestowed on me or which philosophy has added, might eventually be alleviated by the sweet fellowship of someone born under Jove.*<sup>3</sup>

**S:** I see that Neptune is conjunct his Jupiter in Leo. He must have fallen in a big way for those he saw as "noble". He must have seen them as gods. How painful it must have been for him - a passionate Scorpio with an earthy sexual nature longing for mystical union with another. What did he do with all of this? And how did it get him to Platonic Love?

**V:** The phrase itself first appears in a letter he wrote to his friend, Alamanno Donati, with whom he shared a passion for Plato:

*What kind of friendship will ours be called, oh Alamanno? since it began from nothing else than from Platonic love, we must call it nothing less than Platonic.*<sup>4</sup>

In a later letter to this same friend he wrote that 'such a divine love kindled by the flames of the virtues and growing strong from celestial rays, seeks to return to the sublime heights of heaven which no fear of earthly ills can ever trouble.'<sup>5</sup>

**S:** I understand. They must have both loved reading Plato, and must have come to love the man that they perceived behind the philosophy. He took his conception of "Platonic Love" from Plato's own notions of the best and highest forms of love and then applied it to his feelings for his friend. But was this man his lover, in any sense?

**V:** He never tells us in what sense they were "lovers", but everything points to his own life of chastity. He seems to have been searching for

1 Dane Rudhyar, *The Pulse of Life* (Philadelphia, David McKay Co. 1943)

2 *ibid*

3 Ficino, *Letters*, translated by members of the language department of the School of Economic Science, 4 volumes (London, Shepherd-Walwyn 1988)

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4 M. Ficino, *Opera Omnia* (Basil, 1576) ~6

5 M. Ficino, *Letter*, *op. cit.* Vol. 4, No.15



ways to express the deep feelings he had for this Alamanno - and this was his way. Perhaps there was sexual feeling in it, but he was seeking another route through which his feelings could express themselves.

Another man was even more central to his struggle and transformation. His name was Giovanni Cavalcanti, and Ficino met him around 1468, five or six years after he was given the Villa in Careggi by Cosimo's grandson, Lorenzo de' Medici. We know how much he felt for this man by many of the things he wrote to him. Listen to this:

*The care of my own sick body and that of my father is one burden for me. Your absence is another. Both must be borne with equanimity, lest they become more burdensome through impatience.*<sup>6</sup>

Even though he was doing work that he loved, in a place that was beautiful, he was still tormented during these years, and I think it was because of this terrible longing, his passionate nature, which seemed to have no resolution. He was a spiritual man of his times, and Christianity has always rejected the body's urges, other than procreation. Its higher aim had to do with the release of the spirit, and this tradition he found very compatible with his own complex nature. In his *De Amore*, for example, he writes:

*Venerial madness leads to intemperance, and therefore to disharmony. Therefore it likewise seems to lead to ugliness, whereas love leads to beauty. Ugliness and beauty are opposites; therefore any motions which carry us to them seem to be opposite to each other. Therefore the desire for coitus (that is, for copulation) and love are shown to be not only the same motions but opposites.*<sup>7</sup>

And again, but here we begin to hear Plato's mind:

*A man [must] be considered mad as well as miserable, who whilst called to the sublime through vision, plunges himself into the mire through touch. Although he could become God instead of man by contemplating the divine through human beauty, from man he returns to beast by preferring the physical shadow of form to true spiritual beauty.*<sup>8</sup>

This last passage was actually written to Cavalcanti. From the year he moved into the villa and began translating Plato - and this was the year of his *Saturn Return* - until seven years later (the time of the waxing square) - his letters, and his chart, show that he was struggling mightily with his own nature.

**S:** You once described the *Saturn Return* as the time in which we are asked, or told, to take

responsibility for the work we have to do in this life. The following seven years must be the opening up of that work.

**V:** Yes. And at the end of those seven years something happened. In 1469 he was 35 and Saturn was in Taurus; Venus ruled of course. While it was sitting opposite his Scorpio Sun and square to his awkward, idealistic embodied Saturn-in-Aquarius-on-the-Ascendant and also square his romantic Jupiter (and Neptune) in the house of relationship - something changed. Saturn in Taurus tells us of the work he had to accomplish on his love nature. Whenever Saturn is in Taurus there is work to be done on one's love nature, and as he was sensitive to the higher notes of each planet's field of meaning, he really worked to simplify his love nature. Of course, Saturn was trine his Moon and Venus during this time, and so, through grace as well as work, he found his way through. And *De Amore*, his commentary of Plato's *Symposium*, was the result.

He wrote to his beloved Cavalcanti:

*A long time ago, dear Giovanni, I learned from Orpheus that love existed and that it held the keys to the whole world: then from Plato I learned the definition of love and its nature. But what power and influence this God has, had lain hidden from me until I was thirty-four years old, when a certain divine hero, glancing at me with heavenly eyes, showed me, by a certain wonderful nod how great the power of love is. Being in that way fully informed, as it seems to me, about amatory things, I have composed a book **On Love**. This book, written in my own hand, I have decided to dedicate exclusively to you, so that I may return to you what belongs to you.*<sup>9</sup>

**S:** He calls this Cavalcanti "divine hero". What a perfect description of Jupiter conjunct Neptune in Leo in the seventh house! Though of course he wasn't conscious of Neptune as it hadn't been discovered yet. It is interesting that each of the modern planets, Uranus, Neptune and Pluto, seems to simply deepen the picture of Ficino shown by the "seven-planet chart" - none of them reveal contradictory stories. He knew he had Jupiter in his seventh house and that it indicated his desire for the "sweet fellowship of someone born under Jove". Our knowledge that Neptune is there adds the note of longing for mystical union and of idealisation of the loved one, and also disillusionment too.

**V:** Yes, and he had much cause for disillusionment in those he idolised during his life, but he didn't seem to blame others or the world much - he sounds like he took responsibility for what happened to him as he went along, though he does complain about and "blame" Saturn for some of his struggles!

**S:** And now I'm becoming interested in Plato as

6 M. Ficino, *Letters*, op. cit. Vol.1. (1975) No.35

7 M. Ficino, *De Amore Commentary on Plato~ Symposium on Love* (Dallas, Spring Publications, Inc. 1985), 41

8 M. Ficino, *Letters*, op. cit. Vol.1. No.42

9 M. Ficino, *De Amore Op. cit. Appendix. No. 1. This letter prefaced the holographic copy of De Amore*



I begin to see that his immersion in Plato must have been part of the process of transformation for him. I don't know much about Orpheus, whom he mentions, and I'm still not sure about this Platonic Love. I wonder if you mean that he substituted his love for Plato for the real love he would have wished for. If so, it doesn't sound very satisfying.

**V:** Let me tell you what he learned from Plato about Eros and love.

**S:** Ah, Eros. Come to think of it, I don't know much about Eros - I know that it is the name of a Greek God and that it is also the Greek word for love, and that it is the root of the word "erotic", and erotic means sex! Rather simplistic, I imagine?

**V:** It is a Greek word, yes, and it is the basis of "erotic", but in Plato it meant that which seeks the *something within* sex, the thing that makes sex sex, so to speak. And Plato sort of isolated it, brought it out for view, extracted it, we might say, for it appears to have been misunderstood in his time just as it has been in ours. I think Plato was trying to clarify something for his friends and students whom he felt had lost their way; mistaking sex for the thing they were seeking, missing the fact that it was this *something else* they were seeking *through* sex.

As far as I know, Plato took the idea of Eros from the Mystery Religions that flourished before him. These regions accounted for the dual nature of man - earthly and divine - by mythologems like that of Zagreus or Dionysus, son of Zeus, who was killed and devoured by the Titans when he was a child. Zeus, in his towering rage, killed the Titans with his thunderbolts, and out of the ashes of their bodies he formed the human race. The myth says that our natures are therefore titanic and earthly, but also *divine*, through Zagreus, whom they had eaten. The Orphic tradition apparently sought to free the divine element from the earthly sensual part through purification and ecstasy, so that it could be re-united with the Divine. Other religions have had, and still do have, this idea of the dual nature, earthly and divine, and they all work through rituals of one kind or another to find the way to free the divine from the sensual part, so the divine part may find its rightful heavenly home. This longing, from the divine part of ourselves for the Divine itself, is Eros. Even in Christianity there is a long tradition which addresses this yearning for God. St. Paul, who really constellated the idea of *Agape* - the notion of the Judeo-Christian God's love for us - also expressed his own longing for his God. St. Augustine, and even the great medieval scholar, St. Thomas Aquinas, wrote about God in such a way that one can feel the longing they felt for this divine Other. And so, even in the Christian tradition Ficino had a precedent for longing for the Divine. But as far

as I know this was not the place where he found the ideas that brought him to his resolution. It must have been when he was translating the *Symposium*; his whole book, *De Amore*, is a close commentary on this work.

Now in the *Symposium* Diotima, the prophetess of Mantinea and his respected teacher, tells Socrates of Eros. However, she does not call Eros a god; she calls him a *daimon*, or as we might say, a spirit. Like all *daimons* his function is to convey messages back and forth between Gods and men, or to be the bridge between the temporal and the eternal. She says that he was born at a feast that was being celebrated by the Gods on the day of Aphrodite's birth. In the garden where Resourcefulness was sleeping, Poverty came in and got herself with child by him. That child was Eros. Diotima says that Eros or Love is poor, like his mother, and is always in want and longing for something. But he is also resourceful and wise like his father so he can get exactly what he wants from life, and what he wants is to be happy by possessing that which he considers good and beautiful.

**S:** I remember Plato says that in the realm of Ideas it is the True, the Beautiful and the Good which are the highest, and that which the higher part of the soul is ultimately seeking.

**V:** Yes, that's right. Diotima says that when a man falls in love, it is the beauty of the beloved which attracts him. And if he behaves with propriety and self-restraint with the beloved, then the beauty he sees will give him a glimpse of the divine beauty his soul is *really* seeking. Seeing beauty in one person will lead him to see beauty in another. You know how the state of falling in love seems to cast a sort of spell on you in which everything takes on a glow. Diotima says:

*This is the right way of approaching or being initiated into the mysteries of love, to begin with examples of beauty in this world, and using them as steps to ascend continually with that absolute beauty as one's aim, from one instance of physical beauty to two and from two to all, then from physical beauty to moral beauty, and from moral beauty to the beauty of knowledge, until from knowledge to that absolute beauty.*<sup>10</sup>

Diotima says you can only do this by nurturing true goodness in yourself and in the beloved and that it is the only goal that can ever make love fulfill its promise.

**S:** So, what she is saying is that when I fall in love, it is eternal beauty that I am seeking, even if I don't know it. And then, because I don't know it, I become disillusioned when the person turns out not to behave beautifully at all - and to be honest, when I see myself behave in a most unbeautiful fashion, the disillusionment gets worse. I had not seen that the person I fell in love with was carrying the spark of something

10 Plato  
*The Symposium*  
(Harmondsworth,  
Middlesex, 1951), 94

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divine. In order to remain in the state I've achieved through falling in love, I must maintain "right conduct" and must nurture the good in myself and in the other.

**V:** Something like that. And the death you are feeling...?

**S:** ... is the death of the illusion that I might find someone who will remain eternally beautiful.

We sat for a time as the café began to fill. The rain had stopped. After a while, she said, 'I feel strangely quiet. I think I almost look forward to love again - at least I have the beginning of a glimmer of what it's all about. And I begin to have some idea of this man, Marsilio Ficino, who read Plato and coined the term Platonic Love. That Jupiter-Neptune in Leo in the seventh house! He was looking for the divine spark in those whom he loved - he must have seen them as gods. And then as time did its darkening work, he too became disillusioned. When Saturn entered Taurus he was put to the test and somehow came through. And then he understood Plato!

**V:** That's right. And at some point he wrote this to his beloved Cavalcanti:

*Certainly love (as all philosophers define it) is the longing for beauty. The beauty of the body lies not in the shadow of matter, but in the light and grace of form; not in the dark mass, but in clear proportion; not in sluggish and senseless weight, but in harmonious number and measure. But we come to that light, that grace, proportion, number and measure only through thinking, seeing and hearing. It is thus far that the true passion of a true lover extends. However, it is not love when the appetite of the other senses drives us rather towards matter, mass weight and the deformity that is the opposite of beauty or love, but a stupid, gross and ugly lust.<sup>11</sup>*

Plato does acknowledge the sensual or "vulgar" Eros, the desire for sensual or sexual satisfaction, but he seems to place *more* value on the 'Celestial' Eros which is the higher aspect of the soul. This he considers to be the desire for oneness with the Forms - the real world behind our brief, time-bound, decaying one, and our love of the beautiful here is our love for Pure Forms. In the *Symposium* he has Diotima discuss *both* aspects of Eros as the desire for immortality. The Earthly Eros leads men to sexual union with women for the purpose of procreation. This leads to physical immortality. The Heavenly Eros leads men to love men for the purpose of great achievements of mind and spirit, which give another kind of immortality. However, she says that if that kind of love is manifested in sexual acts then we have lost our way and are trapped and drawn downward into decay.

As a modern woman I do not agree with Plato's ideas about sexual love being about procreation between men and women only. I think that love *can* be expressed in sexual acts between two people and not only for the purposes of procreation. But I do agree that unless both people cherish their own and the other person's soul-longing for the immortal realm, whether it be for the Good, the True and the Beautiful, the Divine, the Eternal, or simply God, then their love has little chance of surviving the destruction of time. In these strange, unholy times where the knowledge of the heart - the reality reached by imagination - is rarely honoured or cherished, we have forgotten that this hidden, eternal reality exists. We want to believe that all we have to do is to find someone who can gratify us completely and we will be happy/saved/redeemed. Or, all we have to do is change ourselves enough so that we will be worthy for someone else to make us happy.

**S:** Well, this has certainly been interesting. This Friday has certainly been a Venus day for me, but in a way I didn't expect. I think I shall pay more attention to Venus on Fridays in the future. I notice that in my chart Venus and Mercury are close to Ficino's Sun - do you think Hermes guided me into this café so that I could contemplate Love's journey again? One thing puzzles me, though. You said, at the beginning of our conversation, that his experience of love and its pain led him to a profound transformation. Were you saying that this transformation freed him of all the pain that love can bring? That this "Platonic-Erotic" love he experienced resolved all love's pain?

**V:** Ah, well from everything we know, he did achieve a profound peace at the end of his life. But by then - he was 65 when he died - it seems he had burned through to this peace...

**S:** Burned through...what do you mean?

**V:** I think perhaps this is the beginning of another conversation.

**S:** Yes, you are right, it is time to stop. The longer I sit here, the more questions begin to arise. The Good and the True might not be so easily perceived when one is on the high sea of erotic love, and yet this is what Ficino worked with to facilitate his own transformation. "Burned through", you said... I sense, but cannot imagine, the worlds beneath the waters I have been immersed in for so long.

For now I shall think about this man, Marsilio Ficino, and the next time I fail in love with beauty I shall try to keep my eye on the divine spark that I see in the one who becomes my Beloved. At this moment my desire is to navigate by the idea of the Good, the True and the Beautiful. I begin to realize I might not know how to do this at all. I suddenly wonder - have I just stepped through the door here, into a very long apprenticeship? Look, it's cleared outside - I can even see a star or two!



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# The Brother-Sister Marriage

## The sibling layer of adult relationships

Brian Clark

The most successful and long-lasting relationships, we are told, are those between couples who are friends as well as lovers, who are able to strike a happy balance between eroticism and camaraderie. Here, **Brian Clark** identifies the non-sexual component of committed relationship as that of siblings; and, in a superb retelling of brother-sister myths, including that of the King and Queen of Olympos, he offers a compelling insight into a dynamic which is rarely conscious in those who strive to make relationships work.

*"In myth the union of siblings was reserved for gods and was realised in Hera's Gamos, where the highest god of the Greeks joined her as brother-husband."*

Hera, frustrated with the progress of the war, and Zeus' vigilant protection of her Trojan enemies, resolved to help the Greek offence. Without Zeus, the Greeks would have an advantage over the Trojans, so Hera's plan was to divert Zeus' attention. To accomplish the task, Hera manipulated both Aphrodite and Hypnos into helping her. Armed with Aphrodite's magic girdle, she would be sexually irresistible to Zeus. She bribed Hypnos<sup>2</sup> into promising that Zeus would be rendered unconscious after Hera seduced him. With Zeus comatose, the Trojans would be vulnerable, and other gods, like her brother-in-law Poseidon, would be freer to help the Greeks. On the summit of Mount Ida, Zeus encountered Hera, desiring her passionately; in a way he had not felt for a long time. This feeling reminded him of the first time they had secretly made love: in their uncle's palace beneath the sea, unbeknownst to any of the other gods.

Aphrodite's magic girdle had cast its spell. When Hera approached, Zeus could not wait to ravish his wife. On Mount Ida's peak they made love, protected from exposure to the other gods by a golden cloud which Zeus drew down to cover them. At Zeus' command, Nature supplied Hera with a soft bed, as well as the privacy she required to be intimate with him.<sup>3</sup> After making love, Hypnos drew Zeus into a deep slumber, and then informed Poseidon he was at liberty to help the Greeks. Hera's scheme, at least for now, had been successful.

Hera and Zeus had not always been locked in power struggles or schemes against each other. Earlier, when they first fell in love, they were equals. Rhea, their mother, had pro-

tected them from the familial wars raging against their father, by hiding the young brother and sister in the palace of their aunt and uncle.<sup>4</sup> Beneath the sea, in the great palace of Oceanus and Tethys, Zeus and Hera consummated their relationship, a relationship that was to remain secret for 300 years.<sup>5</sup> When Zeus finally overthrew their father Cronos, he ascended to power with Hera: sister, wife, now queen. Their sacred marriage is referred to as the only 'true marriage' on Olympus. Hera presided over courtship, marriage and its rituals. The classical version of their relationship from this point concentrates on Zeus' philandering, Hera's jealousy, and the power battle born out of tempestuous and betrayed feelings. Their 'secret' relationship was forgotten, abandoned to the unconscious.

Hera and Zeus' 'secret' relationship is the sibling layer of their marriage, a level of relationship that often remains unconscious to adult partners. Psychoanalysis exclusively focused on the impact the parental marriage left on the child, forgetting the sibling relationship, and its imprint on the pattern of adult relationship. The Olympian marriage includes the sibling level of relationship, constituting a more holistic union. The sibling level of adult relationships contains feelings of equality and similarity, a facility to share both physical and emotional spaces equally, loyalty, and *philia* - brother-sister love. However, the sibling level of relationship also activates an incest taboo; partners may feel loving, supportive and friendly towards one another, but not erotic or sexual. The level of relationship that contains this tension of opposites between siblings or peers (the intense erotic feelings of love, desire, vulnerability and need) is taboo. Equality, symmetry and similarity, which begins in the sibling system, activates a taboo against Eros.

Two spheres of adult relationship are delineated by Lynda Schmidt as the 'sibling



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I. C. Kerényi, *Zeus and Hera: Archetypal Images of Father, Husband and Wife* trans. Christopher Holme Princeton University Press (Princeton: 1975). p.113

2 Hypnos is the god of Sleep and a brother to Thanatos (Death) and father of the dream-bringers: Morpheus, Icelus and Phantasus.

3 Homer, *The Iliad*, translated by Richmond Lattimore, University of Chicago Press (Chicago: 1961) 14:346-51 describes the scene this way:

"There underneath them the divine earth broke into young, fresh grass, and into dewy clover, crocus and hyacinth so thick and soft it held the hard ground deep away from them. There they lay down together and drew about them a golden wonderful cloud, and from it the glimmering dew descended."

4 C. Kerényi in *Zeus and Hera: Archetypal Images of Father, Husband, Wife* states that the source of the myth of Zeus and Hera's first lovemaking "was most probably a sacred story told or sung among women at a Hera Festival". (p.102)

5 This is the tale from the island of Samos. The story is either that the wedding night lasted 300 years or the marriage was secret for 300 years. For amplification on this see C. Kerényi, *The Gods of the Greeks*, Thames and Hudson (London: 1951) p. 95-99 as well as C. Kerényi, *Zeus and Hera: Archetypal Images of Father, Husband and Wife*, p. 91-113.

6 Lynda Schmidt "The Brother-Sister Relationship in Marriage" from *The Journal of Analytic Psychology* (Volume 25, Number 1, January 1980), p.34

7 *ibid.* p.31-32

8 K. Kerényi *Zeus and Hera: Archetypal Images of Father, Husband, Wife*, p.109

9 *ibid.*, p.113

10 Robert Eisner *The Road to Daulis: Psychoanalysis, Psychology and Classical Mythology* Syracuse University Press (Syracuse: 1987)

11 Homer's epithet for Artemis, describing her penchant for hunting and killing - see *The Iliad* 5:53

archetype' and the 'marriage archetype'.

"The sibling archetype offers the possibility of understanding, free of parental overtones. It allows for the natural expression of positive and negative feelings of peers whose relationship is for life. The marriage archetype offers the excitement and tension of non-understanding. It permits the instinctive, biological expression of extreme ends of the dimension of maleness and femaleness, thus keeping the charge of sexuality."<sup>6</sup>

Schmidt highlights the need to balance the two archetypes which shape adult relationships; the sibling archetype with the marriage archetype. Traditional marriages could benefit from equality and love offered from the sibling level, while contemporary couples may feel more passionate and centred, by becoming consciously aligned to the marriage archetype. While we are engaged in a dominant struggle to be equal to our partner, Eros wanes. Conversely, when lost in the passion of the union, we are unaware of the inequality and power imbalance occurring within the relationship.

"What is needed is the doubling up of the pair imagery. What begins as a husband and wife pair, needs the intimacy, understanding and mutuality of a Brother-Sister attitude, to bridge the otherwise intolerable gap between man and woman."<sup>7</sup>

Both levels of adult partnership have their dark side. Hera and Zeus have entered into the *umbra* of the marriage archetype: power struggles, jealousy, infidelity, betrayal and dishonesty. Since the sibling aspect of their relationship is unconscious, there is no ability to recognise their equality, symmetry, or shared origins. Recognising both levels within an adult relationship promotes a wider horizon, and allows the partners more flexibility when interacting with each other. Balancing these levels is one of the tasks of adult relationships.

Hera, as the goddess of marriage, embodies both the *sibling archetype*, as Zeus' sister, and *marriage archetype*, as wife. She has married her brother, and, as the patroness of marriage, she has experienced the secret of the sibling marriage:

"No Athenian bride was allowed to marry a homo-gastrios, a brother who had the same mother as herself. Such a marriage would have been contrary to the greatest matriarchal incest prohibition, which only Hera was allowed to transgress. Of her, it is said that she was the only sister allowed to have such a husband, the only one equal to her in birth."<sup>8</sup>

Why the sibling level of adult relationship would remain secret, is open to conjec-

ture. Karl Kerényi suggests the sibling relationship extends beyond the image of 'normal' love, to a representation of a *bisexual totality*. The sibling pair resonates on the level of an equal relationship, a friend, a comrade, a colleague, not on the level of dependency, which could threaten "the propagation of the human race"<sup>9</sup>. The secret relationship of Zeus and Hera reminds us of the powerful union of siblings that takes place outside the parental sphere. While exclusively focused on the parental marriage, we conspire to keep the sibling marriage unconscious.

Classical myth continued to reflect the denial of the sibling marriage, by keeping Hera in a fixed role as the jealous wife, trapped in an unequal marriage. Yet Hera, as the goddess of marriage wed to her brother-husband, has experienced another level of relationship. While we constrain Hera, as the muse of marriage, in a one-dimensional role, we fail to honour her history: the ancient tradition that brought her into union with her sibling, her brother and her equal.

#### Apollo and Artemis: Brother-Sister-Companion

"Both are always frustrated in love - Artemis by choice, Apollo in spite of what he thinks are his best efforts."<sup>10</sup>

Apollo was furious when he discovered Coronis had taken another lover. After seducing her, Apollo returned to Delphi. However, Coronis, feeling abandoned and alone, took a new lover. Apollo had just found out; the god of reason was no longer reasonable. In his rage, he summoned his sister, Artemis, to his side. Artemis agreed with her brother, that the penalty for this infidelity must be death. She also agreed to be Coronis' executioner and, from afar, Artemis shot her arrows. She struck Coronis in the breast, mortally wounding her, unaware that her brother's unborn son, Asclepius, was within her womb. Hermes was then summoned to help perform a caesarean, removing Asclepius from the womb of his dead mother who lay on the funeral pyre.

It was Artemis 'of the showering arrows'<sup>11</sup> who was often responsible for a sudden or unexplained cause of death, especially for women. Perhaps another agenda for executing Coronis so swiftly existed; an agenda forged out of her close identification with her brother.

From a very young age Artemis knew what she wanted, and her father, Zeus, obliged. She desired eternal virginity, disinterested in any future male relationships. Artemis was already fulfilled with the one she had: her brother, Apollo. She also asked her father for a bow and



a quiver of arrows. Like her brother, she is easily recognised by her bow and arrows. Both are distant gods, shooting their arrows from afar, avoiding eye contact with their victim. Strongly identified with her brother, she moved swiftly to kill off Coronis before Apollo could recant. The strong attachment was mutual, and Apollo had also conspired to kill off one of his rivals for his sister. The power of their brother-sister bond covertly operated to eliminate potential rivals for either one's affection.

Artemis enjoyed the company of Orion, who was also a great hunter. Together, they shared a passion for game hunting, roaming the mountainous terrain that Artemis loved. Apollo was concerned that Artemis could become attached to Orion. However, Apollo's behaviour suggested that jealousy was the motivating passion beneath his scheme. Apollo released a giant scorpion to attack Orion; although Orion was a powerful fighter, he could not subdue the creature. To escape, he jumped into the sea and swam out of danger, until his body was an indistinguishable speck on the horizon. Knowing his highly competitive sister, Apollo challenged her to hit a faraway target; the speck barely visible in the distance. Artemis let her arrows fly. Being masterful at her art, she hit her target, unaware it was her companion, Orion.<sup>12</sup> When she learned she had killed her hunting companion, Artemis was grief-stricken.<sup>13</sup> Apollo had been successful; he remained his sister's closest male companion.

Artemis and her twin brother Apollo had been devoted to each other since their birth. Apollo is "the brother she loves".<sup>14</sup> Artemis and Apollo had first joined together in the womb of their mother, Leto. Cursed by Hera, pregnant Leto was refused sanctuary in every place she sought refuge. Finally, the rocky, abandoned island of Delos offered her a home for the promise that her unborn child, the son of Zeus, would build his first temple on the island, before he became famous. Delos was now guaranteed that it would be an honoured centre in antiquity. Artemis was born nine days earlier on a neighbouring island, Ortygia, and helped her mother deliver her twin brother Apollo; the first delivery for the goddess destined to be invoked by women in childbirth. The twins bonded before their birth through their shared gestation in the womb of their troubled mother. Artemis, the midwife for her twin, became his feminine guide and companion; they became close allies and mates. Both protected their mother, Leto, and her honour. Together, they killed the twelve children of Niobe, who tried to convince the Thebans they should honour her rather than Leto, since she was more fertile, having a dozen children while Leto had only two. Apollo killed the six sons;

Artemis, the six daughters. The twins were mirrors of each other; twin-souls.

By the later classical period, Apollo and Artemis became associated with the two luminaries, Sun and Moon, fostering their relationship as a powerful couple. His association with the Sun is probably derived from a common epithet *Phoebus*, meaning bright.<sup>15</sup> This epithet linked Apollo to his maternal grandmother, Phoebe, who was associated with both the Moon and the Delphic oracle, later claimed by her grandson. Artemis' association with the Moon may have come as late as the second century BCE, when she was Latinised to Diana.<sup>16</sup> The root of her name, *di*, was often associated with bright, which may have also contributed to her association with the Moon; or, she too inherited the lunar association from her grandmother. Nonetheless, by the period astrology became of interest to the Greeks, Apollo and Artemis were firmly aligned with the Sun and Moon. Our primary astrological pair of luminaries have a sibling derivation, which the alchemists knew, and we have forgotten.

Ptolemy, writing in the second century CE, suggested that we first look to the opposite gender luminaries when considering marriage in the horoscopes of men and women.

*"With regard to men, it is to be observed in what manner the Moon may be disposed..... But, in the case of women, the Sun must be observed, instead of the Moon."*<sup>17</sup>

Contemporary astrology continues to look at the powerful union of the Sun and Moon as an image of *conjunctio* or *heiros gamos*, forgetting the sibling story that underlies the luminaries. Apollo and Artemis are part of the template of the Sun-Moon couple, therefore their inability to separate from each other to find union outside their relationship is a powerful unconscious force underlying the surface of the Sun/Moon dynamic. A narcissistic bond keeps them together, and inhibits them from moving into other relationships. Using each other as mirrors, they continue to see the reflection of each other in their partners. Both Artemis and Apollo also remain youthful, another narcissistic signature; Artemis on the threshold of womanhood, and Apollo, a *puer aeternus*.

The traditional astrological statement that Sun/Moon combinations were indicators of marriage inspired Jung to conduct his synchronicity experiment that compared the aspects between the Sun and Moon in couple's horoscopes. Jung says: "Ptolemy regards the *conjunctio* of a masculine Moon with a feminine Sun as particularly favourable for marriage".<sup>18</sup> Did Jung know he

12 There are various mythic versions as to how Orion was killed and differing accounts as to his relationship with Artemis. Some versions suggest Artemis slew Orion because he terrorised her companions, the Pleiades, or she sent the scorpion from rage at his offence to her and her sacred territory. I have chosen the version, of course, that supports my outcome.

13 Ironically, she searched for her nephew, Asclepius, whose mother she had killed, to plead to have him raise Orion. However, Asclepius had already been shot down by Zeus' thunderbolts for having already transgressed the boundary between life and death by raising the dead.

14 "The Second Hymn to Artemis", *The Homeric Hymns*, translated by Charles Boer, Spring (Dallas: 1970).

15 Adrian Room, *NTC's Classical Dictionary*, National Textbook Co., (Chicago: 1990). p.57

16 Sarah Iles Johnston, *Hekate Soteira, A Study of Hekate's Roles in the Chaldean Oracles and Related Literature*, Scholar's Press (Atlanta: 1990). On p 31, footnote 8, Johnston says: "Artemis' identification with the Moon precedes that of Hekate with the Moon; the first certain evidence for the idea is found in the second century BCE." She suggests that Hekate did not become associated with the Moon until the first century CE. Artemis' association with the Moon may also have been a logical derivation from Apollo's link to the Sun. Johnston also suggests that by the time of Plutarch (CE c.46 - c.120) "the identification of Artemis with the Moon was so commonly held an assumption, that it could be used as supportive evidence in making another point."

had this aspect with his rival Sigmund Freud? Jung's Moon is exactly conjunct Freud's Sun in Taurus, which may speak about their sibling relationship.

With couples, my experience of the synastri aspect of the Sun-Moon is powerful in two ways: first, it constellates the parental marriage in their relationship. Secondly, it also evokes the sibling relationship. Two layers of the relationship exist, and while the 'marriage' may be the more conscious level, it is often the unnoticed sibling patterns that are infecting the relationship with indifference, ambivalence, and separateness.

In their own way, Apollo and Artemis were married. Unable to separate from each other, they found it difficult to form other relationships outside their own. Artemis had already chosen to be a virgin, therefore remained true to her brother. If she hesitated at all (as with Orion) Apollo would be there, to make sure the relationship would not last. Even when Artemis chose a chaste companion like Hippolytus, the relationship was doomed to end tragically.

Apollo's adult heterosexual relationships were also reflective of his powerful union with his sister. His most successful relationship was with Cyrene. Growing up in the wilds of the Pelion region, Cyrene became an avid huntress, enjoying nature and communing with the creatures that roamed the mountainside. Apollo loved the Pelion area, where his friend Chiron had fostered his son Asclepius. When Apollo witnessed Cyrene wrestling a lion, he fell immediately in love with her. He took her from the mountains of Thessaly to Libya, where she is remembered by the city named for her. In Libya, Cyrene was Queen, regent of a land where hunters were prosperous. The woman Apollo loved was a replica of his sister; a huntress, independent, strong, from the wild. He also fell in love with her as she wrestled a lion. Artemis, 'the mistress of animals', also wore a lion's skin.<sup>19</sup> Apollo is still in relationship with Artemis while he is with Cyrene.<sup>20</sup>

Apollo, however, is remembered more for his disastrous relationships. Daphne, like her niece Cyrene, enjoyed the wild, the forests and the hunt. Daphne, like Artemis, would rather be enjoying nature, and the companionship of other nymphs, than be in relationship. Along with other nymphs, Daphne had torn a male trespasser to pieces, reminiscent of Artemis' fury at Actaeon. Apollo fell in love with Daphne, and when she was separated from the other nymphs, Apollo pursued her. But Daphne fled from him in terror, declaring his love frightened her even more. Finally, in her

desperation, she prayed to the gods to deliver her from the fate of being Apollo's mistress, and they obliged. As Apollo put his arms around her, she transformed into the laurel tree, still trembling and shaking from the chase. Again, Daphne is reminiscent of Apollo's sister, as the two are linked together through Artemis' epithet, 'Daphnaea', the laurel tree that was sacred to her. The sister and love-interest are undifferentiated.

Apollo is also implicated in the death of one of his male lovers, Hyacinthus, a handsome Spartan youth. Apollo's bisexuality is also part of the larger pattern of sibling love. This is a complex part of the Artemis and Apollo story, but K. Kerényi suggests a pattern amongst opposite sex siblings that is worth noting:

*"The love of a brother and sister couple tends, more than normal love, to the restoration of a bisexual totality, which is presupposed by that powerful mutual attraction. This is where the much-feared dangers of the much-desired sibling love are to be found."<sup>21</sup>*

The Solar-Lunar dyad, as represented by Apollo and Artemis, is companionship, friendship and philia. The narcissistic component of their relationship allows Artemis to be reflected in the company of her nymphs; while Apollo sees his reflection through the company of handsome young boys that he befriends.

Apollo was primarily bound to his sister, claiming substitutes for her as his partners. Unlike Zeus and Hera, who have a difficult time getting back to their sibling marriage, Apollo and Artemis have a difficult time leaving it. This theme often enters into adult relationships when separation between the siblings has not taken place. Similar to Apollo and Artemis, it may begin through the mutual protection of a parent. The sibling enmeshment and unholy attachment is created out of the toxicity of the familial atmosphere. Their sibling union permits no other relationships to exist. The denial of the sibling impact on contemporary relationships is common when there are unresolved issues or powerful feelings associated with the opposite sex siblings. This denial is supported collectively, therefore often slips by the trained ear of the therapist. However, the unconscious brings the sibling material to consciousness via dreams or uncanny coincidences between siblings and partners: identical names, similar birth dates, the same birth position, or similar mannerisms and characteristics.

*"It is often the case, when the sibling situation is most directly replicated in the contemporary love relationship, that the patient is generally unaware, denying, or manifesting total repression of the earlier derivation of the current relationship. Often*

17 Ashmand, J.M. *Ptolemy's Tetrabiblos Symbols and Signs* (North Hollywood: 1976). p.124

18 C.G. Jung *Synchronicity: An Acausal Connecting Principle from The Collected Works Volume 8*, Routledge and Kegan Paul (London: 1960). 869n.

19 T.H. Carpenter, *The Terrible Twins In Sixth-Century Attic Art from Apollo: Origins and Influences* edited by Jon Solomon, University of Arizona Press (Tucson: 1994). On p. 72, Carpenter describes three vases which depict Artemis wearing the lion skin.

20 Ironically it is Cyrene's grandson, Aristaeus' son, Actaeon, that Artemis will later kill for having transgressed her sacred ground. Artemis may carry some urges for revenge!

21 K. Kerényi, *Zeus and Hera: Archetypal Images of Father, Husband, Wife* p.113

the sibling will be left out of the associative material and will emerge only through disassociated, displaced, and dream references.<sup>122</sup>

Astrologically, this transference situation can be explored in the comparison of the sibling's and partner's horoscopes with our own or our clients'. The similarities between the horoscopes reveal patterns that are most likely to repeat in the current relationship. The comparison of the two composite charts, the client and their sibling with the client and their partner, also reveal recurring issues that are ripe to be replayed throughout the relationship.

While the sister-brother bond remains unconscious, the sibling archetype is imprisoned in the dark. Guggenbühl-Craig is very perceptive on this point. In revisiting the state of marriage, he discusses exiled archetypes that are banished to the underworld, and therefore become pathological, or are lived out more intensely and obsessively. He acknowledges the sibling archetype is one of these condemned archetypes; and in the current changing ambience of relationships, it may be able to become more conscious:

*"The archetype of the siblings will again be able to be lived out - the Artemis-Apollo relationship - and the intimate, persistent, all-encompassing love between brother and sister will no longer be condemned as incest or unhealthy bond. (Interestingly enough, the sibling relationship was less pathologised and less understood as 'incest' in Queen Victoria's time than it is today.)"*<sup>123</sup>

### Ares and Aphrodite: Brother-Sister-Lover

Our two previous sibling pairs share the same mother and father. Ares and Aphrodite are half siblings, sharing the same father, Zeus (according to Homer's genealogical account). Homer however is perplexed by their relationship and how to describe it. In *The Iliad*, Homer refers to Ares as the 'beloved brother' of Aphrodite, whereas in *The Odyssey* the passionate love affair between Ares and Aphrodite is humorously retold. What seems to be confusion on the part of the poet may actually be more of an inspired truth, since he has represented both levels of their relationship: their close sibling bond, as well as their adult love affair. Aphrodite and Ares, while bound together by the sibling bond, are also able to separate from each other:

Aphrodite's marriage to Hephaestus is her most commonly known marriage, possibly because of Homer's popular *Odyssey* tale. But there are also references to the marriage of Ares and Aphrodite, and they are often depicted together on vase paintings and in myth.<sup>24</sup> We have come to know them as a couple; whether married or not, they represent an erotic relationship. They are the deities that underpin the astrological archetypes, Venus and Mars, traditionally associated with the formation of adult relationships, and sexual and emotional compatibility. The combination of these two in synastry has always been of major impor-

ance, from Ptolemy ("if Venus be in concurrence with Mars, she will produce entire love and affection in the cohabiting parties") to modern astrological reasoning ("Aspects between Venus and Mars, and from other planets to these two in chart comparison, demonstrate the physical workings of the relationship and how the affections and desires blend and complement each other").<sup>25</sup>

Aphrodite and Ares will be eternally remembered for their passionate encounters and lustful rendezvous. Since they have also separated, we are able to see more clearly the sibling aspect of their relationship which expresses itself in terms of equality, individuality and companionship. They are able to be jealous, angry, passionate, loving or even disinterested within their relationship, yet also secure that these powerful feelings will not destroy the partnership. The sibling-friend-partner level of the relationship holds the memory of ability to self-express and be individualistic, without destruction of the union.

Ares and Aphrodite's children are perhaps interesting metaphors for their relationship. Their daughter Harmonia represents the balance, harmony and union of their relationship while their twin sons Deimos and Phobos are personifications of the intensity of feelings underlying their union. Deimos means 'fear', and as an attendant to his father during the Trojan war, he also personified the terror of battle. Phobos means 'panic', and he also attended his father during the war as his chariot driver. Together they portray the dark feelings and emotions of discord that are also part of the sibling relationship. From later references, we also have another son - Eros, a reincarnation of the powerful force, first born from Chaos. Now Eros is a personification of the erotic power that connects these two lovers. In sibling synastry, as well as between adult partners, the contacts between Venus and Mars are often an indication of this Eros, and the potent feeling life unleashed between the siblings. In many cases astrologically the brother is well described through the placement of Mars in the horoscope, while the sister can often be identified as Venus.

### The Sister-Brother Marriage Astrologically

The mythology of Apollo and Artemis, Aphrodite and Ares, and Zeus and Hera, informs our astrological archetypes of Sun and Moon, Venus and Mars, and Jupiter and Juno. All these astrological symbols have sibling undertones, and are important in the analysis of relationships; certainly in synastry and chart comparisons, confirming the importance of examining primary sibling patterns and complexes when exploring current adult relationships.

Other astrological symbols directly connected to the sibling are the sign Gemini and its derivate, the third house. Their ruler, Mercury, is also associated with the sibling story or pattern. Certainly, the mythic tale of Mercury's theft from his older brother, Apollo, is a reference for sibling rivalry and birth order positioning. As suggested, Mars is most likely embodied by

22 Judith F. Lasky and Susan F. Mulliken

*Sibling Relationships and Mature Love from Love: Psychoanalytic Perspectives*, edited by Judith F. Lasky and Helen W. Silverman, New York University Press (New York: 1988). p. 86

23 Adolf Guggenbühl-Craig *Marriage Dead or Alive* trans. Murray Stein, Spring (Zürich: 1977). p.58

24 K. Kerényi, in *Gods of the Greeks* p.71, states "There were tales in which Aphrodite took to husband the war-god Ares."

25 The first quote is from Ptolemy's *Tetrabiblos*, p.126 and the next quote from Penny Thornton, *Synastry*, p.89



a brother, while Venus resonates with the sister image. The sibling archetype constellates itself in a myriad of ways in the horoscope.<sup>26</sup> However, the nexus between the sibling and our adult relationships locates itself in the houses of relationship, especially the seventh house.

The seventh is the house of marriage and relationship, also the second in the trinity of houses known as the 'houses of relationship'. The seventh house follows the third, and precedes the eleventh in this trinity. Therefore the seventh house of adult relationship is informed by the third, the house of the sibling. Experiencing equality in relationship is founded originally in our sibling experiences, symbolised by the third house, and then is transferred into relationships outside the family of origin.<sup>27</sup> The third house is a template for our relationship patterns, which begin with sibling interactions. This trinity of houses symbolises the conscious attempt to establish peer relationship, equality and individuality; the level of partnership first encountered with the sibling. Through these houses, the theme of creating and sustaining equal relationships, as well as our urge for social intercourse, develops. The psychological landscape in each house is interconnected, therefore our sibling relationships will be recreated in our partnerships and friendships. Equally, experiences with partners and friends can facilitate change and healing with our siblings. Ultimately, the sibling relationship extends to all our other equal interactions, from our playmates to our co-workers.

The third house symbolises our inherent disposition to becoming an individual within a larger system, the sibling system. Within this system we develop our individuality in relationship to the sibling, learning to be independent, yet part of a community. The other relationship houses have a similar task. In the seventh we strive to sustain our individuality within marriage, while in the eleventh we experience our independence within our social circles.

Unlike the third, the seventh house is above the horizon, and therefore suggests more visibility or objectivity. Perhaps this symbolises what we already know: that the sphere of sibship below the horizon offered no conscious choice of the 'other', it is a non-consenting realm. But on the horizon of the seventh, our partners are consenting, at least consciously. Siblings are contained by the larger system of the family, whereas seventh house partners come from beyond the familial system. Into the seventh we carry the *a priori* pattern of the sibling along with our experiences of relating in the sibling system. There is an analogy between the arrival of the partner, and the birth of a sibling. Powerfully conflicted feelings of love and rivalry, fascination and anger are constellated with the arrival of the seventh house other, as they are with the birth of a sibling.

The seventh house is the sphere of equality on an adult level, where we encounter others who feel familiar, and complement what we sense is missing in

ourselves. The seventh house process embraces the experience of being with an equal other in a committed and intimate way. There is mutuality and reciprocity. Seventh house partners are not only marriage or life partners, but the business partner, and others engaged in relating at an equal level of exchange. Partner contains part, the sense of being separate – apart, yet also able to join.

Traditionally, the seventh is the house of "open enemies". Sibling rivalries may be re-enacted openly with our partners. In a contemporary context, the seventh house open enemy may be our own shadow material rather than a literal individual, however, the unconscious is marvellously astute at choosing individuals who embody these shadowy qualities. The seventh house, like the third, is a territory where consciousness occurs because of an other.

The sign on the cusp of the seventh house represents an important quality to us which is very often prominent in our partner's horoscope. The planets in the seventh house are representative of archetypal patterns constellated in the exchange between partners, generally first embodied in the partner before they are consciously able to be successfully integrated into our lives. The seventh house is where the Sun is preparing to set – the Hesperides of the horoscope. It is twilight, when light and shadow intermingle, and we prepare to meet the dark. The partner awakens an earlier psychic stratum where unresolved or incomplete issues with the sibling may be constellated in our current relationship. The open enemy may be our unresolved rivalries, left-over anger or unfinished challenges with our siblings, rearranging themselves with our partners. The seventh house experience is directly influenced by the earlier residue of our sibling relationships. Into the seventh house we drag the unresolved sibling relationships. Unconsciously, we may have entered a new relationship in reaction to this unresolved material with a sibling.

Partners can also become the target for unresolved hostilities that siblings cannot confront with each other. The partner is triangulated in the sibling relationship, when incomplete issues remain unconscious. This is confirmed by a family therapist:

*"Siblings may also displace their problems in dealing with each other on the intrusion of a new spouse. Predictable triangles are especially likely between a husband and his wife's brothers or between the wife and the husband's sisters."<sup>28</sup>*

Equally, it may be a partner's sibling who enters into the triangle. We may be able to express intimacy with a sibling-in-law that we find difficult with our sibling.

In dealing with issues between couples, I find it enormously valuable and revealing to ask about their sibling constellations: their birth position, sibship size and gender, age spacing, birth dates and names etc. These

**26** For further amplification of the sibling archetype astrologically, see Brian Clark, *The Sibling Constellation*, Penguin Arkana (London: 1999)


**27** The fifth house marks the departure from the familial environs and the beginning of experimentation with relationship external to the family

**28** Monica McGoldrick, *The Joining of Families through Marriage: the New Couple*, in *The Changing Family Life Cycle*, Betty Carter and Monica McGoldrick (eds), p 228

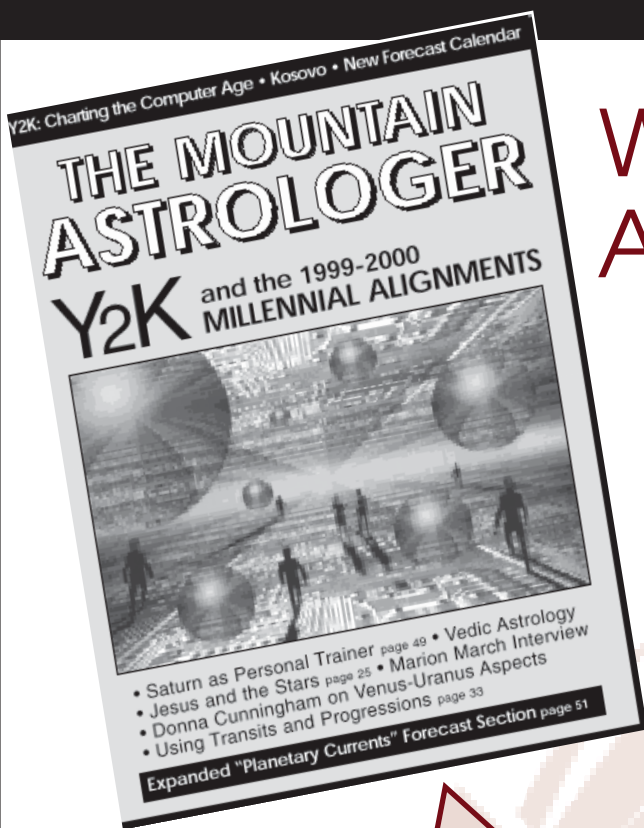
details can often open up and link together the imagery of the third and seventh houses to reveal issues from the sibling system that are infiltrating the current relationship. Third house planetary energies, that are still projected on to a sibling or unexpressed in us, will find a new venue in our present relationship.

The sister-brother marriage is a mythic pattern, as seen in the relationship of Hera and her brother, Zeus. While later myth focused on their power struggles and dysfunctional marriage, the earlier stories told us of their secret marriage and sacred union. This sacred union was their sibling marriage, the level which contains the equality and companionship in all relationships. The seventh house experience rests on the third house, and the relationships of the seventh house include the archetypal layer of the

sibling marriage. Opposite-sex siblings are often a temporary carrier of the *anima* or *animus*, and transferring this powerful connection to another equal partner will undoubtedly awaken intense feelings between the sibling and the partner.

The third house's consciousness of separateness prepares us for the fourth house merger with the family, just as the seventh prepares us for union with the beloved in the eighth. The seventh house prepares us for the eighth house intimate encounter, where what is exchanged within the relationship is of equal value, a marriage between two peers, two equals and two soul-mates. Perhaps awaiting in the eighth is the mystery of the sacred marriage of the sister and brother. 

# Y2K and the Millennium Bug



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# The Sacred Marriage and the Geometry of Time

Robin Heath

Get your thinking caps on. Astrologer, astronomer, and mathematician **Robin Heath** is about to demonstrate something fundamental and wondrous about the way the solar system works; that the mathematical relationship between the Sun and Moon appears also in geometry, mythology, and depth psychology. He tackles 'one of the three greatest problems of the ancient world' and solves it. Prepare to be amazed.



**Robin Heath** is a member of the Association of Professional Astrologers and holds the Faculty Certificate, taken in 1981. Previously a senior lecturer in mathematics and engineering and for two years the editor of the *Astrological Journal*, he has been studying, lecturing and writing about astrology and megalithic astronomy for over twenty-five years. Author of several books, he has recently published the acclaimed *Sun, Moon & Stonehenge*, available from Midheaven Books at £12.99. Robin also undertakes guided tours to sacred sites throughout the UK, Brittany and Ireland. You can contact him via email at [slyhenge@zetnet.co.uk](mailto:slyhenge@zetnet.co.uk).

*"It seems that he (the Sun) is first and foremost a self-representation of the longing of the unconscious, of its unquenched and unquenchable desire for the light of consciousness. But consciousness, continually in peril of being lead astray by its own light and of becoming a root-less will o' the wisp, longs for the healing power of nature, for the deep wells of being and for the unconscious communion with life in all its countless forms."*

Carl Jung, *Symbols of Transformation*

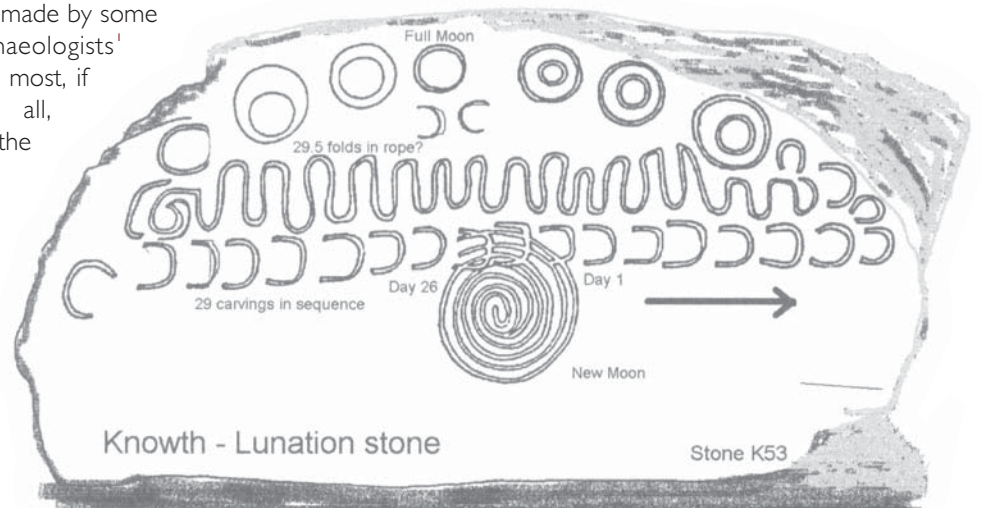
Human perception of the cosmos, like all cultural processes, has undergone a steady evolution since our forebears first became conscious of the seasons, the phases of the Moon and the apparent daily rotation of the skies. The origins of this giant leap for mankind remain unknown, both in time and place, but current thinking places it well before 20,000 BCE. More recently, artefacts have been discovered which provide ample evidence that between 3500 BCE and 1400 BCE, a huge exploration of the heavens was being undertaken, apparently independently, by several cultures. Artefacts are not the only evidence concerning this quest to understand the heavens. Myth and legend, particularly that involving the two luminaries, provides a rich vein of material by which we may explore our past and, through the lens of psychological astrology, our present and future as well.

The assumption is made by some archaeologists<sup>1</sup> that most, if not all, of the

myths and legends are of much later origin than the age of the clay tablets, hieroglyphs and megalithic pictograms, and therefore not valid as a source of information to explain the cultural aspirations of these early astronomers. However, our culture has, until quite recently, swallowed whole the cultural aspirations of the Bible, despite its earliest known extant texts being of no earlier origin than the ninth century CE. And we must ask just how is the source or origin of a myth or legend actually ever known?

Historians define the term *ethnocentrism* as attempting to project present cultural values onto a past culture. Whilst modern psychology suggests that projection occurs regularly in our personal interactions, one must surely question whether this is happening too at a collective level, when one finds the numbers governing the main cycles of the luminaries repeated in myths and legends, and appearing carved on stones adjacent to known alignments to those same cycles. This is the equivalent of finding treasure from an old map upon which is marked 'treasure is located here' and then being told that the map is invalid and that one is projecting one's cultural greed fantasies onto the map!

A surprising amount of astronomical knowledge may be found preserved in myth and legend.



I Ruggles and Burl, *Vistas in Astronomy*, Vol 39, pp 517-528, 1995

Figure 1

Much of this is symbolic and non-quantifiable, and our astrology and Jungian psychology draws extensively on this material to great effect. However, it will now be shown that these same sources also provide an objective and quantised component, and astrologers in particular are extremely well placed to appreciate the importance of the material which follows in confirming that the cosmos is a revelatory source of information for those souls brave enough to attempt to meld intellect with the heart, logic with intuition. This is the very essence of Pythagorean philosophy.

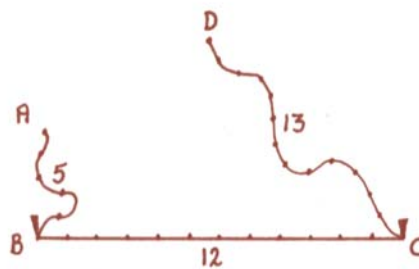
### The Dance of the Sun and Moon

The earliest and perhaps the most thorough observations of the Sun and Moon were undertaken along the Western seaboard of Europe by the Megalithic culture, between 3000 and 1400 BCE. Their alignments to the key solstitial rising and setting of the Sun, together with the major and minor standstill azimuths of the Moon, may still be seen in stone rows, marked stones to distant horizon markers, and in the orientation of important 'burial chambers' such as Newgrange, in the Boyne Valley, Ireland. The accuracy of such alignments has been shown to be astonishingly precise, a discovery which has left the archaeological world largely in heavy denial. And if the astronomy of these sites is stunningly accurate, then the geometry of many stone rings is laid out to an accuracy that a modern surveyor would find most difficult to emulate. These things do not fit at all with the other archaeological evidence of the culture which built the megaliths, and whilst archaeologists dispute the astronomical accuracies of these sites, the geometry remains on the ground at hundreds of sites and may be surveyed to confirm the standardisation of design and form, together with the accuracy.

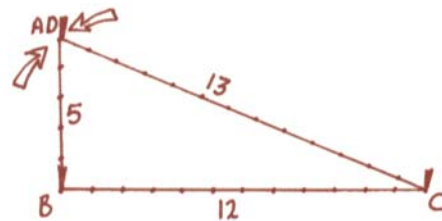
Ancient man, through direct observation, wrestled from the skies the immutable numbers of the Sun and Moon, and well understood the solar year to be 365.242 days in length, that the lunation period took 29.531 days to complete, and that the sidereal month lasted 27.322 days. Proof that early astronomers had obtained this vital first data prior to 2000 BCE may be established from hieroglyphics and clay tablets in the Mediterranean cultures, where the numbers are actually written down in sexagesimal fraction form. In preliterate Europe, proof must take another form. Whilst the alignments themselves invite us to imagine the mindset of the constructors, this isn't confirmation that they understood the numbers. However, the Knowth Stone, K53, one of scores of carved stones near Newgrange (figure 1), appears to

contain a simultaneous numerical and visual message concerning the lunation period of  $29\frac{1}{2}$  days - and the reader is invited to count the loops in the central serpentine shape, and then repeat the procedure for the semicircular hoops and circles which surround it.

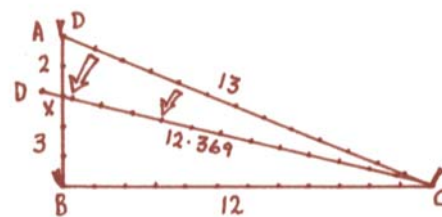
Once the numbers of the Sun and Moon are revealed, then the process of understanding their cosmic dance may begin. Modern astronomy has now moved on from such things, and thinks there is no dance. We are told by mainstream cosmologists that soli-lunar cycles are random and wholly unrelated each to the other - and astronomers regrettably no longer ask the same kinds of questions that Kepler once asked in order to discover his three planetary laws. The reverse situation applies in astrology - many astrologers tend to assume that astrology is a seamless system, and fail completely in seeing that, like all organisms, it too must evolve or gradually cease to be useful.



1. Peg "12" side of marked rope



2. Bring A and D together to form the right-angle at B. Peg A.



3. Bring "D" down to the 3:2 point (X). XC is now 12.369 units long - the silver fraction may be used to determine the lunations within a calendar. This completes the lunation triangle.

Figure 2  
How to construct  
a lunation triangle





Figure 3 Azimuths of extreme sun and moon rise (in Southern Britain)

- 2 Polon means he who causes the heavenly bodies to move together in harmony
- 3 The solar tropical year is 365.242 days whilst the lunar year is 354.37 days in length. Thus the differential 'overplus' is 10.875 days.
- 4 The Jewish calendar is based on the Metonic cycle, interposing seven intercalary months every 19 years in order that the solar years and lunar years tally.
- 5 *Sun, Moon & Stonehenge*  
Robin Heath  
ISBN 09526151 7 7  
Bluestone Press, 1998  
6 1.72 feet + 1 foot = 2.72 feet
- 7 The ratio 3:2 is also the most harmonious interval or ratio in music - the 'fifth'

### The Sacred Marriage

A happy marriage must invoke a certain degree of harmony, yet no calendar can resolve the annual incompatibility between the Sun and Moon.<sup>2</sup> The lunar year (12 lunations) is 354 days in length, just under 11 days shorter than the solar year.<sup>3</sup> There are thus 12.368 lunations in the year. Unfortunately, because we now prefer decimal 'fractions' to the vanquished traditional fractions, most fail to see the long term picture of the marital problems of Sun and Moon - at least in certain quarters! That extra 0.368 of a lunation is *seven nineteenths* - thus there are twelve and *seven nineteenths* of a lunation in the year. As a vulgar fraction, this is 235/19, and, immediately, we can read directly from the numbers that in exactly 19 years there are exactly 235 lunations - the *Metonic Cycle* is right before our faces.<sup>4</sup> Every nineteen solar years, to the day, the Sun and Moon take up the same positions in the sky *to within two hours* - date, phase and even time of day are replicated. It is very easy to check this by taking one's natal data and looking in the ephemeris to your nineteenth birthday. Less egocentrically, we can ponder why such an accurate synchronicity between Sun and Moon is to be found, if the orbital periods occurred by chance. When do coincidences start to become something else?

### The Silver Fraction of the Moon

A calendar maker must first understand the importance of 7/19ths of a lunation - which I have named the *silver fraction*. It is the benchmark of a culture which understands Sun and Moon cycles, that this fraction will appear within its calendar and other artefacts. And, once we moderns know what to look for, this

is indeed the case. The diameters of the Aubrey and Sarsen circles at Stonehenge - Britain's temple of Apollo - form the ratio seven to nineteen. The unit of length used by the megalithic culture in Europe to fabricate its stone buildings - the so-called Megalithic yard of 2.72 feet - is related to the British foot by the ratio seven to nineteen. The *lunation triangle*,<sup>5</sup> alluded to in *St John*, chapter 21, encodes the wisdom of a geometric construction, which reveals the 12.368 lunations ready fitted into the solar year, in order to derive an accurate soli-lunar calendar (figure 2 overleaf). The mathematical solution invokes Pythagoras' Theorem, where we discover that 12.368 is the square root of 153 (fishes or square Megalithic yards!)

To find the required length of 12.368 units, construct a triangle from rope, and bring the '13' side down towards the '12' side, stopping at the 3:2 point of the shortest side, which is 5 in length. Using the Megalithic yard as the unit of length, twelve Megalithic yards *plus a foot* now lie inside the triangle - yielding the annual lunation dates - whilst an anachronistic Egyptian unit of length - the Royal Cubit - stands outside. This fact casts great doubt on the alleged cultural independence of our megalithic ancestors, and shows us that a Royal cubit plus a foot equals a Megalithic yard.<sup>6</sup> The lunation triangle explains why.

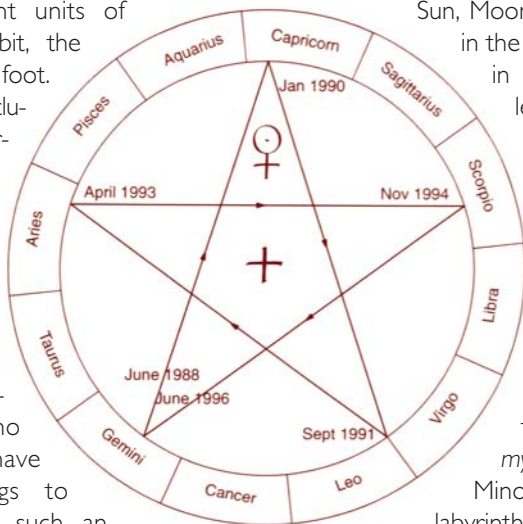
The symbolism of the 3:2 point represents the coming together of the first 'male' and 'female' numbers in Pythagorean and Hindu-Greek philosophy.<sup>7</sup> Here it is to be found incorporated into a simple geometric construction, using just whole number lengths, which yields up a profound astronomic truth, and which

contains known ancient units of length - the Royal cubit, the Megalithic yard and the foot. This demonstrates conclusively three vitally important facts - that geometry, astronomy, numerology, metrology and the symbolism of the sacred marriage are all interconnected through its use, that the ancient world knew of the construction, and that no human hand could have fashioned these things to arrange themselves in such an organised manner. A remarkable glimpse of the Divine shines through this material, and we confirm that, indeed, 'God is a geometer'.

### Phi in the Sky

The silver fraction may also be found elsewhere. A pentagram 'star' constructed within a circle of diameter 13 units will contain star 'arms' each of length 12.364 of the same units.<sup>8</sup> (See figure 5.) The 5:12:13 Pythagorean triangle formed by the station stone rectangle at Stonehenge, in units of 8 Megalithic yards each, thus defines the Aubrey circle diameter at Stonehenge, being the required 13 units in diameter. (104 Megalithic yards = 8 x 13.) The pentagram star also epitomises the concept of the *Divine Proportion*, *phi* ( $\phi$ ), as it contains more examples of the Golden Section<sup>9</sup> than any other known shape. How strange that this shape (and the number 13) is identified in popular culture and religious lore with evil, magic, witchcraft and things that go bump in the night! The irrational number *phi* is always to be found where evolutionary processes of growth and/or decay are occurring. The five star-arms of the pentagram suggest that this may be taken on into space - in five years, there are 5 x 12.364 (or 100 x  $\phi$ ) lunations. Thus solar years and lunations are linked, through the *Divine Proportion* ( $\phi$ ).

Harmony in the sky may perhaps best be found in the relationship between the orbit of Venus and that of the Earth. The synodic period of Venus is 584 days and this forms the *phi*-ratio 8/5 with the solar year. Thus, in exactly eight years, Venus will appear to stop in the heavens five times, each time describing a 'retrograde loop' before resuming normal service (figure 4). And after eight years, our pentagram construction informs us that the Sun and Moon will form the same position in the sky with respect to Venus, because 8 x 12.364 is within a day and a half of being 99 lunations.<sup>10</sup> Thus, eight years from a station of Venus, the



Sun, Moon and Venus all appear in the same relative positions in the heavens - Venus less than 2°, and the Moon just 17° different.

The eight-year cycle of the Sun and Moon is mentioned by Frazer in *The Golden Bough*,<sup>11</sup> in the context of the Cretan mythos surrounding the Minotaur bull-myth and the

labyrinth. However, it is inconceivable that a culture ritually observing this cycle would fail to notice that Venus would always be observed acting as consort to the Sun in this process. The link between Taurus, Venus and the Moon is made perfectly clear by this; perhaps, we have found out why Venus became the planet of relationship and harmony, because its orbit in relation to the Earth describes a pentagram, (see figure 4) and why the Moon is exalted in the Zodiacal sign of the Bull. Again, geometry, astronomy and myth have, when married together, revealed a truth familiar to astrologers.

### Squaring the Circle

One of the greatest problems of the ancient world was that of 'squaring the circle', a task to be undertaken with just ruler and compass. To make the *perimeter* of a circle equal to the perimeter of a square was solved by the ancient world - the design of the Great Pyramid's square base began with a huge 'year circle' of perimeter 36,524 inches. To make the *area* of the square equal to that of a circle has apparently never been satisfactorily solved. The writer began to approach this problem using the same approach indicated by the lunation triangle - that the symbols, geometry, numbers and astronomy should all interlink - and by understanding it as a further manifestation of the marital problems of the Sun and Moon.

In some cultures, squares and linear features are associated with solar and masculine imagery, whilst the circle and curves remain linked with lunar cultures and feminine symbols - it's not hard to see why. Lunar cultures tend to occupy circular dwellings, whilst solar cultures favour rectilinear houses. However, in some cultures, the situation may be reversed; it may be argued that the three axes of matter (*mater*) or form in the physical, are linear, epitomised by the cube, and take on the mantle of being 'feminine', whilst the circular glyph of Apollo quite clearly furnishes us with an exam-

Figure 4  
The Venus Pentagram

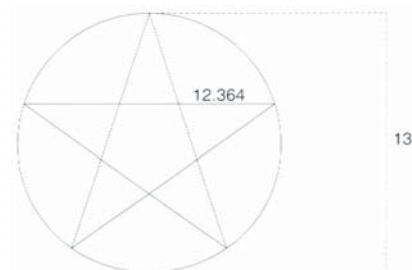
8 This construction is accurate to three parts in ten thousand - three hours in error after a year

9 The Golden Section emerges from any series of integers where the previous two are added to create the next; a series called the Fibonacci numbers. The pure form of the Fibonacci series is 0, 1, 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13, 21, 34... etc. As the numbers become larger, the ratio between adjacent numbers in the series tends towards the value of *phi*, also known as the Golden Mean, the Golden Section, or the Divine Proportion. The irrational number *phi* is 0.618033989...

10 Avebury originally contained 99 stones in its outer ring, and the two inner rings are numerically poised to record Sun/Moon synchronicities

11 J. G. Frazer, *The Golden Bough - the Dying God* Vol. 4, page 76

Figure 5 Pentagram Star



12 Many Megalithic monuments have their axis or entrance shaft aligned to one of the cardinal sunrise or sunset positions, and evidently Neolithic folk well understood the yearly rhythm of the Sun's risings and settings along the horizon. Similarly several known lunar alignments to the Moon's extreme rise and set positions are also well recorded.

12 To construct a length of 0.618 of a given length - the Divine Proportion ratio phi ( $\phi$ ) - is a standard geometrical construction, to be found in many texts and may be found carved on Egyptian temple walls. It involves two adjacent squares of the given length.  $\phi$  is  $(\sqrt{5} - 1)/2$ .]

ple of a 'masculine' symbol which is also solar - so solar that it is used as the glyph representing the Sun itself. Whichever stance you wish to take here, one is still left with a clear polarity between curves and lines, masculine and feminine, Sun and Moon. However, in solving the squaring of the circle, we will come to see that the circle should more correctly be associated with the Moon.

If one regularly observes sun- and moonrises over many years, some new numbers spill from the observations. Megalithic sites still survive in scores to confirm that early Britons were performing these observations, and had discovered the extreme position of sunrise at the solstices, as well as the extreme moonrise position within the 18.618 year cycle of the nodes, now termed the *major standstill*.<sup>12</sup> In addition we know from the stories of Irish 'solar-heroes' and the replacement solar-hero, Jesus, that the 33-year repeat rising of the Sun was understood in ancient times. The story of the resurrection, whatever else it contains, contains a great piece of astronomic wisdom. After exactly thirty-three years have elapsed, there have been almost exactly 12,053 days, the error being so minute that the sunrise position on the horizon becomes impossible to distinguish from that of the original sunrise. Numerically, one may confirm the truth of this statement by multiplying 365.242199 by 33. Other exact numbers of elapsed years do not approach this high accuracy, as I have demonstrated in *Culture and Cosmos*. Thus, every 33 years, the Sun makes an extreme rising position, never exceeded, whilst the Moon performs a similar function every 18.618 years (figure 3). Any observer who reads the cultural symbolism of square and cir-

cle correctly, and then obtains these numbers from the motions of the luminaries can, with just a ruler and compass, solve this 'third greatest problem of the ancient world', for if we make the side of a square equal to 33 units, and the radius of a circle equal to 18.618 of the same units, they will have the same area, and we have squared the circle, to an accuracy of better than one part in thirty-thousand (figure 6).<sup>13</sup> Just as for the lunation triangle, it is shown that the numbers, geometry, symbolism and astronomy are all perfectly integrated, and we catch another glimpse of the Divine hand in the structure of the cosmos.

### Conclusions

The reader will have noticed that all the geometric constructions revealed here are spatial yet use *lengths of time* rather than *lengths in space*. As such, a geometrical and numerical application of the fourth dimension is demonstrated - a *geometry of time*. This is akin to the natal chart, which is also a geometrical construction in both space and time, particularly when transits and progressed directions are applied.


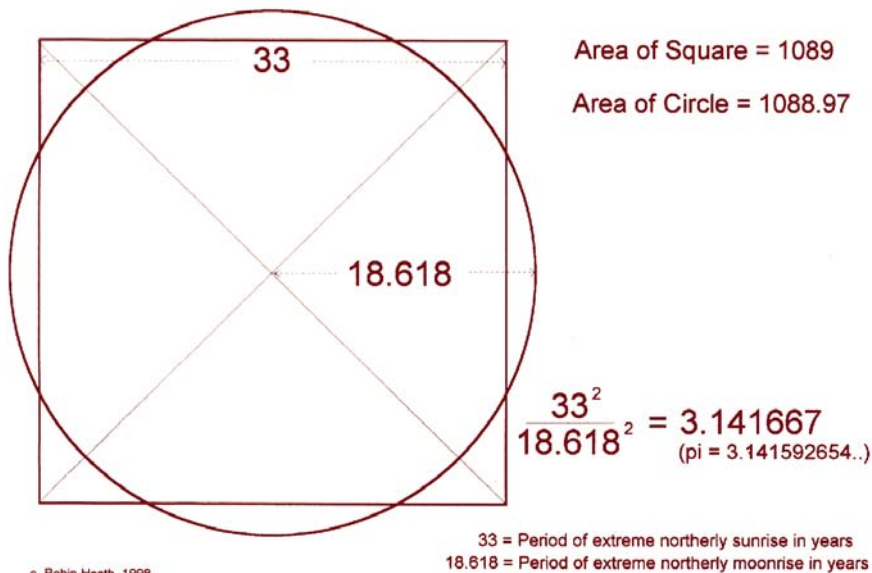
That the Sun and the Moon are so perfectly placed in space to reveal practical solutions to calendrical and geometric problems, provides a complete vindication of the validity of astrology and Jungian psychology as a philosophical tool to explain our link to the cosmos. In addition, this writer stands in renewed awe of the immensity of the concept of the Sacred Marriage, and its implications for the balanced development of human consciousness. 

Figure 6

## Pi in the sky

### Squaring the Circle by area - a soli-lunar solution



# The Eternal Triangle

Liz Greene

**Liz Greene** has the knack of writing about the most complex and murky areas of life with a sparkling astringent clarity, and a compassionate appreciation that there are always two sides to a story. In this article, she explores one of the knottiest human patterns, looking at those relationships in which there are *three* sides.

Relationship triangles are an archetypal dimension of human life. We do not ever escape them, in one form or another. We also tend to handle them rather badly when they enter our lives. That is understandable, because triangles are usually evocative of very painful emotions, regardless of the point of the triangle on which we find ourselves. We may have to cope with feelings of jealousy, humiliation, and betrayal. Or we may have to live with the sense of being a betrayer – of being dishonest, of injuring someone. We may feel all these feelings at once, as well as the conviction of being a failure. The emotions that are involved in triangular relationships are often agonising, and cut away at self-esteem. Because triangles confront us with very difficult emotions, we will usually find ourselves trying to blame someone for the presence of a triangle in our lives. Either we blame ourselves or we blame one of the other two people. But triangles are indeed archetypal – and if we have any question about their universality, we need only read the literature of the last three thousand years. Anything archetypal presents us with a world of purposeful patterns and intelligent inner development. There is something about the experience of the triangle which can be one of our most powerful means of transformation and growth, unpleasant and painful though it is. Betrayal, whether one is the betrayer or the betrayed, does something to us which potentially could be of enormous value.

Nothing enters our lives that is not in some way connected with our individual journey. This does not imply blame or causality, but it does imply a deeper meaning which may be transformative for the individual who is prepared to seek that meaning. If a triangle enters one's life, it is there for something. If we choose to react solely with bitterness and rage, that is our choice. But we could also choose to make the triangle a springboard for some real soul-searching. This is particularly difficult because the experience of humiliation usually invokes all the defence systems of infancy, and it is very hard to move beyond such primal responses to a more detached perspective. As astrologers,

we may find it worth exploring whether there is such a thing as a pattern in the chart that is conducive to triangles; whether there are deeper reasons why any individual gets involved in a triangle, by their own or someone else's choice; and why some people are more prone to triangles than others. We might also consider what possible approaches might help us work with triangles more creatively, which will involve looking at them psychologically and symbolically.

## The universality of triangles

There are many kinds of triangles, not all involving an adult sexual relationship. Even if we restrict ourselves to sexual triangles, we would find many different varieties. Sexual triangles are not always made of the grand dramatic stuff of Tristan and Isolde. In some adult love triangles, all three points are fixed. There are two partners and there is a third person involved with one of the partners, and there is no movement in the triangle. It is static and may go on for many years, until one of the three participants dies. In other love triangles, one of the points is constantly changing. One can practise serial adultery – sometimes, as in the case of John F. Kennedy, with an astonishing rate of turnover. But both these situations are triangles, even though we tend to accord a higher romantic value to the first; and both will evoke the same spectrum of archetypal emotions.

Apart from triangles where a sexual involvement exists between any combination of the two sexes, there are many other kinds of triangles. The most fundamental are those involving parents and children. Triangles may also involve friendships. More complex are the triangles which involve non-human companions. One partner may feel a sense of jealousy and betrayal about the other one's dedication to work or artistic involvement or spiritual development. Such triangles can evoke exactly the same feelings of jealousy as the sexual variety. When one withdraws into a creative space, one has somehow "left" the person one lives with, and it can create enormous jealousy on the part of one's partner. The creative process is an act

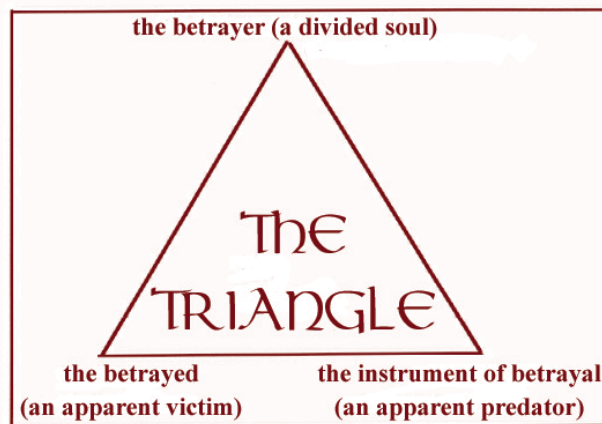


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Because of the values of our Judeo-Christian heritage, we are brought up to believe that if our love is not exclusive, it is not love, and we are no longer "good" people.



of love, which is perhaps why the 5th house is traditionally said to govern both. If one loves one's work, it may evoke enormous jealousy. There are even triangles involved with pets. This might sound absurd, but one partner can feel extremely jealous, hurt, upset, and abandoned because the other partner is deeply attached to his or her cat or dog – even if one does not wish to admit to such feelings in public. All these different kinds of triangles may seem unrelated. The one thing they have in common is the component of one or another variety of love, which, in a triangle, is no longer exclusive. And when we must share someone's love, whether with another person or with something ineffable like the imagination or the spirit, we may feel betrayed, demeaned, and bereft.

This little diagram is a simplistic picture of the three points of the triangle. For the moment, the astrological signifiers have been left out. Some people experience only one of these points in a lifetime, and some are experienced in all three.

The **Betrayer** is the person who apparently chooses to get involved in the triangle. I use the word "apparently" because one cannot always be sure how much conscious choice there really is, and one cannot be sure how much collusion exists between Betrayer and Betrayed as well. But whatever might be at work beneath the surface, the Betrayer is a divided soul. There is a love or attraction or need for two different things. Most of us carry the assumption that love should be exclusive, even if on a conscious level we profess a more liberal perspective. Because of the values of our Judeo-Christian heritage, we are brought up to believe that if our love is not exclusive, it is not love, and we are no longer "good" people. We have failed, or we are selfish and unfeeling. When we experience this kind of deep inner division, it is therefore extremely difficult to face. It is much easier for the Betrayer to come

up with a list of justifications for why he or she is committing the act of betrayal. We do not often hear the Betrayer say, "I am divided. I am torn in half." More commonly, what we hear is: "My partner is treating me very badly. He/She is not giving me A, B, C, and D, and I need these things in order to be happy. Therefore I have a justification for looking elsewhere."

At the next point of the triangle is the **Betrayed**, who is apparently the unwilling victim of the Betrayer's inability to love exclusively. I have used the word "apparent" here too because, once again, there may be some question about the unconscious collusion involved in this particular role. All three points on the triangle are secretly interchangeable. They are not as different as they first appear. But the Betrayed generally believes that he or she is loyal, and it is the other person who is disloyal. It is someone else who has initiated the triangle. Usually we think of the Betrayed as having the hardest time in a triangle, because this is the person who generally acts out all the pain and jealousy and feelings of humiliation.

Finally, at the third point of the triangle, there is the **Instrument of Betrayal**. This is the person who apparently enters an already existing relationship between two people and threatens to destroy or change it. This point of the triangle usually gets a rather bad press, being seen as "predatory" or a taker of someone else's beloved possession. If we happen to occupy this point, we may receive only limited sympathy, and none at all from those in established relationships who feel the cold wind of their own possible future. In fact, the Instrument of Betrayal may feel himself or herself to be a victim, and may perceive the Betrayed as the predator. We can begin to glimpse the secret identity between these two points of the triangle. There are people who move round the triangle and try all three points during the course of their lives, sometimes many times. There are other people who stick with one point exclu-

sively, and always get betrayed in their relationships, or always wind up playing the Betrayer. Or they are always the Instrument of Betrayal, and keep getting involved with people who are attached elsewhere.

We might also think of triangles as belonging to four basic groups. These may overlap, but they may also be associated – up to a point – with distinctive astrological configurations. There is the ubiquitous family triangle, about which this article is primarily concerned. There are also power triangles and defensive triangles. These two varieties of triangle are not really separate, although there are some slight differences. Both have a distinctive flavour, and the reasons for their entry into one's life may not be entirely rooted in the family background. A defensive triangle would be, for example, a man or woman who needs to form an additional relationship outside their established partnership because of feelings of deep inadequacy. They may be plagued by great insecurity, and may feel very frightened that if they commit themselves too much, and put all of their eggs in a single basket, they would be too vulnerable, and rejection would be utterly intolerable. A triangle is then unconsciously created as a defence mechanism. If they are abandoned by one partner, they have always got the other. This is not usually conscious, but it is a powerful motivating factor in many triangles.

There are also triangles in pursuit of the unobtainable. These can overlap with family triangles as well as with defensive and power triangles. But there is a special ingredient to the pursuit of the unobtainable, and often the deeper motivation is artistic or spiritual. Sometimes, when we seek unobtainable love, it actually has little to do with human beings. But we may translate our creative or mystical longings into the pursuit of those we cannot have. In this way we open up a dimension of the psyche which has more to do with creative fantasy than with relationship. The artist's "muse" is rarely his or her wife or husband. This kind of triangle can involve elements of early family dynamics, and it may also incorporate defensive motives; but it needs to be understood from a different perspective.

The last group – triangles which reflect un-lived psychic life – subsumes all the others. When we look more deeply at family triangles, we always need to ask why we want so badly to be close to a particular parent. What does that parent mean to us? Why can we cope with indifference from one parent but require nothing less than absolute fusion with the other? In the end, inevitably, we will find bits

of our own souls farmed out along the points of the triangle – any triangle, whether motivated by family dynamics, power, defensiveness, or all of the above. There are exceptions, because there are always exceptions to any psychological pattern. But in the main, when a triangle enters our lives, regardless of the point we are on, there is some message in it about dimensions of ourselves which we have not recognised or lived. If a pattern of triangles keeps repeating, then it is a very strong message, and we need to listen to what it is trying to tell us.

### The family triangle

Family triangles do not finish in childhood, but have repercussions throughout life. If unresolved, they may secretly enter our adult relationships. If a family triangle is unhealed, we may recreate it, once or many times, hoping on some deep and inaccessible level that we will find a way to heal or resolve it. Freud developed the idea of the Oedipal triangle – also known as "the family romance" – in a very specific context. In his view, we attach ourselves passionately to the parent of the opposite sex, and enter into a situation of rivalry and competitiveness with the parent of the same sex. Depending on how the Oedipal triangle is resolved in childhood – and this includes the parents' responses as well as one's own innate temperament – our later relationships will inevitably be affected. If we unequivocally "win" and get the exclusive love of the parent of the opposite sex, we suffer because we never learn to separate or share. We experience a kind of false infantile potency because we feel that we have beaten the rival. We are all-powerful, which may open the door to a later inability to cope with any kind of relationship disappointment. And one's relationships with one's own sex may also be disturbed accordingly.

If, for example, a boy sees his mother and father in conflict, and "wins" the Oedipal battle by becoming his mother's surrogate husband, he may experience deep unconscious guilt toward his father. Also, he may lose respect for his father, whom he has apparently pushed out of the way with great ease. The boy's image of father may then be of someone weak, impotent, and easily beaten, and somewhere inside he will fear this in himself, because he too is male. This boy may have to keep affirming his Oedipal victory later in life by turning every male friend into a rival, and relating exclusively to women. Such men do not connect with other men, but only to the women who are attached to other men. The bond with his mother will have cost this man his relationship with his father, which may mean he has no positive internal masculine



The rival in an adult triangle may be secretly far more important to the individual than the apparent object of desire.

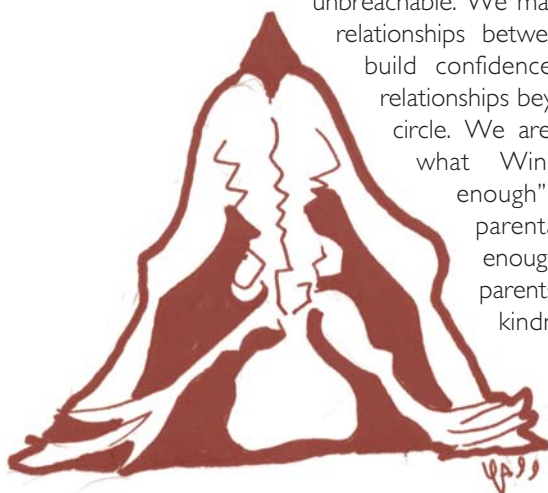
image on which to draw, and no sense of support from the community of men around him. His sense of male confidence and male sexual identity must rely entirely on whether his women love him – and the more, the better. That is a very insecure and painful place in which to live. We could apply the same interpretation in the case of a woman and her father.

If we entirely lose the Oedipal battle – and the operative word is *entirely* – we also suffer. Absolute Oedipal defeat is a humiliation which can severely undermine one's confidence in oneself. By "absolute", I mean that the child feels that no emotional contact of any kind has been achieved with the beloved parent, and a profound feeling of failure ensues. One simply cannot get near the parent, who may be incapable of offering any positive emotional response to his or her child. Or the other parent is always in the way. Later in life, such an emotional defeat can generate a gnawing sense of sexual inadequacy and inferiority. It can contribute to many destructive relationship patterns – not least the kind of triangle where one is hopelessly in love with a person who is permanently attached elsewhere. One may become the unhappy Instrument of Betrayal, forever knocking at the closed door of a lover's marriage. Or one may become the Betrayed, helplessly repeating the Oedipal defeat in the role of the established partner who is humiliated by the greater power of the mother- or father-rival. With both unequivocal Oedipal victory and unequivocal Oedipal defeat, we are unable to establish a psychological separation from the beloved parent, and a part of us never really grows beyond childhood. We may then become stuck in repetitive relationship dynamics where we keep trying to "right" the original difficulty through a triangle.

Freud thought that the healthiest resolution of the Oedipal conflict is a kind of mild defeat, where we get enough love from the beloved parent but are still forced to acknowledge that the parents' relationship is ultimately unbreachable. We may then learn to respect relationships between other people, and build confidence through establishing relationships beyond the magic parental circle. We are here in the realm of what Winnicott called "good enough" – a good enough parental marriage, a good enough relationship with both parents, and sufficient love and kindness for the Oedipal defeat to be accompanied by a reasonable sense of security

within the family and a knowledge that one will continue to be loved. It is also important that we do not fear punishment from the parental. Sadly, many parents, themselves emotionally starved and resentful in an unhappy marriage, do punish their children for "stealing" the partner's love. We need to recognise that we cannot supplant one parent in order to have the other, but we also need to know that we will be loved by the parent we have tried to overthrow. Naturally this is an ideal which few families can achieve. A great many people suffer from one degree or another of excessive Oedipal victory or excessive Oedipal defeat. What really matters is what we do with it, and how much consciousness we have of it. And nothing is quite so potent an activator of consciousness as a relationship triangle.

There is considerable value in Freud's psychological model, and there do seem to be many situations where absolute Oedipal defeat or absolute Oedipal victory are linked with a tendency to become involved in triangles later in life. But there are serious limitations to this model of the family romance. The parent to whom we attach ourselves is not necessarily the parent of the opposite sex. The parent may be one's own sex. Oedipal feelings are not, after all, "sexual" in an adult sense, but have more to do with emotional fusion. So, in fact, do many of our apparently purely sexual feelings in adulthood; sexuality carries many emotional levels which are not always conscious. An Oedipal defeat or victory involving the parent of one's own sex may have equally painful repercussions, and be equally conducive to later relationship triangles. One may feel dislocated from one's own sexuality, because the beloved parent is a model for that sexuality and the bond is too weak or negative to allow the model to be internalised in a positive way. A man may forever try to win his father's love by proving how manly he is. He may then unconsciously set up triangles which are not really about the women with whom he becomes involved, but are unconsciously aimed at impressing other men – or punishing them for the father's rejection. And a woman may try to win her mother's love and admiration in the same way, or punish other women for her mother's failure to love her. The rival in an adult triangle may be secretly far more important to the individual than the apparent object of desire. We have only to listen to the obsessive preoccupation the Betrayed and the Instrument of Betrayal have with each other to recognise that the situation may be psychologically far more complex than it seems.

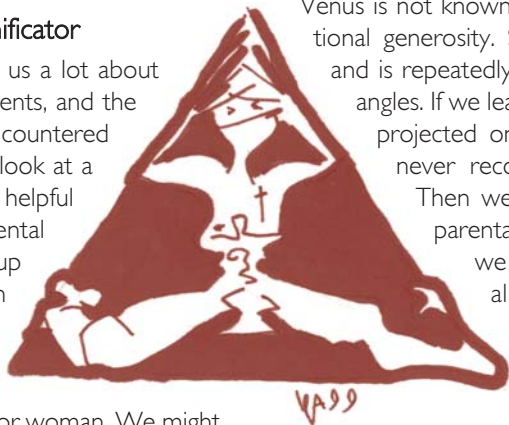


## Helpful Oedipal hints:

### Venus as a parental significator

The birth chart can tell us a lot about our images of our parents, and the experiences we have encountered through them. When we look at a chart, we may find some helpful Oedipal hints. The parental signifiers usually show up very powerfully, and in such a way as to involve one's emotional and sexual needs and one's image of oneself as a man or woman. We might find planets in the 10th or the 4th house, which immediately suggests the parent is a carrier for or representative of something mythic and archetypal. Having no planets in the parental houses does not mean there are no conflicts with the parents, or no subjective image which we project on them. But it is often easier to perceive the parent as another person, another human, however flawed. When planets occupy these houses, the planetary gods appear with the parent's face, wearing the parent's clothes. A piece of our own destiny, our own inner journey, comes to meet us in very early life, disguised as mother or father and passed down through the family inheritance. While this is not "bad" or "negative", it does imply something powerful, fascinating, and compulsive about the parental relationship which requires a greater degree of consciousness and a greater effort at integration.

Repeating triangles in adult life are frequently linked with planets in the parental houses. Often we will see Venus in the 10th or 4th. Venus describes what we perceive as beautiful and of value, and therefore what we love, both in ourselves and in others. If a parent appears in the birth chart as Venus, that parent is going to be a symbol of what we recognise as most beautiful, most valuable, and most worthwhile. That in itself is not negative. But it may mean that we project our own beauty and worth on the parent, and a lot then depends on how the parent handles such a projection. We see deeply lovable, worthwhile qualities or attributes in the parent and we fall in love with the parent because we are in love with the attributes. Hopefully, as we mature, we eventually introject these things, and recognise that they belong to us as well as to the mother or father. This process can help to create a lasting, loving bond between parent and child – a mutual valuing of the other for qualities which are shared. But not every parent is free of hidden agendas regarding his or her children. If the parent is too hungry for love and admiration, he or she will unconsciously work to maintain the projection and remain forever Venus in the child's eyes.



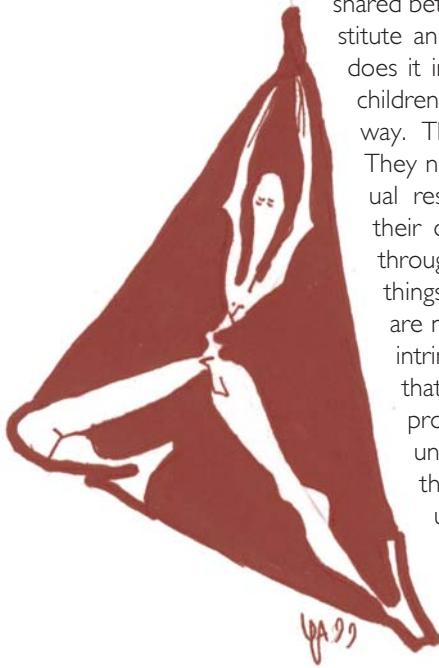
Venus is not known in myth for her emotional generosity. She is a vain goddess and is repeatedly implicated in love triangles. If we leave the Venusian image projected on the parent, we may never recognise it in ourselves.

Then we will keep looking for parental surrogates on whom we can place this image of all that is worthwhile and desirable in life, and we will keep finding Venusian love-objects who seem worth so much more than we do ourselves. Or we may try to reclaim Venus by playing her ourselves, pitting one lover against another in order to convince ourselves that we are really of value after all. Where Venus is, we love.

Rivalry is one of the most characteristic attributes of Venus placed in the house of the parent of one's own sex. We may wind up feeling a lot like Snow White a good deal of the time. With Venus in the 10th in a woman's chart, there may be deep and painful rivalry between mother and daughter. From the daughter's point of view, the mother may appear to be very jealous, although the jealousy may be expressed covertly as incessant criticism or subtle undermining of the daughter's feminine confidence. Sadly, the jealous or competitive mother is often an objective reality. But it is one's own Venus in the 10th, and one must sooner or later acknowledge one's own jealousy as well. If Venus is a same-sex parental significator, then Venusian attributes are shared between parent and child. The archetypal love-goddess, who must be the fairest and best-loved of all, is an image which has passed down through the family line. This image needs to be individually expressed and not forever relegated to a battle as to who will win the love-object. In this case the love-object may not be as important as beating the rival. Rivalry and envy are closely related, and when Venus is a same-sex parental significator, we may see beautiful, enviable qualities in the parent and wish we had them ourselves. Then we begin to compete in order to prove that we are Venus too – a bigger and better and more beautiful Venus.

Parents may also feel a sense of sexual threat when confronted by a child who is growing into sexual maturity before their eyes. This sense of threat may be based on heightened sexual awareness. When Venus is a parental significator, it may not be felt purely on the parent's side, but may happen in both parent and child. Recognising that erotic feelings may be





One may become a “marriage wrecker”, as they used to call it in the days when there were still marriages

shared between parent and child does not constitute an excuse for child sexual abuse. Nor does it imply an “abnormal” relationship. But children can be very seductive, in a childlike way. They are “trying on” their sexuality. They neither want nor expect an adult sexual response, but they need to discover their own physical and emotional identity through expressing it to the parent. These things are simply part of family life. They are not pathological; they are human, and intrinsically healthy. The erotic energy that is part of any person’s development process in childhood is going to be unleashed in the family because that is the appropriate place for the child to unleash it. It is also natural and appropriate for the parent to respond positively – although it is not appropriate for this to be acted out in destructive ways. Some children may carry more of an erotic energy pack than others; this may depend on factors such as where Venus and Mars are placed in the child’s birth chart. Likewise, some parents may be more susceptible than others, and the synastry between parent and child may help to illuminate why this should be so. A reasonably stable parental relationship is important, and also a sufficient degree of consciousness, for the parents to be able to contain this natural process without falling into a triangle. If one is a little girl with Venus in the 4th house, one may well try to split the parents, because father is the beloved with whom one shares some very lovely and pleasurable feelings. And if the parental marriage is insecure, and the mother unconsciously begins to behave in a hostile or competitive way, is her behaviour surprising?

### Divided loyalties

Even in the happiest and most emotionally stable of families, one may feel both deep love for and intense rivalry with the parent. One may find, for example, Venus in the 4th and Moon in the 10th. This is the case in the chart of Prince Charles, who has offered us one of the more notorious triangles of modern times. With such configurations there may be a strong identification with the rival. The child may wind up in a position of being the Betrayer as well as the Instrument of Betrayal. That is not conducive to feeling good about oneself, so something is likely to be suppressed. The young ego simply cannot cope with such ambivalence. If one expresses Venus in the 4th, with all its implications of love for the father, one will hurt and betray the mother. And if the Moon is in the 10th, how can one do this to someone whose feelings one is so identified with? Then Venus may get suppressed, and later in life one may wind up in a triangle without understand-

ing the early pattern which is fuelling it. Or the feelings for the mother may be suppressed. One may become a “marriage wrecker”, as they used to call it in the days when there were still marriages. A “marriage wrecker”, psychologically speaking, is a person who moves in on an established relationship, not only because of genuine affection and desire for the love object, but also because there is a compulsive need to take on the role of – to literally become – the rival with whom one is secretly identified.

It is very difficult to acknowledge such a pattern in oneself. If we wind up in the role of the Instrument of Betrayal, we like to think that we have truly fallen in love with someone, and the fact that they are already in an established relationship is just bad luck. They made a mistake and married the wrong person, or they married against their will because there was a child on the way. Whatever rationalisations we give ourselves, we may justify our role as Instrument of Betrayal by devaluing the importance of the already existing bond. This may sometimes prove extremely naive, and lead to a great deal of disillusionment and hurt when one discovers that the “unwanted” spouse means far more to the beloved than one has ever been able to acknowledge. One may also discover, to one’s horror, that one begins to behave exactly like the despised rival whom one has initially relegated to the “he/she only stays with her/him because of the children” bin. When parental issues are unresolved, the urge to unseat a couple may be extremely powerful – especially if the rival is also one’s close friend, which facilitates recreating the feelings of the original family triangle.

We may also see things in the beloved parent which are not so lovely. For example, a man with Venus in the 10th may also have a Moon-Pluto square or a Moon-Saturn opposition, or Venus conjunct Saturn or Chiron. There are two very different images of mother expressed by such combinations, one of which is beloved and beautiful, the other of which is threatening or hurtful. These two attributes tend to manifest in one’s later life as two people – the Betrayed and the Instrument of Betrayal. This is what Jung called a “split anima”, or the female equivalent – a “split animus”. Jung was quite preoccupied with the psychological dynamics of this pattern because he suffered from it himself. Although his definitions are somewhat rigid and in need of greater flexibility in interpretation, they are useful in helping us to understand why we need triangles, and why the three points are secretly interchangeable. All three people are likely to suffer from the same unresolved parental dynamic. The inner split seems to be particularly strong and

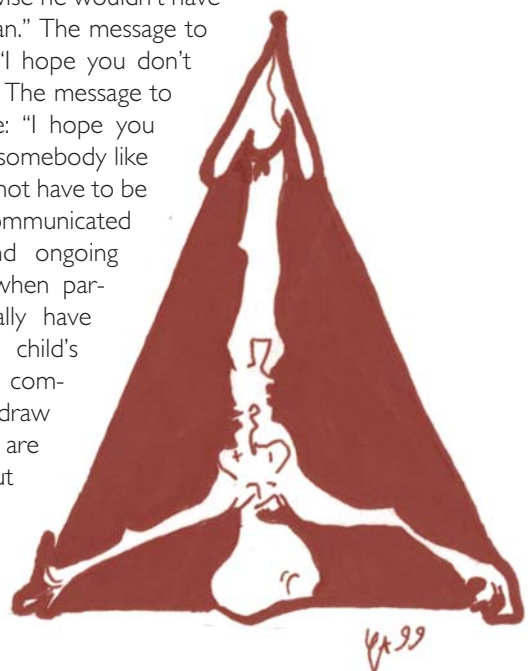
## Split families: oppositions from 4th to 10th

conductive to compulsive triangles when apparently irreconcilable opposites appear in the same beloved parent. There are parents in whom the opposites are not terribly opposite, but there are also parents in whom they are very extreme. Such parents are fascinating and often exercise great sexual charisma because they are so unfathomable. The parent is beautiful and beloved, but also hurtful, cruel, unfeeling, devouring, or otherwise indigestible. It is very hard for the human psyche to accept extreme opposites in one package, so one needs two people through whom one can experience the ambivalent feelings. One will get to be Venus, and the other will get to be Pluto or Saturn or Chiron or Mars or Uranus.

Parental images which convey extreme opposites may contribute to a propensity for triangles in adult life. We get involved with someone, and over time that person begins to take on the image of one side of the parent. After a few years of living together, we begin to say to ourselves and our friends, "My partner's so possessive, I just have to have some breathing space," and there sits Venus in the 10th or the 4th, square Pluto. Or we say, "My partner is so restrictive and conventional, I just have to be free to be myself," and there sits Venus in the 10th with Moon opposition Saturn. We feel we aren't enjoying the kind of beautiful, erotic, amusing relationship that we hoped we would find in partnership. We then justify the lover who plays the role of Venus. The split is acted out, but in fact it reflects two opposite qualities that we have not come to terms with in the relationship with one parent. Of course such splits connected with the parents are, at the deepest level, concerned with opposite qualities that have not been resolved within oneself. All triangles, including those arising from the family background, are ultimately concerned with our own un-lived psychic life. If we were able to reconcile our own opposites, we could allow our parents to be contradictory as well. There is nothing extraordinary about a parent having both a charming, lovable Venusian side and a withdrawn Saturnian side or a demanding Plutonian side. Human beings are multifaceted, and they may both love us and hurt us. But we may find these contradictions in our parents intolerable if the parents themselves cannot cope with their own contradictions. Then we get no help in learning to integrate our contradictions. And some of these, in astrological terms, are simply too extreme to deal with in early life. By this I mean configurations which link Venus or the Moon to Saturn or Chiron – these require a wisdom only time and experience can make available – or to the outer planets, which are quite impossible for a young child to integrate on a personal level.

Triangles may develop within the family through the parents splitting up. Often this is portrayed in the birth chart by oppositions from the 4th to the 10th. Such oppositions do not inevitably indicate that the parents have separated, but usually there is conflict and separation on a psychological level, if not a physical one. One experiences the parents in opposition, and when this happens we are usually forced to take sides. Our own inability to cope with the situation impels us to do so, and sometimes one parent cannot refrain from trying to elicit the child's loyalty as a weapon against the other parent. In this situation the bottom line, as ever, involves a contradiction within the individual, experienced first through the parents, reflected by opposing planets in the chart, and ultimately needing to be dealt with on an inner level. But unconsciousness on the part of the parents can make this a longer and harder process. Even if we are subjected to no parental pressure, it is unlikely that we can cope with divided loyalties at such a young age. And in such circumstances it would take extremely wise and conscious parents to be in sufficient accord with each other to place no emotional pressure of any kind on their child. Usually, if the parents are so unhappy that they are separating, they are not in the mood to be cooperative. Separations release primal emotions in us, and these may involve considerable vindictiveness – especially if the separation is triggered by a triangle.

Often the child winds up feeling like a football in a particularly aggressive football match. One parent – especially if he or she is the Betrayed – may attempt to claim possession of the child, overtly or subtly, in order to hurt the Betrayer. There are certain scripts which appear to be read by lots of people. For example: "Your father left me because he was a bastard. He was incapable of loving. He didn't love any of us, otherwise he wouldn't have gone off with that woman." The message to a male child might be: "I hope you don't grow up to be like him." The message to a female child might be: "I hope you don't grow up to marry somebody like him." Such messages do not have to be spoken. They may be communicated through martyrdom and ongoing misery. The Betrayed, when parents split up, will usually have great power over the child's psyche because of the compassion he or she can draw out of the child. Children are not equipped to step out of the fray and look



We need to think of these dynamics not from a perspective of rigid sexual demarcations, but as a way of attempting to heal a wound.

objectively at the breakup. It must be someone's fault, either their own or one of the parents. And children also dare not reject those messages, because they are terrified of angering the parent who is now the sole caretaker. In our society, when parents split up, the mother usually gets the child – even if this is not psychologically the best solution for that particular child. There are many instances where the father might be emotionally better equipped to raise the child, but the courts of law do not see it that way. The mother must be quite floridly appalling to have her child taken away from her. If the parents are not actually married, the father's rights may be nonexistent in terms of access. One might well question whether a father really merits having his child torn away and turned against him solely because he has betrayed his wife. But triangles have a way of generating very unpleasant emotional consequences which carry on down the generations and breed more triangles.

The permutations of human blindness are many and various, and divorcing or separating parents – or even those who remain living together but are emotionally alienated – will generally demand that the child choose one or the other. The love for the other parent must be denied, suppressed, silenced. This is terribly human. If we are hurt by someone, we find it hard to bear if someone else we love shows affection to the person who has hurt us. If there are oppositions between the 4th and the 10th in the child's chart, then the child's own inner division colludes with the parents' division. I have seen many, many examples over the years where the person has had to deny great love for a parent in such circumstances. The denial may be believed even by the person himself or herself. When we see Venus, Moon, Neptune, Sun, or Jupiter in a parental house, we know that there is a powerful positive bond with the parent, even if the relationship has also been very difficult. If any of these planets are in the 4th, they are likely to describe strongly positive and even idealised feelings for the father. But if there has been a breakup and the father has gone off – or if there are oppositions from planets in the 10th, even if he hasn't gone off – it may prove impossible for the person to keep such feelings in consciousness. The ambivalence may be too painful, and the sense of disloyalty to the mother may be too great to bear. Perhaps the father has left because of another relationship. Perhaps he marries again, and has other children. Then the problem is compounded, because the child's own jealousy allies with the jealousy of the mother and makes it quite impossible for the emotional bond with the father to be recognised. The relationship is destroyed, and the child, who is now grown up,

says, "Oh, I haven't seen my father much since the divorce. I have very little to do with him. I see him occasionally, but we don't have much of a relationship." All the positive, loving feelings have been pushed underground, because we do not cope well with divided loyalties. We suppress them because we have to survive psychologically; and we have to live with mother.

If there are planets in the 4th which suggest love and idealisation, and the parents split up, the suppressed feelings for the father may provide fodder for later triangles. This can apply to both sexes. It should not be surprising if a woman coming from this kind of family background, with this kind of chart configuration, winds up playing the Instrument of Betrayal and hurls herself at a married man. Equally, she may find herself as the Betrayed, married to someone just like her father. Or she may become the Betrayer as a defence, because she is determined not to wind up like her mother. A man with this background and chart placement may wind up unconsciously choosing a woman like his mother and then, to his horror, finds himself in his father's shoes. A triangle may be inevitable, because the more unconscious the feelings are toward this beloved missing parent, the more certain they will be to emerge later in an adult relationship.

These unconscious feelings may also cross sexes. They do not necessarily limit themselves to women who seek the missing father in other men, or men who find themselves in the same situation as their fathers. A man who has lost his father, and who has Venus or Neptune or the Moon in the 4th, may seek the qualities of the father in women. Or if he is gay, he may seek them in another man. We need to think of these dynamics not from a perspective of rigid sexual demarcations, but as a way of attempting to heal a wound. Also, they reflect our efforts to contact archetypal qualities in our adult relationships which we glimpsed first in the parent and which we ultimately need to find in ourselves. Because we carry something unresolved and unhealed, we may faithfully recreate our parents' marriage. Then we may find ourselves in the same triangle, on any of the three points, with either or both sexes. These underlying dynamics seem very obvious when we start thinking about them. The difficulty lies in thinking about them when we are in the middle of a triangle. It is very easy if we are the detached astrologer or psychotherapist – if there is indeed such a thing as an entirely detached person – or even the friend with a certain amount of psychological knowledge. We may clearly see the familial roots of many adult triangles if we are observers, but it is

(continued on page 37)



# The Centre for Psychological Astrology

## Seminar Schedule - Summer 1999

**25th April**

### **The Love and Courtship of Money**

Some people are rich and some people are poor and the rest are somewhere in between. To some it means everything and to others little, and how much of it you have may have nothing to do with whether you feel prosperous or not. How much of it can you handle? During this day we shall examine the astrological factors that indicate one's ability to generate material wealth as well as the forces that enhance or impede our capacity to enjoy it and use it well.

**2nd May**

### **The Scapegoat**

The image of the Scapegoat is one of the most ancient, powerful, and disturbing of mythic motifs. It is also a fundamental human mechanism by which societies and individuals attempt to cleanse themselves of that which inhibits or corrupts life. Scapegoating may be overt and brutish, but it may also be subtle and appear to have a positive or beneficent motive. The Scapegoat may appear evil, or may appear as a spiritual redeemer. Public figures and minority groups are often scapegoated. On subtler levels, scapegoating occurs in families, schools, and intimate relationships. The horoscope can help to shed light on why we feel we need to scapegoat others or a part of ourselves, and also why we may find ourselves scapegoated by individuals or groups at different junctures of life. In this seminar we will examine the links between certain planets and configurations and the mechanism of scapegoating, and whether there is a creative kernel at the heart of the mythic image which could help us to deal with it more constructively.

**9th May**

### **Dreams and the Horoscope**

The living psychological reality of birth chart placements and transiting and progressed planets is nowhere more richly demonstrated than in the links between our dreams and our horoscopes. Understanding the feeling and meaning of anything in the horoscope is enhanced and deepened by recognising the patterns of dream imagery which are unique to each individual. Although underlying dream motifs are universal and archetypal, each individual's dreams weave the archetypal and the personal into an inner tapestry specific to that individual throughout life. This seminar will use case material to demonstrate how working with dream material can not only illuminate issues in the horoscope, but also provide invaluable insights during times of important transits and progressions. These insights can help us to recognise where the psyche is trying to move at such moments.

**16th May**

### **Important Dynamics of Elements and Crosses and their Role in Relationships**

What is the way you tend to look at the world, often without noticing

**Darby Costello**

**Liz Greene**

**Liz Greene**

**Karen Hamaker Zondag**

it? What are your unconscious expectations of yourself and others? How do you tend to overreact when life becomes too stressful? What special message has the inferior function? Understanding the dynamics of the elements and crosses gives you a profound instrument in handling your relationships better and is very important in understanding unexpected behaviour of children. Bring your chart!

**23rd May**

### **How We Form Couples:**

#### **Patterns of Relating and the 7th House**

The 7th house contains the seed image of the couple that we carry within us. It also describes a model of relationship inherited from the parental couple, which may set up hidden patterns in our own partnerships. This seminar will examine these underlying patterns as well as the kinds of encounters with others and with our own psyches described by the sign and planetary combinations of the 7th house and its ruler.

**6th June**

### **Advanced Tarot Workshop**

This day will provide an opportunity to explore in greater depth the meaning and symbolism of the Tarot. It is designed particularly for those who have attended Beginners Workshops but can be taken by those who are very familiar with the Tarot. A great emphasis will be placed on practical work so that students can gain greater confidence in performing readings.

**13th June**

### **Astrology of Collective - Current Transits Part One**

We think of 'our transits' and our clients' transits as though they were personal. Of course, at one level they are. But whether we are aware of it or not, the great tides of ideas which sweep through the collective affect us all. This seminar will look at how we are all subject to the vogues and fashions of the zeitgeist. Please bring your own charts, on acetate if possible.

**20th June**

### **Astrology of Collective - Current Transits Part Two**

Continuing our discussion of the transits of the time, we will be especially focusing upon the Saturn-Uranus square which will be with us through to July 2000, and the likely significance of this for the world and for each one of us.

**27th June**

### **Eclipses and Solar Returns**

This seminar will explore the 1999 eclipse sequence in terms of what it means to us personally and psychologically as well as within the collective at large. In addition, we will consider the general significance of the two annual eclipse seasons as they key into the horoscope. Solar Returns will also be included and the focus will be on the practical use of this information for our own and our clients' horoscopes.

**Lynn Bell**

**Juliet Sharman-Burke**

**Charles Harvey**

**Charles Harvey**

**Melanie Reinhart**



## APPLICATION FORM

Name:

CPA dip student yes/no

Address:

Telephone:

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

- Hans Baker - Study Group
- Sun 2 May Liz Greene - The Scapegoat
- Sun 9 May Liz Greene - Dreams and the Horoscope
- Sun 16 May Karen Hamaker Zondag - Important Dynamics of Elements and Crosses and their Role in Relationships
- Sun 23 May Lynn Bell - How We Form Couples: Patterns of Relating and the 7th House
- Sun 6 June Juliet Sharman-Burke - Advanced Tarot Workshop
- Sun 13 June Charles Harvey - Astrology of Collective Current Transits *Part One*
- Sun 20 June Charles Harvey - Astrology of Collective Current Transits *Part Two*
- Sun 27 June Melanie Reinhart - Eclipses and Solar Returns

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: +44-181 749 2330  
Email: [sharmancpa@compuserve.com](mailto:sharmancpa@compuserve.com)**

Hans Baker is running an eight-week **Study Group** for those who have a basic knowledge of astrology, but wish to increase and improve upon their skills in a small group.  
*For more information, call Hans on 0117 940 5537*

### Please Note:

All one day seminars are on Sundays between 10am and 5pm with the exception of Charles Harvey's two seminars which will start at 10.30 am. There are two coffee breaks and a lunch break. You are welcome to bring all charts (preferably on acetate for use with an overhead projector) 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 £37.00. If cancellations are received less than 10 days before the seminar the fee may be forfeit unless a replacement can be found. No acknowledgments are sent unless requested. Please enclose SAE.*

### Venues:

All *one day* seminars are held at **Regents College, Inner Circle, Regents Park, London NW1**

Nearest tube: Baker Street.

The *Tarot* workshop is held at **209 Hammersmith Grove, London W6**

Nearest tube: Goldhawk Rd/Hammersmith Broadway/Shepherds Bush.

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

# The CPA Press Order Form

	Quantity	Price
<b>APOLLON</b> - The Journal of Psychological Astrology		
<i>Issues 2-4 - including this issue</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
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## About the Centre for Psychological Astrology

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

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

### History

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

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

For further information, visit our website at <http://www.astrologer.com/cpa> or 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)

extremely difficult to see them when we are involved in the triangle. And the more unconscious we are of our parental dynamics, the more emotionally compulsive the triangle is likely to be, and the harder it is to see clearly.

Even if we do see, we may still be bound, because we have to live something through. We do not heal anything through the exercise of reason alone. But the emotions which the triangle brings to the surface may change, and the outcome may be very different, internally if not externally. The sad thing about triangles is that everybody loses. Sooner or later, on one level or another, all three people wind up hurt. Even if the Instrument of Betrayal succeeds in breaking up an existing relationship and “getting” the love-object that he or she has been fighting for, it is a Pyrrhic victory. The Betrayer has to choose in the end, so even if something is won, something is also lost. And the victory is no less Pyrrhic for the Betrayed who succeeds in “getting back” the erring partner. We have exercised our Oedipal power and reversed the original Oedipal defeat that we suffered in childhood. But what have we really won, and what must we live with afterward? Resentment seems to be inevitable, no matter which point of the triangle we favour. If we are the Instrument of Betrayal, we have led someone else into making a very painful choice, and often there will be a lot of suffering, not only emotionally but also financially, and so there will be resentment. But even more importantly, if we remain unconscious, we have done nothing to heal the inner split which lies behind the triangle. We have only achieved an external solution. Nothing has really changed.

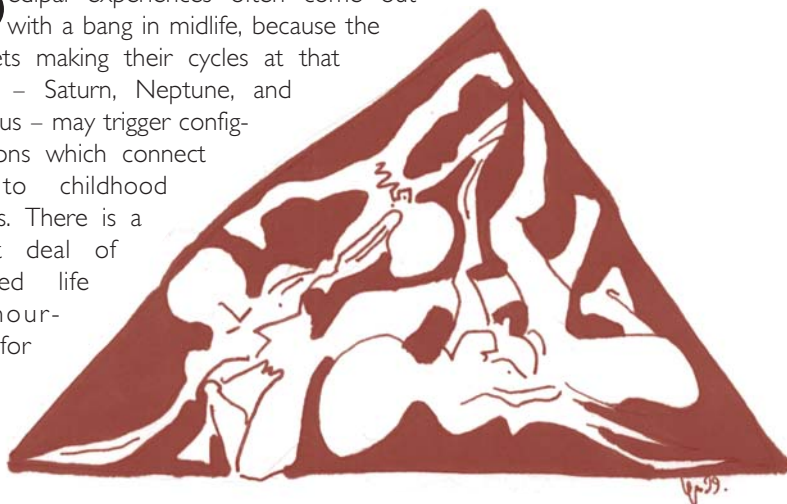
#### **Insecurities which generate triangles: Saturn and Chiron**

There is another consequence of family triangles – the potential alienation between oneself and others of one’s own sex. An unresolved Oedipal battle may result in a loss of trust in one’s own sexuality. If a situation of intense rivalry and competitiveness occurred with the same-sex parent, there will inevitably be effects in terms of our friendships and the way that we interact with our own sex later. If a woman has a mother who is an insurmountable rival, at whose hands she has suffered a painful and humiliating childhood defeat, confidence in her femininity may be undermined. And because she does not trust herself, she will not trust other women. They will all seem to have the power to “take away” those she loves. This mistrust of one’s own sex can be very acute. A woman may have a wonderful friendship with another woman, and then she meets a really lovely man, and they get involved, and what does she do about introducing her friend

to her partner? The undercurrent of anxiety and suspicion may make things very difficult, and unconsciously she may even set herself up for betrayal. She may unconsciously select as friends those of her own sex who act out her unresolved conflict with her mother, because they have unresolved conflicts with their mothers. The same applies to men. If a man has experienced a situation of destructive competitiveness with his father, then, in any later relationship in which he becomes involved, the issue of rivalry will always raise its head, because other men always seem to be potential rivals. One must be on guard all the time. This is not possessiveness in the ordinary sense. Its roots are quite different.

Placements such as Venus aspecting Saturn or Chiron can contribute to this dynamic, not because they are in themselves Oedipal, but because they reflect certain insecurities which can be compounded by the family triangle. Mars aspecting Saturn and Chiron may also reflect deep sexual insecurities which are heightened by family triangles and lead to feelings of defeat. These sets of aspects may compel a repetition of the failure later, or an attempt to heal the hurt by proving one’s sexual potency through triangles. There is no single astrological pattern which describes a propensity for triangles, but rather, many different combinations which can describe different images of and responses to the parents, and different ways of reacting to the natural and inevitable Oedipal phase of childhood. Venus-Saturn and Venus-Chiron do not “cause” a person to be drawn into triangles, but they describe a deep and innate awareness of human limits which, in childhood, when there is no real comprehension of what this could offer in a positive sense, can lead the child into feeling inadequate and damaged. The loss or alienation of a beloved parent will then be attributed to one’s own failings, and later in life one may feel one cannot “keep” a partner because a rival will always take him or her away.

Oedipal experiences often come out with a bang in midlife, because the planets making their cycles at that time – Saturn, Neptune, and Uranus – may trigger configurations which connect us to childhood issues. There is a great deal of un-lived life clamouring for





Forgiveness can only come out of a recognition of one's collusion in the triangle – whatever one's role – and the taking back of one's projections.

expression under the midlife group of transits, and unresolved family triangles that have managed to remain buried may finally break out because they are carrying un-lived psychic life with them. But it depends on how powerful the conflict is. It may come out much earlier. There are people who experience triangles from the very beginning of their relationship lives. Not all triangles have parental roots, and parental roots may also involve something deeper. We may well wonder what could be deeper than the Oedipal dynamic, but as Jung was reputed to have once said, even the penis is a phallic symbol. If there is a family pattern which is unresolved, such as the Venusian issues we have been looking at, it stands a good chance of erupting in one's outer life under the appropriate transits. That, for some people, may be the only way any kind of healing or resolution becomes possible. But behind the parental issue is the archetypal issue – why do we seek the love of that particular parent, and what does the parent symbolise for our own souls? This is invariably linked with what needs to be developed in oneself – one's own destiny.

At midlife, if important bits of oneself have remained undeveloped, they will come bursting out, especially under the Uranus opposition to its own place. And often, the first place we meet these occluded bits of ourselves is in somebody else. It is the most characteristic way in which the psyche knocks on the door and demands integration. This need to become more of what one really is may begin with a sudden attraction. Un-lived bits of ourselves may also appear in a rival. Surprisingly, the rival may be more important psychologically than the person over whom one is fighting. But if there has been no pattern of triangles earlier, the eruption of one at midlife may not necessarily imply an unresolved family problem. And if it does, the problem needs to be seen in a larger context.

#### Triangles which involve un-lived life

We now come to the issue of what might really lie beneath the dynamics of triangles – beneath the parental patterns and defences and power-plays and all the other apparently “causal” reasons why triangles enter our lives. I believe there is always an element of un-lived life in every triangle, and for various reasons it seems we are sometimes unable to discover that un-lived life except through the extreme emotional stress which triangles generate. Betrayal is an archetypal experience which is our chief instrument of maturation. This does not mean that we all need to become embittered cynics. But there is something important in recognising how our fantasies of what we think life and love should be prevent us from growing up and becoming full

members of the human family. Betrayal is the means through which these fantasies are punctured and recognised. We attempt to enclose ourselves and other people in our fantasy-world, which is meant to compensate for childhood pain. Since all childhoods have pain, the naive assumptions we carry are also archetypal, and reflect an alternative child-world that resembles Eden in its innocence and fusion-state with the divine parent. The serpent in the Garden is therefore an image of this archetypal role of betrayal, which is inherent in the state of innocence and sooner or later rises up to destroy our fusion.

There is no formula to cope with the pain of betrayal. But an archetypal perspective can help us to look at things differently, although the pain cannot be explained or imagined away. There is no remedy for this kind of pain. But there is a difference between blind pain and pain that is accompanied by understanding. The latter has a transformative effect. When there is no consciousness, triangles do tend to repeat themselves – different characters, same script. Some triangles are truly transformative. They do break apart an old pattern, and the new relationship is genuinely much happier and more rewarding. Or the triangle serves the purpose of freeing energy, freeing inner potentials, and even if the old relationship is re-established, or one winds up with neither party, everything has changed. But we are still ourselves, however much we try to rearrange our outer lives, and if an inner issue has not been dealt with, the same patterns will begin to arise in the new relationship. The compatibility may be greater with another partner, but one must still deal with one's own psyche.

A triangle can be like a grand trine in a chart. The energy circles around and around; it flows back on itself and does not nourish anything else in one's life. Within triangles, all three people tend to project elements of themselves on each other. The triangle holds these projections in place, and there may be enormous resistance to change. We might even say that the triangle forms because there is resistance to change, so whatever is seeking expression from within is experienced through projection. When such a triangle breaks up, the projections come back home again. Psychic energy is released, whether it is through death or the voluntary relinquishing of someone. The timing of this is not accidental. In one or two or even all three parties, unconscious issues have finally reached a point where they can be integrated, even if this is expressed by simply letting it go. The moment we are able to do that, the projections begin to become conscious. I do not believe real forgiving comes in any other way. It is a kind of grace. It cannot be created by an act

of will. It is very sad to hear the Betrayed saying, "I forgive you," not because it is truly heartfelt, but in order to get the straying partner back again. Underneath there may be no forgiveness at all – although this may not be entirely conscious – and then the punishment can go on and on. Forgiveness can only come out of a recognition of one's collusion in the triangle – whatever one's role – and the taking back of one's projections. Before that, forgiveness is not really possible. It only seems to emerge out of something being genuinely integrated in oneself. The entire process is transformative. We cannot manufacture forgiveness if we have been betrayed – nor can we manufacture it for ourselves if we are the Betrayer. We can only work to integrate what belongs to our own souls.

The Saturnian parent who rejects, and then turns up in a triangle as a cold and rejecting partner, may have something to do with our own need to acquire boundaries. If we view this fundamental Saturnian experience from a more detached perspective, what is rejection, in the end, except someone else drawing boundaries which we find intolerable? It may be our own lack of boundaries that attracts us into a triangle where we are the Betrayed, rejected by a Saturnian partner who says, "I can't stand this emotional claustrophobia. I want to be separate." Or we may be the Betrayer, fleeing from a partner whose emotional needs seem stifling but who secretly mirrors our own inability to cope with loneliness. The hard and painful lessons that come from these kinds of experiences are lessons about what is undeveloped in ourselves. We may have to discover our primal passions if Pluto is in our 10th or 4th. But we may disown this at first, and say, "My mother was terribly manipulative," or, "My father was so controlling." Why do people become manipulative and controlling? If someone is expressing Plutonian qualities in a relationship, they are not doing it because it is fun; they are doing it because the relationship is equated with survival, and there is a desperate need to ensure that the beloved remains close. Pluto is mobilised when one feels under threat. People become manipulative because they are terrified of losing the object of their love. That love object constitutes survival for them, and manipulation seems the only possible way to ensure the continuity of the relationship. We are all capable of this, given the right level of attachment and the right level of threat. If we disown these Plutonian attributes and keep them firmly projected on the parent, Pluto may turn up in a triangle. Then we ourselves may have to discover how possessive we can be. Or we acquire a deeply possessive partner. We may get as far as saying, "Ah, yes, I have chosen someone just like my mother/father." That is a useful piece of insight, but it is only the beginning. This possessive quality in the parent is described by our own 4th or 10th house

Pluto. We must still discover it in ourselves. Often we only discover we have a Pluto through the experience of betrayal. It is just a blank in the chart until a triangle unearths it, and then we suddenly find our Pluto for the first time. We discover that we feel passionately, that we need intensely, that desperation can make us treacherous and manipulative, and that control may seem the only way to survive. This process of self-discovery may be a frightening and humbling experience, but it allows us to fully become what we are.

Psychic integration is the teleology of all triangles. Even when the outer planets are involved in parental triangles, the thing to which we are so deeply attached in the parent is really something that belongs to our own souls. This "something" may involve our stretching beyond personal boundaries and allowing a deeper or higher level of reality into our lives, but nevertheless it is connected with our own life journey. When we see astrological symbols which we experience first through the parents and then later through a triangle in which the same experience repeats itself, there is something within us that needs to be lived, and it may keep coming back through triangles until we find a way to live it. Planets which are parental signifiers in the chart are not only descriptive of parental patterns. They are descriptive of un-lived dimensions of ourselves, especially when they do not agree with the rest of the chart. Even if the parent embodies the planet in creative ways, it is still our planet, and belongs to our own destiny. A planet in the 4th or 10th, or in major aspect to the Sun or Moon, may not be enacted obviously by the parent, but it will be part of what we experience through the parent. If the parent has not creatively lived the archetypal pattern symbolised by the planet, it is harder to understand what we are dealing with. And therefore we may not realise what we are meeting through a triangle which appears in our life later. It is not just an unfinished parental complex, although that element may be important to explore. It is ultimately one's own planet, and therefore something of one's own soul. It is part of our psychological inheritance, but we must give shape to it. Even triangles which appear screamingly Oedipal also have to do with our own inner lives, because what we love or hate in the parent is something that belongs to us. But we need to find our own way of living it.



# Hole in One

## John Green

Don't be squeamish. Like it or not, young people these days are into body piercing. **John Green** offers his reasoning as to why it has caught on in the West, in a frank and revealing article. Don't try this at home...



**John Green** is the proud owner of seventeen piercings. He is a DJ and a writer of numerous unpublished novels and several published short stories and entries in encyclopaedias on everything from DNA to old trains. (This doesn't mean he's interested in either!) He is currently studying with the CPA. You can find his short graphic story *Angel Alice* on the Web at [www.scape-goat.org.uk](http://www.scape-goat.org.uk).

One grey, rainy, British summer of a day in June 1991\* I took the longest walk of my life through the streets of Norwood in London, not exactly renowned as England's Sodom and Gomorrah. About forty minutes later I was walking back to my car with a far jauntier step, on a high that had nothing to do with illicit substances. I felt heroic, bordering on the mythical, albeit with a swagger of parted legs that John Wayne never achieved. The reason? My first proper piercing, not the ears, not the nose; in fact, somewhere that only a select few would ever get to view, I had taken the step and become a kindred spirit with the late Prince Albert.

Nearly eight years later, it seems every Tom, Dick and Harriet is sporting a hole somewhere that they certainly weren't born with. If not a piercing, they may have tattoos, deliberate scars or some other body modification. The days when the only piercers were chemists or hairdressers armed with guns, studs and a cotton ball dripping with surgical spirit have long since disappeared. The modern piercing studio tends to be rather like a dentist's surgery, with fully adjustable chair, rubber gloves and sterilising equipment everywhere. No longer performed by the amateur, piercing has become a skilled profession. So why, and how, did we suddenly embrace these most ancient of practices? And why now?

### The rebirth of hole and needle

Body piercing has a long and distinguished history. It is known to have been practised by the Romans; they used nipple piercings as a sign of bravery, and, more usefully, as a way of attaching their cloaks. The *Kama Sutra* refers to the *apadravya*, a vertical penis piercing, while the *ampallang* (same sort of thing, only placed horizontally through the penis head), is thought to have originated in Borneo in the Dyak tribe. More recently, in Victorian times, the Prince Albert piercing (a ring going through the urethra and coming out through a hole in the underside of the penis) was used as a dressing ring, to keep the unsightly member in place next to the leg, so as not to cause a bulge in the front of the fashionably tight trousers of the Victorian male. Whether Albert actually had

one, and if so, whether Victoria was amused or not, is a matter for conjecture.

In the mid-eighties, most piercings were through the ear, or the occasionally outrageous nose. Piercing suddenly blossomed, to perforate all our other bits and pieces that could support a hole. This is generally attributed to the work of three men, Doug Malloy and Jim Ward, in the US, and Mr Sebastian, in the UK. Their work developed from the gay and S&M communities in both countries, and slowly began to hit the street through fringe groups of travellers, Goths, and anyone generally into the 'alternative' culture. It wasn't an easy ride, and by the late eighties, Mr Sebastian was fighting a jail sentence, the case being argued that piercing a consenting adult could be called malicious wounding! Society seemed to be fighting for body integrity, against the idea that each of us owns our own body and should be allowed to do what we like with it. It is a difficult argument, similar to that for euthanasia. Should an adult of sound mind be allowed to do whatever they want with their body? Society found it difficult to find where to draw the line between piercing and self-mutilation. The legality of professional piercing has, however, been grudgingly accepted.

More liberal tolerance of piercing came about in the mid-nineties; navel and eyebrow piercings were taken up by the fashion industry and appeared on the cat walk, bands like *Take That* had members who sported them, and the British media began to take an interest in the fetish scene on a slightly less crude level than had been exhibited before (*The Observer* rather than *The News of the World*). Fetish clubs like The Torture Garden began to take on Ministry of Sound status in London. It was time for piercing to have its fifteen minutes of fame. To those of us who had been stared at for years for our dangly surgical steel rings and bolts it was all rather odd. Suddenly it was *fashion* and you couldn't even wander round a suburban supermarket without seeing reddened navels, eyebrows or lips on the recently pierced. Nowadays if you input *Prince Albert* on an Internet search engine you'll get more entries on piercings and fetishes than you will

\* PA piercing:  
26th June 1991 15:00  
Norwood, London



on the British Royal family. The words even crop up on popular TV shows such as BBC's *The Fast Show*. "A Prince Albert, sir? Ooh. Suits you sir! Suits you."

### Bursting the bubble

So slowly times began to change, and piercing became more tolerated in many large cities, particularly in England with its casual acceptance of, and even love for, eccentrics; and in the large American cities. Recently a friend of mine from an American West coast small town was worried about going home with her new London-born lip and clitoris piercings, only to find that no one batted an eyelid when she got there. But many small towns probably do take the old Biblical view of *Leviticus 19:28*:

*You shall not gash yourselves in mourning for the dead; you shall not tattoo yourselves. I am the Lord.*

It is interesting that the Bible associates body modification with mourning, and thus suffering, an idea we shall touch on later.

But who does get themselves pierced? One reason is purely for adornment. However, the distinction between fashion and personal beautification here is important, though not necessarily obvious. When piercing becomes unfashionable, it may then be actively disliked by followers of fashion, whilst for others, piercing will still be regarded as emphasising or increasing the beauty of the wearer, regardless of current popular opinion. This enhancement can be a very positive thing, something quite emotionally healthy, when it allows people to be at ease with their bodies. Piercing has long been seen as ornamentation in African tribes such as the Masai and the Padaung of Malaysia; promoting it as decoration, instead of self-flagellation and other "deviant" behaviour, has helped to establish it in many parts of Britain and America.

In 1985, *Piercing Fans International Quarterly* (PFIQ) magazine, possibly the largest independent publication on the subject, published by Gauntlet, America's largest supplier of body jewellery, ran a survey of its subscribers. 83% of the people who responded had attended college, 24% had college degrees, and 33% had gone on to postgraduate study. The result also showed that 93% of the people who responded were Caucasians. This survey, then, would seem to suggest that of those people who become deeply involved in piercing, a significant number are well educated. It probably wouldn't be unfair to suggest they were 'white middle class'. Maybe this suggests an element of rebelling against Mummy and Daddy whilst at

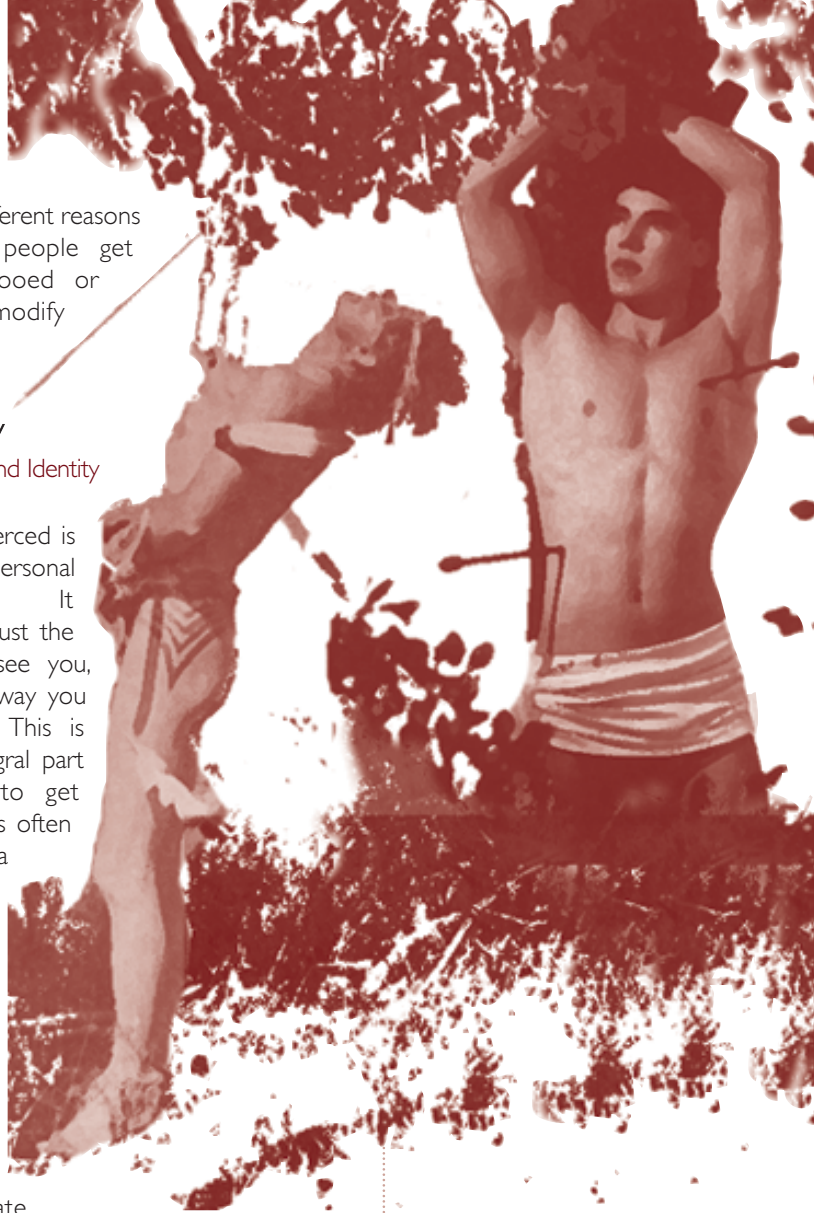
college, but there are many very different reasons as to why people get pierced, tattooed or otherwise modify their body.

### Gilding the Lily

I: Self Image and Identity

Getting pierced is a very personal experience. It changes not just the way others see you, but also the way you see yourself. This is often an integral part of wanting to get pierced. Dress often links us to a particular subcultural group, but often what we really want is to denounce the accepted norms of society, and not to affiliate ourselves with a stereotyped group of rebels, already labelled by that society. Piercing, then, may well be an attack on what is seen as enforced social conformity; but because of the hidden nature of many piercings, it is a way of emphasising your own sense of identity in a very private and personal way. The girl next to you on the bus may have labia rings; you'll never know that but she does, and that helps get her through her day. On the bus, she is just another person going to work in the rush hour, but the piercing reminds her that she is different and special. Something she can see and touch. Many piercees say they feel an increase in self-confidence after having a piercing. Of course there are many who want to join the rebel tribe, and hang three million bolts and rings from their face. However, many feel that piercing's great value is in establishing this feeling of your own identity without having to show others, or put anything 'on display'.

Similarly, many people profess to a feeling of greater acceptance of their bodies after piercing. There is so much pressure in society, especially on women, to conform to a body look that is considered normal or beautiful. This occurs to such a degree that our society now



Collage of Fakir Musafar & St Sebastian based on photos by Charles Gatewood and Pierre & Gilles.



Freya and orchid - collage  
photo by Bruce Eden



suffers from previously uncommon eating disorders, such as bulimia and anorexia. It could be pointed out that low body image has often given rise to the practice of self mutilation, such as slashing one's arms with a razor, and ask whether piercing is so different. But for many people, piercing creates a feeling of being more 'at home' in one's own body, and regarding it as beautiful, whatever others might think.

## 2 Rites of passage

For some people piercing is a way for them to come to terms with emotional pain, by re-experiencing physical pain in an environment which they control. It can be a way of reclaiming the body, a rite of passage to a new life. Two of my own piercings have been used in this way; a physical pain that I controlled, and that became a part of me, in order to help me get over a time of emotional crisis. I know I'm not alone in this, as many of the people with piercings and tattoos I have spoken to have used the experience in this way. Undergoing a potentially painful and invasive experience cannot help but change one's perspective on life to some extent. You can probably draw a comparison with the feeling that people who go through operations say they experience; their view on life changes, due to their being forced to face their own mortality.

One of the most famous body modifiers, Fakir Musafar, has argued that, in some people there is an *instinctive* drive towards undergoing a rite of passage, to the extent that if society denies them one, they will create one for themselves. A rite of passage marks the transition from one life crisis to the next, birth to maturity, to marriage, to eldership, to death. Tattooing has long been used in the rite of passage from boyhood to man, and piercing is joining it in popularity. It seems there is a need for us to develop our own rites of passage in these times, when so many of them have been lost.

(Iron John gets an *ampallang* anyone?). It is interesting that we are looking back to ancient, or 'primitive', techniques such as piercing, to fill the void, to compensate for the loss of ancient traditions of the rite of passage. Too often the idea of 'family values' in government-speak means making things hard for single mothers, rather than re-establishing the family of community, in which we can regain these all important rites.

Rites of passage symbolically mark an event as important. In mythology we find so many of these rites marked with pain and discomfort. In Northern mythology (to use my favourite and often overlooked myths) Odin (or Woden if you like, the god we get Wednesday from), the all-father, performs his own voluntary self-sacrifice to rejuvenate himself, and gain magical wisdom. 'For nine nights,' he says in the *Eddas*, 'wounded by my own spear, consecrated to Odin, myself consecrated to myself, I remained hanging from the tree shaken by the wind, from the mighty tree whose roots men know not.' The tree was *Yggdrasil*, the world tree, and his reward was to understand the use of runes in magick. I think the important part is that, in this process of suffering to move forward, he consecrates himself to himself. It is not a sacrifice to another power or being. But all these rites must be performed for ourselves, taking responsibility for, and using the power from, our own actions.

Because piercing permanently marks the body, the piercing, and often its placement and the jewellery used, become highly symbolic of the event for which it is being done. Piercings also act as an outward sign, to those who can interpret them, of the passage of one's life. I know couples who will exchange piercing jewellery in intimate piercings, as a vow of commitment to each other, like an engagement or marriage. There is a sense of achievement in these rites of passage; the piercing makes a per-



manent record of, and is itself part of, that ritual: the symbolic death, and subsequent rebirth, of the individual into a different way of life.

### 3 Pain

“Did that hurt?” This has to be the most frequently asked question of anyone with piercings. It is a tricky one to answer, as the feeling of pain is highly subjective. Secondly, as a species, we have no pain memory; which is handy, as those of us who are not the firstborn probably wouldn't even be here if we did. Some people find piercing utterly painless, others have lost consciousness. In my own experience, piercing is certainly less painful than tattooing, as it is one moment of brief, though sometimes intense, pain, instead of the more constant burning sensation of a tattoo. The experience seems to go above and beyond pain, a sensation which seems to be bound up with the whole ritual of being pierced, a feeling that in some ways could be said to be on the borders of the mystical or spiritual experience. This aspect can make both piercing and tattooing an addictive experience. Many people I have spoken to, (and I have felt the same), describe with affection a piercing and speak with relish about 'The next one I'm going to get', in terms which parallel expressions about drug use. In fact, getting a new piercing is often a *fix*, an experience anticipated since the pleasure of getting the last one has worn off. Similar to many drugs, piercing can give you a high of pleasure, unlike that achieved from anything else, and this means only another piercing can match it. I have not yet met anyone who has taken this addiction past the stage of merely talking about it. However that is not to say that there aren't piercing junkies out there.

The use of intense sensation, and endorphin highs, in entering altered states can be seen in the rites of many peoples such as the Native Americans. There is a Native American ritual known as the O-Kee-Pa or Sundance which consists of making a deep piercing behind each nipple and then inserting hooks into the piercings. Ropes were attached to the hooks and the initiate was spun around in circles until he lost consciousness. This was repeated in recent years by Fakir Musafar as a means of spiritual, mental, and emotional cleansing. Well, it makes a change from a few pints and a curry.

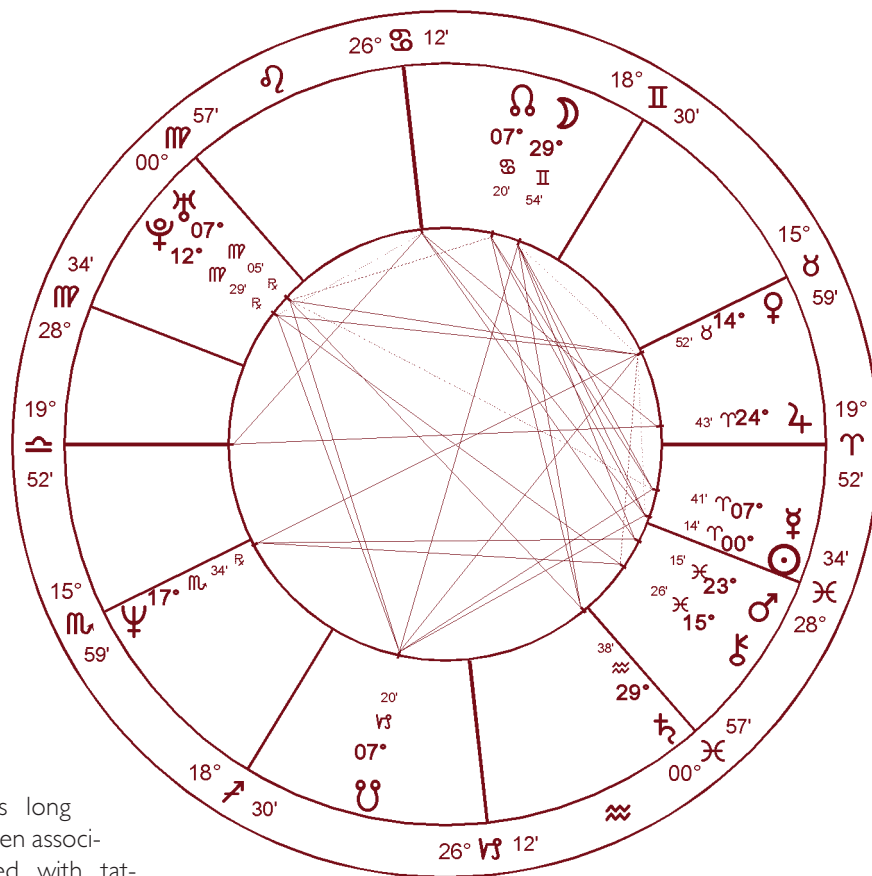
In its ritual context, the importance of pain is, for some, to demonstrate the ability to endure hardship. In most people I have talked to, however, those who actively sought the sensations associated with piercing, did so to accept, understand and learn from the sensations. An attitude of calm acceptance, rather than a display of bravado, is sought. Of course some do it just to appear 'hard', something that

has long been associated with tattoos; but then, the idea of the amount of pain one can take being associated with tribal rank is not a new one.

### 4 Sex

However, piercing isn't just for religious or spiritual reasons, nor for social status or adornment. For many, the motivation behind body piercing is highly sexual. Many people may ask, 'Why do these things?' and surely a very valid reason is, "Because it's fun!" This can often be the primary reason behind nipple and genital piercings, and to some extent tongue ones. When the nipples or genitals are pierced, the entire area becomes more sensitive. In the PFIQ survey 57% of subscribers engaged in dominant-submissive play.

Of course, genital piercing is not limited to gay sado-masochists. Many people pierce their genitals (and nipples) to heighten sexual pleasure. Many women have reported greater sexual satisfaction with pierced clitorises or clitoral hoods. Men pierce their genitals for the same reason. Many men have reported an increase in sexual stimulation after a piercing. 'It's like having a hand inside my lover playing with me at the same time as I move in and out', says one piercee from the survey. In these times of trying to fit our body into agreed 'normal' stereotypes is there anything wrong with just having fun? As genitally pierced Genesis P Orridge from musical/magickal/art group *Psychic TV* sings: 'Love your body. Enjoy your body. Why don't you fucking just enjoy your own fucking body?'



**John Green**  
 20th March 1964  
 20.00  
 Chingford, London  
*Placidus*  
*Tropical*  
*True Node*

© J Green



### 5 Magick/Religious aspects of piercing

Piercing as a personal rite of passage certainly has distinct magickal/religious connotations. Many piercees view the practice in this way, whereby attempts are made to manipulate the spiritual via ritual, in order to produce specific effects. In this way magick acts to reinforce group identity and solidarity during periods of social instability or stress. A rite of passage can, in itself, be a very emotionally powerful event. By the addition of a magickal or religious significance to the ritual, the whole piercing can be transformed. Not only does the use of magick or religion reinforce the status of the piercing by giving it 'higher' or 'deeper' significance, the psychological effects can be enormous. The symbolism involved in piercing, voluntary submission to pain and damage, bloodletting, the sealing of the piercing with, most often, a continuous band of steel (a ring, the power of which is legendary in magick, due to its self-perpetuation), can easily be, and often has been, related to laying oneself bare before one's beliefs in order to experience, even briefly, some form of communion; then to symbolically seal the event permanently to the person who experienced it. I think we're back to Odin on the tree here.

This isn't anything new (surprise, surprise). The use of body art for its medicinal or protective properties is well documented throughout history. The Shan, who live on the Thai/Burma border, have been noted for their use of tattooing as a form of medicine. In the Oceanic societies studied by Gell, tattooing made up an important part of their lives socially. The tattoos were seen to have a number of

different uses including magickal protection.

Nowadays there are many cases of this interpretation. One woman in the PFIQ survey states that she always seemed to get pierced when she was feeling low; the piercing then was seen as an aid to happiness, and relief from tension. Another young lady had a piercing done for 'psychic protection': in other words, her flesh contained a magickal talisman. In some cases the exact reason for the piercing is not known, even by the person who owns it; they simply felt they needed to have it. This absolute, but inexplicable, need for a piercing is one of the most common reasons you come across for people having one. As such, piercing is a powerful 'magickal' aid to redressing balance in such people's lives.

### Holes in the sky

*Here comes the science bit – concentrate*

Jennifer Anniston

So is there anything in astrology to explain the surge of interest in body modification? Does it show up in people's charts? I'm not going to answer these questions, for two reasons. First, I'm still a relative beginner in psychological astrology, and I'm sure many people reading this will have better ideas than I do. Second, these are questions we have to be careful with. In the same way the current trend is to find a gene for everything, a gene for being gay, one for being a thief, etc, it is easy to think that certain planets cause us to behave in a certain way. Genes themselves do not 'make' anyone anything; similarly a chart will only show up certain psychological needs, of which a piercing may be one person's way of expressing them, where someone else will do something else entirely. I'm reminded of a story told by comedian Eddie Izzard about a trip he made to the doctor's for a cold. At the time, he was coming out as a transvestite, and he went along to the appointment in a dress, and wearing make up.

*'I've got a cough.'*

*'You've got what?'*

*'I've got a cough.'*

*'You're a transvestite?'*

*'No, I've got a cough. I am a transvestite, but I've got a cough.'*

*'Well I'd better sort the transvestite thing out. Have to refer you for that.'*

*'No, that's not a problem. Just the cough, thanks.'*

I've been on the receiving end of similar conversations over my piercings, when the simple thing is, most people who have piercings are just pierced; it is part of who they are and not the result of anything else.

Firstly, I want to look at an individual chart, mine, actually, and refer to the charts of a few other piercees I know personally. I think a

lot of personal interest from piercing comes from Venus and Pluto. Mythologically (in the Northern myths) I equate Freya with Venus and Hella with Pluto. Freya was the Northern goddess of love and sex but she has these wonderfully dark overtones which seem to relate to these subjects, added to her sexual warrior aspect as head of the Valkyries (eat your heart out Xena). In one myth, Freya finds a particular magickal necklace (the Brisningamen) so desirable that she is prepared to sleep with four dwarves in order to obtain it. I like the idea of sex (integration) with the dark shadow (the underground dwarves) in order to achieve what the individual desires and needs. Hella is the Northern mythos version of Hades, ruling the underworld (Hel). To me, she perfectly sums up the life and death struggle that Pluto is so preoccupied with; after all, she is half woman and half rotting corpse; how much more life and death do you want?

I think a lot of body modification desires come from the interaction of these two colourful characters. In my chart Venus is trine Pluto, and that gives that life or death struggle for survival full reign in the worlds of sex and emotional and erotic satisfaction, which sounds like the perfect plot for a French movie. Freya's (Venus') love for the beautiful and stimulating meets up with the tribal and dark aspect of the dwarves (Pluto), and after self-sacrifice gets her a magickal necklace (piercing). The combination of Pluto and Venus gives the demand for extremes in our idea of beauty, the themes of pain and sacrifice, submission and domination, and the body modification helps achieve a compromise between the two, satisfying both. Venus hovering on the brink of my eighth

house I think gives added Plutonic overtones, with Pluto conjunct Uranus in the 11th adding in the desire to belong to a darker, more Plutonic group. Of my brief, and highly unscientific, study of piercees, two-thirds had an aspect between Venus and Pluto.

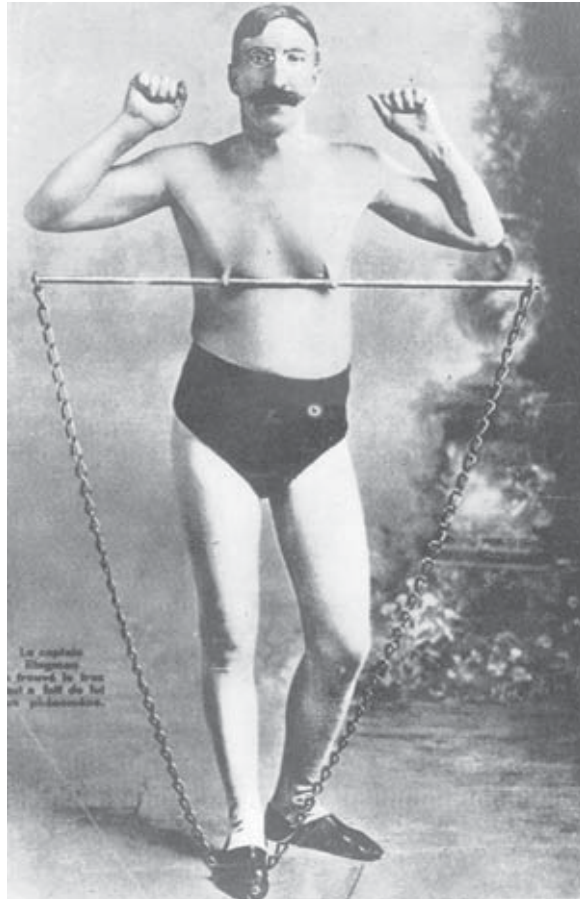
Chiron seems to play a role too in the body modification malarkey. After all, a piercing is a wound that doesn't heal, so surely that's not too surprising. Personally I have Chiron in aspect to Venus, Neptune and Pluto. I think Chiron allows us to see the beauty in what others consider ugly or weird (particularly in aspect to Venus). The aspects of Chiron to Neptune and Pluto obviously show up in many people's chart due to the slow movement of these planets, but in my own chart the aspect to Venus brings Pluto into play again, through its trine to Venus, and here the shamanic aspect of Chiron comes out through the same themes of extremes of sex, danger, power games, and how healing can be achieved through them. We have already noticed the similarity of shamanic type initiation rites of symbolically facing death, and body modification. Interestingly, the Bible quote given earlier suggests the link between Plutonic mourning and body modification. Aspects of Chiron to personal planets, particularly Venus, cropped up in over half of my little survey too.

On a personal note I have suffered from depression during much of my life, and one of the ways I use to overcome this is through creating something (Chiron in the 5th); usually writing, but I have also used piercing in this way, I guess as using a symbolic suffering (Chiron in Pisces) as a way of re-establishing my





Wait until you see my next trick - © Hulton Picture Co.



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own sense of identity and worth. Interestingly on the day I got my first proper body piercing, the Prince Albert, transiting Pluto was opposite my Venus, trine my Mars, conjunct my Neptune, and trine my Chiron. Transiting Uranus and Neptune were trine my Venus, trine my Pluto and sextile Chiron, while transiting Chiron was conjunct my MC. Make of that what you want, but it felt good enough for me, giving me the feeling of Odin, consecrating and sacrificing myself to myself in a magickal ritual which gave me greater self confidence and a feeling of 'knowing' who I truly was. The act of piercing was not itself a cure for depression, but the ritual helped me to mentally prepare myself to overcome it.

So are there any clues as to why piercing became important to so many people over the last decade and a half? I think Neptune played a role here, in moving fashion in mysterious ways. It has been well documented by Liz Greene and others how Neptune plays a role in youth cults, and the comings and goings of fashion. I think Neptune's forays through Scorpio (1956-70) and Capricorn (1984-98) played an important role here. Those of us with Neptune in Scorpio gave rise to punk, new romantic, and Goth as we grew up, all interested in the beauty of extremes and death or nihilism. By 1988 we were in our early twenties or thirties, and ready to start up fetish clubs and

play around with Pluto influences. Neptune was now in Capricorn, which initially seems a bit conservative but look at the flip side, restriction, boundaries, bondage? Perfect for more interest in fetishistic roles. In addition, Pluto entered its own sign of Scorpio in November 1983 for about 12 years; for the first few years it made a sextile to Neptune in Capricorn, adding an even darker sexual and magickal aspect to what were already sadomasochistic influences, making it a perfect time for body modification to work its way to the surface of our consciousness, and become part of our everyday life.

So eight years on from my first real body piercing, and I feel the bubble has burst for piercing, fashion-wise. However, it has now become an accepted part of British society, and whilst no longer the height of fashion, it is no longer the symbol of the outcast or scapegoat. Those who became 'modern primitives' will keep the home fires burning, at the very least to sterilise their needles. Piercing has made its home in society, and acted as a blood stained social marker of a society slowly and painfully changing, from one set of social values to another. Maybe it will prove to be a rite of passage for the whole of society to a more accepting age. Probably not. Me? I'm just trying to find a flap of skin I can stick another ring through.



# Neptune and Pluto: Romance in the Underworld

## Sophia Young

The myth of Orpheus and Eurydice epitomises the nature of romantic love as we understand it today, says **Sophia Young**. Describing the ancient tradition of courtly love, Sophia tells us a moving story of how one woman's struggle towards self-esteem has been helped by a love that is not so far removed from that of the troubadours of old.

"Romantic love is the single greatest energy system in the Western psyche. In our culture it has supplanted religion as the arena in which men and women seek meaning, transcendence, wholeness, and ecstasy."

Robert A Johnson, *We*<sup>1</sup>

Neptunian romantic love inevitably draws Pluto in its wake. All that is not perfect is cast out, does not exist, in the magic ring of romantic love. The euphoria of merging with divinity, as represented by the Beloved Other, is not sustainable. The exiled darkness gathers its energies, and turns to attack the enraptured pair. In order to experience the ultimately redemptive qualities of love, they must undergo a Pluto transit and transform, or else they must die. This cycle is seen in the great romances such as *Tristan & Iseult* and myths such as Orpheus. In real life we can see the cycle unfold. Princess Diana became a truly romantic heroine when she died at the enraptured stage of a romance. Pluto in Pisces in our national UK chart (1801)<sup>2</sup> may throw some light on why this tragic death reverberated with such enormity round the kingdom.

The modern, western romantic notion was born with the troubadours and balladeers of the 12th century. For the two thousand years up until this point in time, the 250-year Neptune/Pluto cycle of conjunction and opposition occurred when Pluto was in Taurus. In 1154, the first opposition took place with Pluto in Gemini. With the movement of the base of the Neptune and Pluto cycle from Taurus to Gemini, the cultural phenomenon of *courtezia* or courtly love took hold and swept the courts of Europe.<sup>3</sup> The stars of Gemini, Castor and Pollux, are locked in an eternal voyage in the myth, passing each other on their journey from earth to heaven but continuing in opposite directions. The Romantic tradition is full of such couples who cannot be together.

In 1160 Luc de Gast, an English troubadour, wrote *Tristan and Iseult*, one of the classic romances. A brave knight shares a love potion

with the beautiful maiden he is escorting to become his uncle's Queen. Tragedy results. These types of passionate, fated and doomed fables have informed our expectations of romantic love ever since.

In such tales, as retold by the Knight in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* or Luc de Gast, the feminine was worshipped by a knight in the form of an idealised lady, usually unobtainable and married to someone else. They were not to have physical contact; sexual desire was kept constantly bubbling, but never fulfilled. The Sagittarian spiritual idealism was to remain untarnished by earthy manifestation. The intensity and passion were never to manifest physically but might lead to a heightened relationship with the divine. The Gemini/Sagittarius axis introduced a spiritual ideal of romantic relating, very different from its fixed predecessor.

It is not hard to see the hand of Neptune at work, casting romantic spells on us. Nothing is more delightfully intoxicating than the heights of romantic love. It is a simultaneous reaching backward to the unity of the womb and reaching forward to spiritual merger with the divine. It is a loss of self in an other. If allowed to complete its course, romantic love can be redemptive and return us to a more complete sense of self. However, if we stay merged in the womb-like embrace of romantic love, we stay static and never emerge as individuals.

Waters stincke soon , if in one place they bide,  
And in the vast sea are more putrif'd  
John Donne<sup>4</sup>

Pluto is inevitably attracted to such stasis. The couple caught up in romantic love are ultimately fated to allow their relationship to change or to die. Yet the act of disentangling, of being separate within a pair, can feel like a kind of death. Living as an individual may paradoxically equate with not existing:

"Deep within every man there lies the dread of being alone in the world, forgotten by God, overlooked among the tremendous household of mil-

Sophia Young is an astrologer, counsellor and mother. A Gemini, she will be speaking on this subject at the Astrological Association 1999 August Conference. To prove she in fact has a stellium of planets in Gemini she will be simultaneously breastfeeding a new-born and escorting a toddler and husband.

- 1 Johnson, Robert A (1983) *We* Harper Row
- 2 Act of Union - 1 January 1801 0:00 GMT London
- 3 Belloc, H. (1961) *Tristan and Iseult* Unwin
- 4 Donne, J. (1981) *Elegie III Change* Selected Poems Penguin

lions and millions. That fear is kept away by looking upon all those about one who are bound to one as friends or family, but the dread nevertheless is there and one hardly dares think of what would happen to one of us if all the rest were taken away."

Kierkegaard 1936.

Romantic union with the Other can be a defence against existential aloneness. However, as with all defence systems, at some point they will be challenged. We cannot stay forever in the Neptunian twelfth, but must brave Pluto, in order to pass on over the Ascendant and be born. The combining forces of love, or Eros (Neptune), inevitably meet the destructive separating ones of death, or Thanatos (Pluto).

The story of *Orpheus and Eurydice* can be read as a demonstration of what happens when the Other is not allowed to be experienced as separate; how Pluto and Neptune are romantically linked. This story may have its roots in the 579-575 BCE conjunction of Neptune and Pluto in Taurus, at the start of classical Greece, though such myths inevitably evolve through different incarnations and eras. However, the refusal to let go of the beloved ideal, and eventual dismemberment, echo the Taurus/Scorpio axis in a more graphic way than the stories from the Neptune/Pluto in Gemini/Sagittarius.

Orpheus is an archetypal Piscean. His mother is Calliope, the Muse of Epic Poetry. His father is Apollo, the Sun God. Orpheus himself is a great musician and a romantic. According to Shakespeare he had the power to make flowers open and wild beasts turn gentle with his harmonies. Orpheus yearns for the perfect woman, a muse with whom to fuse. This idealised relationship with the muse is often observed in poets, *qv* Dante and Beatrice, and Yeats and Maude Gonne. The fantasy of perfection is retained, and fuels their poetic imagination.

When at last Orpheus meets his *anima* personified, the nymph Eurydice, he falls in love and they marry immediately. She cannot resist his spellbinding charm. However, in their courtship, all has been romance; there has been no time for each to discover the other, "warts & all". The movement from this stage in relationship where the beloved is an archetypal Other Half, Mr or Ms Right, a mirror of one's soul, to one where the projections and realities are sorted and sifted is a difficult one to weather in real life. Infantile rage at the unbearable separateness of the other may resurface and shatter the relationship.

Just as the alchemists first mixed their individual elements, then separated them in search of the philosopher's stone, so we too, on our individual journeys, are subject to a process of fusion followed by separation. Jung quoted a medieval alchemist: "only what is separated, may be properly joined." There is a constant cycle of separation and attachment throughout life. First we are expelled from the womb; once out, we eventually discover mother is a separate entity. (I have an 18-month-old son who refuses to name me Mummy, although Daddy, the dog, aeroplanes, ladders, and flowers all have names. If he were to speak my name, he would be admitting that I am separate from him.)

If we manage to weather these primary partings, there is then the journey to discover who we are as separate selves. Sometimes this can be done within relationship, sometimes hermetically alone. For self-discovery to be undertaken within a relationship, consciousness must be permitted entry, and ancient defences lowered. In the alchemical process there is a stage of mixing elements represented by a naked King and Queen shaking left hands. The linked left hands show they are not conscious in their union. Likewise with Orpheus and Eurydice's marriage. It is a state of *solutio* or dissolving. They are the same. The relationship has overwhelmed them.

Two symbols of consciousness, fire and the snake, appear in the Orpheus myth.

**Fire:** At the wedding feast there is an ill omen. Hymen, the God of Marriage, lights his wedding torch, but smoke, not flames, issues forth. The flame is a representation of consciousness, the fire Prometheus stole from the Gods for knowledge. In this partnership, self-knowledge is yet to spark.

**The serpent** is the animal found on the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. Shortly after the wedding, Eurydice is chased by a shepherd and, as she flees from him, she is fatally bitten by a snake. That which we reject often comes back to bite us. The snake is Eurydice's rejected Pluto embodied. It can be a symbol of life and fertility when erect, or death and evil when crawling.<sup>5</sup>

It is Eve who is first drawn to consciousness by the serpent. The sin she incites, to eat from the tree of knowledge, is sometimes known as the *felix culpa* (fortunate guilt). If the apple had never been eaten, then mankind would have been stuck in the womb of Paradise forever.

It is Eurydice who is the first to leave the romance, and descend to the underworld. In

5 Condren, M (1989)  
*The Serpent and the Goddess*  
Harper & Row







G. F. Watts  
*Orpheus and Eurydice*  
Photo: Fred Hollyer

modern life it is often the female partner who is the first to feel the need to be separate, who drags the male off to Relate. Just as Adam and Eve are not permitted to remain in ignorant bliss, neither are Orpheus and Eurydice allowed to continue this sublime romance. Romantic love always ends. Orpheus is not prepared to see his love as an individual. Eurydice cannot form a union with someone who is unable to let her be herself. Her own Pluto cycle claims her in the form of a serpent.

Eurydice descends to the underworld, and Orpheus wanders searching and longing for her. While Pluto works his transit on Eurydice, Orpheus has not changed his pattern, still longing for his romantic ideal. Heartbroken Orpheus implores Zeus to let him into the underworld and Zeus consents for him to seek his wife.

*Orpheus hastened to the entrance of Hades, and there saw the fierce three-headed dog, Cerberus, who guarded the gate and would allow no living being to enter nor any spirit to pass out of Hades.*

*As soon as this monster saw Orpheus he began to growl and bark savagely; but Orpheus merely paused and began to play such an enchanting melody that Cerberus' rage was appeased and he finally allowed him to pass.*

*The magic sounds penetrated even into the remote depths of Tartarus, where the condemned shades suspended their toil for a moment and hushed their sighs to listen. Even Tantalus paused in his eternal effort to quash the ever-receding stream, Sisyphus ceased to roll his heavy stone and Ixion's wheel stayed for a moment in its ceaseless course.<sup>6</sup>*

Orpheus then employs a reflective technique, also seen in the Myth of Gilgamesh. When Inanna is impaled on a hook in the Underworld by an envious sister, Ereshkigal, her rescuers do not turn to Inanna directly. They address Ereshkigal's grief at the death of her husband and birth pains, in order to release the jealously hooked Inanna. The Piscean Orpheus has a similar natural compassion. In Gluck's Opera *Orfeo ed Euridice*, when he enters the underworld he sings, "Mille pene, ombre

6 Geuber, H A (1938) *The Myths of Greece & Rome*  
Harrap & Co



*moleste*" - "A thousand pangs I too suffer, like you, o troubled shades; my hell lies within me, in the depths of my heart". Orpheus notices the pain around him and does not directly demand his prize.<sup>7</sup>

An "unknown feeling of pity sweetly comes to soften (their) implacable rage." Pluto and his Queen Persephone are reduced to tears, and they consent to restore Eurydice to him. However, there is one condition; he must not look round to see his beloved's face until he has left the underworld. This is a difficult situation. If Orpheus doesn't face Eurydice he will never truly relate to her and if he does it before he has completed his own underworld cycle, she will be separated from him.

Now, Eurydice has undergone some changes in Pluto's realm. Maidens taken into the underworld grow up. Eurydice has let herself go through the process of separating from Orpheus. She is no longer the archetypal blonde Virgoan maiden with plaits like harvested sheaves.<sup>8</sup> The cutting or covering of a girl's hair in many cultures marks an important transition towards womanhood.

*Never shall a young man  
Thrown into despair  
By those great honey coloured  
Ramparts at your ear  
Love you for yourself alone  
And not your yellow hair.*

W. B. Yeats  
*For Anne Gregory*<sup>9</sup>

If we allow our Pluto transits to work, we are changed. Eurydice wants Orpheus to see her for who she is now, and not for the maiden she was; she berates him on the way back up. Their relationship cannot be complete unless he sees her, yet he has not completed his transition. He turns to look, prematurely, before he has completed his own voyage out of the underworld, and she descends once more. She has matured, and wants to be loved for herself alone, not as a Muse; he is unable to have a relationship with her until he has finished his heroic journey.

Orpheus wanders, heartbroken, once more. He follows his well-worn path, playing dirges and woeful songs. He refuses to play a different tune for the Titan women or the Furies. He will not change. They become enraged at his lack of response, and rip him to shreds. In another version, these women kill him because he worships Apollo his father, the Sun, instead of Dionysus, a Neptunian deity. Both messy endings have a shared theme of Orpheus' refusal to change, and accept different female desires.

The Furies who tear him to pieces are, perhaps, representations of his own angry and rejected Feminine, unable to stand the process of separation. Part of Orpheus resists being born as an individual, and that is the part that splits off, and then furiously persecutes him.

The furious shredding attack of that which has been projected out, appears in Kleinian psychology as a developmental stage.<sup>10</sup> A child has destructive feelings towards the mother who is not totally merged with it, who does not respond to every need immediately. These feelings cannot be born inside, so are projected out into the mother. Mother now possesses these destructive feelings. The child then fears a shattering and destructive attack from its own feelings, conveyed by the person into whom they are projected. This dynamic is both Neptunian and Plutonian, and is played out in the romantic myths. It is also demonstrated by the romantic life of Natalie.

### Chart Example

This is the chart of a woman who, throughout her life, has struggled hard with the urge to merge, and the urge to die. Natalie is a woman of great intelligence, sensitivity and integrity. She is also plagued by suicidal thoughts, an eating disorder, and self-loathing. She has great difficulty in forming intimate sexual relationship, which can be understood from an examination of her family history and her chart.

### Mother

Natalie's mother's natal Sun is conjunct Natalie's Saturn. Natalie's mother is a woman with a traumatic sexual history and psychiatric disturbance. She victimised Natalie, mocking her sexual development, labelling any emotional demands Natalie made as being "difficult", and acting the part, not of the mother, but of the needy child. Natalie has a Sun-Moon-Neptune stellium in Scorpio, in the eleventh, and very little emotional distance from her mother, together with a great propensity for caretaking others. She has taken in whole her mother's messages, about her needs being difficult, and her sexuality derisory.

The anger at the treatment she received, and her mother's lack of mothering, has been too enormous for her fragile ego to experience directly. Her unaspected Mercury in the tenth is not well placed to mediate her powerful feeling responses. Her rage is either projected in the form of a feared attack from outside, or experienced physically as pain. Fearing a Titan-like attack from these feelings, she shreds herself first before they can get to her, cutting her breasts and vagina, mutilating her face. Rather than let someone else humiliate her, she humil-

7 Howard P (1981)  
*Cambridge Opera Handbook*  
CUP  
8 Warner, M (1994)  
*From the Beast to the Blonde*  
Chatto & Windus  
9 Yeats, W B (1989)  
*Yeats' Poems*  
Macmillan, p360  
10 Segal, H (1988)  
*Introduction to the Work of*  
*Melanie Klein* Karnac

iates herself, covering herself in her own excrement; she feels she is shit. So high has her anxiety been about what is out there, she has, for periods, been a recluse, unable to answer the doorbell, or travel outside.

Natalie's behaviour has led her to follow in her mother's footsteps, quite literally, to the same psychiatric hospital. At her Saturn return she took an overdose at a healer's house and was admitted for treatment. Throughout her stay, she rejected the role of patient, denying any difficulty and trying to nurse other clients. Natalie's Sun-Moon-Neptune stellium was being squared, by both the natal and transiting Saturn, at the time of the overdose. She clung rigidly to the role she knew, denying her own need for help, and surrounding herself with needy people who were ready to identify with the victim role.

Natalie has not only expressed her desire to die by such relatively gentle means. She is also a Scorpio, with Pluto approaching her Ascendant. As she becomes more aware of the buried rage within, she talks of wanting to die in a car crash, of bombs going off, of the violence that is locked up inside.

#### Father

There are oral/sexual memories of her now-dead father. She has imagery of suffocating and choking on her father's phallus, as a small girl. This consuming part of her is now "bad"; she struggles with food, and has a terror of vomiting up the terrible, forbidden things she has swallowed. Yet she has a huge thirst for her parents (Sun-Moon-Neptune conjunct) that was thwarted (apex second house Saturn, opposition Mars). This second house Saturn guards against the dangerous unmeetable need to be valued. Like Saturn, her needs have quite literally been swallowed.

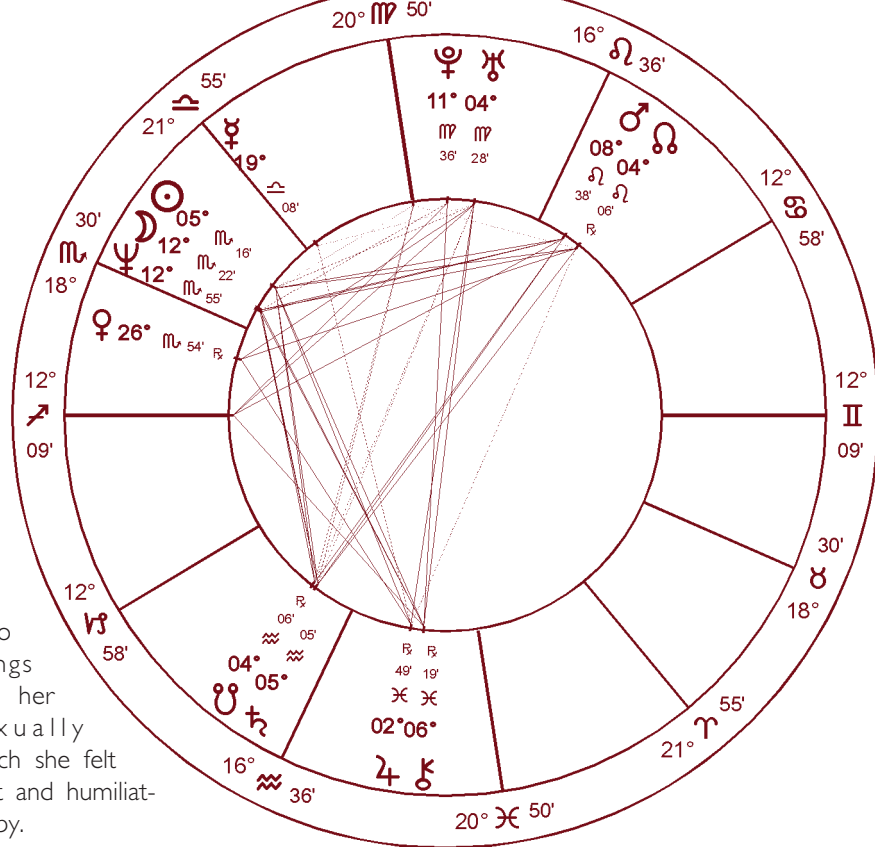
Natalie will binge eat, shopping for food as if in a dream, and, blocking awareness of her actions, consume in huge amounts. After this second house intake, she will purge herself by overdosing on laxatives. The nourishment she desires, but cannot assimilate, explodes out as shit in Plutonian style.<sup>11</sup> Natalie is obese. After her suicide attempt she melted her solid flesh, not into a dew, as Hamlet would have, but into a sea of fat. She has expressed the hope that her obesity will make her physically repulsive to others. The downside is that she feels her inner repugnance is on view for the world to see. The payoff is that, hypothetically, she does not have to deal with sexual relationships, as no-one will be attracted to her. The one lasting sexual relationship she did have was with a man who sometimes acted as if he despised her. She, in turn, would encourage him

to do things to her sexually which she felt hurt and humiliated by.

Natalie now feels it is safer for her to let in the little intimacy she can bear, through friendships. With her Sun-Moon-Neptune conjunction in the eleventh, she loses herself as she acts as a medium and a counsellor for her friends' relationships. She feels that as she is so repugnant, the best she can do is to serve others, and she tries to suppress her own fifth house needs. Yet Natalie is by nature a passionate woman. Her throat (Taurus ruled) is often tight from the effort of keeping these needs in. Saturn in the second holds on physically here; whereas the opposition Mars in Leo in the eighth expels, with the violent contraction of laxatives, unseen into the bowl, to be flushed away.

Her pattern of becoming deeply involved in the relationships of friends is reflected by Venus in the twelfth in Scorpio at the apex of a T-square. She prostrates herself to the eternal triangle. She becomes a "counsellor" figure as she did in the psychiatric hospital. Natalie is, perhaps, repeating an early childhood pattern of trying to mend her parents' marriage, to make them well enough to finally take care of her.

Although Natalie desires better parenting, she also has the need to relive the Oedipal battle with her mother for her father, which she had the horrific experience, in real life, of winning. Little girls going through the Oedipal stage, playing coquette to Daddy, are looking for their attractiveness to be seen and admired, for their emerging Venuses to be bolstered. Natalie's victory resulted in rape, guilt and humiliation. It is this Oedipal tragedy she both guards against repeating by being obese, and yet sets up to recur, again and again, by becoming involved in triangles.



"Natalie"  
Birth Details withheld by request


II Perry, G (1999)  
"Pluto Pathology"  
*The Mountain Astrologer* No.83

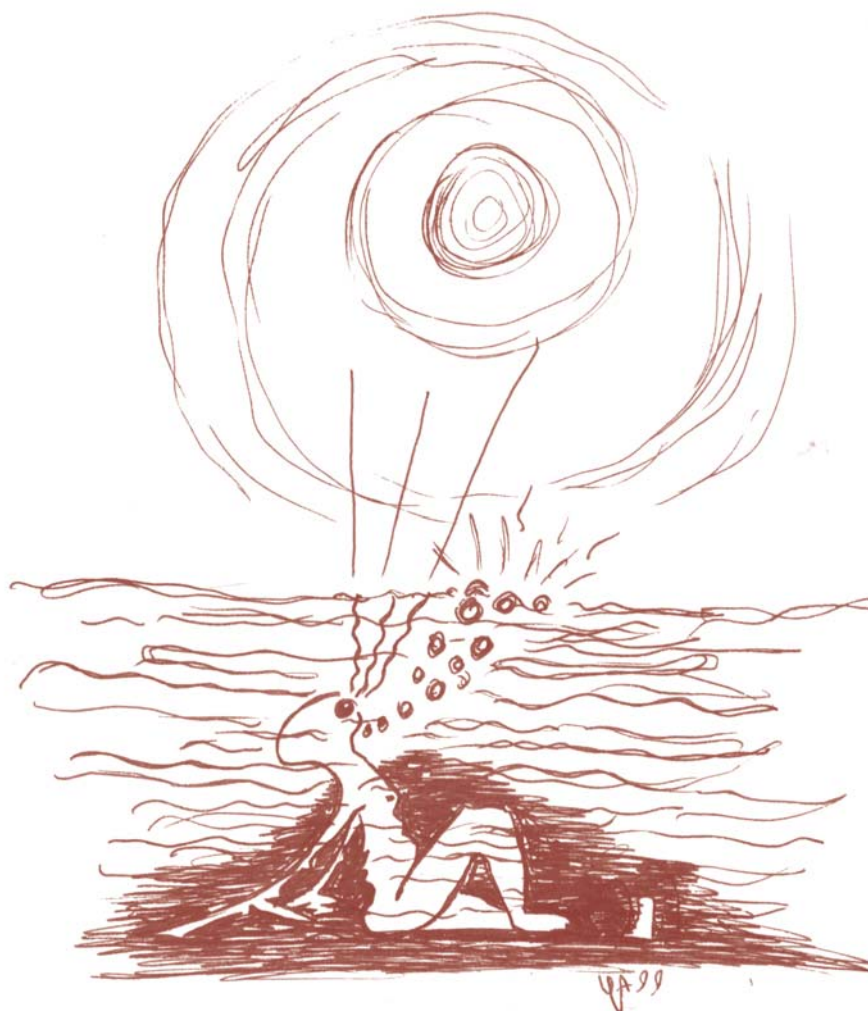
## Romance

She is currently involved in a triangle with a gay man, Bob, and his lover, Hussein. Bob is Natalie's very close friend and confidante. He is genuinely fond of her, and concerned about her. She loves Bob in a romantic way. He is her medieval knight in shining armour, clever, handsome and unobtainable. Her Neptunian side wishes only that he should be happy with Hussein, and she puts a lot of effort into trying to pour oil on troubled waters when they row. She also describes herself as a "sexual catalyst" for their relationship, and intuits that they have better sex after being with her. However, Natalie's four planets in Scorpio, and Mars in Leo in the eighth, strongly desire sexual union with Bob herself. She has powerful physical feelings when he embraces her or talks with her about sexual matters. This is medieval romance made manifest. She loves the idealised partner of someone else, someone she may never unite with sexually. She must contain her feelings. This is also a replay of her family dynamic. Bob is the desired and forbidden father, Hussein the demanding mother they both treat as a child; she is the narcissistically wounded daughter, with needs which are "difficult" to meet.

Though sexual union between Natalie and her beloved would be a repetition of her earlier destructive cycles, the outcome of this relationship need not be disaster. Already she has allowed herself to experience sexual desire for the first time since childhood. She has not had it attacked and humiliat-

ed by Bob, and has managed to talk about these feelings with others. The experience of a desired father figure who loves and admires, but does not exploit, may be a redemptive experience for Natalie's Venus. Since developing a romantic attachment to Bob, she has joined a gym, and her self-harming has decreased dramatically. Her self-confidence and self-worth are seeping back - she has a steady job, and has recently asked for a pay rise. She is no longer severely agoraphobic, and has a social life.

At her Saturn return, and with Pluto on her Venus, the challenge to enter the adult world was too demanding, and Natalie entered the psychiatric hospital, and her obese phase. When Uranus went over her Saturn, opposing her stifled Mars, her hitherto clammed up feelings began to open, and she started taking cautious steps into the world, and to forge new relationships, most importantly with Bob. Now transiting Neptune is currently approaching her Saturn, and Pluto her Ascendant. Her romance may end, not with the death she has, for so long, fantasised as her only escape from unbearable torment, but with "a change into something rich and strange". Natalie has been stuck as a tortured underworld shade for many, many years. Now she is finally allowing her maiden state to slip away, letting herself experience sexual desire, love and passion. Like Eurydice she must gather the courage and resources to demand witness of her full self. This is what romantic love as a combination of Neptune and Pluto can achieve: an experience of self which is both redemptive and transformative. 



# The Lovers in the Tarot

Juliet Sharman-Burke

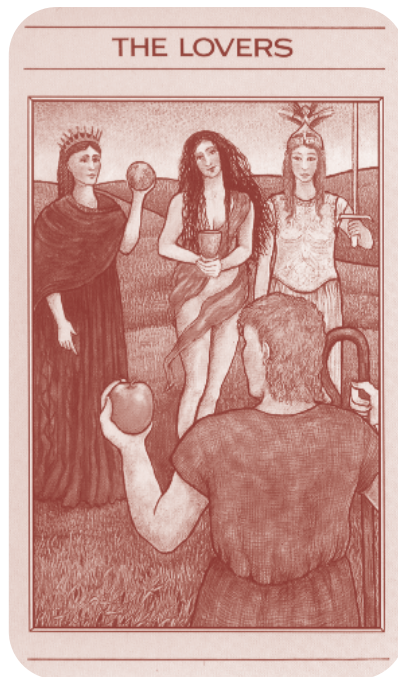
In the first issue of *Apollon* Juliet Sharman-Burke looked at The Sun in the Tarot, in relation to the Sun in the birth chart, and the god of creativity, Apollo. As this issue's theme is relationships, here she considers The Lovers in the Tarot, and Venus in the horoscope.

The Lovers in the Tarot traditionally uses an image of a young man seemingly caught between two or, in some cases, three women (as illustrated), while overhead a winged Cupid hovers, poised to strike his arrow. The myth that seems to have inspired the image for the card is The Judgement of Paris.

The setting for this story was on a suitably Venusian stage: the marriage between a mortal and a goddess to which all the Olympians were invited, save Eris, the goddess of Discord. Eris, annoyed at not being invited, turned up anyway and tossed a golden apple into the assembled guests, crying, "This belongs to the Fairest!"

Three great goddesses, Hera, Athena and Aphrodite, all caught hold of the apple together and demanded that Zeus make a decision as to which of them was the most beautiful. Zeus was unwilling to put himself in such an invidious position, so he chose a nearby shepherd to do the honours. The "shepherd" was in fact Paris, son of King Priam of Troy. Priam had heard from an oracle that his son would be the downfall of Troy, so he decided to get rid of his son by leaving him to die on a mountain side. However, he was rescued by shepherds and raised to manhood by them, and so came to be minding his own business on the hillside when he found himself embroiled in the goddesses' dispute. Hera, queen of the gods, tried to bribe Paris by offering him rulership of the world if he chose her, while Athena, goddess of justice, offered to make him the mightiest and most just of warriors. Aphrodite, however, simply

opened her robes, removed her magic girdle, and offered him the most beautiful woman in the world as his bride. The prizes they offered could be interpreted as standing for three kinds of life - contemplative, active, and passive - or for the three human goals: wisdom, power, and pleasure.



The young Paris, blinded by Aphrodite's dazzling beauty and encouraged by Eros' golden-tipped arrow, chose Aphrodite - pleasure - without further ado, hardly even considering the choices before him or the potential consequences of his decision. Meanwhile, Hera and Athena smiled sweetly, linked arms and left to plot the downfall of Troy. Paris went off to claim his prize - the most beautiful woman in the world - who happened to be Helen of Sparta and unfortunately already married to someone else.

The bloody Trojan War followed Paris' abduction of Helen and ended with the city in flames, the royal house having been destroyed. The oracle was thus fulfilled.

The image of The Lovers reflects the various choices that are on offer in life. The imagery on the card is heavily influenced by Venus-Aphrodite, whose sensual charm so overwhelmed Paris that he completely ignored the qualities of power and victory, and chose in favour of beauty and sexuality. Aphrodite was a goddess of whom the Olympians were wary, as succumbing to her charms got many a god into awkward situations. Not only beautiful and charming, she could also be fickle, amused by the tricks and games involved in love and courtship, and unimpressed by the chaos she and her son, Eros,

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from the Waite deck

could playfully wreak in the love lives of others. The Trojan War is a fine image of this: Aphrodite graciously offers Paris a prize of the most beautiful woman in the world for a wife, conveniently omitting to mention that she is not actually available and the consequence of their union would be disastrous!

The Lovers card often features a Cupid figure in the act of firing an arrow towards the young man's heart. The shape of the bow and arrow suggests sexual union. The Greek version of Cupid was Eros, initially a primal urge and life force, later the son of Aphrodite, who often helped his mother in tormenting the gods and humans alike by shooting gold- or lead-tipped arrows into their

hearts. The gold arrows meant that the person would fall deeply in love with the object before him or her, while the lead tipped ones had the opposite effect. Eros degenerated in Roman art to the chubby mischievous winged child who tormented and tricked humans with his arrows of love. Cupid was often depicted wearing a blindfold, symbolising both the blindness of love and the indiscriminate way in which the gods may bless or curse humans with love.

The Waite deck has moved away from the traditional imagery of a young man confronted with a choice between women and symbolises choice by using the image of Adam and Eve. His card shows the couple standing naked and innocent in Eden. Behind Adam is the Tree of Life, bearing twelve fruits, standing for the signs of the Zodiac and the twelve basic types of human character. Eve stands before the Tree of Knowledge with the five fruits representing the five senses. Adam is looking directly at Eve while Eve looks at the Angel, which suggests that the conscious intellect (Adam) cannot approach the higher realms of the superconscious (the angel) directly but only through the unconscious (Eve).

According to Genesis, the snake tempts Eve to eat the fruit, telling her that if she and Adam do so, their eyes would be opened and they would be like God. The snake is an old symbol of wisdom, immortality and sex.

and by choosing to take the serpent's advice and disobey God, Adam and Eve discovered sex and became like God in that they were able to reproduce themselves, and so create new life. Of course, if they had not disobeyed God's command not to eat the fruit, they would have remained a pair of barren opposites. On the other hand, they would have lived contentedly in Eden. Disobedience brought physical death but the possibility of spiritual life. The old saying "You pay your money and you take your choice," comes to mind here. The meaning of choice is that something is gained but inevitably something must be lost. The root of the word "decide" is *cide* meaning to kill; eg "suicide". So whenever we

consider choice and we

think about what we would like out of a particular situation, we must always consider too what we will be obliged to give up. It is true that we spend - one might even say waste - a lot of time trying to find an "all-win solution", but the truth is such options do not exist. The image on the Tarot reveals this, in its various images of choice.

Although the name of the card is The Lovers, as we have seen above, it does not relate exclusively to matters of the heart. However, the presence of both a man and a woman on the image can be seen as a symbol of both analysis and synthesis, or the separating out of opposite factors which are brought into equal balance with each other so as to be reconciled in harmonious unity. Most relationships contain this tension between opposites which can be occasionally but not permanently resolved, most obviously through sexual intercourse.

Relationships between two people inevitably contain differences, if not opposites, which need continual balancing with occasional moments of unity and bliss in which the warring factors are reconciled. It seems that Venus, the planet of love and harmony, can help enhance an understanding of The Lovers, as, in Taurus, Venus seeks physical and sensual satisfaction in love, while in Libra, she seeks harmony, balance and reconciliation of opposites.



# Eros and Aphrodite, Love and Creation

Erin Sullivan

Here, **Erin Sullivan** casts her masterly mythographer's eye over the archetypal forces at work when we are bursting with that extraordinary feeling of being in love. She suggests that the powerful creativity that is emerging in those times is not just sexual passion, but, at a deeper level, is the means by which we give birth to ourselves.

In the *Theogony*, dating from the 6th century BCE, the origins of the Greek hierarchy and theocracy are found. Hesiod begins this wonderful poem with the origin of the world in *Chaos*. *Chaos* means literally a gap, a 'yawn', a state of animated suspension. The Greek state of *chaos* implies unboundedness, an open, undifferentiated state of being. In other origin myths there are parallels - in Egyptian, Sumerian and Babylonian stories (as well as Native American, South American, African, Tibetan, and Hindu), there exists a state of *chaos* out of which is born matter. Hence from this cosmic *prima materia* are born various deities - often elements of nature or necessary precursors to life itself. Therefore, *chaos* is a rich array of elemental forces all in place, but without form or differentiation.

In this original context, *chaos* is all things in a hiatus, waiting for something, living in a sense of intelligent suspension. This is a vital ingredient in the creative process - any creative process. Jung called this phenomenon a *pleroma* - a "full void". For instance, in preparation for a seminar on this material, with a mind of *chaos*, I just "happened" to open the right book at the right place to a quotation from Jung, describing the *pleroma*: "... in the pleromatic, or as the Tibetans called it, Bardo state, there is a perfect interplay of cosmic forces, but with the creation, which is the division of the world into distinct processes in space and time, events begin to rub and jostle one another."<sup>1</sup> This kind of "chance" discovery, or synchronicity, is a necessary part of the precreative *chaos* function in making anything happen. Not until we give in to the *pleroma* and allow it to work its own material do we get the "heureka!" of discovery - or uncovering, as it may be, for all exists, waiting to be revealed.

In this mythic beginning, after the pleromatic state of *chaos*, the elements spontaneously began to differentiate, constellating in myriad ways to form complex entities, such as Love, Tartarus, Night, and so on. The pleromatic condition is the *ennoia* before *logos* - the feminine wellspring of the *seed-idea* (*ennoia*), which pre-exists the masculine *logos*.

The early arrival of Eros in the origin myth not only offsets the other rather gloomy siblings of Tartarus, but also establishes his function for further creation. Eros is the *cause* of love and creation and thence, all life. From the origins of consciousness, humanity has sought to understand the mystery of creation - in myths the cosmic creator takes fantastical forms, but that we still use the term 'eros' in our language means we must look back at Eros' original intent.

In the origin myth, "something out of nothing", is analogous to our own individual experience of waiting, of being 'stuck', harbouring a mysterious seed, which undergoes a spontaneous incubation period. During times when we feel full of ourselves and complete, as if we are ready for something new, Eros is at work. The discomfort which attends this completeness is the urge to give birth, whether that is to a new perception, an evolution of our self or a relationship or project - we may be consciously preparing for a new experience, but unconsciously still incubating, which is the source of the frustration or discomfort. For example, if one feels stuck or depressed, it may be a foreshadowing of a creative burst - often creation is preceded by a form of depression.<sup>2</sup> Or, on the other hand, one might feel *angst* or excitement with no obvious reason. Pre-creative inflation can create complicated symptoms, all of which are essential to the creative force.

Self-insemination, incubation and delivery are our interior creative process. Psychologically, one begins to collapse into an all-consuming fullness of void. Astrologically, there are liminal periods in which this process is marked. These times of thresholding are experienced in retrograde cycles; Saturn's transit over the angles (sometimes back and forth over the angles); progressed lunations; eclipses; periods of returns such as lunar, Mars, Saturn, and so on. Also, outer planet cycles, as they transit the natal planets three to five times in eighteen-month periods, are distinct liminal, chaotic and creative gestation cycles. All of these astrological times are seeded with Eros.



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Eros is the *deus ex machina* - he arrives, apparently, as the embodiment of a fully matured experience in what appears to be a flash, an instant, to save the day. Eros may appear to be an event in this way, but in fact is a process - a long process.

The processes of creativity and love are fraught with potential disaster, which is why many people forgo the risks involved in both love and creativity. The god Eros is primordial, amoral and completely uncontained - he is present in all things, a kind of cosmic inseminator. The gods are too powerful to be manifest in mortals without a transformer. The wattage is too high. An intermediary or a representative for Eros is necessary as a channel, through which that power might be focused and, therefore, become useful and manifest.

In the story of Aphrodite Urania's birth, we find the medium, the conduit, for the primordial power of Eros. Aphrodite is as powerful a goddess as Eros is a god, but she is defined, has form, is an entity, whereas the earliest Eros is *not* a figure, but an agency. The medial Aphrodite, our astrological Venus, is a channel for Eros' seminal passion. Eros is infused into all the planets as they are powers of creation and agents for the psyche; however, he is the personal minion of Venus, giving her power to transform his primeval rawness into embodied, accessible forms. Venus' aspects in the horoscope to the other planets is the further distribution of creative eros, and Venus in aspect then employs the planet(s) in the creative function. Eros is not always content to be channelled. Concern about Eros running amok is valid. We have all experienced times when our creative impetus sets us on a wild goose-chase, spending time, money, love or energy on a fruitless - literally non-productive - quest.

### Erotic Longing

A preverbal experience of belonging lies in the core of adult feelings of love and relating. A primordial recollection of profound fusion with another is harboured in our psyche. Metamorphosis and transcendence are the prerogative of the gods, and the metamorphosis that occurs in the womb is a mortal replica of the potential for godliness in the human. This intrauterine metamorphosis is both a human evolutionary *and* godly morphosis. The womb memory is what romance longs to recreate in our relationships. It is in this place, and only in this place, where two hearts beat as one. The desire to recreate this state and fuse totally with a loved one is common; the inherent longing for merging is normal, but can easily become a neurotic compulsion. It is a soulful possibility but clearly not a physical nor even psychological reality.

The horoscope - the moment in which our first experience of creation occurs, that of our own self - has several primary indicators of the media through which Eros might move. Birth expels us from perpetual Eros into a separate reality. From that instant on we must find ways of differentiating the raw life-force into ego and personality. On the most basic, instinctual level, Neptune and the Moon hold Eros most closely in its raw state, and then, in the individuated state, Venus provides Eros the embodiment he needs for conscious, manifest results.

### Neptune and the Moon: Cosmic Eros and Human Eros

Though personally I have not formulated a dogma about reincarnation, there is something the soul brought over from pre-existence. We are not a *tabula rasa*; the vessel is not empty. Plato's story about Er, the man who died and came back, and recalled his journey to Hades, makes for fascinating reading.<sup>3</sup> In the terrain of the underworld, Er came to a river, Lethe (literally, Oblivion, the root of our word "lethal"). At the River Lethe, the soul, in its transitional state, is urged to "not drink deeply", even though it is parched from its journey across the Plain of Oblivion, which is roasting hot, rather like Arizona in the summer.

If the soul drinks heavily from the River Lethe, it is reborn in a state of forgetfulness, or Oblivion, which is lethal to the incarnate soul. If the soul just slakes its thirst, it will then pass into a new incarnation with the capacity for recollection - for *anamnesis*. This is the ultimate origin both of creative wisdom and Oblivion. The River Lethe is Neptune - and in Neptune lie all things forgotten from the soul's experience of previous activities, and thus, all things necessary for creative life as an ongoing experience. And it is also a symbol of generation, of life-giving, cosmic water- or obliterating cosmic water.

In this way, Neptune is an astrological symbol for the "cosmic womb" - the primordial origins from which all life is generated and emerges. Coming out of Neptune into incarnation, the next agency is the physical womb, symbolised in the astrological Moon. The Moon symbolises the birth-mother who housed and nourished us in her body and thus represents our sense of safety, warmth, security and soul-history. In the relationship or aspect between the Moon and Neptune, you can often see how deep is the longing to return to that space of transcendental experience where two hearts beat as one - the Neptune side of the womb experience.

Primordial Eros (Neptune) is the innate psychic longing to return a space of absolute

1 *Collected Works*. Vol. 11. Para. 620. Carl G. Jung. Bollingen Series XX. Princeton University Press. 1969.  
2 *Creation Myths*. Marie Louise Von Franz. Spring Publications. Dallas, Texas. 1972.  
3 *The Republic*. Plato. Book 10.  
4 *Phaedrus* Para. 260. p. 56. Plato. Trans. Walter Hamilton Penguin Classics. 1973.



and complete participation with nature, of total fusion with the source of life itself. This state to which we long to return is a memory of the "amniotic Eros", which we experience while we are evolving in the womb (Moon).

The ultimate, cosmic womb is symbolised by Neptune, and the Moon is a symbol of the mother-womb, the embodied Neptune. We all seek the ultimate womb - Neptune - through the unconscious, in the realm of archetypes - through spirituality, art, music and various transcendent functions. Too, we all seek to find the safety of the original container, the womb of mother - we do this in our relationships, our homes, our beliefs and our habits.

The cosmic longing for creation and perfection - the impetus of Eros in its rawest form - lies in our natal Neptune, whereas the more human (and therefore somewhat attainable) longing for a relationship, a creative outlet and a safe place is very lunar, and symbolized by the Moon. And, I am equally certain that this existential longing is *not* just a psychic/somatic recollection of the womb experience, but actually lies in the Eros archetype. Archetypes in their raw state are dangerous to live out; they result in compulsive behaviours without teleology; however, in their "stepped down" or individuated state, archetypes are the essence of organised humanity, the core of self, identity and personality.

So, with the erotic lunar image in mind, it seems that the Great Mother *is* at the root of our longings, our creative urges, our needs for relating and intimacy - and our mum is at the root of making all this magic into something practical. She is our first erotic experience; she is our first love. So, mother complexes are "good" in that they spur us on to find our own creative source within, and mother complexes are "bad" when they urge us to expect the creative source to be found in another, or outside our own psyche, providing unstinting comfort without effort.

Lunar Eros is physical, in the body, and Neptunian Eros is transcendent, in the mind. One needs the link between them, between the symbolic Moon and Neptune, to bring the transcendent to earth, to embody the erotic creative force into life, love, relationship and creative living. Psyche/soma, body and soul - the intimacy between them is possibly the highest force of Eros we find in our existence.

### Platonic Love

The urge toward cohesion and the embodiment of intangibles - mental or spiritual - is an innate human characteristic. Various literary figures called it different things; Goethe called

this force "elective affinity". The ancients saw Eros as the divine attraction, cohesion and formation of relationship - the interaction and balance of things, a context we might well benefit from embracing today. The Socratic philosopher, Plato, thought the infusion of Eros into the psyche was a form of divine madness, either good or bad. About this, he says, "This is the best form of divine possession, both for the subject himself and for his associate (that is, his beloved). And it is when he is touched with this madness that the man whose love is aroused by the beauty in others is called a lover."<sup>4</sup>

What Plato meant by "lover", was not quite what we think today. A "lover" was a person (male) infused with divine Eros, and thus, a potential philosopher - a lover of wisdom, not a lover of bodies. Whether or not Eros promoted a higher state of consciousness and brought about ultimate peace and harmony to the soul, or drove a person mad or to the (lower) sexual expression of Eros, was entirely determined by the conscious intent of the Eros-possessed person.

Obviously, an attack of Eros does not always bring about a desire to read the classics, or to write an aria or a novel! Conversely, a desire to embrace higher wisdom or truth is an attack of Eros. The experience of an Erotic attack is often about transcending the physical world, and sometimes this is done through physical means. This is where Aphrodite in her two guises, Urania and Pandemos, is needed to give shape to the feeling. Aphrodite Urania is her father's daughter - parthenogenic and masculine. Her domain is the celestial love, immortal and philosophical love, whereas Aphrodite Pandemos, born of Dionne and Zeus Dios, is the human, mortal, "common" goddess of human, sexual love.

We all know that the love of a friend is not fraught with sexual territorialism, and the negotiation of feeling between established friends is less threatening to the integrity of one's whole self. And, in sexual and romantic love - even when domesticated - there is a *frisson* of danger to the ego, threat to the wholeness of the self, which fuels the passion and desire. Platonic love, as it is now called, is a love which is not sexually active. Eros is with all relationships, fuelling them with life and creativity, but the much-touted platonic relationship is one which some people are more comfortable with - usually Uranian types of people, or those with an Aquarian Venus or Venus in strong aspect with Uranus. More earthy astrology allows for Aphrodite Pandemos to have a stronger agency. Literally, earth Venuses, Cancer/Scorpio natal signatures, Pluto/Venus





5 *Theogony*, Hesiod. Trans. Dorothea Wender. Penguin Classics. 1972

6 *The Golden Ass*, Lucius Apuleius. Trans. Robert Graves. Penguin Classics. Revised edition, 1990. London.

*The Golden Ass: An Interpretation of Apuleius*. Marie Louise Von Franz. Spring Publications. Seminar Series. 1980. Dallas, Texas.

contacts, and an infusion of Mars bring Eros more comfortably - sometimes compulsively - into sexuality.

### From Urania to Pandemos

Because we cannot stay in Eros, we must move toward separation, differentiation, articulation - within reason. The inherent danger in accepting the dualistic, Cartesian image is becoming too split, too *dual*, in short, bifurcated in the very essence of being. This does not promote creativity. A delicate balance between the ideal and the real is needed. A balance between Aphrodite Urania and Aphrodite Pandemos must be achieved.

Basically, Plato said that anything *in mundo* is merely a flawed replication of the ideal form *in caelo*. The love of wisdom, of philosophy was Eros embodied by Urania and functioning in its highest state. Falling in love with the Ideal

could bring one closer to perfection, truth, beauty and wisdom only if one wanted this badly enough.

Philosophically, Plato was right, but practically he only touched a small core of the general populace! In Platonic terms, Eros was both dark *daimon* and exaltation of the soul, but it took conscious effort

on the part of mortal beings to employ Eros towards love of things intangible. Therefore the love of a beautiful person should stimulate the lover to things higher - to things at a loftier level, rather than descending into the bowels of primordial chaos, or worse, sex. The same primal force powered both the desire to explore the ethereal realms and the physical realm of the body. The capacity to take the responsibility for the ineffable idea and render it into a tangible product is the greatest achievement of human nature working with Eros.

### Creativity - Bridging the Ideal and the Real

A state in which no split exists between mind and body, psyche and soma, is what the French mythographers called *participation mystique*. This is a world-view wherein the relationship between man, gods and nature is in complete sympathy. The experience of the divine and the daemonic were the manor of the gods, and people took great care to respect

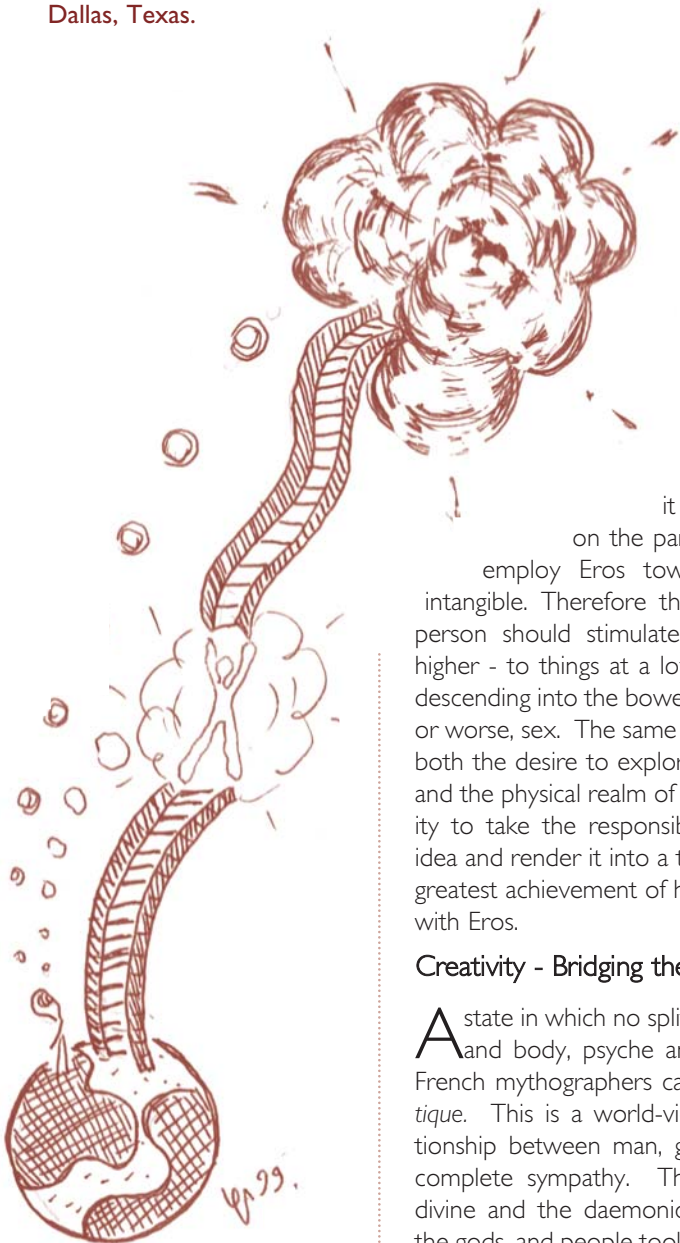
episodes of possession by the gods, or states of *enthios*, where the god enters into the body and takes possession of it through psyche. Literally, this is what *enthios* means - it is the root of enthusiastic. *Enthusiasm* means having the gods within, thus becoming god-filled, or one with the god and in a state of *participation mystique*.

Eros' capacity to seize and compel was highly regarded and, in cases of spontaneous possession, to be feared beyond all other forces. A truly divine possession and erotic stimulation is a transcendent experience. It's what one does with erotic possession that matters. Haven't we all been enthused with a sense of new creativity? "I've got this brilliant project I mean to do," or a painting, or an idea, or a book, or a dress to make, or a bookshelf, or whatever it is that's going to be created.

All creativity is preceded by a rich fantasy time wherein the creation is going to be so beautiful that people will be stunned and transformed when they see it, read it, hear it, or experience it. Erotic Urania must be channelled through practical Pandemos.

Creativity requires plenty of Saturn, lots of work - and Kronos, Saturn, was the midwife of Aphrodite Urania. It was Kronos who reached up with the adamant sickle provided by his mother, Gaia, and castrated his father, Ouranos, as he, "...lay round her, longing for love."<sup>5</sup> It is astrologically relevant that we need Saturn to midwife and contain our own *aphros/foamy* creativity. Without a good solid shape, the intangible "idea" remains in the heavens, and not manifest on earth. From the castration, the blood of the wound fell to earth, spawning the Erinyes, the three Furies who were the minions of blood-justice and have since become metaphors for our conscience - or guilt, however it manifests (Saturn-driven stuff). And, from the semen, falling into the Cyprus Sea, sprang Aphrodite, full-born and attended by the Graces and Eros. So, Saturn is midwife to both creativity and guilt, if we look at it in this way.

From that archaic time, in all subsequent variants of Aphrodite/Venus myths, origins and tales, Eros is either her faithful attendant, her lover or her son. The Roman tale of Eros and Psyche is first told by Apuleias in his novel, *The Golden Ass*<sup>6</sup>, and is not even vaguely Greek, but more a morality play about the conditions in Rome circa the second century CE. *The Golden Ass* is a tale rich with metamorphoses and transmutations, and in the Psyche/Eros tale, there is an *heiros gamos*, a sacred marriage between Psyche, the incarnation of Venus, and

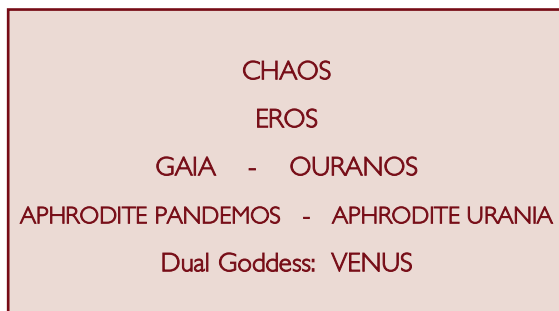


her son, Eros! From out of the collective unconscious emerges the longing, once again, for the marriage of the heaven and earth, of mortal and immortal - the union of the archetypal with the human.<sup>7</sup>

It seems that the gods need humans to act through, and Psyche is either an incarnation of Aphrodite, or her daughter; and Amor/Eros is either the god of Love, or Venus' son. It matters not, the essence is the same: immortal power must be transmuted through mortal action. This is enacted over and over in the translation of the horoscope into the human experience. Our collective longing for union with the divine will manifest in myriad ways and in the order of the myth of all beginnings - from chaos, to Eros, to Aphrodite, to Venus in the horoscope and its aspects, locus and sign, and thence, through the psyche into our mundane lives.

### Aspects of Love and Creation

Eros is the prime motivator and operates through Aphrodite/Venus. Now, that still leaves a vast realm. What has Aphrodite the goddess got to do with me and my horoscope, for example? Well, I might need to think about how my own natal Venus behaves and interacts with other planets in my chart, working to individualise and personalise an archetype, an ideal. How Venus interacts on various levels with other planets in the chart is a start. The archetypal experience is a foundation shared by all, but the personalised, astrological picture is the individual experience.



An artist in the throes of creative *angst*, might feel tortured, besieged, maddened, infuriated with her craft at times - that is the inherent, archetypal difficulty of translating the ideal into the manifest. Looking at Venus in the chart will describe how the imagination becomes reality. Creativity is always hard work. As Saturn midwived Aphrodite, he delivers our creations, too.

Sculptors say they are releasing a form imprisoned in the *prima materia*. The finished sculpture preexists the stone or marble, and is imbued within. It is there to be uncovered, so the sculptor chips away very carefully to release the figure from its prison. Painters say that they are the medium for the image, writers feel cramped by the inadequacy of words and the limits of earthbound creativity, and so on.

Creativity is discovery - not design. This flows for love, as well. There is skill (*τεχνη/techne*), expertise and craft; this is a realm of Aphrodite, but it comes after the erotic attack, after the infusion of divine energy. The source of the creative energy itself is vast and raw, but its channel is necessarily narrow and refined - and the end results are dependent both on our own willingness to shoulder the task, and on the execution of Eros' will through Aphrodite's realm.

### The Hierarchy

So, the primal, creative impulse is refined and personalised by Aphrodite. All things appear to come from *chaos*, through this *pleroma* or full void, and then through Aphrodite, in her higher form, Aphrodite/Urania. See how the hierarchy came into being, in the panel. We are constantly translating things from one level to another, to another, to another until we get right down to the specific. It is highly productive to do some exercises on translating the ideal to the very specific, down to the real business of what you want to think about, feel, do, or whatever. A good exercise in shifting things from that place *in caelo* where it's all perfect, to this place, down here *in mundo* - the daily life of the world. Make a list of the ideals in your heart or mind, and then across from the ideal put the

real - in other words, that which actually occurs, or is likely to happen, in life.

Creativity, for example, is not just the fine arts; it is not about being a painter, or the writer of arias or elegant,

mathematical formulae. It is spontaneously self-generating, giving birth to yourself. That is the most basic creation you can produce - the ever-evolving fullness of yourself. Sometimes creativity is simply about staying alive. There is a lot to be said about creation which has little to do with artwork.

Many people feel that they are not creative. This is because our culture has divided the functions of art and culture. To some degree we are all creative, but we are not all artists *per se*. It is important that astrology address the function of creativity in a way which returns to us our creativity. We all have Venus, we all have Eros, and we are all creative in our way. You don't have to be burning with fire to create or be creative, nor do you have to be up in the *aethers*, nor swimming around, awash in feeling. There are not always lightning bolts and burning bushes with every revelation. The ones that last are the ones which creep slowly to the front and have substance.

<sup>7</sup> There are several names for Eros - Cupid and Amor (Latin for "Love") are the most common. The names are interchangeable. For some reason, Psyche keeps her original Greek name.

This article was created from an edited composite excerpted from "Venus and Jupiter: Bridging the Ideal and the Real". CPA Press. 1997

We really need to rethink creativity. At any rate, all of these things that we are talking about are bound up in the same impulse. The force that drives individuals to bond and merge in meaningful ways in relationships is the very same impulse that urges individuals to create.

This whole business of being creative and experiencing creation has to do with the erotic force underlying the impulse to stay alive, to live - to have *libido*, life-force. Both creation and procreation are motivated by Eros. We may not realise it, but when we love a subject, an idea, or an activity, project or a learning experience that too is an invocation of Eros. Eros turns us on, it stimulates us and inseminates us with the need to know, to understand and learn. How we do that individually is seen through the horoscope through Venus.

It is fundamentally important to realise that the idea of functioning in an erotic world is so different to the one that we're usually taught, at least, in the world in which I was taught. We weren't made aware of Eros and education; we weren't taught that there was something that could be done with these feelings, these longings to merge and fuse and bond other than find a relationship. The function of astrology, however, is to bridge the Ideal and the Real, and bring archetypal motifs into the world in which we function on the daily level. Thus, the astrologer and the fortunate recipient of a depth reading of the chart might mediate between the all-powerful gods and the human soul, and allow the person to have Eros in life through all his and her activities - in love, relating, creativity, work and study! ☺

**Editor writes:**

In our first issue, I explained how we made a valiant attempt at originality in choosing the Hellenic name *Apollon*; because our first choice, *Apollo*, turned out to be already taken by an antique trade magazine. However, just to show that there's nothing new under the Sun, we received a polite message from a German astrological software company pointing out that they too are called *Apollon*. So, in the spirit of fraternity, here's some information about their services!

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# Written in Blood

## Ted Hughes and Sylvia Plath

### John Etherington

One of the most poignant love stories this century, Ted Hughes and Sylvia Plath's relationship, most movingly described in Hughes' collection *Birthday Letters*, is here put under a gentle spotlight by **John Etherington**.

“He became recognised for what he always was, a worthy poet laureate. The title derives from the laurel of the bay tree (*Laurus nobilis*), which was sacred to Apollo, the god associated with the arts. It was used by Greeks and Romans to crown Olympic victors and triumphant generals. In the 15th century, the universities of Oxford and Cambridge invented the title *laureate* (worthy of laurels).”

Philip Howard, *The Times*.<sup>1</sup>

Ted Hughes died of cancer on 28th October 1998. His death came in a year in which he had won much acclaim for both his translation of *Tales from Ovid* and the revelatory *Birthday Letters* which is dedicated to his relationship with Sylvia Plath. Hughes originally achieved fame with his 1957 book, *The Hawk in the Rain* (his other well-known works include *Lupercal* and *Crow*). Although he is famous for his nature poetry, Hughes' writing also includes translations of classics such as Lorca's *Blood Wedding*, and a number of children's books (his best known being *The Iron Man*). He was given the honoured title of Poet Laureate in 1984. Somewhat inevitably, however, he is always likely to be most identified with his marriage to Sylvia Plath. He married her in 1956, and they were together for six years before separating in 1962. Plath committed suicide early the following year. Her death was preceded by Hughes' affair with Assia Weevil, who also took her own life, along with that of their daughter in 1969 (which was also the year that Hughes' mother died).

Ted Hughes was a big man with a powerful intensity and magnetism (in my rectified birth chart for him, Jupiter and Pluto are both in the First House). An exceptional feature of his chart is the sheer strength of the planetary placements. The Sun, Mercury, Venus and

Saturn are in the signs that they rule, while the Moon and Jupiter are in the signs of their exaltation. Hughes' natal Sun is in Leo, and his creative expression typifies the qualities of the sign (i.e., that of the Lion). He is thus renowned for the forcefulness and animal vitality that he injected into English poetry. His Sun is strengthened by the close sextile that it makes with Mars; this aspect signifying the immense energy that he brought to his work. We may also consider the Sun as a signifier of the father. Ted Hughes' father was a First World War veteran, and one of only seventeen men in his regiment who survived. Although he kept quiet about it, it seems that he never really recovered from the horrors that he experienced. Ted, however, with his natal Sun square Chiron, was able to feel his father's unspoken pain.

The violence inscribed into Ted Hughes' family history was not the only bloodshed he perceived. Growing up in the Yorkshire countryside, he was acutely aware of the law of “tooth and claw” that prevails in the animal kingdom. With natal Mercury square Mars this inevitably found its way into his writing, and his poetry emerged out of a close observation of nature. He had a particular gift for evoking the natural world and especially that of animals, whose voices he used to express his own emotions. While at grammar school, he was awarded Robert Graves' *The White Goddess* as a literary prize. This book remained a powerful influence on his thinking, and the Moon became a favourite image in his writing. Ted Hughes' natal Moon is in the sign of Taurus (the sign most closely associated with the countryside) and is in close trine to Mercury, which is particularly good for writing.

Hughes won a scholarship to Pembroke College, Cambridge, and read English there from 1951-1953. It is said that he enjoyed



John Etherington has been studying and working with astrology for twenty years. He has the certificate of the Centre for Psychological Astrology, where he studied under Liz Greene and Howard Sasportas. John has taught astrology both privately and for adult education, in London. He has lectured at the Astrological Lodge, and has written for their *Quarterly Journal*. In July 1994, he founded Midheaven Bookshop, which he currently runs full-time. He is also distributor of CPA Press Books throughout the world.

<sup>1</sup> Philip Howard, “Final Years put Hughes among Worthiest Poets”, *The Times* 30th October 1998, p.5





Ted Hughes  
© Faber

it, but found it increasingly difficult to write essays. Throughout 1953 he was experiencing two extremely powerful once-in-a-lifetime transits. These were transiting Uranus conjunct his natal Pluto and transiting Pluto conjunct his natal Sun. It would seem these transits stirred primal forces within him, for that year he had a highly significant dream about a fox that was the size of a wolf. Writer Lachlan Mackinnon quotes Hughes as follows: (The creature) "spread its hand - a human hand as I now saw, but burned and bleeding like the rest of him - flat palm down on the blank space of my page. At the same time it said, 'Stop this - you are destroying us'. Then as it lifted its hand away I saw the blood print...in wet, glistening blood on the page".<sup>2</sup>

Hughes decided to change direction, and spent his final year at college reading archaeology and anthropology. To quote writer John Redmond: "Hughes was especially fascinated by the animism of early cultures - their recognition and characterisation of the spirits immanent in things - animals, stones, rivers, trees - an animism which he felt would be a corrective to the damagingly functional western view of the environment".<sup>3</sup> With his natal Sun in wide trine to Uranus, in the Eleventh House of humanitarian concerns, he later became actively involved in environmentalism. This aspect, along with his wide natal Sun-Neptune conjunction, also led to a keen interest in esoteric philosophies and religions. These included Sufism, Zen, Taoism, the Kaballah, and Jungian psychology.

Finally on Ted Hughes' chart, I wish to stress the importance of Pluto, since it is the most-aspected planet here. Liz Greene has said that the main keyword for Pluto is "survival", and this is something which is a core issue in Hughes' work. He even brings it into a poem written for the Queen Mother's 95th birthday, in which he refers to "The survivors and their children / dazed in the after-shock."<sup>4</sup> Both the Moon and Mercury make sextiles to Pluto in his chart, and these aspects clearly express his ability to explore the darker forces in the human psyche through his poetry. They also illustrate his gift of transforming simple acts into something far more deep and profound. Apart from sextiling Pluto, Hughes' natal Moon is also closely conjunct Chiron, which would account for his attraction to emotionally vulnerable women.

Sylvia Plath came to England from America in the 1950s and studied at Cambridge. Strongly ambitious, she was set on becoming a poet and finding a suitable husband. The man she found and set her sights on was Ted Hughes, whom she first met at a party to launch the *St. Botolph's Review*. Plath's natal Sun is in Scorpio, and writer Ruth Padel appropriately describes her as "an American who stung her way into British poetry."<sup>5</sup> She goes on to say that "her imagination burnt with active desire to shape language newly and fuse the way-out metaphor with utterly direct speech"<sup>6</sup> (her natal Mercury is in trine to Pluto, and also in close square to Mars). Plath is famous for her novel *The Bell Jar*, and *Ariel*, the volume of poetry that followed her separation from Hughes. Another remarkable example of her writing is *The Journals of Sylvia Plath*, the latter part of which was destroyed by Hughes, who did not want their children to read it. Sylvia Plath became a feminist icon after her death, and her followers blamed Hughes for her suicide. However, it is only fair to note that Plath had a history of psychological problems and breakdowns, and had attempted suicide once prior to meeting Hughes.

The square between the Sun and Saturn in Sylvia Plath's chart signifies her depressive nature. It also illustrates the issues around her father, who died before she was nine years old. His departure led to her adoring him, yet angry at losing him and thus feeling rejected. To quote Ted Hughes on Plath, "All her creative work tells just one story: her Oedipal love for her father, her complex relationship with her mother, the attempt at suicide, the shock therapy"<sup>7</sup> (her recovery included shock treatments and insulin therapy). Plath's chart clearly shows her intensity and preoccupation with the darker side of life. Her natal Sun is not only placed

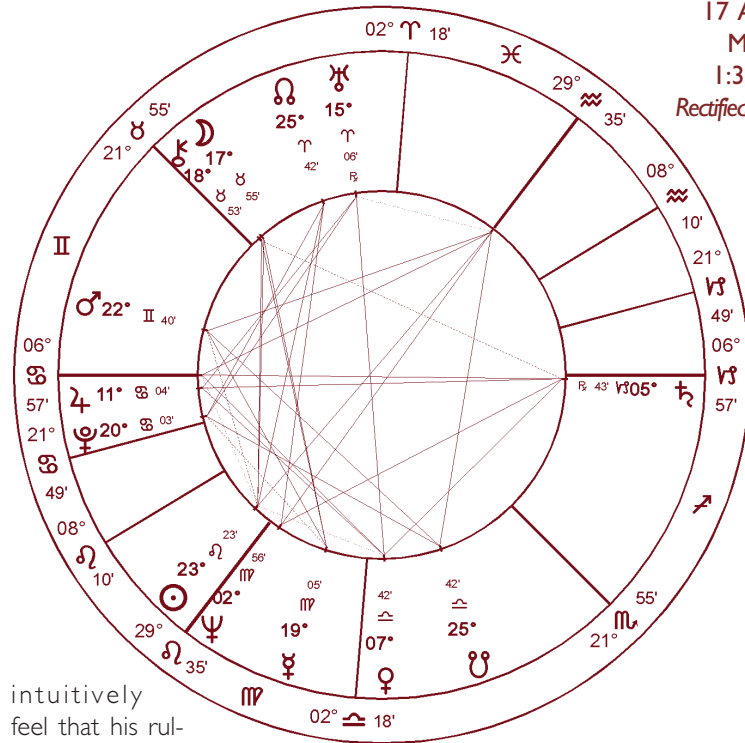
- 2 Lachlan Mackinnon, obituary for Ted Hughes, *The Independent* 30th October 1998, p.6
- 3 John Redmond, "Poet of the Spirits of the Land", *The Guardian*, 30th October 1998, p.28
- 4 Eilat Negev, *The Daily Telegraph*, 2nd November 1998, p.4
- 5 Ruth Padel, *The Independent*, 20th January 1998, p.17
- 6 *ibid.*
- 7 Eilat Negev, "My Life With Sylvia Plath, by Ted Hughes" *The Daily Telegraph*, 31st October 1998, p.4

in the first decan of Scorpio, but is also situated in the Eighth House. Further to this, her natal Mercury, in Scorpio, makes an opposition to Chiron. To quote Hughes once again, "There are artists who concentrate on expressing the damage, the blood, the mangled bones, the explosion of pain, in order to rouse and shock the reader. And there are those who hardly mention the circumstances of the wound, they are concerned with the cure. Sylvia tended to focus on the pain and scratch at the wound."<sup>8</sup>

Ted Hughes' initial meeting with Sylvia Plath is recounted by him in the poem *St. Botolph's*.<sup>9</sup> It should be noted that Hughes had an interest in astrology, and thus brought astrological symbolism into the poem (in fact, his book *Birthday Letters*, from which it is taken, was published on the day that Neptune entered Aquarius).<sup>10</sup> From *St. Botolph's* come the following extracts:

*Jupiter and the full Moon conjunct  
Opposed Venus. Disastrous expense  
According to that book. Especially for me.  
The conjunction combust my natal Sun.  
Venus pinned exact on my mid-heaven...  
What else? I left it  
For serious astrologers to worry  
That conjunction, conjunct my Sun, conjunct  
With your natal ruling Mars. And Chaucer  
Would have pointed to that day's Sun in the Fish  
Conjunct your Ascendant exactly  
Opposite my Neptune and fixed  
In my tenth House of good and evil fame.  
Our Chaucer, I think would have sighed.  
He would have assured us, shaking his sorrowful head.  
That day the solar system married us  
Whether we knew it or not.*

One only has to check the ephemeris for the date of the party (25th February 1956), to see that much of the information here is correct. The day's Sun in the Fish (Pisces) is not exactly conjunct Plath's Ascendant, however; it is seven degrees away (even if an earlier chart for Plath, which gives her a 15° Pisces Ascendant, is used).<sup>11</sup> Also, Jupiter and the full Moon do not oppose Venus; they oppose the Sun. If, as Hughes says, that day's Sun in Pisces was fixed in his Tenth House, then Venus in Aries could not have been pinned to his Midheaven (since Pisces precedes Aries in the wheel of the zodiac). One of these transits has to be incorrect, and it would appear that he is using poetic licence. We thus have a choice; if Venus were pinned to the Midheaven, then he would be Leo Rising, and if the Pisces Sun was in the Tenth, then he would be Cancer Rising. I am inclined to opt for the latter, since Hughes did not come across as a double Leo. He was a very private man, and I



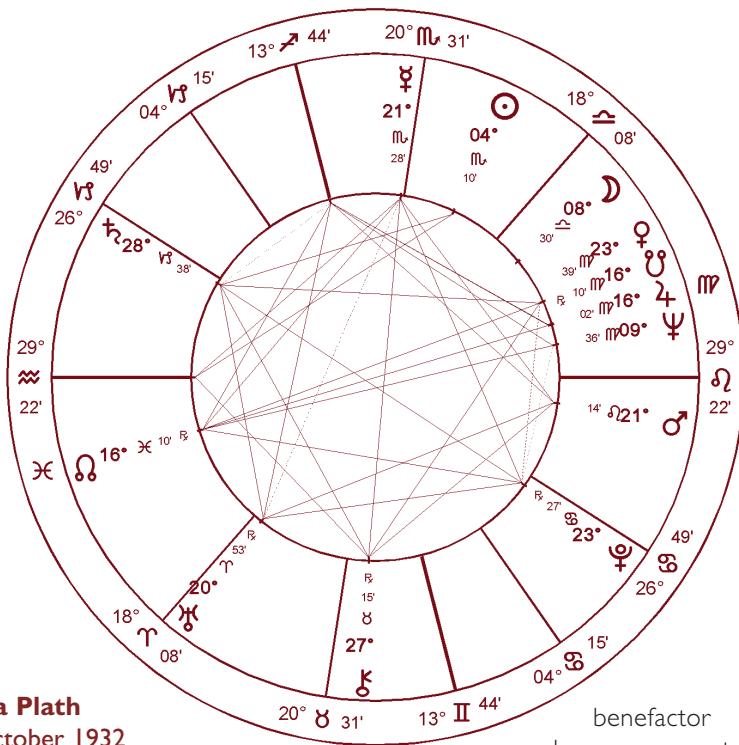
**Ted Hughes**  
17 August 1930  
Mytholmroyd  
1:36 AM (BST)  
*Rectified by the author*  
Geocentric  
Placidus  
True Node

intuitively feel that his ruling planet should be the Moon. I have rectified his Midheaven to 30° Aquarius. (See appendix for details.)

When we come to look at the composite chart of Ted Hughes and Sylvia Plath, we will see that they have an exact Mars-Pluto conjunction. With this aspect, it is not surprising that blood was drawn on their first meeting! To quote Plath, from her journal, "...And when he kissed my neck I bit him long and hard on the cheek, and when we came out of the room, blood was running down his face".<sup>12</sup> Within four months Hughes and Plath were married (their wedding took place on 16th June).

Before I explore the synastry between Ted Hughes and Sylvia Plath, I will consider how they might have approached marriage as individuals. In Ted Hughes' chart there are several aspects which signify a freedom-closeness dilemma.<sup>13</sup> Hughes has natal Venus in opposition to Uranus, and natal Jupiter opposite Saturn - configurations that would not have made a close commitment easy for him (especially as a young man). Therefore his early relationships are sure to have been fraught with some tension and struggle. In Sylvia Plath's chart, the only house that has more than one planet in it is the Seventh, which contains a stellium. This clearly shows that the area of marriage would be of great importance to her. Planets in the Seventh House show qualities that we are liable to project onto the partner until we have fully developed them in ourselves. Thus with the Moon, Venus, Jupiter and Neptune here, Plath would arguably have been looking for someone who was parent, lover,

- 8 *ibid*
- 9 Ted Hughes, *Birthday Letters*, London: Faber and Faber, 1998, p.14
- 10 29th January 1998. See John Etherington's letter to *The Times*, 17th January 1998.
- 11 *Astrological Association Journal*, XXV, 4, p. 256
- 12 Sylvia Plath, *The Journals of Sylvia Plath*, New York: Ballantine Books, 1983, p.113
- 13 See Liz Greene & Howard Sasportas, *The Development of the Personality*, Maine: Weiser, 1987, p. 214



**Sylvia Plath**  
 27 October 1932  
 14:10 (EST)  
 Boston  
 Geocentric  
 Placidus  
 True Node

benefactor and redeemer; no easy task for any mere mortal (even Ted Hughes!).

I will now briefly examine some of the main synastric features between the charts of Ted Hughes and Sylvia Plath. There are two tight conjunctions by cross-aspect in the poets' charts. The first of these (as observed in the poem) is Hughes' natal Sun conjunct Plath's natal Mars (co-ruler of her Sun sign, Scorpio). It was Plath who took the initiative of entering a collection of typescript poems on Hughes' behalf that led to him receiving a first publication award for *The Hawk in the Rain*. The Sun-Mars conjunction would also explain Plath's great attraction to Hughes. Mars in a woman's chart says a lot about the qualities she is looking for in a man, hence Hughes' natal Sun, at the same degree, would make him the perfect hook for the projection of 'ideal man' (or, indeed, 'father figure'). This brief passage from Plath's journal clarifies this. She says, "It is as if he is the perfect male counterpart to my own self: each of us giving the other an extension of the life we believe in living",<sup>14</sup> and "There is just no one like him. ...Who fits so perfectly and is so perfectly the male being complement to me".<sup>15</sup>

The other major cross-aspect between the two charts is the conjunction between Ted Hughes' natal Venus and Sylvia Plath's natal Moon. This is an aspect of great romantic attraction. It also shows that Plath would have nurtured Hughes' artistic talent and that, in turn, Hughes' affection would have brought Plath's emotions alive (her Libran Moon does not have aspects from any of the other planets). However, since Hughes had a close square from Saturn to his natal Venus, it also squared Plath's Moon. Thus, a darker side to their love would inevitably make its presence felt.

I will now consider the composite chart of Ted Hughes and Sylvia Plath. In the composite there is a close conjunction of the Sun and Venus, which is indicative of their shared poetic gifts, as well as the love that existed between them. Reading *Birthday Letters*, there seems to be no doubt that Hughes loved Plath, and there are some lines of great beauty and tenderness in his writing. Take, for example, the following lines from *St. Botolph's*:

*I see you there, clearer more real  
 Than in any of the years in its shadow  
 As if I saw you that once, then never again.*<sup>16</sup>

And, from *18 Rugby Street*:

*A poltroon of a star, I cannot remember  
 How I smuggled myself, wrapped in you,  
 Into the hotel. There we were.  
 You were slim and lithe and smooth as a fish.  
 You were a new world. My new world.  
 So this is America, I marvelled.  
 Beautiful, beautiful America!*<sup>17</sup>

In Hughes' and Plath's composite, the Sun-Venus conjunction sextiles the Moon, which is in close conjunction with Mars and Pluto. This combination of planetary energies is indicative of the passion and intensity of feeling that existed within the relationship. It shows the potential for great achievement and transformation, but also for destruction, rage and jealousy. If the birth-time that I am using for Hughes is correct, it puts the composite Pluto exactly on the I.C. In Robert Hand's book on composites,<sup>18</sup> he says that with this placement, two people may act out very deep, unconsciously motivated patterns that change the course of the relationship. He also says that one or more of the couple's parents may have an unusual degree of influence on the relationship. In this case, it would seem to be Plath's father.

The composite chart of Hughes and Plath is undoubtedly a challenging one. The Mars-Pluto conjunction opposes Saturn, and squares the opposition between Mercury and Uranus, thus forming a grand cross. On one level, this worked very positively, and it is said that the two poets "gave each other much in the way of literary models, criticism, stimulus and support".<sup>19</sup> On another level, however, it led to some explosive scenarios. A story that illustrates this well is that of the grouse. Shortly after their marriage, Hughes and Plath came across a wounded grouse. Hughes instinctively felt that the appropriate thing to do was to kill it, so he did. According to Hughes, this caused Plath to go "absolutely berserk" (apparently grouse were part of her mythology).<sup>20</sup>

- 14 Sylvia Plath, *Journals*, p.154
- 15 *ibid.*, p.156
- 16 Ted Hughes *Birthday Letters*, p.15
- 17 *ibid.*, p.24
- 18 Robert Hand *Planets in Composite* Pennsylvania Whitford Press 1975, p. 340
- 19 "Ted Hughes OM" obituary in *The Daily Telegraph*, 30th October 1998, p.31
- 20 Story related in "Londoner's Diary", *The Evening Standard*, 4th January 1999, p.12 (originally in American sporting magazine *Wild Steelhead and Salmon*)





# Reflections

## Dermod Moore on Ganymede

### 4 POLICEMEN HURT IN 'VILLAGE' RAID

Melee Near Sheridan Square  
Follows Action at Bar

Hundreds of young men went on a rampage in Greenwich Village shortly after 3 A.M. yesterday after a force of plainclothes men raided a bar that the police said was wellknown for its homosexual clientele. Thirteen persons were arrested and four policemen injured.

The young men threw bricks, bottles, garbage, pennies and a parking meter at the policemen, who had a search warrant authorizing them in investigate reports that liquor was sold illegally at the bar, the Stonewall Inn, 53 Christopher Street, just off Sheridan Square.

Deputy Inspector Seymour Pine said that a large crowd formed in the square after being evicted from the bar. Police reinforcements were sent to the area to hold off the crowd.

Plainclothes men and detectives confiscated cases of liquor from the bar, which Inspector Pine said was operating without a liquor license.

The police estimated that 200 young men had been expelled from the bar. The crowd grew to close to 400 during the melee, which lasted about 45 minutes, they said.

Arrested in the melee, was Dave Van Ronk, 33 years old, of 15 Sheridan Square, a well-known folk singer. He was accused of having thrown a heavy object at a patrolman and later paroled in his own recognizance.

The raid was one of three held on Village bars in the last two weeks, Inspector Pine said.

Charges against the 13 who were arrested ranged from harassment and resisting arrest to disorderly conduct. A patrolman suffered a broken wrist, the police said.

Throngs of young men congregated outside the inn last night, reading aloud condemnations of the police.

A sign on the door said, "This is a private club. Members only." Only soft drinks were being served.

The New York Times  
29th June 1969

Indulge me, I'm going to take you on a flight of fancy here. Allow me to take liberties, to take poetic licence, to push the boat out. To mix a metaphor or two. Come along for the ride. You may protest, but I'll not harm you. I keep that particular delight for myself.

I'm Ganymede. Catamite, bumboy, fairy, fag-got, queer. Leper. Outcast. Maverick. Shaman. Artist. Priest. Loner. Poet. Prince. Queen. Dreamer. Victim. Martyr. Just your average doomed, fickle, beautiful youth, then. You'll find me propping up a certain type of bar in any Western town; or anywhere they sell Levis, which is probably everywhere now. I work out, to keep my body in shape; I know what's in vogue, and I flaunt it.

I'm waiting for someone. But not just anyone, you understand.

I'm Aquarius. One twelfth of the Zodiac. One twelfth of humanity. Not all Aquarians are catamites; and not all catamites are Aquarians. You knew that, didn't you? As much as you knew that all Geminis aren't twins, and not all twins are Geminis. But I don't hear you talking about *me* when you think of Aquarius. The water-bearer, sure. The beautiful young prince, cup-bearer to the Gods. A pretty story. But it hasn't really registered with you that I'm *queer*, has it? That the person I'm waiting for is male? Well, I use the term *person* loosely. I'm waiting for a divine claw to grab me by the scruff of the neck and whisk me away to his eyrie. Haven't you guessed who he is yet?

No mere mortal for me; I am waiting for the King of the Gods, no less. I have tasted that passion; no one else can match him. I am spoilt by the divine ecstasy of his embrace, the thunderbolt of his vision, his capricious, explosive, liberating grace.

Although, I must admit, it gets a bit wearing, waiting for him to come, to be seduced by him. Sometimes, in those panicky moments when I think I'm being stood up, I wonder if he'd really like me if I wasn't so young, if I wasn't so... *hot*. I've been the object of someone else's lust; before Zeus came along. Eos it was; she had been cursed by Aphrodite to suffer a constant longing to seduce young mortals. I've never been quite sure of myself since. Was it me, or was it a venereal spell?

One thing I know is that I crave so much to receive him, to be loved, desired, *possessed* by him. He has awoken in me, with his unbridled passion, a hunger for the infinite, the impossible, a glorious fertility. In each man that passes through my life I seek him, my Divine King, master of disguises. I know, if I ever see him in his true godlike form, I must die; intimacy puts me at fatal risk. *True knowledge is death*. That is my fate. But I must know him. I am his subject *and* object, desiring starbursts with every kiss, transcendence with every climax.

The disappointment is too much to bear when the masks slip, and, instead of my beloved King, I see only another man like me. Mortal, flawed, pained. Narcissus never knew that the youth he fell for was himself; no narcissist *he*, then. But, like him, I seek perfection, and yet I know it can only be found in that which is touched by heavenly inspiration. I fall in love so many times; I am in love with love; but Eros cheats when he plays dice with me. Luck is never a lady for me.

And as for her; the Queen of Heaven, Mistress of the Mundane? Vindictive to the end. She does not understand Zeus, like I do; she can not cope with his wild ways, his endless searching. Galled because I put her daughter Hebe out of a job, she made his life hell until he was forced to make a metaphor out of me. That's when I became Aquarius; apparently I'm coming into fashion now. And about time too.

Try not to misunderstand me. I'm not out to destroy the family, or self-destruct for the sake of it, in a futile life in search of pleasure. That's what it looks like, seen through Hera's eyes. I am a threat to her, undermining the stability of the sacred institution of marriage. It's a crumbling institution in any case. But like my fellow-traveller Priapus, another victim of her jealousy, it is her reactionary nature that causes me to be misunderstood, that shames my nature. I am a scapegoat for sins of perversion; and if the cap fits, I wear it. Why not? There is nothing about me that is shameful, although I admit it is sometimes difficult to shake off those feelings of being an outsider, a freak. Growing up with a sexuality that is different, self-esteem is hard to come by. Feelings of love must remain hidden, for fear of mockery, for fear of alienation. In childhood, no-one gets away with being different.



I am but a man seeking a glimpse of the Divine Father. I long for a quality that seems impossible to find; but that doesn't stop me looking. Often night after driven night. Sometimes, I wonder if that curse on Eos was catching. Sex can all too easily become something to fill the gap inside, if I'm not careful. But, I'm not careful. He who dares, wins.

The sublime is what I seek. In everything. Childless, my life itself becomes my project, my ego-extension, my work of art. It's my defiant gesture against the status quo, my vision of what may be. It often eludes me; but in the search, I often go further than most.

And I die younger than most. In my pursuit of treacherous Eros, in my flight from Hera's family values, I have endured more than most humans can bear. Like Prometheus, there is a price to pay for desiring that which is divine: that same eagle which first took my heart, now swoops down daily and rips out my liver, with grief for my friends and lovers, struck down with deadly plague. Too many. Too young. Some wounds never heal, some pain can never ease. Some lessons are never learned; some still dance on, in a survival trance, recklessly seeking the heady elation of self-destruction, in defiance of Nature's laws, in search of some greater significance.

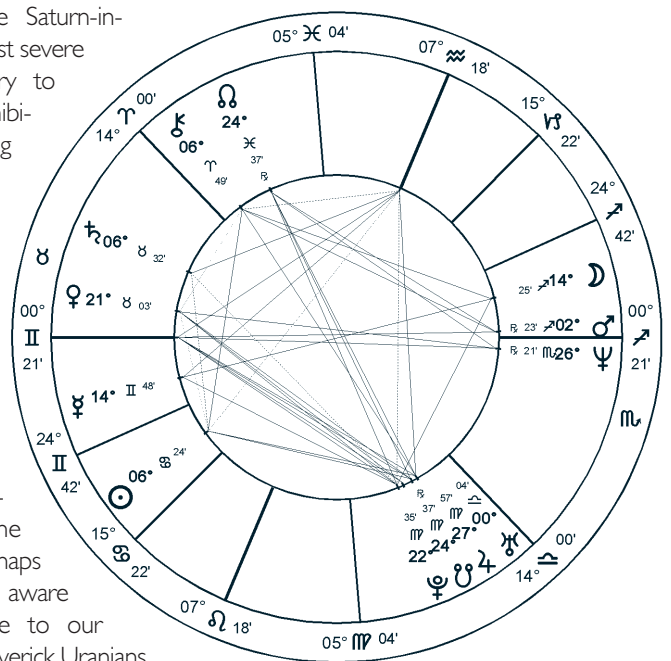
You'll find in me the best of human qualities; loyalty, friendship, humour, and a strong sense of justice. A passion for change. I seek not to threaten Hera; she and I operate in different realms. Secretly, I wish to befriend her; for nothing would ease my soul's ache more than to have her welcoming me into her rites of love, enabling me to marry my own kind. I am not the danger she fears me to be. I have ideas about family that aren't about destroying old institutions, but of reforming them. My vision of a better world includes the strangely controversial notion that no child should ever be unwanted, or harmed in any way. The divine child in me loves children. Too many of them are born, unplanned, into unstable and hostile environments. In collaboration

with my lesbian sisters, many of us are showing the way towards a new concept of family, based on friendship, mutual respect, and a principled dedication to child welfare. If only all families were like that. If it's all a bit Utopian, well, so be it, that's my nature. I do see the drawbacks. But, perhaps, I can see a bit farther than you.


This month, I reach my Saturn return. Or at least one of my many manifestations does. In June 1969, some of my kind stopped taking abuse from the authorities, and started to fight back, at the beginning of something called Gay Liberation. I was there, at the Midheaven, looking down on the faggots and dykes at a bar in New York called the *Stonewall Inn*, breaking windows, throwing stones, and shouting Gay Pride. Not for the first time, and not for the last.

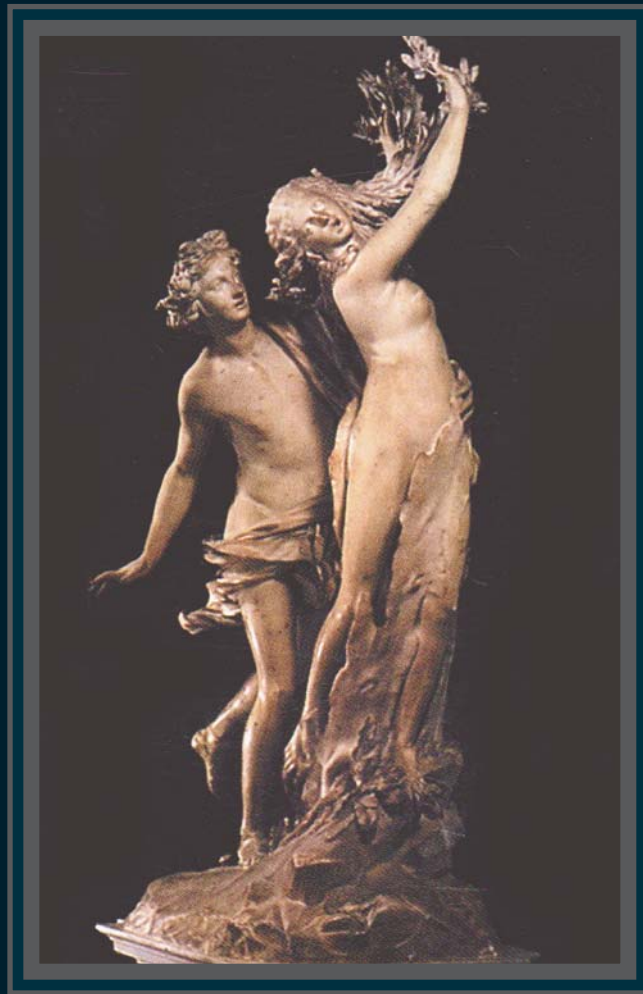
It's been some journey, from shame to pride. It's not over yet. Although our fight has brought us far, in terms of changed attitudes and laws, we still have a long way to go before we can cope *inside* with growing up, taking responsibility for our feelings as gay men, and not eternal boys. Once carriers of spirituality, bearers of bright nectar for the gods, we now neglect that part of our nature. Partly due to Judeo-Christian attitudes to "deviant" sexuality, and the general spiritual impoverishment of Western society, our revolution has, apparently, won us the right to spend our lives shopping and fucking; a base Saturn-in-Taurus defence against severe self-doubt. We carry to extremes men's inhibition in expressing emotion; we have become parodies of the macho figures that tormented us as unsure children, repeating the patterns that are familiar to us.

As Neptune passes through the sign of Aquarius, perhaps we'll become more aware of the spiritual side to our natures, eccentric maverick Uranians all. Maybe we'll learn to seek a different kind of magic, not from eternally disappointing lovers, but from a loving tribe of fellow queers. Friendship may not be seen as the booby prize, after all. Perhaps our values will seem to offer redemption to a whole new generation, as a new Millennium commences; a brave new world where we no longer rage at the clay feet of gods, and no longer fear the disappointment of discovery of our own, and others', humanity.



**Stonewall**  
 28th June 1969  
 3:10am  
 New York  
 Tropical  
 Geocentric  
 Placidus

Perhaps. 



*Apollo and Daphne*  
Gian Lorenzo Bernini