

# THEOSOPHICAL ASTROLOGY



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"If you choose the language of karma and the logic of reincarnation, universal unity and causation, and human solidarity, then you must also accept that theory is only as good as its practice. On this clarified and purified basis it becomes possible to make some small difference by one's life to the lives of others through showing true reverence and humility and an authentic agnosticism because of the ineffability of the One, the universality of the Law of Karma, the intricacy and exactitude of philosophical astrology, and the mysterious mathematics of sum-totals pertaining to the series of reincarnations. Thus one may learn to take an accurate account of the heavy toll exacted by the blockage of the Divine Light in the interior principles. A strenuous effort is required to learn the *ABC's* of occultism, and it would be folly to expect to discover the origins of consciousness through the self-restricted evidence of only one of its states. The ontological depths of *Prajna* can only be approached after there is a thorough mastery of the psychological and moral planes of human existence. Through firm detachment and unwavering attention, one must make oneself invulnerable to the siren calls of the past and cloying fantasies about the future, for the *narjol* is not safe until after having crossed beyond the regions of illusion . . . ."

The Healing of Souls, *HERMES*, January 1982

Raghavan Iyer

# THEOSOPHICAL ASTROLOGY

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BY

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THEOSOPHY TRUST BOOKS

NORFOLK, VA

# **Theosophical Astrology**

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ISBN-13: 978-0-9992382-3-3

ISBN-10: 0-9992382-3-X

Library of Congress Control Number: 2018931842

Printed in the United States of America

*Cover photo:* St Mark's Clock, housed in the Clock Tower on the Piazza San Marco in Venice, Italy; inaugurated on February 1, 1497.  
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The heavens themselves, the planets, and this centre  
Observe degree, priority, and place,  
Insisture, course, proportion, season, form,  
Office, and custom, in all line of order;  
And therefore is the glorious planet Sol  
In noble eminence enthron'd and spher'd  
Amidst the other; whose med'cinable eye  
Corrects the ill aspects of planets evil,  
And posts, like the commandment of a king,  
Sans check to good and bad. But when the planets  
In evil mixture to disorder wander,  
What plagues and what portents, what mutiny!  
What raging of the sea, shaking of earth!  
Commotion in the winds! frights, changes, horrors,  
Divert and crack, rend and deracinate  
The unity and married calm of states  
Quite from their fixture! O, when degree is shak'd,  
Which is the ladder of all high designs,  
The enterprise is sick. How could communities,  
Degrees in schools, and brotherhoods in cities,  
Peaceful commerce from dividable shores,  
The primogenitive and due of birth,  
Prerogative of age, crowns, sceptres, laurels,  
But by degree, stand in authentic place?

William Shakespeare

*Troilus and Cressida*, Act I, Scene iii

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# INTRODUCTION

One of the great mysteries of our contemporary secular culture is the utter persistence of astrology in the popular mind and among numerous serious thinkers. The tension between acceptance and denial of astrology as a real science is, however, quite old, going back at least to Hellenistic times, and is found in the Church throughout its history. Today's version of that tension tends to pit science against alleged superstition. Yet in our science-embracing culture, astrology simply refuses to go away. Why is that?

Astrology includes many things, has many forms, and serves multiple purposes. Taking just three common examples, typical astrological charts show the positions and relations of the planets at the moment and location of birth. Progressed astrology maps the return of planets to their birth positions as well as the times and ways they cross and relate to those original positions and to one another. And horary astrology looks at the positions of the planets in the zodiac at a given moment when some decision is to be made (e.g., when to lay the foundation stone of a temple). And then there is the astrology once commonly found in newspapers, where planets were taken in conjunction with the signs of the zodiac to give general indications of what to expect for the day, given one's birth sign. This latter was never taken seriously by knowledgeable astrologers, being rather like the sentiments found in fortune cookies ending meals in Chinese restaurants. "People admire your attitude," for example, can apply to anyone's self-image, and so it "works." But such messages are random, and the newspaper's astrological messages each have to be general enough to cover about 1/12 the population, because there are 12 signs in the zodiac.

There is much more to any system of astrology than the mechanisms for casting a chart or giving naïve interpretations, as, for example, Mars means conflict, Jupiter wealth or generosity, Mercury intelligence, and so on. Like all sciences, astrology is a complex of symbols and principles of interrelationships. And like

all science, astrology is also based on experience and observation. In some ways, astrology is more like medical science than physics, since its variables are often multivalent and context-dependent. And like all sciences, astrology is based on assumptions about the nature of reality and the universe. It shares with all sciences the assumption that there are discoverable laws of nature that are invariant, at least over long periods of time. It shares the assumption that nature and the universe is intelligible to a reasoning, observing consciousness.

But it also holds to principles that are rejected by reductionist, materialist science. For example, as some neurophysicists suspect today, consciousness is embedded in nature and is not just some epiphenomenon that arises from complex biochemical arrangements in the brain. Astrology thinks of nature as intelligible because it is intelligent. Put simply, matter and mind (whether conscious or not) are on a spectrum; they are different aspects of one fundamental unity. Unlike the search in quantum physics for a Theory of Everything, astrology includes consciousness in any such theory. Consequently, just as biological (including brain) changes affect consciousness, so consciousness affects matter (as the placebo effect shows). Given this awareness, it is only reasonable to expect some kind of relationship between the movement of planets and human life and activities. Of course, this implies some kind of causal connection between the two, and this has been a profound sticking point in any scientific view of astrology.

The skeptical empiricist philosopher David Hume argued causality cannot be any unobserved necessary connection between a cause and an effect. Rather, he held, we observe patterns that repeat and we come to expect some event to be followed by another event, again and again. Immanuel Kant added to this idea the observation that we can never stand outside our senses to see the way things are independent of them, thereby reducing space and time to modes of perception and denying that we ever know things-in-themselves. Scientists tended to shelve these views, seeking to describe nature as it is. But quantum physics, much to the dismay

of Albert Einstein who helped found the subject, discovered that at the most sub-atomic levels, traditional causality was lost, leaving only statistical predictions of quantum events. Matter itself dissolved into fields that manifest as particles only when observed.

Theosophy teaches causality, but does not restrict it to the world of everyday experience. Understanding spirit and matter to be opposite ends of a single spectrum that can be called the One Life, spirit can be said to be matter in its uttermost refined state, and matter is crystallized spirit, so to speak. But such a perspective requires more than ordinary language to characterize, and so symbols emerged among the ancients to address causality at many levels and to understand the many interpenetrating levels of spirit, mind and matter in the cosmos. In that perspective, causality appears at many levels and it can be understood best through the careful deployment of symbols in consciousness, for things at every level point beyond themselves to deeper meanings. In light of Theosophical understanding, astrology is a science requiring all the rigor, intense observation and complex principles that any science must possess. And like any science, its observations are grounded in a philosophical worldview. In this exceptional volume, that worldview is Theosophy as set forth by Helena Petrovna Blavatsky in her many writings. Fundamental to this worldview is the ancient Hermetic axiom, "As above, so below," teaching that analogy and correspondence are methods fundamental to understanding the relationships between microcosm and macrocosm, self and world.

Astrology comes in many forms. Traditional astrology maps the planets as if the earth were the center of the universe. Solar astrology places the sun in the center. Western astrology traditionally fixes the twelve signs of the zodiac as if the sun enters Aries each spring equinox, but the slight, slow wobble of the earth in its orbit, rather like a spinning top rotates its upper part in a circle, precesses the equinoxes in a cycle of over 25,000 years. This means that over time the sun appears in different signs at the spring equinox. This is the idea behind the Age of Aquarius, emerging after approximately 2500 years of the Age of Pisces, Aries ending

about 2500 years ago when the Piscean Age began. Indian astrology calculates this precession of the equinoxes and so places the sun now in or near Aquarius (depending on the method of calculation). So the zodiac fixed in the calendar of Western astrology is one sign off by Indian standards. Since astrology has theoretical and symbolic content as well as empirical content, those born under a particular sign as measured in Western astrology would be considered to have been born under a sign one place earlier in the precessed zodiacal system of Indian astrology. This will show up in the fact that many people find characteristics of the previous sign as applying to themselves as well as the characteristics of their Western birth sign, since some features are established by empirical experience and other by theoretical considerations.

Just as there are many kinds of maps of a given region, such as road maps, topological maps, population maps, geological maps, economic maps, etc., so also there are various astrological maps. Knowing that "map is not territory," different maps are useful for different purposes. In driving, one wants a road map. In hunting for minerals, one wants a geological map, and so on. Similarly, different astrological maps serve different ends. The ultimate reality that manifests in consciousness, social and environmental conditions, and planetary movements is not the map which points toward it. Astrology rooted in Theosophy serves spiritual understanding, reflection, thinking and acting. It is a mandala of all unfolding existence.

Traditionally, astrology has been used for three purposes: understanding the variable forces in the world, individual growth and transformation, and prediction regarding the future of the individual and conditions in the world. As the articles on each of the zodiacal signs and planets show, the purely personal purposes are not, on the whole, the most significant. And as they demonstrate, the symbolism and meanings involved are rich, complex and worthy of study and contemplation, activities which in themselves can serve the purposes of astrology.

As H.P. Blavatsky shows in the extract from *Isis Unveiled* included in this volume, this symbolism is profound indeed. For while map is not territory, astrological symbolism is connected to the deeper meanings and purposes of life. Put simply, astrology, when seriously studied, is knowledge. At a superficial level, it can throw light on personality traits and forces at play in daily life. When considered more seriously, it can illuminate aspects of one's spiritual life and increase spiritual awareness as that life is increasingly seen as an irreducible part of a greater whole, that of humanity as a whole and the evolving cosmos.

The typical challenge to astrology is that it fails in its predictive power, and the common complaint is that it cannot tell me if I will get sick tomorrow or buy that new car, etc. After all, the laws of physics tell me that if I let go of an apple, it will fall to the ground. This view assumes that astrology is deterministic, that the planets make things happen. Even physics has had to give up that view when it explores the micro-structure of things, since quantum theory can only predict statistically. Astrology seeks to predict general conditions that affect thought and action both collectively and individually. As Shakespeare noted in *Julius Caesar*, "The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars, but in ourselves, that we are underlings", astrology does not deny free will, but it acknowledges conditions which affect the exercise of choice and its results. A deep reflection on the symbolism and maps of astrology can aid in understanding the world, anticipate future conditions, and provide a resource for thought and action. These comprehensive articles provide the material for such reflection.

This volume does not contain instructions for casting a chart or even for interpreting one or another astrological map. The symbols discussed in detail can be applied at many levels, and, as with all good explanations, can be grasped and assimilated at multiple levels. These articles range across many ways of thinking, thereby freeing the reader from a fixed or dogmatic framework, allowing for new insights and broadened awareness to emerge. As in all Theosophical teaching, the student—here the reader—is

encouraged to engage the ideas presented, examine them, reflect on them, and make them his or her own. Repeated engagement will nurture and grow individual understanding. Thus these essays taken together constitute an introduction to Theosophical astrology, a treasure house of resources for the aspiring soul.

Prof. Elton Hall  
Ithaca, NY January 2018

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NOTE: All of the articles and readings in this work can be found in digital format on the Theosophy Trust website at <https://www.theosophytrust.org/>.

Editor, Theosophy Trust

**THE PHILOSOPHY  
OF  
ASTROLOGY**





# THE ZODIAC

*When Iswara was telling the pranavamantram to Parvathi, his son Subramania happened to hear it, and having learnt it, unknown to his parents, went and concealed himself. Iswara wanted to find him and to do so invented astrological science.*

*Sainyamuni Sutra*

Like the rim of a great celestial wheel, the stars in the sun's ecliptic appear to revolve in age-old patterns around the earth. The ancients, drawn to them as living entities, called their apparent orbit the Wheel (*diakos*) of Life (*zoi*) or Zodiac, and linked its course with the fortunes of men. They saw the symbolic patterns of stars as powerful clusters of beings whose various qualities affected the earth and all that lived upon it. For millennia Hindu astronomers measured the coming and going of whole epochs by the calculations of stellar movements. In Plato's time the Athenians marked a daily calendar with stars that rose or set upon the horizon as the ecliptic wheel appeared and disappeared in a serpentine fashion due to the tilting of the earth in its revolution. On the basis of such observations, peoples of ancient cultures came to relate the moment of birth to a certain rising star or constellation. Not all have been considered fortunate, as Shakespeare acknowledged when he caused Romeo to speak these despairing lines:

O here  
Will I set up my everlasting rest  
And shake the yoke of inauspicious stars from this world-wearied  
flesh.

Shakespeare also suggests that man may play an active role in response to these sidereal influences. In *The Tempest* Prospero declares:

I find my Zenith doth depend upon  
A most auspicious star; whose influence,  
If now I court not, but omit, my fortunes  
Will ever after droop.

It is said that the sun, signifying the heart of man, relates to his innermost desires and that if one is born at sunrise, noon, sunset or midnight, the solar influence is strongly manifest. While this is believed to be more significant as one gets older, the young are generally thought to be more influenced by the rising constellation of their birth, the star under which they were born. But how do the stars and planets affect us? How can the symbolic characters we have attributed to these celestial orbs have distinctive influences on the lives of human beings? Is it through a subtle gravitational pull that affects the psycho-physical nature or is it by the operation of some sort of 'synchronicity' which links events occurring at the same time and yielding similar effects? Do local conditions of events at any moment reflect, in miniature, the evolution of the world as a whole? For example, will a person born at sunset always express psychological tendencies analogous to the character of the moment when the sun sinks out of sight? Perhaps there is a substratum beneath the analogical correspondences existing in the solar system which activates tangible spiritual and psycho-physical causes, operating to produce a complex metaphysical and physical chain of effects. Or, as the ancient Hindus thought, there may be a process whereby ethereal substances flow forth from the stars and planets and affect their material counterparts on earth. In the Hindu pantheon there are millions of spirits, gods and elementals magnetically attracted to certain quarters of the heavens. With stars and planets assuming various aspects, shoals of friendly or hostile elementals are thought to pour in upon our atmosphere, variously affecting individuals and races according to their natures. On the basis of millennia of carefully recorded observations, Eastern astrologers believe that there are different groups of spirits which have special sympathies with certain human temperaments, and the very elements themselves are believed to have their origin in the stars, a conclusion endorsed by contemporary astrophysics.

Pythagoras taught that the entire universe is one vast series of mathematically correct combinations, an idea beautifully echoed in the Platonic axiom: God geometrizes. If the passage of influences between bodies making up this complex design is based upon a

pervasive universal law, then one can see the zodiac, with all its complicated attributes, as a natural symbol reflecting the myriad expressions of an ordered system. Far from seeing the zodiac as arbitrary in its various conceptions and interpretations, Plato accepted it as an archetypal religious symbol of the Many and the One.

Natural symbols are ideas that belong to the collective human *psyche*. On one level symbols relate the image of something to its intellectual meaning through a merging of the unconscious with the conscious mind. On another level the idea of a symbol like the zodiac may be seen as not merely corresponding to the interpretations people place upon their experiences but also to an objective reality where certain antecedents must cause certain consequences which are neither replaceable nor arbitrary. If the idea of the zodiac is a projection of the human mind, which merely takes on forceful reality through collective consciousness, we are speaking of it as the result of an intellectual structuralism which may, at one particular level of consciousness, have great validity. If, however, we consider the zodiac as a natural archetype, we are implying more than an individual or collective projection. We are suggesting the existence of an idea based upon a universal fact which expresses itself mentally, psychically and physically, which partakes of substance as well as consciousness, and depicts something fundamental about the nature of being itself. Though the zodiacal signs are abstract ideas, they designate particular stars which are related to the earth and other planets in precisely ordered ways. Similarly, though spirits, gods and elementals are idealizations, they represent manifest force-fields in the heavens and on earth which have been observed in their effects by scientists and magicians in all parts of the world.

The Hindus, the Chinese and Greeks, as well as many other peoples, were quick to echo this archetypal celestial pattern in their cities and sanctuaries. The Chinese Empire was called the 'Middle Kingdom' or the earthly counterpart of the zodiac, while the Emperor himself represented the Pole Star at its centre. They

observed the months when various phenomena were most active and allocated the appropriate names and shapes to the constellations dominating the heavens at particular times of the year. The empire was divided into twelve provinces, each with its presiding sign, much as Athens was divided into twelve portions, radiating outward from the central Acropolis, each containing temples of worship dedicated to the appropriate zodiacal god. These ancients perceived the correspondence of twelves at various levels involving temporal as well as spatial units, and in many cultures the hours, months and years were delineated and named after the celestial signs.

The zodiacs of Europe, the Middle East and Asia, as well as of Mexico and Peru, demonstrate a high degree of uniformity of application as well as conception. Several days of the Aztec month had names identical to their Chinese counterparts. Variations of the zodiacal pattern existed in North America in pre-Columbian days, and rock paintings in Africa and Australia testify to the worldwide nature of zodiacal symbolism. Its permutations indicate a great time-span of development and even if we attribute its universal presence to diffusion from one or two cultural centres, that in itself would argue for its immense antiquity. Indeed, the zodiac is felt by some to be the root of all mythologies. The Dendera Zodiac, for instance, shows the passage of three sidereal years, indicated by the inversion of the Lion, which represents a transposition of the poles, and by the triple image of Virgo. *The Secret Doctrine* describes this and other zodiacs at Dendera as records of the last part of the Fourth Sub-Race of the Fifth Root-Race going back seventy-five to eighty thousand years. The pattern of the Dendera Zodiac was evidently widespread, for the monolithic rocks of Stonehenge are positioned in a closely similar design.

Though many modern scholars argue for a Chaldean origin for the zodiac, believing that after the Macedonians received it Alexander brought it to India, there is ample evidence that the zodiac and the science of astrology were highly developed in India long before the arrival of the pugilistic Greeks. For one thing, the

Hindu epoch 3102 B.C., which marks the beginning of *Kali Yuga*, could not have been derived from a more recently borrowed science of astrology because the determination of such an epoch requires hundreds of centuries of observation of the average motions of stars and planets. Nor did the Hindus merely compare borrowed intervals to arrive at their epochs, since theirs are not at all connected to those of the Greeks. In addition, the astronomical instruments used by the two cultures are markedly dissimilar.

The *Rig Veda* teaches Astrology is the eye of Brahma. Attempting to 'see' through this eye, the ancient Hindus and Egyptians took their zodiacal measurements from four 'fixed' stars that moved. They realized that the zodiac moved one degree in every seventy-two years and completed an entire rotation in some twenty-six thousand years. This was the original sidereal zodiac, differing from the later Greek system that the West inherited, which in practice froze the zodiac by assuming that the sun peaked at the solstices at the same celestial position year after year. More recently, many have realized the arbitrariness of the later system and have switched to the use of the sidereal zodiac wherein the 'Greek Leo' and the 'sidereal Cancer' are really the same thing. In the second century A.D. Ptolemy, using the Greek system, introduced the idea of cardinal signs, identifying them as Aries, Cancer, Libra and Capricorn, or those in which the equinoxes and solstices fell. Because these signs are still identified with the times of solstice and equinox in the West, they are still called cardinal, though the equinoxes and solstices now fall in the celestial regions of Taurus, Leo, Scorpio and Aquarius. Esoteric sources indicate that the vernal equinox has already passed out of Pisces into Aquarius, ushering the largely unwitting world into a New Age.

It has been suggested that the signs of the zodiac symbolize and analyze phases of the cycles and evolutionary stages which they embrace. This may be seen in many correlative observations made by various cultures such as the concurrence of a full moon in Virgo with new crops. The signs have characteristics which can be symbolically related to the nature of cycles or stages. It is thought-

provoking to consider that "the orbit of the sun through the twelve divisions corresponds to twelve degrees or stages in the action of the active principle upon the passive." In the Hindu tradition there has long been an exact correspondence between the signs of the zodiac and the cosmic cycles of *Avatars*, while in the tradition of the Jews the characteristics of the signs can be recognized in the words of the dying Jacob to his sons when he indicated to them the future of each of the twelve tribes.

The zodiacal signs are ideographs and hieroglyphs with number, colour and tone. Their number is significant by its ordinal place in the series as well as its factorial position, the latter indicating whether it is cardinal, fixed or mutable, properties which can in turn be related to other trinities such as Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva, the three *gunas*, and concepts such as knowledge, devotion and sacrifice. These can be seen as aspects of consciousness expressing themselves through certain signs or as symbols of stages of human life. The tropical Aries corresponds with the newborn baby who sees the world subjectively in terms of his own being. Taurus suggests a growing awareness of the world in relation to oneself, while Gemini relates to play and the development of the capacity to articulate one's newly discovered knowledge. Cancer, connected with the moon, symbolizes adolescence and emotional turbulence, followed by Leo, where the individual attempts to stand on his own two feet and assert his own sense of identity. This sign characterizes a certain exuberance which is liable to incur difficulties, but Virgo, with its willingness to learn and serve, marks a maturing corrective stage. Libra, symbolizing balance, corresponds to a finding of one's place in the scheme of things, while Scorpio suggests a creative direction to one's energies and a fruitful consummation, Sagittarius a steady will to improve, and Capricorn, practical attainment on the basis of recognized ideals. These are followed by Aquarius, where an impartial understanding of things is possible, and which may lead the individual to a Piscean expression of ultimate meaning or, if the Aquarian potential was poorly grasped, an obverse expression of emotional reinvolverment and its attendant suggestion of futility.

In the *Abhidhammatha Sangha* the twelve *Nidanas*, the causes of sentient existence expounded in Buddhist teachings, are linked with the twelve signs of the zodiac. Their division into two sixes is reminiscent of the way Patanjali distinguishes the individuality from the personality. Here, Aries is related to *avidya* or the ignorance and non-cognition responsible for birth. Taurus relates to *samskara*, the karmic conditions from previous lives, while Gemini corresponds to *vijñāna*, or egoic self-consciousness. This is followed by Cancer, related to *namarupa*, or name and form, Leo to *sadayatanam* or the six senses, and Virgo to *sparsa*, the contact with the outer world. These first six, relating to the personality, are followed by the second six related to individuality. Libra corresponds with *vedana* or perception and sensation, while Scorpio relates to *trishna*, thirst or desire, and Sagittarius is connected with *upadana*, clinging. Capricorn relates to *bhava*, becoming, Aquarius to *jati*, birth, and Pisces to *jara marana*, decay and death. The last two are especially significant in relation to the potentiality of the soul's liberation from the wheel of life and death and have direct implications for the future. The first two are related to the past, while those in between mark the conditions and possibilities of the present. These temporal correlations remind one of Plato's account of the Moirae, the goddesses of past, present and future who enforce destiny through the 'Spindle of Necessity,' eternally ensuring the reincarnation of all life that is not yet fully enlightened. In this powerful metaphor Plato depicts the soul as it first chooses to descend into a personality and then becomes forgetfully enveloped while the forces of the three goddesses bear it towards its destiny.

#### BEHOLD THE BEGINNING OF SENTIENT FORMLESS LIFE

The stillness of the deep gives rise to One followed by Seven which is Three and Four, the multiples of which are Twelve. The hierarchy of Creative Powers is divided into seven esoteric aspects within the twelve great Orders that are recorded in the twelve signs of the zodiac. In the ancient Etruscan tradition this was spoken of as the apportionment of Twelve Millennia for the acts of creation



which were then assigned to the twelve signs of the zodiac. *The Secret Doctrine* describes the highest hierarchical group as composed of the Divine Flames or 'Fiery Lions' hidden in the sign of Leo. This is the nucleole of the superior divine world. From this flame come the three descending groups. In Hindu tradition the Twelve Great Transformations of spirit into matter are said to take place during the four great ages of the first *Mahayuga*. This is the hidden meaning of the Kabalistic axiom: the Dodecahedron lies concealed in the perfect cube.

These magnificent conceptions are synthesized in the symbol of the zodiac which covers, with its pictorial garments, the most arcane mysteries of manifested life. Hidden within the signs are the clues to the gradual understanding of how the universe is evolved from pre-existing matter, how it is one of an endless series, and how "Eternity is pointed off into grand cycles." The first six signs involve a steady materialization, the second six a gradual refinement, followed by a great indrawing of all life. The zodiac thus symbolizes an entire cosmic cycle of evolution and dissolution.

In the Hindu system of zodiacal correlations the process of manifestation from the Word to the universe of thought is traced through the twelve signs. *Mesam* is related to *Aja*, or that which has no birth - *Parabrahm*. *Sabham* is *Pranava* or the Word. *Mithunam* is *Ardhanarisvara*, the first androgyne, while *Karkatakam* is numerologically linked to the Tetragram. *Simham* is related to the *Jivatma*. Its position as fifth in the series explains its synonym - *Pancasyam* - relating the lion to the Five Brahmas while another synonym - *Hari* - links it up with *Narayana* as representative of *Jivatma*, the animating power of the universe and of man. *Kanya*, the virgin, reflects the six primary forces or *shaktis*, while the next sign, *Tula*, involves the balanced preparation of the way toward the earthly manifestation of man. *Hamsa* becomes the manifest swan. Next, *Vrscikam* symbolizes *Vishnu*, or that which is the universe expanded in subjective thought. Then *Dhanus* follows, representing the nine *Prajapatis* and *Makaram*, the pentagon or the symbol of man. *Kumbham* or *Aquarius* identifies the fourteen *lokas* of Hindu

tradition, while *Minam* is related to the five elements which are the keystones of evolution and which provide the vehicles through which the Word becomes increasingly manifest. From the One (*Parabrahm*) to the Three (the first androgyne) to the Four (the Tetragram), which is Seven (the universe expanded in thought), and finally to the five elements or pentagonal faces of the universe shaping the dodecahedron of the manifested world, the work of the Divine Creative Powers is completed.

The tropical signs of Libra and Scorpio were latecomers to what was originally a scheme of ten exoteric signs and two hidden mystical signs. They contain the explanation of the gradual transformation of the world from the spiritual and subjective into the two-sexed and objective. Libra and Scorpio are blinds to "conceal the true names which gave the key to the whole secret of creation, and divulge the origin of 'good and evil.'" Libra is a turning point between the 'descending' and 'ascending' signs and as such, in man, marks the beginning of self-devised efforts. Scorpio is not only related to sexual generation but to the lighting up of *Manas*. The Scorpion, when linked with Uranus, is the 'Bond Breaker' which, by its sting, breaks up the sense of self and awakens cosmic consciousness. Esoteric tradition teaches that in this sign the centrifugal forces of evolution begin to draw into separative centres of self, gathering together powers of a volcanic potential and permitting Uranus to supplant the fiery and expansive Mars.

The zodiac is the womb of the earthly universe where the essence of each form in manifested life can be traced back to its germane archetype. The *Vedas* and the *Upanishads* spoke of the icosahedron as representing the astral light which stands behind the material universe whose power is surrounded by the dodecahedron. The structure of the icosahedron is based upon the number ten and is related to the ten signs which existed before the separation of the one-sign Virgo-Scorpio into the three separate signs of Virgo, Libra and Scorpio. The twelve-faced zodiac and dodecahedron reflect the patterns recorded in the astral light and form a link between the objective and subjective sides of nature. Through them radiate the

'Twelve Founts' of the Law, the apertures releasing the stream of power, "which taketh its type from the impress of the power of the invisible waters above." Spreading into our solar world from this invisible source, it becomes concentrated in the form of the sun, whence it radiates outwards to the seven sacred planets which refract its re-synthesized unity in the myriad sounds, rhythms and colours of the spheres.

Plato called the planets 'visible gods' and while the rulers of the twelve zodiacal signs were said to be invisible, they were causal to the twelve principal manifestations of the creative force which runs the universe. Thus Plato taught that the *Dodecatheoi*, who were pictured on the central milestone of Athens from which all distances were measured, were not the visible signs or stars but gods who ruled behind and through them. These are the Lords of the zodiac from whence springs the human soul.

Plato speaks of the soul's striving to follow one of the Twelve Gods and later, when fully incarnated, attempting to recognize what kind of spirit was trying to express itself through the soul's lunar vesture. In a more active sense, the soul could be seen as a sun journeying through the womb of the world (zodiac) along a ray of particular tone and colouring which is connected with one of the twelve signs. Combining these particular forces in a unique way, the soul becomes an agent perpetuating and refining divine energy in the world, while the signs themselves represent work to be completed during the many turnings of Ezekiel's wheel.

The zodiacal or Ezekiel's wheel is symbolically related to *Ouroboros* - the serpent biting its tail which symbolizes *AEON* or duration. The serpentine motion of manifesting cosmic power is *Fohat* or *kundalini* working on ever more concrete levels, and its wave-like action is symbolized in the glyphs for Taurus, Leo, Scorpio and Aquarius: Believed to be of great antiquity, they indicate the moving powers in evolution and the progressive stages of awakening. In Mediterranean mythology the bull is often either slain by the hero or devoured by the lion, which in turn is slain by the initiate who finally, as the Scorpion must, in stinging himself,

destroy the lower man and release the higher mind into Aquarius. Thus the serpentine power is latent in Taurus, active in Leo, fully awake in Scorpio and transcendent in Aquarius. It is said that when man becomes manifested in Aquarius, he will be like Horus in the *cippus* of Alexandria, who stands holding the serpent and all the other signs in his hands. He will represent the culmination of all creation which was subjected to four groups of the twelve powers of the World-Soul.

Behind the Twelve are the Four and the Three, which sequence lends meaning to the idea that the twelve signs derive from the four elements combined with the three *gunas*, which latter number times twelve can be correlated with the thirty-six principles of essential being, or *tattoams*. The same thirty-six can be arrived at by multiplying the four elements times nine, a numerological derivation related to the *Prajapatis* who assisted the *Demiurgos* in constructing the universe. The elements can be conceived as modes of motion characteristic of different stages of evolution, while the *gunas* represent qualities of being at various levels of essence, transition and materialization. From the flame of the 'Fiery Lions' come the three descending groups or qualities which commence the twelve great transformations through the four stages. The dodecahedron lies concealed within the triangle and the perfect cube.

In the *Symposium* it is stated that "Sacrifice and Divination is the art of communion between gods and men," the art of reconciling the conscious and the unconscious. Perhaps this is a necessary reflection of the sacrifice of the zodiacal gods themselves suggested in Hindu tradition where it is said that the astral prototypes of the zodiac created by Brahma were sacred sacrificial animals. Indeed, the sign of Aries, which in the tropical zodiac ushers in the initial stage of evolution, is the Ram or lamb of sacrifice. In Egyptian symbolism, during the first stage of its journey through the world, the solar boat bears the sun in the form of a ram-headed man. Man, in sacrificing the lamb to God, attempts to reciprocate on the plane of matter, releasing the essence of the sacred animal to its source.

The sacrifices of *Avatars*, in their many zodiacal forms, are echoed in the most ancient types of religious ritual reflecting the highest aspects of man's link with the stars.

Just as men sacrifice to the gods, so they must sacrifice to one another, for all human problems are problems of relationship. All relationships are symbolized by the zodiac and the twelve types of sidereal power combine in all possible ways as they circle around the focus of life. If the sun must pass through them all, so must the soul pass through and alchemize their qualities, reflecting thereby the greater balance of the heavens. This it does by relating to others as well as to itself. The only way by which a zodiacal balance can be reflected among human beings is through continual sacrifice and divination, the reconciliation of self with Self, the One with the Many. There can be no doubt that great Compassionaters have set the pattern for us. Just as the sidereal archetypes exist as models, so there must have been actual realms on earth where Masters of Wisdom walked. Esoteric tradition teaches that in what is now the Gobi desert there were once twelve islands, the abodes of the Twelve Hierophants, which existed until the last great glacial period. Among the Kalmucks of Central Asia this profound and beautiful idea continues as a living reality. They identify cardinal islands in a circle of twelve, representing the reflection of the twelve lands above.

Through the zodiacal modes, the pilgrim soul attempts to merge itself back into the divine source of its Ray. At the point of the tropical Aquarius, the soul may drink of the waters of the Supernal Cup and be released from the wheel.

Say, I am a child of Earth and Starry Heaven,  
 But my race is of Heaven alone.  
 This ye know yourselves.  
 And lo, I am parched with thirst and I perish,  
 Give me quickly  
 The cold water flowing forth  
 From the Lake of Memory.

*Orphic Mysteries*

But if the waters of Lethe are drunk, the pilgrim soul will enter into Pisces, all wrapped in emotion, to die and be reborn upon the wheel once more. The Supernal Waters can fill the being with *ananda*, a love for all mankind, the platform which may bear the soul into the sign of Pisces, a saviour. But if the soul would sacrifice for humanity, it must be capable of total liberation from the wheel at the air sign of Aquarius. The death in Pisces which follows will then be one pursued by choice and on behalf of the whole.

The Twelve Gods watch through the duration of great *kalpas*. They endure as man evolves and reaches dimly toward their light. They wait as man slowly marshals their mighty forces within his being and rises heavenward with Aquarius to take the whole of the zodiac into his own hands.

'It is the sun who preserves and nourishes all creatures; and even as the Ideal World which environs the sensible world fills this last with the plenitude and universal variety of forms, so also the Sun, enfolding all in his light, accomplishes everywhere the birth and development of creatures. . . . Under his orders is the choir of Genii, or rather the choirs, for there are many and diverse, and their number corresponds to that of the stars. Every star has its genii, good and evil by nature, or rather by their operation, for operation is the essence of the genii. . . . All these Genii preside over mundane affairs, they shake and overthrow the constitution of States and of individuals; they imprint their likeness on our Souls, they are present in our nerves, our marrow, our veins, our arteries, and our very brain-substance.'

*The Secret Doctrine*

*Hermes*, January 1976

Helen Valborg

# ASTROLOGY VERIFIED

WRITING in the Theosophist upon the subject of Astrology, C.C. Massey says that he thinks at present we are not fully acquainted with the science, and that, as now practiced, it is not always reliable.

His remarks as to its unreliability are justly applicable to that branch of it which relates to nativities alone, and so far I agree with him, because I have encountered numerous cases where judgments upon nativities have been most erroneous. That department of the science is very abstruse and beset with difficulties requiring constant years of study to master. Can we wonder then at the mistakes made by the professional astrologer? He cannot afford these years of patient toil, for even with but one foot upon the threshold of the hoary art he begins to dispense his judgments and prognostications.

The three first divisions of the science: *Genethliacal Astrology*, or telling what shall be the individual's fate; *Mundane Astrology*, or foretelling the circumstances of nations, the occurrence of wars and pestilence; and *Atmospherical Astrology*, or indicating the weather from certain aspects of the planets, are by no means easy to understand or practice, as they require not only a close application for several years, but a good education too. But here is another branch of the subject called Horary Astrology, or the answering of questions put to the Astrologer at any time upon any subject whatever about which the questioner is anxious. This can be soon learned by close attention, and its practice will be found to reward the student with answers having in them as much of certainty as we can hope for in this illusionary world. Nor, need one wait for years before trusting himself to make replies to questions or to solve problems, excepting always *Elections*, or the determining of days and times for beginning or doing anything.

Zadkiel, who was a well-educated man, an ex-officer of the English Navy, in writing on this subject, says that any one of

average intelligence can soon learn by Horary Astrology, whom to do business with, what things to avoid, and what will be the result of any particular business engaged in or proposed. That Zadkiel was right I have had for some years abundant proof. And we have Lilly who preceded Zadkiel, saying the same as his follower. In Lilly's Introduction to Astrology there are given hundreds of instances where Horary Astrology has furnished correct answers to questions then put. Lilly was the astrologer who predicted the great fire which in 1666 burnt down London, and also the plague that took off a vast number of her inhabitants. No matter how much the so-called scientific world may sneer at this, it remains a fact quite susceptible of proof.

In my experience with Horary Astrology I have found that some persons have not naturally the proper cast of mind for giving a correct reply to a question, which, by another reader of the figure, would be justly answered, and, again, that one who will always be correct in Horary questions may be quite unable to do well with a nativity.

It is permissible to name those professors who are dead, because then we cannot be accused of advertising them. In the city of New York there resided, up to within a short time ago, one Dr. Charles Winterburn who practiced medicine and incidentally Horary Astrology. I consulted him many times for which he would take no pay, and I cannot remember a case in which he made a wrong answer. His mind was peculiarly fitted to give a sound reply to any question astrologically put, and it was with a sincere sorrow that I heard of his death. From among the many questions answered by him I have taken a few as well as some upon which judgments were given by other astrologers, by myself and some other amateurs.

Two years ago, at exactly 3 p.m., I signed a contract relating to the use of the electric light. The conditions were favourable, and every one interested thought much money would be made. I sent Dr. Winterburn and three other astrologers - each being unaware that the others had the question and one living in a distant city - this question: "At 3 p.m. today I signed a contract; what will come



of it?" No other data were given. With starling unanimity, they all replied that *nothing* would come of it, but that it would be abandoned. Dr. Winterburn said that I might get from it a small sum, but expenses would eat that up, and one of the others said that the opposite parties to the contract were disagreeing amongst themselves and had no funds. This I afterwards found to be true. Eleven weeks was the length of time given by astrology for it to last. Within eleven weeks the whole matter was abandoned, and I made nothing whatever from it.

Subsequently, I entered into a matter having some connection with the Government and a certain manufactured article. For the sake of collecting evidence for, or against, Astrology, I obtained judgments on the affair laying them away without paying enough attention to them to even read them. The business went forward with apparently good prospects, but at last it began to assume an unfavourable turn, and then I looked into the replies I had received. With one accord, as before, they declared I had better not go on; all stating that there appeared to be evidence of some money, but also of a greater amount of expense. Dr. Winterburn, in reply to a letter written on this point, said: "On the 20th of this month you will get some return from it, but then you should drop it. However, I see that you will give it up, and it will slip away from your neighbourhood *in toto*." On the 20th I received the only money ever paid in the case, and from that day to this have had no more to do with it than if I had never heard of it.

In the year 1879, I contemplated a removal of my offices, and asked Dr. Winterburn for an astrological judgment. He replied: "Do not move yet, the place offered is not good, and you will have great annoyance and loss there; wait." Soon after a room, apparently no better in another building, was offered. Dr. Winterburn and others with the same unanimity said; "Move; the new offer is good, it will be pleasant in every way." As the new place was good and cheap I moved, and not because Astrology said so. But, singular as it may appear, in eight months afterwards the place against which they advised me – and the location and description of which they were

perfectly unaware of – was invaded by masons and carpenters, the wall torn down in midwinter by order of the Municipal Government, and the whole place exposed for half a year to weather and dirt. Had I been there the expense would have been great, and the annoyance immeasurable. Let me say further that when their replies were given, neither the landlord nor the Government had these alterations in contemplation.

When President Garfield was shot, some friends and myself erected different astrological figures on the event, and construing by the rules, we all said he would die. I placed his death about a week off. Our mistakes were of time and were not the mistakes of the art.

Previous to my father's death, Dr. Winterburn, having no acquaintance with him and never having seen him, said: "All the indications are bad; I think the direction I have named will be fatal. He will die in a few days, but his death will be easy and calm." He died in fifteen days as calmly and sweetly as a child would drop to sleep. The only datum given to the astrologer was the question: "My father is sick; what will come of it?"

Such are a few of many instances I have had of the preciseness and truth of this ancient art. I could give hundreds.

These experiences lead me to the conclusion that Horary Astrology is a correct mode of divination. Those ancient men, who, with minds unfettered by the shackles of bigotry or theology, but having an overflowing desire to benefit that "great orphan Humanity," were wont in the part of India and Egypt to inquire into all of Nature's works, found that Nature is one vast machine whose wheels work one within the other. Calculate the motion and know the mode of motion of one, and you have a key for all. So they took the planets with the heavenly road in which they travel, and erected a scheme based on experience and the universal reign of law, which enabled them and will enable us to guide the faltering steps of man through the dark and rugged valley of this life. Anxiety is one of man's greatest and most insidious foes. It fetters his energy and defeats his ends. If Astrology will relieve one

at any crisis from anxiety, is it not well to foster its pursuit and spread its fame? It has relieved me often from anxiety which, without it, I would have felt for months. It will do the same for any one.

Let the light then shine from the East where Astrology began: let those whose forefathers gave to Claudius Ptolemy the materials for his *Tetrabiblos*, give to us what aid they can for the great understanding and development of this most ancient art.

William Q. Judge

*Theosophist*, April, 1882

# A DISCUSSION OF THE ZODIAC



If the reader will keep in mind the Hindu ideas of cosmogony, as given in Chapter VI [of Volume II of *Isis Unveiled*], he will better understand the relation between the biblical antediluvian patriarchs, and that puzzle of commentators — "Ezekiel's wheel." Thus, be it remembered: 1, that the universe is not a spontaneous creation, but an evolution from pre-existent matter; 2, that it is only one of an endless series of universes; 3, that eternity is pointed off into grand cycles, in each of which twelve transformations of our world occur, following its partial destruction by fire and water, alternately. So that when a new minor period sets in, the earth is so changed, even geologically, as to be practically a new world; 4, that of these twelve transformations, the earth after each of the first six is grosser, and everything on it — man included — more material, than after the preceding one: while after each of the remaining six the contrary is true, both earth and man growing more and more refined and spiritual with each terrestrial change; and 5, that when the apex of the cycle is reached, a gradual dissolution takes place, and every living and objective form is destroyed. But when that point is reached, humanity has become fitted to live subjectively as well as objectively. And not humanity alone, but also animals, plants, and every atom. After a time of rest, say the Buddhists, when a new world becomes self-formed, the astral souls of animals, and of all beings, except such as have reached the highest Nirvana; will return on earth again to end their cycles of transformations, and become men in their turn.

This stupendous conception, the ancients synthesized for the instruction of the common people, into a single pictorial design — the Zodiac, or celestial belt. Instead of the twelve signs now used, there were originally but ten known to the general public, viz.: Aries, Taurus, Gemini, Cancer, Leo, Virgo-Scorpio, Sagittarius, Capricornus, Aquarius, and Pisces.<sup>1</sup> These were exoteric. But in addition there were

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<sup>1</sup> In Volney's "*Ruins of Empires*" p. 360, it is remarked that as Aries was in its fifteenth degree 1447 B. C., it follows that the first degree of "Libra"

two mystical signs inserted, which none but initiates comprehended, viz.: at the middle or junction-point where now stands Libra, and at the sign now called Scorpio, which follows Virgo. When it was found necessary to make them exoteric, these two secret signs were added under their present appellations as blinds to conceal the true names which gave the key to the whole secret of creation, and divulged the origin of "good and evil."

The true Sabean astrological doctrine secretly taught that within this double sign was hidden the explanation of the gradual transformation of the world, from its spiritual and subjective, into the "two-sexed" sublunary state. The twelve signs were therefore divided into two groups. The first six were called the ascending, or the line of Macrocosm (the great spiritual world); the last six, the descending line, or the Microcosm (the little secondary world) — the mere reflection of the former, so to say. This division was called Ezekiel's wheel, and was completed in the following way: First came the ascending five signs (euhemerized into patriarchs), Aries, Taurus, Gemini, Cancer, Leo, and the group concluded with Virgo-Scorpio. Then came the turning-point, Libra. After which, the first half of the sign Virgo-Scorpio, was duplicated and transferred to lead the lower, or descending group of Microcosm which ran down to Pisces, or Noah (deluge). To make it clearer, the sign Virgo-Scorpio, which appeared originally thus , became simply Virgo, and the duplication, , or Scorpio, was placed between Libra, the seventh sign (which is Enoch, or the angel Metatron, or Mediator between spirit and matter, or God and man). It now became Scorpio (or Cain), which sign or patriarch led mankind to destruction, according to exoteric theology; but, according to the true doctrine of the wisdom-religion, it indicated the degradation of the whole universe in its course of evolution downward from the subjective to the objective.

The sign of Libra is credited as a later invention by the Greeks, but it is not generally stated that those among them who were initiated

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could not have coincided with the Vernal equinox more lately than 15,194 years B. C., to which, if you add 1790 years since Christ, it appears that 16,984 years have elapsed since the origin of the Zodiac.

had only made a change of names conveying the same idea as the secret name to those "who knew," leaving the masses as unwise as ever. Yet it was a beautiful idea of theirs, this Libra, or the balance, expressing as much as could possibly be done without unveiling the whole and ultimate truth. They intended it to imply that when the course of evolution had taken the worlds to the lowest point of grossness, where the earths and their products were coarsest, and their inhabitants most brutish, the turning-point had been reached — the forces were at an even balance. At the lowest point, the still lingering divine spark of spirit within began to convey the upward impulse. The scales typified that eternal equilibrium which is the necessity of a universe of harmony, of exact justice, of the balance of centripetal and centrifugal forces, darkness and light, spirit and matter.

These additional signs of the Zodiac warrant us in saying that the Book of *Genesis* as we now find it, must be of later date than the invention of Libra by the Greeks; for we find the chapters of the genealogies remodelled to fit the new Zodiac, instead of the latter being made to correspond with the list of patriarchs. And it is this addition and the necessity of concealing the true key, that led the Rabbinical compilers to repeat the names of Enoch and Lamech twice, as we see them now in the Kenite table. Alone, among all the books of the Bible, *Genesis* belongs to an immense antiquity. The others are all later additions, the earliest of which appeared with Hilkiah, who evidently concocted it with the help of Huldah, the prophetess.

As there is more than one meaning attached to the stories of the creation and deluge, we say, therefore, that the biblical account cannot be comprehended apart from the Babylonian story of the same; while neither will be thoroughly clear without the Brahmanical esoteric interpretation of the deluge, as found in the Mahābhārata and the Satapatha-Brahmāna. It is the Babylonians who were taught the "mysteries," the sacerdotal language, and their religion by the problematical Akkadians who — according to Rawlinson came from Armenia — not the former who emigrated to India. Here the evidence becomes clear. The Babylonian Xisuthrus is shown by Movers to have represented the "sun" in the Zodiac, in the sign of Aquarius, and Oannes, the man-fish, the semi-demon, is Vishnu in his first avatar; thus giving the key to the double source of the biblical revelation.

Oannes is the emblem of priestly, esoteric wisdom; he comes out from the sea, because the "great deep," the water, typifies, as we have shown, the secret doctrine. For this same reason Egyptians deified the Nile, apart from its being regarded, in consequence of its periodical overflows, as the "Saviour" of the country. They even held the crocodiles as sacred, from having their abode in the "deep." The "Hamites," so called, have always preferred to settle near rivers and oceans. Water was the first-created element, according to some old cosmogonies. This name of Oannes is held in the greatest reverence, in the Chaldean records. The Chaldean priests wore a head-gear like a fish's head, and a shadbelly coat, representing the body of a fish.<sup>2</sup>

"Thales," says Cicero, "assures that water is the principle of all things; and that God is that Mind which shaped and created all things from water."<sup>3</sup>

"In the Beginning, SPIRIT within strengthens Heaven and  
Earth,  
The watery fields, and the lucid globe of Luna, and then —  
Titan stars; and mind infused through the limbs  
Agitates the whole mass, and mixes itself with GREAT  
MATTER."<sup>4</sup>

Thus water represents the duality of both the Macrocosmos and the Microcosmos, in conjunction with the vivifying SPIRIT, and the evolution of the little world from the universal cosmos. The deluge then, in this sense, points to that final struggle between the conflicting elements, which brought the first great cycle of our planet to a close. These periods gradually merged into each other, order being brought out of chaos, or disorder, and the successive types of organism being evolved only as the physical conditions of nature were prepared for their appearance; for our present race could not have breathed on

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<sup>2</sup> See cuts in Inman's "*Ancient Faiths*."

<sup>3</sup> Cicero, "*De Nat. Deorum*," i., 10.

<sup>4</sup> Virgil, "*Æneid*," vi., 724 ff.

earth, during that intermediate period, not having as yet the allegorical coats of skin.<sup>5</sup>

## THE BIBLE PATRIARCHS IDENTICAL WITH ZODIACAL SIGNS

In chapters iv. and v. of *Genesis*, we find the so-called generations of Cain and Seth. Let us glance at them in the order in which they stand:

### LINES of GENERATIONS

<i>Sethite.</i>		<i>Kenite.</i>
1. Adam. 2. Seth. 3. Enos. 4. Cainan. 5. Mahalaleel. 6. Jared. 7. Enoch. 8. Methuselah. 9. Lamech. 10. Noah.	{ Good Principle. }	1. Adam. 2. Cain. 3. Enoch. 4. Irad. 5. Mehujael. 6. Methusael. 7. Lamech. 8. Jubal. 9. Jabel. 10. Tubal Cain.
		{ Evil Principle. }

The above are the ten biblical patriarchs, identical with Hindu Pragâpatis (Pradjâpatis), and the Sephiroth of the *Kabala*. We say ten patriarchs, not twenty, for the Kenite line was devised for no other purpose than, 1, to carry out the idea of dualism, on which is founded the philosophy of every religion; for these two genealogical tables represent simply the opposing powers or principles of good and evil; and 2, as a blind for the uninitiated masses. Suppose we restore them to their primitive form, by erasing these premeditated blinds. These are so transparent as to require but a small amount of perspicacity to select, even though one should use only his unaided judgment, and were not, as we are, enabled to apply the test of the secret doctrine.

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<sup>5</sup> The term "coats of skin," is the more suggestive when we learn that the Hebrew word "skin" used in the original text, means human skin. The text says: "And Java Aleim made for Adam and his wife עֹר כַּחֲבַנֹת Chitonutt Our. The first Hebrew word is the same as the Greek χιτων — chiton — coat. Parkhurst defines it as the skin of men or animals עֹר עַר and עֹרָה, Our, Or, or Ora. The same word is used at Exodus xxxiv. 30, 35, when the skin of Moses "shone" (A. Wilder).



By ridding ourselves, therefore, of the Kenite names that are mere duplications of the Sethite, or of each other, we get rid of Adam; of Enoch — who, in one genealogy, is shown the father of Irad, and in the other, the son of Jared; of Lamech, son of Methusael, whereas he, Lamech, is son of Methuselah in the Sethite line; of Irad (Jared),<sup>6</sup> Jubal and Jabal, who, with Tubal-Cain, form a trinity in one, and that one the double of Cain; of Mehujael (who is but Mahalaleel differently spelled), and Methusael (Methuselah). This leaves us in the Kenite genealogy of chapter iv., one only, Cain, who — the first murderer and fratricide — is made to stand in his line as father of Enoch, the most virtuous of men, who does not die, but is translated alive. Turn we now to the Sethite table, and we find that Enos, or Enoch, comes second from Adam, and is father to Cain (an). This is no accident. There was an evident reason for this inversion of paternity; a palpable design — that of creating confusion and baffling inquiry.

We say, then, that the patriarchs are simply the signs of the Zodiac, emblems, in their manifold aspects, of the spiritual and physical evolution of human races, of ages, and of divisions of time. In astrology, the first four of the "Houses," in the diagrams of the "Twelve Houses of Heaven" — namely, the first, tenth, seventh, and fourth, or the second inner square placed with its angles upward and downward, are termed angles, as being of the greatest strength and power. They answer to Adam, Noah, Cain-an, and Enoch, Alpha, Omega, evil and good, leading the whole. Furthermore, when divided (including the

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<sup>6</sup> Here, again, the "Masorah," by converting one name into another, has helped to falsify the little that was left original in the primitive Scriptures. De Rossi, of Parma, says of the Massorettes, in his "*Compendis*," vol. iv., page 7: "It is known with what carefulness Esdras, the most excellent critic they have had, had reformed [the text] and corrected it, and restored it to its primary splendor. Of the many revisions undertaken after him, none are more celebrated than that of the Massorettes, who came after the sixth century . . . and all the most zealous adorers and defenders of the "Masorah," Christians and Jews . . . ingenuously accord and confess that it, such as it exists, is deficient, imperfect, interpolated, full of errors, and a most unsafe guide." The square letter was not invented till after the third century.

two secret names) into four trigons or triads, viz.: fiery, airy, earthy, and watery, we find the latter corresponding to Noah.

Enoch and Lamech were doubled in the table of Cain, to fill out the required number ten in both "generations" in the Bible, instead of employing the "Secret Name"; and, in order that the patriarchs should correspond with the ten kabalistic Sephiroth, and fit at the same time the ten, and, subsequently, twelve signs of the Zodiac, in a manner comprehensible only to the kabalists.

And now, Abel having disappeared out of that line of descent, he is replaced by Seth, who was clearly an afterthought suggested by the necessity of not having the human race descend entirely from a murderer. This dilemma being apparently first noticed when the Kenite table had been completed, Adam is made (after all the generations had appeared) to beget this son, Seth. It is a suggestive fact that, whereas the double-sexed Adam of chapter v. is made in the likeness of the Elohim (see *Genesis* Chapter I 27 and v. 1 of the same), Seth (v. 3) is begotten in Adam's "own likeness," thus signifying that there were men of different races. Also, it is most noticeable that neither the age nor a single other particular respecting the patriarchs in the Kenite table is given, whereas the reverse is the case with those in the Sethite line.

Most assuredly, no one could expect to find, in a work open to the public, the final mysteries of that which was preserved for countless ages as the grandest secret of the sanctuary. But, without divulging the key to the profane, or being taxed with undue indiscretion, we may be allowed to lift a corner of the veil which shrouds the majestic doctrines of old. Let us then write down the patriarchs as they ought to stand in their relation to the Zodiac, and see how they correspond with the signs.

The following diagram represents Ezekiel's Wheel, as given in many works, among others, in Hargrave Jennings' *Rosicrucians*:

## EZEKIEL'S WHEEL (Exoteric).

These signs are (follow numbers):

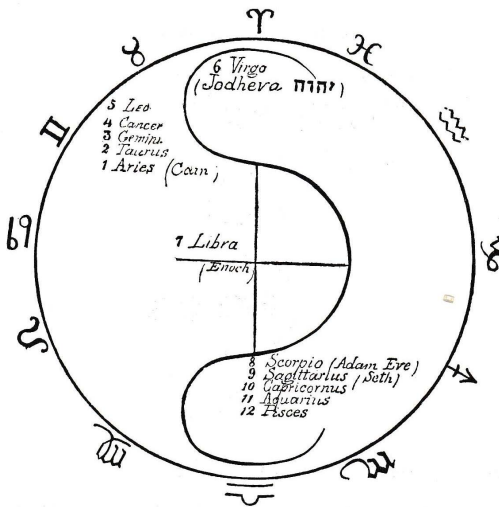
1, Aries; 2, Taurus; 3, Gemini; 4, Cancer; 5, Leo; 6, Virgo, or the ascending line of the grand cycle of creation. After this comes 7, Libra — "man," which, though it is found right in the middle, or the intersection point, leads down the numbers:

8, Scorpio; 9, Sagittarius; 10, Capricornus; 11, Aquarius; and 12, Pisces.

While discussing the double sign of Virgo-Scorpio and Libra, Hargrave Jennings observes (p. 65):

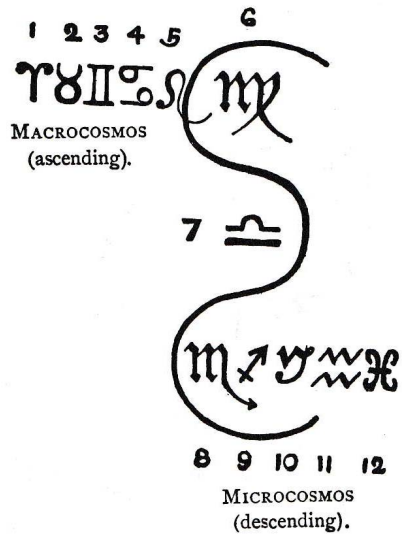
"All this is incomprehensible, except in the strange mysticism of the Gnostics and the kabalists; and the whole theory requires a key of explanation to render it intelligible; which key is only darkly referred to as possible, but refused absolutely, by these extraordinary men, as not permissible to be disclosed."

## EZEKIEL'S WHEEL (Esoteric).



The said key must be turned seven times before the whole system is divulged. We will give it but one turn, and thereby allow the profane one glimpse into the mystery. Happy he, who understands the whole!

To explain the presence of Jodheva (or Yodheva), or what is generally termed the tetragram יְהוָה, and of Adam and Eve, it will suffice to remind the reader of the following



verses in *Genesis*, with their right meaning inserted in brackets.

1. "And God [Elohim] created man in his [their] own image . . . male and female created he them [him]" — (Ch. 1. 27).

2. "Male and female created he them [him] . . . and called their [his] name ADAM" — (v. 2).

When the ternary is taken in the beginning of the tetragram, it expresses the divine creation spiritually, i.e., without any carnal sin: taken at its opposite end it expresses the latter; it is feminine. The name of Eve is composed of three letters, that of the primitive or heavenly Adam, is written with one letter, Jod or Yodh; therefore it must not be read Jehova but Ieva, or Eve. The Adam of the first chapter is the spiritual, therefore pure androgyne, Adam Kadmon. When woman issues from the left rib of the second Adam (of dust), the pure Virgo is separated, and falling "into generation," or the downward cycle, becomes Scorpio,<sup>7</sup> emblem of sin and matter. While the ascending cycle points at the purely spiritual races, or the ten prediluvian patriarchs (the Pradjâpatis, and Sephiroth)<sup>8</sup> are led on by the creative Deity itself, who is Adam Kadmon or Yodcheva, the lower one is that of the terrestrial races, led on by Enoch or Libra, the seventh; who, because he is half-divine, half-terrestrial, is said to have been taken by God alive. Enoch, or Hermes, or Libra are one. All are the scales of universal harmony; justice and equilibrium are placed at the central point of the Zodiac. The grand circle of the heavens, so well discoursed upon by Plato, in his *Timæus*, symbolizes the unknown as a unity; and the smaller circles which form the cross, by their division on the plane of the Zodiacal ring — typify, at the point of their intersection, life. The centripetal and centrifugal forces, as symbols of Good and Evil, Spirit and Matter, Life and Death, are also those of the Creator and the Destroyer, — Adam and Eve, or God and the Devil, as they say in

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<sup>7</sup> Scorpio is the astrological sign of the organs of reproduction.

<sup>8</sup> The patriarchs are all convertible in their numbers as well as interchangeable. According to what they relate, they become ten, five, seven, twelve, and even fourteen. The whole system is so complicated that it is an utter impossibility in a work like this to do more than hint at certain matters.

common parlance. In the subjective, as well as in the objective worlds, they are the two powers, which through their eternal conflict keep the universe of spirit and matter in harmony. They force the planets to pursue their paths, and keep them in their elliptical orbits, thus tracing the astronomical cross in their revolution through the Zodiac. In their conflict the centripetal force, were it to prevail, would drive the planets and living souls into the sun, type of the invisible Spiritual Sun, the Paramatma or great universal Soul, their parent; while the centrifugal force would chase both planets and souls into the dreary space, far from the luminary of the objective universe, away from the spiritual realm of salvation and eternal life, and into the chaos of final cosmic destruction, and individual annihilation. But the balance is there, ever sensitive at the intersection point. It regulates the action of the two combatants, and the combined effort of both, causes planets and "living souls" to pursue a double diagonal line in their revolution through Zodiac and Life; and thus preserving strict harmony, in visible and invisible heaven and earth, the forced unity of the two reconciles spirit and matter, and Enoch is said to stand a "Metatron" before God. Reckoning from him down to Noah and his three sons, each of these represent a new "world," i.e., our earth, which is the seventh<sup>9</sup> after

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<sup>9</sup> See vol. I. of the present work, p. 32. Alone, the Hindu calculation by the Zodiac, can give a key to the Hebrew chronologies and the ages of the patriarchs. If we bear in mind that, according to the former astronomical and chronological calculations, out of the fourteen manwantara (or divine ages), each of which composed of twelve thousand years of the devas, multiplied by seventy-one, forms one period of creation — not quite seven are yet passed, the Hebrew calculation will become more clear. To help, as much as possible, those who will be sure to get a good deal bewildered in this calculation, we will remind the reader that the Zodiac is divided into 360 degrees, and every sign into thirty degrees; that in the Samaritan Bible the age of Enoch is fixed at 360 years; that in "Manu," the divisions of time are given thus: "The day and the night are composed of thirty *Mouhourta*. A *mouhourta* contains thirty *kalas*. A month of the mortals is of thirty days, but it is but one day of the *pitris*. . . . A year of the mortals is one day of the *Devas*."

every period of geological transformation, gives birth to another and distinct race of men and beings.

Cain leads the ascending line, or Macrocosm, for he is the Son of the "Lord," not of Adam (*Genesis* iv. 1). The "Lord" is Adam Kadmon, Cain, the Son of sinful thought, not the progeny of flesh and blood, Seth on the other hand is the leader of the races of earth, for he is the Son of Adam, and begotten "in his own likeness, after his image" (*Genesis* v. 3). Cain is Kenu, Assyrian, and means eldest, while the Hebrew word כִּנִּי means a Smith, an artificer.

Our science shows that the globe has passed through five distinct geological phases, each characterized by a different stratum, and these are in reverse order, beginning with the last: 1. The Quaternary period, in which man appears as a certainty; 2. The Tertiary period, in which he may have appeared; 3. Secondary period, that of gigantic saurians, the megalosaurus, ichthyosaurus, and plesiosaurus — no vestige of man; 4. The Palæozoic period, that of gigantic crustacea; 5 (or first). The Azoic period, during which science asserts organic life had not yet appeared.

And is there no possibility that there was a period, and several periods, when man existed, and yet was not an organic being — therefore could not have left any vestige of himself for exact science? Spirit leaves no skeletons or fossils behind, and yet few are the men on earth who doubt that man can live both objectively and subjectively. At all events, the theology of the Brahmans, hoary with antiquity, and which divides the formative periods of the earth into four ages, and places between each of these a lapse of 1,728,000 years, far more agrees with official science and modern discovery than the absurd chronological notions promulgated by the Councils of Nice and Trent.

The names of the patriarchs were not Hebrew, though they may have been Hebraized later; they are evidently of Assyrian or Aryan origin.

H.P. Blavatsky

*Isis Unveiled*, Vol. II 455-467

# ZODIACS OF ANCIENT INDIA AND EGYPT

"If modern masters are so much in advance of the old ones, why do they not restore to us the lost arts of our postdiluvian forefathers? Why do they not give us the unfading colours of Luxor – the Tyrian purple, the bright vermilion and dazzling blue which decorate the walls of this place, and are as bright as on the first day of their application? The indestructible cement of the pyramids and of ancient aqueducts; the Damascus blade, which can be turned like a corkscrew in its scabbard without breaking; the gorgeous, unparalleled tints of the stained glass that is found amid the dust of old ruins and beams in the windows of ancient cathedrals; and the secret of the true malleable glass? And if chemistry is so little able to rival even the early mediæval ages in some arts, why boast of achievements which, according to strong probability, were perfectly known thousands of years ago? The more archæology and philology advance, the more humiliating to our pride are the discoveries which are daily made, the more glorious testimony do they bear in behalf of those who, perhaps on account of the distance of their remote antiquity, have been until now considered ignorant flounders in the deepest mire of superstition."

*Isis Unveiled, I 239*

Among other arts and sciences, the ancients – aye, as an heirloom from the Atlanteans – had those of astronomy and symbolism, which included the knowledge of the Zodiac.

As already explained, the whole of antiquity believed, with good reason, that humanity and its races are all intimately connected with the planets, and these with Zodiacal signs. The whole world's History is recorded in the latter. In the ancient temples of Egypt this was proved by the Dendera Zodiac; but except in an Arabic work, the property of a *Sufi*, the writer has never met with a correct copy of these marvellous records of the past, as also of the *future*, history of our globe. Yet the original records exist, most undeniably.

As Europeans are unacquainted with the real Zodiacs of India, nor do they understand those they happen to know (witness Bentley), the reader is advised, in order to verify the statement, to turn to the work of Denon (*Travels in Egypt, Vol. II.*) in which, *if understood*, the two famous Egyptian Zodiacs, can be found and examined. Having seen them personally, the writer has no longer need to trust to what other students – who have examined and studied both very carefully – have to say of them. As asserted by the Egyptian Priests to Herodotus, who was informed that the terrestrial Pole and the Pole of the Ecliptic had formerly coincided, thus was it found and corroborated by Mackey.<sup>1</sup> For he states that the Poles are represented on the Zodiacs in both positions: "And in that which shows the Poles (polar axes) at right angles, there are marks which prove that 'it was not the last time they were in that position; *but the first*' – after the Zodiacs had been traced." "Capricorn," he adds, "is represented at the North Pole, and Cancer is divided, near its middle, at the South Pole, which is a confirmation that originally they had their winter when the Sun was in Cancer; but the chief characteristics of its being a monument commemorating the *first time* that the Pole had been in that position, are the Lion and the Virgin." (See in Part II, §"A Mystery of the Zodiac.")

Broadly calculated, it is believed by the Egyptologists that the great Pyramid was built 3,350 B.C. (See Proctor, *Knowledge*, Vol. I. pp. 242, 400); and that Menes and his Dynasty existed 750 years before the Fourth Dynasty (supposed to have built the Pyramids) had appeared ("*The Great Pyramid*," Staniland Wake). Thus 4,100 years B.C. is the age assigned to Menes. Now Sir J. Gardner Wilkinson's declaration that "*all the facts lead to the conclusion that the Egyptians had already made very great progress in the arts of civilization before the age of Menes, and perhaps before they immigrated*

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<sup>1</sup> "*The Mythological Astronomy of the Ancients Demonstrated*" by a strangely intuitional symbolologist and astronomer, a kind of a self-made adept of Norwich, who lived in the first quarter of this century.



into the valley of the Nile" (Rawlinson's "*Herodotus*," vol. ii. p. 345) is very suggestive, as destroying this hypothesis. It points to great civilization in *prehistoric* times, and a still greater antiquity. The *Schesoo-Hor* ("the servants of Horus") were the people who had settled in Egypt, and, as M. G. Maspero affirms, it is to this *prehistoric* race that "belongs the honour . . . of having founded the principal cities of Egypt, and established the most important sanctuaries." This was *before* the great Pyramid epoch, and when Egypt had hardly arisen from the waters. Yet "they possessed the hieroglyphic form of writing special to the Egyptians, and must have been already considerably advanced in civilization." It was, says Lenormant, "the country of the great prehistoric sanctuaries, seats of the sacerdotal dominion, which played the most important part in the origin of civilization." What is the date assigned to this people? We hear of 4,000, at the utmost of 5,000 years B.C. (Maspero). Now it is claimed that it is by means of the cycle of 25,868 years (the Sidereal year) that the approximate year of the erection of the Great Pyramid can be ascertained. "Assuming that the long narrow downward passage was directed towards the pole star of the pyramid builders, astronomers have shown that . . . . Alpha Draconis, the then pole-star, was in the required position about 3,350 B.C., as well as in 2,170 B.C. (Proctor, quoted by Staniland Wake.) But we are also told that "this relative position of Alpha Draconis and Alcyone being an extraordinary one . . . it could not occur again for a whole sidereal year" (*ibid*). This demonstrates that, since the Dendera Zodiac shows the passage of three sidereal years, the great Pyramid must have been built 78,000 years ago, or in any case that this possibility deserves to be accepted at least as readily as the later date of 3,350 B.C.

Now on the Zodiac of a certain temple in far Northern India, as on the Dendera Zodiac, the same characteristics of the signs are found. Those who know well the Hindu symbols and constellations, will be able to find out by the description of the Egyptian, whether the indications of the chronological time are correct or not. On the Dendera Zodiac as preserved by the modern Egyptian Coptic and Greek adepts, and explained a little differently

by Mackey, the Lion stands upon the *Hydra* and his tail is almost straight, pointing downwards at an angle of forty or fifty degrees, this position agreeing with the *original* conformation of these constellations. "But in many places we see the Lion (*Simha*)," Mackey adds, "with his tail turned up over his back, and ending with a Serpent's head; thereby showing that the Lion had been '*inverted*'; which, indeed, must have been the case with the whole Zodiac and every other Constellation, when the Pole had been inverted."

Speaking of the *Circular* Zodiac, given also by Denon, he says: There, "the Lion is standing *on* the Serpent, and his tail forming a curve downward, from which it is found that *though six or seven hundred thousand years* must have passed between the two positions, yet they had made but little difference between in the constellations of Leo and the Hydra; while *Virgo* is represented very differently in the two. In the *circular* Zodiac, the *Virgin* is nursing her child; but it seems that they had not had that idea when the pole was first within the plane of the Ecliptic; for in *this* Zodiac, as given by Denon, we see *three Virgins* between the Lion and the Scales, *the last of which holds in her hand* an ear of wheat. It is much to be lamented that there is in this Zodiac a breach of the figure in the latter part of Leo and the *beginning of Virgo* which has taken away one *Decan* out of each sign."

Nevertheless, the meaning is plain, as the three Zodiacs belong to three different epochs: namely, to the last three family races of the fourth Sub-race of the Fifth Root-race, each of which must have lived approximately from 25 to 30,000 years. The first of these (the "Aryan-Asiatics") witnessed the doom of the last of the populations of the "giant Atlanteans" <sup>2</sup> who perished some 850,000 years ago

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<sup>2</sup> The term "Atlantean" must not mislead the reader to regard these as one race only, or even a nation. It is as though one said "Asiatics." Many, multi-typed, and various were the Atlanteans, who represented several *humanities*, and almost a countless number of races and nations, more varied indeed than would be the "Europeans" were this name to be given

(the Ruta and Daitya Island-Continents) toward the close of the Miocene Age. <sup>3</sup> The fourth sub-race witnessed the destruction of the last remnant of the Atlanteans – the Aryo-Atlanteans in the last island of Atlantis, namely, some 11,000 years ago. In order to understand this, the reader is asked to glance at the diagram of the genealogical tree of the Fifth Root-Race (*vide Secret Doctrine*, ii 434) – generally, though hardly correctly, called the Aryan race, and the explanations appended to it.

*The Secret Doctrine*, ii 431

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indiscriminately to the five existing parts of the world; which, at the rate colonization is proceeding, will be the case, perhaps, in less than two or three hundred years. There were brown, red, yellow, white and black Atlanteans; giants and dwarfs (as some African tribes comparatively are, even now).

<sup>3</sup> Says a teacher in "*Esoteric Buddhism*," on p. 64: "In the Eocene age, even in its very first part, the great cycle of the fourth race men the (Lemuro) Atlanteans had already reached its highest point (of civilization), and the great continent, the father of nearly all the present continents, showed the first symptoms of sinking. . . ." And on page 70, it is shown that Atlantis as a whole perished during the Miocene period. To show how the continents, races, nations and cycles overlap each other, one has but to think of Lemuria, the last of whose lands perished about 700,000 years before the beginning of the Tertiary period (see p. 65 of the same work), and the last of "Atlantis" only 11,000 years ago; thus both overlapping – one the Atlantean period, and the other the Aryan.

# TWO LOST KEYS: THE BHAGAVAD-GITA - THE ZODIAC

It has never been admitted by orientalists that there existed a key to the *Bhagavad-Gita*, other than a knowledge of the Sanskrit language in which it is written. Hence our European translators of the poem have given but its philosophical aspect.

But it is believed by many students of Theosophy - among them such an authority as H. P. Blavatsky - that there are several keys to the noble poem, and that they have been for the time lost to the world. There has been no loss of them in the absolute sense, since they are preserved intact in many rolls and books made of polished stones hidden and guarded in certain underground temples in the East, the location of which would not be divulged by those who know. No search has been made by the profane for these wonderful books, because there is no belief in their existence; and for the sincere student who can project his mental sight in the right direction, there is no need for such discovery of the mere outward form in which those keys are kept.

There is also a key for the Zodiac. The modern astrologers and astronomers have lifted up their puny voices to declare regarding the probable origin of the Zodiac, giving a very commonplace explanation, and some going so far as to speak of the supposed author of it, not that they have named him or given him a distinct place in history, but only referred to the unknown *individual*. It is very much to be doubted if these modern star-gazers would have been able to construct anything whatever in the way of a Zodiac, had they not had this immemorial arrangement of signs ready to hand.

The *Bhagavad-Gita* and the Zodiac, while differing so much from each other in that the one is a book and the other the sun's path in the heavens, are two great storehouses of knowledge which may be

construed after the same method. It is very true that the former is now in book shape, but that is only because the necessities of study under conditions which have prevailed for some thousands of years require it, but it exists in the ideal world imbedded in the evolutionary history of the human race. Were all copies of it destroyed tomorrow, the materials for their reconstruction are near at hand and could be regathered by those sages who know the realities underlying all appearances. And in the same way the Zodiac could be regathered by those sages who know the realities underlying all appearances. And in the same way the Zodiac could be made over again by the same sages - not, however, by our modern astronomers. The latter no doubt would be able to construct a path of the sun with certain classifications of stars thereon, but it would not be the Zodiac; it would bear but little relation to the great cosmic and microcosmic periods and events which that path really has. They would not apply it as it is found used in old and new almanacs to the individual human being, for they do not know that it can in any way be so connected, since their system hardly admits any actual sympathy between man and the Zodiac, not yet having come to know that man is himself a zodiacal highway through which his own particular sun makes a circuit.

Considering how laughable in the eyes of the highly-educated scientific person of today the singular figures and arrangement of the Zodiac are, it is strange that they have not long ago abolished it all. But they seem unable to do so. For some mysterious reason the almanacs still contain the old signs, and the moon's periods continue to be referred to in these ancient figures. Indeed, modern astronomers still use the old symbology and give to each new asteroid a symbol precisely in line with the ancient zodiacal marks so familiar to us. They could not abolish them were the effort to be made.

The student of the *Bhagavad-Gita* soon begins to feel that there is somewhere a key to the poem, something that will open up clearly the vague thoughts of greater meanings which constantly rise in his mind. After a while he is able to see that in a philosophical and

devotional sense the verses are full of meaning, but under it all there runs a deep suggestiveness of some other and grander sweep for its words. This is what the lost key will reveal.

But who has that key or where it is hidden is not yet revealed, for it is said by those who know the Brotherhood that man is not yet in the mass ready for the full explanation to be put into his hands. For the present it is enough for the student to study the path to devotion, which, when found, will lead to that belonging to knowledge.

And so of the Zodiac. As our acquaintance, through devotion and endeavor, with the journey of our own sun through our own human zodiac grows better, we will learn the meaning of the great pilgrimage of the earthly luminary. For it is impossible in this study to learn a little of ourselves without knowing more of the great system of which we are a copy.

*For Atmân is the sun,  
The moon also it is;  
And the whole collection of stars  
Is contained within it.*

*Path, August, 1890*

William Brehon, F.T.S.

# THE THEORY OF CYCLES

It is now some time since this theory, which was first propounded in the oldest religion of the world, Vedaism, then taught by various Greek philosophers, and afterwards defended by the Theosophists of the Middle Ages, but which came to be flatly denied by the *wise men* of the West, like everything else, in this world of negation, has been gradually coming into prominence again. This once, contrary to the rule, it is the men of science themselves who take up. Statistics of events of the most varied nature are fast being collected and collated with the seriousness demanded by important scientific questions. Statistics of wars and of the periods (or cycles) of the appearance of great men – at least those as have been recognised as such by their contemporaries and irrespective of later opinions; statistics of the periods of development and progress at large commercial centres; of the rise and fall of arts and sciences; of cataclysms, such as earthquakes, epidemics periods of extraordinary cold and heat; cycles of revolutions, and of the rise and fall of empires, &c.; all these are subjected turn to the analysis of the minutest mathematical calculations. Finally, even the occult significance of numbers in names of persons and names of cities, in events, and like matters, receives unwonted attention. If, on the one hand, a great portion of the educated public is running into atheism and scepticism, on the other hand, we find an evident current of mysticism forcing its way into science. It is the sign of an irrepressible need in humanity to assure itself that there is a Power Paramount over matter; an occult and mysterious law which governs the world, and which we should rather study and closely watch, trying to adapt ourselves to it, than blindly deny, and break our heads against the rock of destiny. More than one thoughtful mind, while studying the fortunes and verses of nations and great empires, has been deeply struck by one identical feature in their history, namely, the inevitable recurrence of similar historical events reaching in turn every one of them, and after the same lapse of time. This analogy is

found between the events to be substantially the same on the whole, though there may be more or less difference as to the outward form of details. Thus, the belief of the ancients in their astrologers, soothsayers and prophets might have been warranted by the verification of many of their most important predictions, without these prognostications of future events implying of necessity anything very miraculous in themselves. The soothsayers and augurs having occupied in days of the old civilizations the very same position now occupied by our historians, astronomers and meteorologists, there was nothing more wonderful in the fact of the former predicting the downfall of an empire or the loss of a battle, than in the latter predicting the return of a comet, a change of temperature, or, perhaps, the final conquest of Afghanistan. The necessity for both these classes being acute, observers apart, there was the study of certain sciences to be pursued *then* as well as they are *now*. The science of today will have become an "ancient" science a thousand years hence. Free and open, scientific study now is to all, whereas it was then confined but to the few. Yet, whether ancient or modern, both may be called exact sciences; for, if the astronomer of today draws his observations from mathematical calculations, the astrologer of old also based his prognostication upon no less acute and mathematically correct observations of the ever-recurring cycles. And, because the secret of this science is now being lost, does that give any warrant to say that it never existed, or that, to believe in it, one must be ready to swallow "magic," "miracles" and the like stuff? "If, in view of the eminence to which modern science has reached, the claim to prophesy future events must be regarded as either a child's play or a deliberate deception," says a writer in the *Novoyé Vremya*, the best daily paper of literature and politics of St. Petersburg, "then we can point at science which, in its turn, has now taken up and placed on record the question, in its relation to past events, whether there is or is not in the constant repetition of events a certain periodicity; in other words, whether these events recur after a fixed and determined period of years with every nation; and if a periodicity there be, whether this periodicity is due to blind chance or depends on the same natural laws, on



which are more or less dependent many of the phenomena of human life." Undoubtedly the latter. And the writer has the best mathematical proof of it in the timely appearance of such works as that of Dr. E. Zasse, under review, and of a few others. Several learned works, treating upon this mystical subject, have appeared of late, and of some of these works and calculations we will now treat; the more readily as they are in most cases from the pens of men of eminent learning. Having already in the June number of the THEOSOPHIST noticed an article by Dr. Blohvitz *On the significance of the number Seven*,<sup>1</sup> with every nation and people – a learned paper which appeared lately in the German journal *Die Gegenwart* – we will now summarize the opinions of the press in general, on a more suggestive work by a well-known German scientist, E. Zasse, with certain reflections of our own. It has just appeared in the *Prussian Journal of Statistics*, and powerfully corroborates the ancient theory of Cycles. These periods, which bring around ever-recurring events, begin from the infinitesimal small – say of ten years – rotation and reach to cycles which require 250, 500, 700 and 1000 years, to effect their revolutions around themselves, and within one another. All are contained within the *Máhá-Yug*, the "Great Age" or Cycle of the Manu calculation, which itself revolves between two eternities – the "Pralayas" or *Nights of Brahma*. As, in the objective world of matter, or the system of effects, the minor constellations and planets gravitate each and all around the sun, so in the world of the subjective, or the system of causes, these innumerable cycles all gravitate between that which the finite intellect of the ordinary mortal regards as eternity, and the still finite, but more profound, intuition of the sage and philosopher views as but an eternity within THE ETERNITY. "As above, so it is below," runs the old Hermetic maxim. As an experiment in his direction, Dr. Zasse selected the statistical investigations of all the wars, the occurrence of which has been recorded in history, as a subject which lends itself more easily to scientific verification than any other. To

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<sup>1</sup> See Volume I of *Theosophist*, pp. 345-50.

illustrate his subject in the simplest and most easily comprehensible way, Dr. Zasse represents the periods of war and the periods of peace in the shape of small and large wave-lines running over the area of the old world. The idea is not new one, for, the image was used for similar illustrations by more than one ancient and mediaeval mystic, whether in words or picture – by Henry Kunrath, for example. But it serves well its purpose and gives us the facts we now want. Before he treats, however, of the cycles of wars, the author brings in the record of the rise and fall of the world's great empires, and shows the degree of activity they have played in the Universal History. He points out the fact that if we divide the map of the Old World into five parts – into Eastern, Central, and Western Asia, Eastern and Western Europe, and Egypt – then we will easily perceive that every 250 years, an enormous wave passes over these areas, bringing into each in its turn the events it has brought to the one next preceding. This wave we may call "the historical wave" of the 250 years' cycle. The reader will please follow this mystical number of years.

The first of these waves began in China, 2,000 years B.C. – the "golden age" of this Empire, the age of philosophy, of discoveries and reforms. "In 1750 B.C., the Mongolians of Central Asia establish a powerful empire. In 1500, Egypt rises from its temporary degradation and carries its sway over many parts of Europe and Asia; and about 1250, the historical wave reaches and crosses over to Eastern Europe, filling it with the spirit of the Argonautic expedition, and dies out in 1000 B.C. at the siege of Troy."

A second historical wave appears about that time in Central Asia. "The Scythians leave her steppes, and inundate towards the year 750 B.C. the adjoining countries, directing themselves towards the South and West; about the year 500 in Western Asia begins an epoch of splendour for ancient Persia; and the wave moves on to the east of Europe, where, about 250 B.C., Greece reaches her highest state of culture and civilization – and further on to the West, where, at the birth of Christ, the Roman Empire finds itself at its apogee of power and greatness."

Again, at this period we find the rising of a third historical wave at the far East. After prolonged revolutions, about this time, China forms once more a powerful empire, and its arts, sciences and commerce flourish again. Then 250 years later, we find the Huns appearing from the depths of Central Asia; in the year 500 A.D. a new and powerful Persian kingdom is formed; in 750 – in Eastern Europe – the Byzantine empire; and, in the year 1,000 – on its western side – springs up the second Roman Power, the Empire of the Papacy, which soon reaches an extraordinary development of wealth and brilliancy.

At the same time, the *fourth* wave approaches from the Orient. China is again flourishing; in 1250, the Mongolian wave from Central Asia has overflowed and covered an enormous area of land, including with it Russia. About 1500, in Western Asia, the Ottoman Empire rises in all its might and conquers the Balkan peninsula; but at the same time in Eastern Europe, Russia throws off the Tartar yoke, and about 1750, during the reign of Empress Catherine, rises to an unexpected grandeur and covers itself with glory. The wave ceaselessly moves further on to the West, and, beginning with the middle of the past century, Europe is living over an epoch of revolutions and reforms, and, according to the author, "if it is permissible to prophesize, then, about the year 2,000, Western Europe will have lived one of those periods of culture and progress so rare in history." The Russian press, taking the cue, believes that "towards those days the Eastern Question will be finally settled, the national dissensions of the European peoples will come to an end, and the dawn of the new millennium will witness the abolishment of armies and an alliance between all the European empires." The signs of regeneration are also fast multiplying in Japan and China, as if pointing to the approach of a new historical wave at the extreme East.

If, from the cycle of two-and-a-half century duration, we descend to those which leave their impress every century, and, grouping together the events of ancient history, will mark the development and rise of empires, then we will assure ourselves that, beginning

from the year 700 B.C., the centennial wave pushes forward, bringing into prominence the following nations – each in its turn – the Assyrians, the Medes, the Babylonians, the Persians, the Greeks, the Macedonians, the Carthaginians, the Romans and the Germanians.

The striking periodicity of the wars in Europe is also noticed by Dr. E. Zasse. Beginning with 1700 A.D., every ten years have been signalized by either a war or a revolution. The periods of the strengthening and weakening of the warlike excitement of the European nations represent a wave strikingly regular in its periodicity, flowing incessantly, as if propelled onward by some invisible fixed law. This same mysterious law seems at the same time to make these events coincide with astronomical wave or cycle, which, at every new revolution, is accompanied by the very marked appearance of spots in the sun. The periods, when the European powers have shown the most destructive energy, are marked by a cycle of 50 years' duration. It would be too long and tedious to enumerate them from the beginning of History. We may, therefore, limit our study to the cycle beginning with the year 1712, when *all* the European nations were fighting at the same time – the Northern, and the Turkish wars, and the war for the throne of Spain. About 1761, the "Seven Years' War"; in 1810 the wars of Napoleon I. Towards 1861, the wave has a little deflected from its regular course, but, as if to compensate for it, or, propelled, perhaps, with unusual forces, the years directly preceding, as well as those which followed it, left in history the records of the most fierce and bloody war – the Crimean war – in the former period, and the American Rebellion in the latter one. The periodicity in the wars between Russia and Turkey appears peculiarly striking and represents a very characteristic wave. At first the intervals between the cycles, returning upon themselves, are of thirty years' duration – 1710, 1740, 1770; then these intervals diminish, and we have a cycle of twenty years – 1790, 1810, 1829-30; then the intervals widen again – 1853 and 1878. But, if we take note of the whole duration of the in-flowing tide of the warlike cycle, then we will have at the

centre of it – from 1768 to 1812 – three wars of seven years' duration each, and, at both ends, wars of two years.

Finally, the author comes to the conclusion that, in view of facts, it becomes thoroughly impossible to deny the presence of a regular periodicity in the excitement of both mental and physical forces in the nations of the world. He proves that in the history of all the peoples and empires of the Old World, the cycles marking the millenniums, the centennials as well as the minor ones of 50 and 10 years' duration, are the most important, inasmuch as neither of them has ever yet failed to bring in its rear some more or less marked event in the history of the nation swept over by these historical waves.

The history of India is one which, of all histories, is the most vague and least satisfactory. Yet, were its consecutive great events noted down, and its annals well searched, the law of cycles would be found to have asserted itself here as plainly as in every other country in respect of its wars, famines, political exigencies and other matters.

In France, a meteorologist of Paris went to the trouble of compiling the statistics of the coldest seasons, and discovered, at the same time, that those years, which had the figure 9 in them, had been marked by the severest winters. His figures run thus: In 859 A.D., the northern part of the Adriatic sea was frozen and was covered for three months with ice. In 1179, in the most moderate zones, the earth was covered with several feet of snow. In 1209, in France, the depth of snow and the bitter cold caused such a scarcity of fodder that most of the cattle perished in that country. In 1249, the Baltic Sea, between Russia, Norway and Sweden remained frozen for many months and communication was held by sleighs. In 1339, there was such a terrific winter in England, that vast numbers of people died of starvation and exposure. In 1409, the river Danube was frozen from its sources to its mouth in the Black Sea. In 1469 all the vineyards and orchards perished in consequence of the frost. In 1609, in France, Switzerland and Upper Italy, people had to thaw their bread and provisions before they could use them.

In 1639, the harbour of Marseilles was covered with ice to a great distance. In 1659 all the rivers in Italy were frozen. In 1699 the winter in France and Italy proved the severest and longest of all. The prices for articles of food were so much raised that half of the population died of starvation. In 1709 the winter was no less terrible. The ground was frozen in France, Italy and Switzerland, to the depth of several feet, and the sea, south as well as north, was covered with one compact and thick crust of ice, many feet deep, and for a considerable space of miles, in the usually open sea. Masses of wild beasts, driven out by the cold from their dens in the forests, sought refuge in villages and even cities; and the birds fell dead to the ground by hundreds. In 1729, 1749 and 1769 (cycles of 20 years' duration) all the rivers and streams were ice-bound all over France for many weeks, and all the fruit trees perished. In 1789, France was again visited by a very severe winter. In Paris, the thermometer stood at 19 degrees of frost. But the severest of all winters proved that of 1829. For fifty-four consecutive days, all the roads in France were covered with snow several feet deep, and all the rivers were frozen. Famine and misery reached their climax in the country in that year. In 1839 there was again in France a most terrific and trying cold season. And now the winter of 1879 has asserted its statistical rights and proved true to the fatal influence of the figure 9. The meteorologists of other countries are invited to follow suit and make their investigations likewise, for the subject is certainly one of the most fascinating as well as instructive kind.

Enough has been shown, however, to prove that neither the ideas of Pythagoras on the mysterious influence of numbers, nor the theories of ancient world-religions and philosophies are as shallow and meaningless as some too forward free-thinkers would have had the world to believe.

*Theosophist*, July, 1880

H. P. Blavatsky

# CYCLES

A PAPER READ BY WILLIAM Q. JUDGE BEFORE

THE ARYAN T. S., OCTOBER 22, 1889

IN advancing these few observations upon the doctrine of cycles, no claim to an exhaustive study of the matter is made. This paper is merely by way of suggestion.

The subject was brought before my mind by our discussion some evenings ago, when the question of the descent upon earth, or ascent from it, of celestial beings or progressed souls engaged our attention. It seemed certain that such ascent and descent were governed by cyclic laws, and therefore proceeded in regular periods. Some sentences from the *Wisdom of the Egyptians* by Synesius in matter furnished me by Bro. Chas. Johnston, now of India, read:

After Osiris, therefore, was initiated by his father into the royal mysteries, the gods informed him . . . that a strong tribe of envious and malignant damons were present with Typhos as his patrons, to whom he was allied and by whom he was hurled forth into light, in order that they might employ him as an instrument of the evil which they inflict on mankind. For the calamities of nations are the banquets of the evil damons.

Yet you must not think that the gods are without employment, or that their descent to this earth is perpetual. For they *descend according to orderly periods of time*, for the purpose of imparting a beneficent impulse in the republics of mankind. But this happens when they harmonize a kingdom and send to this earth for that purpose souls who are allied to themselves. For this providence is divine and most ample, which frequently through one man pays attention to and affects countless multitudes of men.

For there is indeed in the terrestrial abode the sacred tribe of heroes who pay attention to mankind, and who are able to give

them assistance even in the smallest concerns. . . . This heroic tribe is, as it were, a colony from the gods established here in order that this terrene abode may not be left destitute of a better nature. But when matter excites her own proper blossoms to war against the soul, the resistance made by these heroic tribes is small when the gods are absent; for everything is strong only in its appropriate place and time. . . . But when the harmony adapted in the beginning by the gods to all terrene things becomes old, they descend again to earth that they may call the harmony forth, energize and resuscitate it when it is as it were expiring. . . . When, however, the whole order of mundane things, greatest and least, is corrupted, then it is necessary that the gods should descend for the purpose of imparting another orderly distribution of things.

And in the *Bhagavad Gita* it is said by Krishna:

When Righteousness  
Declines, O Bharata! When Wickedness  
Is strong, I rise, from age to age, and take  
Visible shape, and move a man with men,  
Succoring the good and thrusting the evil back,  
And setting Virtue on her seat again,

And:

At the approach of Brahma's day, which ends after a thousand ages, all manifested objects come forth from the non-developed principle. At the approach of Brahmas night they are absorbed in the original principle. This collective mass of existing things, thus coming forth out of the absolute again and again, is dissolved at the approach of that night; and at the approach of a new day it emanates again spontaneously.

In the foregoing quotations two great aspects of cyclic law are stated.

The latter has reference to the great cycle which includes all cycles of every kind. All the minor cycles run their course within it. When it begins a new creation is ushered in, and when it ends the great day of dissolution has arrived. In Arnold's translation of the *Bhagavad Gita* the beginning of this great cycle is beautifully called by him "*this vast Dawn*," and of the close he reads:



When that deep night doth darken, all which is  
Fades back again to Him who sent it forth.

The real figures expressing the mortal years included in this period are not given. Each Manwantara, according to the Hindus, is divided into the four Yugas or Ages, with a certain number of years allotted to each. Speaking on this subject in the *Key to Theosophy* (page 83), H. P. Blavatsky gives us a clue thus:

Take as a first comparison and a help towards a more correct conception, the solar year; and as a second, the two halves of that year, producing each a day and a night of six months duration at the North Pole. Now imagine, if you can, instead of a solar year of 365 days, ETERNITY. Let the sun represent the universe, and the polar days and nights of six months each - days and nights lasting each 182 trillions and quadrillions of years instead of 182 days each. As the sun rises every morning on our objective horizon out of its (to us) subjective and antipodal space, so does the Universe emerge periodically on the plane of objectivity, issuing from that of subjectivity - the antipodes of the former. This is the "Cycle of Life." And as the sun disappears from our horizon, so does the Universe disappear at regular periods when the "Universal Night" sets in . . .

This is about the best idea we can get of it. It is impossible for the human mind to conceive these periods. No brain can grasp 182 trillions of years, much less if quadrillions are added. Few if any persons can mentally traverse the full extent of even *a million*. But we can make an approximation to the idea by using her suggestion of dividing the year and calling six months a day and six months a night, and then extending each into what is equivalent to infinity with us, since it is impossible to seize such immense periods of time.

And carrying out the correspondence suggested by her, we have at once a figure of the inclusion of all the minor cycles, by calling each day when we rise and night when we sleep as the beginning and ending of minor cycles. Those days and nights go to make up our years and our life. We know each day and can calculate it, and fairly well throw the mind forward to see a year or perhaps a life.

A quotation from Vol. I., at 31 of *Isis Unveiled* will give us the Indian figures. She says:

The Maha-Kalpa embraces an untold number of periods far back in the antediluvian ages. Their system comprises a Kalpa or grand period of 4,320,000,000 years which they divide into four lesser yugas running as follows:

Satya yug	-----	1,728,000 years
Treta yug	-----	1,296,000 years
Dwapara yug	-----	864,000 years
Kali yug	-----	432,000 years
		<hr/>
		4,320,000

which make one divine age or Maha yuga; seventy-one Maha Yugas make 306,720,000 years, to which is added a sandhi, or twilight, equal to a Satya yuga or 1,728,000 years, to make a manwantara of 308,448,000 years. Fourteen manwantaras make 4,318,272,000 years, to which must be added a sandhyamsa or dawn, 1,728,000, making the Kalpa or grand period of 4,320,000,000. As we are now (1878) only in the Kali Yuga of the 28th age of the 7th manwantara of 308,448,000 years, we have yet sufficient time before us to wait before we reach even half of the time allotted to the world.

Further H. P. Blavatsky clearly states that the other cycles are carried out within this greater one, as at 34, Vol. I.

As our planet revolves once every year around the sun and at the same time once in every 24 hours upon its own axis, thus traversing minor cycles within a larger one, so is the work of the smaller cyclic periods accomplished and recommenced within the Great Saros.

Leaving the region of mathematics, we find this great period represents the extension of pigmy man into the vast proportions of the great man, whose death at the close of the allotted period means the resolving of all things back into the absolute. Each of the years of this Being embraces of our years so many that we cannot comprehend them. Each day of his years brings on a minor cataclysm among men; for at the close of each one of his days,

metaphorically he sleeps. And we, as it were, imitating this Being, fall asleep at night or after our diurnal period of activity.

We are as minor cells in the great body of this Being, and must act obediently to the impulses and movements of the body in which we are enclosed and take part.

This greater man has a period of childhood, of youth, of manhood, of old age; and as the hour arrives for the close of each period, cataclysms take place over all the earth. And just as our own future is concealed from our view, so the duration of the secret cycle which shows the length of life of this Being is hidden from the sight of mortals.

We must not, however, fall into the error of supposing that there is but one of such great Beings. There are many, each being evolved at the beginning of a new creation. But here we touch upon a portion of the ancient philosophy which is fully explained only to those who are able to understand it by virtue of many initiations.

The Sandhya and Sandhyamsa referred to in the quotation taken from *Isis Unveiled* are respectively the twilight and the dawn, each being said to be of the same length and containing the same number of years as the first or golden age - *i.e.*, 1,728,000. It is in strict correspondence with our own solar day which has its twilight and dawn between day and night.

In going over the figures of the four ages, a peculiarity is noticed to which I refer at present as merely a curiosity. It is this:

The digits of Satya Yug 1. 7. 2. 8. Added together make 18; those of Treta Yug 1. 2. 9. 6 make 18; those of Dwapara Yug 8. 6. 4 make 18; while those of Kali Yug 4. 3. 2 sum up only 9; but if those of the grand total of 4,320,000 be added together they make 9, and that with Kali give 18 again. 18 is a number peculiar to Krishna in the *Bhagavad Gita*, and the poem has 18 chapters in it. If the three 18's and one 9 found as above be added together, the result will be 63, and  $3 \times 6 = 18$ , and if added make 9, and 18 added gives nine. If we multiply the three 18's and 9 produced from the different ages, we get 5.8. 3. 2. Which, if treated as before, give 18 again. And in the

process of thus multiplying we discover a recurrence of the three eighteens and one 9, only inverted, as: The first 18 multiplied by the second one gives 3. 2. 4, which added results in 9; 324 multiplied by the third 18 gives 5.8. 3. 2, which being added gives 18; and the product of the multiplication of 5,832 by 9, which is the result of adding the figures of Kali Yuga, is 5.8. 4. 1, which on being added gives 18 again.<sup>1</sup> Now, as the last of these apparently fanciful operations, let us add together the results gained by multiplying the figures which were obtained during the various steps we have gone through and then adding the results.

The first figures are 1x8 =	-----	8
The second 3x2x4 =	-----	24
The third 5x8x3x2 =	-----	240
The fourth 5x8x4x1 =	-----	160
		<hr/>
These added together give	-----	4.3.2
which are the digits of Kali Yuga.		

Now turning to *Isis Unveiled* at p. 32 of Vol. 1, we find this remarkable paragraph:

Higgins justly believed that the cycle of the Indian system, of 432,000, is the true key of the secret cycle.

But in the following paragraph she declares it cannot be revealed. However, we may get some clues, for we see in the figures of Kali Yuga, 432,000, and in the great total (leaving out the Sandhis), 4,320,000. What this secret cycle is, I, however, am not competent to say. I only desire to throw out the hints.

Having thus glanced over the doctrine of the great cycle which includes all others, let us now devote a little consideration to the cycle referred to in the passages from the Egyptian Wisdom first quoted.

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<sup>1</sup> Readers may not be able to perform the calculations exactly as stated in the article as some of the original steps have been lost. [Ed.]

This cycle may be called for the present purpose The Cycle of Descending Celestial Influences. By "descending" I mean descending upon us.

Osiris here signifies most probably the good side of nature, and his brother Typhos the evil. Both must appear together. Typhos is sometimes called in the Egyptian books the opposer, and later with us, is known as the Devil. This appearance of Typhos at the same time with Osiris is paralleled in the history of the Indian Krishna who was a white Adept, for at the same time there also reigned a powerful Black magician named Kansa, who sought to destroy Krishna in the same way as Typhos conspired against the life of Osiris. And Rama also, in Hindu lore the great Adept or ruling god, was opposed by Ravana, the powerful Black magician king.

In instructing Osiris after the initiation, the gods foresaw two questions that might arise within him and which will also come before us. The first is the idea that if the gods are alive and do not mingle with men to the advantage of the latter and for the purpose of guiding them, then they must necessarily be without any employment. Such a charge has been made against the Beings who are said to live in the Himalayas, possessed of infinite knowledge and power. If, say the public, they know so much, why do not they come among us; and as they do not so come, then they must be without employment, perpetually brooding over nothing.

The instructor answered this in advance by showing how these Beings – called gods – governed mankind through efficient causes proceeding downward by various degrees; the gods being perpetually concerned in their proper sphere with those things relating to them, and which in their turn moved other causes that produced appropriate effects upon the earth, and themselves only coming directly into earthly relations when that became necessary at certain "orderly periods of time," upon the complete disappearance of harmony which would soon be followed by destruction if not restored. Then the gods themselves descend. This is after the revolution of many smaller cycles. The same is said in *Bhagavad-Gita*.

But frequently during the minor cycles it is necessary, as the *Egyptian Wisdom* says, "to impart a beneficent impulse in the republics of mankind." This can be done by using less power than would be dissipated were a celestial Being to descend upon earth, and here the doctrine of the influence among us of Nirmanakayas<sup>2</sup> or Gnanis is supported in the Egyptian scheme in these words:

For there is indeed in the terrestrial abode the sacred tribe of heroes, who pay attention to mankind, and who are able to give them assistance even in the smallest concerns.

This heroic tribe is, as it were, a colony from the gods established here in order that this terrene abode may not be left destitute of a better nature.

These "heroes" are none other than Nirmanakayas, Adepts of this or previous Manwantaras who remain here in various states or conditions. Some are not using bodies at all, but keep spirituality alive among men in all parts of the world; and others are actually using bodies in the world. Who the latter are it would of course be impossible for me to know, and if I had the information, to give it out would be improper.

And among this "sacred tribe of heroes" must be classed other souls. They are those who, although now inhabiting bodies and moving among men, have passed through many occult initiations in previous lives, but are now condemned, as it were, to the penance of living in circumstances and in bodies that hem them in, as well as for a time make them forget the glorious past. But their influence is always felt, even if they themselves are not aware of it. For their higher nature being in fact more developed than that of other men, it influences other natures at night or in hours of the day when all is favorable. The fact that these *obscured adepts* are not aware now of what they really are, only has to do with their memory of the past; it does not follow, because a man cannot remember his initiations, that he has had none. But there are some

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<sup>2</sup> For more on Nirmanakayas, "*The Voice of the Silence*".

cases in which we can judge with a degree of certainty that such adepts were incarnated and what they were named. Take Thomas Vaughan, Raymond Lully, Sir Thomas More, Jacob Boehme, Paracelsus, and others like them, including also some of the Roman Catholic saints. These souls were as witnesses to the truth, leaving through the centuries, in their own nations, evidences for those who followed, and suggestions for keeping spirituality bright seed-thoughts, as it were, ready for the new mental soil. And as well as these historical characters, there are countless numbers of men and women now living who have passed through certain initiations during their past lives upon earth, and who produce effects in many directions quite unknown to themselves now. They are, in fact, old friends of "the sacred tribe of heroes," and can therefore be more easily used for the spreading of influences and the carrying out of effects necessary for the preservation of spirituality in this age of darkness. We find in our present experience a parallel to this forgetting of previous initiations. There is hardly one of us who has not passed through circumstances in early life, all of which we have forgotten, but which ever since sensibly affect our thoughts and life. Hence the only point about which any question can be raised is that of reincarnation. If we believe in that doctrine, there is no great difficulty in admitting that many of us may have been initiated to some extent and forgotten it for the time. In connection with this we find in the 2d volume of *The Secret Doctrine*, at page 302, some suggestive words. The author says:

Now that which the students of Occultism ought to know is that the "third eye" is indissolubly connected with Karma.

In the case of the Atlanteans, it was precisely the Spiritual being which sinned, the Spirit element being still the "Master" principle in man, in those days. *Thus it is in those days that the heaviest Karma of the Fifth Race was generated by our Monads..*

Hence the assertion that many of us are now working off the effects of the evil Karmic causes *produced by us in Atlantean bodies.*

In another place she puts the date of the last Atlantean destruction as far back as 11,000 years ago, and describes them as a people of immense knowledge and power. If we allow about 1,000

years for our period in Devachan, we will have only passed through some eleven incarnations since then; and supposing that many more have been our lot – as is my opinion, then we have to place ourselves among those wonderful though wicked people at the height of their power. Granting that we were guilty of the sinful practices of the days in which we then lived, and knowing the effect of Karma, it must follow that since then we have passed through many very disagreeable and painful lives, resembling by analogy dreadful situations in the years between youth and maturity. No wonder, then, if for the time we have forgotten outwardly what we then learned.

But all these historical personages to whom I have referred were living in a dark cycle that affected Europe only. These cycles do not cover the whole of the human race, fortunately for it, but run among the nations influenced for the allotted period, while other peoples remain untouched. Thus while Europe was in darkness, all India was full of men, kings and commoners alike, who possessed the true philosophy; for a different cycle was running there.

And such is the law as formulated by the best authorities. It is held that these cycles do not include the whole of mankind at any one time. In this paper I do not purpose to go into figures, for that requires a very careful examination of the deeds and works of numerous historical personages in universal history, so as to arrive by analysis at correct periods.

It is thought by many that the present is a time when preparation is being made by the most advanced of the "sacred tribe of heroes" for a new cycle in which the assistance of a greater number of progressed souls from other spheres may be gained for mankind. Indeed, in *Isis Unveiled* this is plainly stated.

Writing in 1878, Madame Blavatsky says in Vol. I of *Isis*:

Unless we mistake the signs, the day is approaching when the world will receive the proofs that only ancient religions were in harmony with nature, and ancient science embraced all that can be known. Secrets long-kept may be revealed; books long-forgotten and arts long-time-lost may be brought out to light again; papyri



and parchments of inestimable importance will turn up in the hands of men who pretend to have unrolled them from mummies or stumbled upon them in buried crypts; tablets and pillars, whose sculptured revelations will stagger theologians and confound scientists, may yet be excavated and interpreted. Who knows the possibilities of the future? An era of disenchantment and rebuilding will soon begin - nay, has already begun. The cycle has almost run its course; a new one is about to begin, and the future pages of history may contain full proof that -

If ancestry can be in aught believed,  
Descending spirits have conversed with man  
And told him secrets of the world unknown.

Now the way to get at the coming on of the period or close of a larger cycle without wandering in the mazes of figures, is to regard the history and present state of mankind as known.

Thus in the darker age of Europe we find India almost unknown and America wholly so. That was a period when cycles were operating apart from each other, for men were separated from and ignorant of each other. In these continents there were great and powerful nations ruling in both North and South America, but they were not in communication with Europe or India.

Now, however, China knows of and communicates with England and America, and even dark Africa has constant visitors from all civilized nations, and to some extent is affected by us. Doubtless in the greater number of towns in Africa the white man and his doings are more or less like fables, but we with larger knowledge know that those fables rest upon the *fact* of our explorations there.

Judging, then, from the appearances in the affairs of men, we can conclude that now some great cycle is either ending or beginning, and that a number of minor circles are approaching each other.

At the same time with these social or material cycles, there are corresponding ones on a higher plane. One is quite easy to trace. It is the influence of Eastern metaphysics upon the Western mind. This higher cycle had been revolving for many years among the Orientals before we came within its power. Our falling under it is

due to a physical cycle as a means. That one which is represented in the progress of trade, of science, of means for transportation. In this way the philosophical system of India and Tibet has begun to affect us, and no man can calculate its course.

Taking into account the spiritual cycles all so intimately connected with Karma and reincarnation, one would be compelled to conclude that this cycle will not be slow or weak. For, if we in Europe and America are the reincarnations of the ancients who formulated this philosophy, we must certainly be powerfully affected upon having it presented to our notice in this life. And as the very air is getting filled with theosophical ideas, and children are growing up every day, the conclusion is irresistible that as the new generation grows up it will be more familiar with theosophical terms and propositions than we were in our youths. For in every direction now, children are likely to hear Karma, Reincarnation, Buddhism, Theosophy, and all these ideas mentioned or discussed. In the course of twenty-five years, then, we shall find here in the United States a large and intelligent body of people believing once more in the very doctrines which they, perhaps ages ago, helped to define and promulgate.

Why not, then, call one of our present cycles the cycle of the Theosophical Society? It began in 1875, and, aided by other cycles then beginning to run, it has attained some force. Whether it will revolve for any greater length of time depends upon its earnest members. Members who enter it for the purpose of acquiring ideas merely for their own use will not assist. Mere numbers do not do the work, but sincere, earnest, active, unselfish members will keep this cycle always revolving. The wisdom of those who set it in motion becomes apparent when we begin to grasp somewhat the meaning of cyclic law. The Society could have remained a mere idea and might have been kept entirely away from outward expression in organization. Then, indeed, ideas similar to those prevalent in our Society might have been heard of. But how? Garbled, and presented only here and there, so that perhaps not for half a century later would they be concretely presented. A wise

man, however, knows how to prepare for a tide of spiritual influence. But how could an every-day Russian or American know that 1875 was just the proper year in which to begin so as to be ready for the oncoming rush now fairly set in? To my mind the mere fact that we were organized with a definite platform in that year is strong evidence that the "heroic tribe of heroes" had a hand in our formation. Let us, then, not resist the cycle, nor, complaining of the task, sit down to rest. There is no time for rest. The weak, the despairing, and the doubting may have to wait, but men and women of action cannot stand still in the face of such an opportunity.

*Arise, then, O Atlanteans, and repair the mischief done so long ago!*

*Roll on, O Wheel, roll on and conquer;*

*Roll on forevermore!*

*Path, December, 1889*

William Q. Judge

# CYCLIC IMPRESSION AND RETURN AND OUR EVOLUTION

LECTURE, APRIL 25, 1892, BEFORE THE CONVENTION  
WILLIAM Q. JUDGE

Mr. Chairman, Fellow Theosophists, Ladies and Gentlemen: The title of what I am about to say to you is CYCLIC IMPRESSION AND RETURN AND OUR EVOLUTION. Now what is a cycle? It has nothing to do with the word psychic, and I am sorry to have to say that, because I heard some people this morning repeat the title as "psychic" instead of "cyclic," seeming to think perhaps that that was the same thing, or had some relation to it. The word cyclic is derived from the Greek word *Kuklos*, or a ring. It has been turned in the English language into the word cycle, by the process of saying *Kykle*, and then cycle. The corresponding word in the Sanscrit is *Kalpa*, which has in fact a wider and a deeper meaning; because cycle in English is a word which covers, is used for, and thus somewhat confuses, many cycles. It is used for the small cycles, and the larger cycles, the intermediate cycles and the great ones, whereas the word *Kalpa* means and implies only one cycle of a large size, and the smaller cycles within that are designated by other words.

What is a cycle? It is a circle, a ring. But not properly a ring like a wedding ring, which runs into itself, but more properly like a screw thread, which takes the form of a spiral, and thus beginning at the bottom, turns on itself, and goes up. It is something like the great Horseshoe Curve in the Pennsylvania Railroad. There you go around the curve at the lower end; you go down into the horseshoe, and as you turn the grade rises, so that when you arrive at the opposite side you have gotten no further than the beginning, but you have risen just the distance between the two ends of the grade.

But what do we mean by a cycle in Theosophy, in our own investigations of nature, or man, or civilization, or our own

development, our own origin, our own destiny? We mean by cycles, just what the Egyptians, the Hindoos and the philosophers of the Middle Ages meant by it; that is, that there is a periodical return or cycling back, circling back of something from some place once more. That is why it is called cycle, inasmuch as it returns upon itself, seemingly; but in the Theosophical doctrine, and in the ancient doctrines, it is always a little higher in the sense of perfection or progress. That is to say, as the Egyptians held, cycles prevail everywhere, things come back again, events return, history comes back, and so in this century we have the saying: "History repeats itself."

But where do Theosophists say that cyclic law prevails? We say that it prevails everywhere. It prevails in every kingdom of nature, in the animal kingdom, the mineral world, the human world; in history, in the sky, on the earth. We say that not only do cycles pertain, and appertain, and obtain in and to the earth and its inhabitants, but also in what the Hindoos call the three kingdoms of the universe, the three worlds; that is, that below us, ourselves, and that above.

Now, if you will turn to Buckle, a great writer of the English school, you will find him saying in one of his standard books, a great book often quoted, that there is no doubt cyclic law prevails in regard to nations, that they have come back apparently the same, only slightly improved or degraded, for there is also a downward cycle included within those that rise; but Buckle did not discover a law. He simply once more stated what the ancients had said over and over again. And it has always seemed to me that if Buckle and other people of that kind would pay a little more attention to the ancients, they would save themselves a great deal of trouble, for he obtained his law by much delving, much painstaking labor, whereas he might have gotten the law if he had consulted the ancients, who always taught that there were cycles, and that there always will be cycles.

Among the ancients they had a great many large and important cycles. In their classification they had a Saros and a Naros, which

are not understood today by us. They are known to some extent, but what exactly they are, we do not know. The Egyptians taught that there was a great sidereal cycle, and that is recognized today, at last; that is the cycle of 25,000 years, the great one caused by the fact that the sun went through the signs of the Zodiac in that length of time. Now, I do not assume that you know nothing about astronomy, but in order to make it clear, it will be better for me to state this over again, just as it is. The sun goes through the signs of the Zodiac from day to day and from year to year, but at the same time, in going through the signs of the Zodiac, he goes back slowly, like the hands of a clock ticking off the time. In going through that period he comes back to the same point again, and retards himself, or goes back; that is called the precession of the equinoxes, and it is so many seconds in such a length of time. Those seconds in the sky turned into time show you that the sun takes 25,000 and odd years to come back to the place from which he started out at any particular time; that is to say, if you imagine that on the first of April, this year, the sun was in such a degree of Aries, one of the signs of the Zodiac, he will not get back to that sign by the precession of the equinoxes until 25,000 years have passed away.

Now, the sun is the center of our solar system and the earth revolves around it, and as the earth revolves she turns upon her axis. The sun, it is known now by astronomers, as it was known by the ancients (who were ourselves in fact), revolves around a center. That is, that while we are going around the sun, he is going around some other center, so that we describe in the sky not a circle around the sun, but a spiral, as we move with the sun around his enormous orbit. Now do you grasp that idea exactly? It is a very important one, for it opens up the subject to a very large extent. There is a star somewhere in the sky, we do not know where – some think it is Alcyon, or some other star, some think it may be a star in the Pleiades, and some others think it is a star somewhere else – but they know by deduction from the known to the unknown, as Brother Thomas told you this morning, that the sun is attracted himself by some unknown center, and that he turns around it in an enormous circle, and as he turns, of course he draws the earth with

him. In the course of 25,000 years in going around the signs of the Zodiac, he must take the earth into spaces where it has never yet been, for when he reaches this point in Aries, after 25,000 years, it is only apparently the same point, just as when I came around the curve of the Horseshoe, I started around the first point and went around the curve, came back to the same point, but I was higher up; I was in another position. And so, when the sun gets back again to the point in Aries, where he was on the first of April this year, he will not be in the exact position in the universe of space, but he will be somewhere else, and in his journey of 25,000 years through billions upon billions of miles, he draws the earth into spaces where she never was before, and never will be as that earth again. He must draw her into cosmic spaces where things are different, and thus cause changes in the earth itself, for changes in cosmic matter in the atmosphere, in the space where the sun draws the earth, must affect the earth and all its inhabitants. The ancients investigated this subject, and declared long ago this 25,000 years cycle, but it is only just lately, so to speak, that we are beginning to say we have discovered this. We know, as Nineteenth century astronomers, that it is a fact, or that it must be a fact, from deduction, but they knew it was a fact because they had observed it themselves and recorded the observations.

The Egyptians had also the cycle of the Moon, which we know, and they had more cycles of the moon than we have, for the moon not only has her cycle of twenty-eight days, when she changes from full to disappearance, and then again to youth, but she also has a period of return somewhere over fourteen years, which must itself have its effect upon the earth.

Then they said, also, that the human soul had its cycle, it being 5,000 years. That is, the man died, or the king died, and his body was turned into a mummy in the hope that when, after his five thousand years cycle had elapsed and he came back once more to earth, he would find his mummy there? No; but that no one else should have taken his mummied atoms and made a bad use of them. Mummification is explained by us in another way. Their

knowledge of the law of cycles caused them to make the first mummy. They held that a human soul returned; they also held that all atoms are alive, just as we do; that they are sensitive points; that they have intelligence belonging to the plane on which they are, and that the man who misuses atoms of matter, such as you have in your bodies and your brains, must stand the consequences. Consequently, saying that to themselves, they said, "If I die, and leave those atoms, which I have used so well, perhaps some other man will take them and use them badly, so I will preserve them as far as possible until I return, and then by a process destroy the combination of atoms, absorb them into some place, or position, where they might be put to good use." That may seem offensive to some today, but I am merely repeating the theory. I am not saying whether I believe it or not.

The ancient Egyptians who held these theories have disappeared and left nothing behind but the pyramids, the temples of Thebes, the Sphinxes and all the great monuments which are slowly being discovered by us. Where have they gone? Have they come back? Do the Copts now in Egypt represent them? I think not, although heredity is the boasted explanation of everything. The Copts are their descendants? They know nothing, absolutely nothing but a simple language, and they live the life of slaves, and yet they are the descendants of the ancient Egyptians! What has become of them? The ancient Egyptians we think were co-laborers with the ancient Hindoos, whose cycle remains; that is to say, whose descendants remain, holding the knowledge, in part, of their forefathers, and we find that the Hindoos have held always the same theories as to cycles as the Egyptians held. They divided the ages of the world. They say manifestation begins, and then it lasts for a period called a Kalpa, an enormous number of years; that Kalpa is divided into ages. The small cycle is composed of a large number of years; one will be four thousand, another four hundred thousand, another will be a million, and so on, making a total which we cannot grasp with the mind but which we can write upon the paper.



Now, the idea of cycles came from the Hindoos, through the nations who spread out from there, for it is admitted that the land of Hindustan is the cradle of the race. The Aryan race came down into Christendom, so that we find the Christians, the Romans, the Greeks and all people around that time holding the same theories as to cycles; that is, that cyclic law prevails everywhere. We find it in the ancient mystics, the Christian mystics, the middle age mystics and the mystics of times nearer to ours.

If you will read the works of Higgins, who wrote the *Anacalypsis*, you will find there laborious compilations and investigations on the subject of the cycles. Do they obtain? Is there such a thing as a cycle which affects human destiny?

Coming closer to our own personal life, we can see that cycles do and must prevail, for the sun rises in the morning and goes to the center of the sky, descends in the west; the next day he does the same thing, and following him, you rise. You come to the highest point of your activity, and you go to sleep. So day follows night and night follows day. Those are cycles, small cycles, but they go to make the greater ones. You were born, at about seven years of age you began to get discretion to some extent. A little longer and you reach manhood, then you begin to fall, and at last you finish the great day of your life when body dies.

In looking at nature we also find that there are summer and winter, spring and autumn. These are cycles, and every one of them affects the earth, with the human beings upon it.

The esoteric doctrine that Brother Mead has been talking about, the inner doctrine of the old theosophists and the present day theosophists, to be found in every old literature and religious book, is that cyclic law is the supreme law governing our evolution; that reincarnation, which we talk so much about, is cyclic law in operation and is supreme. For what is reincarnation but a coming back again to life, just what the ancient Egyptians taught and which we are finding out to be probably true, for in no other way than by this cyclic law of reincarnation can we account for the problems of life that beset us; with this we account for our own character, each

one different from the other, and with a force peculiar to each person.

This being the supreme law, we have to consider another one, which is related to it and contained in the title I have adopted. That is the law of the return of impressions. What do we mean by that? I mean, those acts and thoughts performed by a nation – not speaking about the things that affect nature, although it is governed by the same law – constitute an impression. That is to say, your coming to this convention creates in your nature an impression. Your going into the street and seeing a street brawl creates an impression. Your having a quarrel last week and denouncing a man, or with a woman and getting very angry, creates an impression in you, and that impression is as much subject to cyclic law as the moon, and the stars, and the world, and is far more important in respect to your development – your personal development or evolution – than all these other great things, for they affect you in the mass, whereas these little ones affect you in detail.

This Theosophical doctrine in respect to cycles, and the evolution of the human race, I think is known to you all, for I am assuming that you are all theosophists.

It is to be described somewhat in this way: Imagine that before this earth came out of the gaseous condition there existed an earth somewhere in space, let us call it the moon, for that is the exact theory. The moon was once a large and vital body full of beings. It lived its life, went through its cycles, and at last having lived its life, after vast ages had passed away, came to the moment when it had to die; that is, the moment came when the beings on that earth had to leave it, because its period had elapsed, and then began from that earth the exodus. You can imagine it as a flight of birds migrating. Did you ever see birds migrate? I have seen them migrate in a manner that perhaps not many of you have. In Ireland, and perhaps in England, the swallows migrate in a manner very peculiar. When I was a boy, I used to go to my uncle's place where there was an old mass of stone ruins at the end of the garden, and by some peculiar

combination of circumstances the swallows of the whole neighboring counties collected there. The way they gathered there was this: When the period arrived, you could see them coming in all parts of the sky, and they would settle down and twitter on this pile of stone all day, and fly about. When the evening came – twilight – they raised in a body and formed an enormous circle. It must have been over forty feet in diameter, and that circle of swallows flew around in the sky, around this tower, around and around for an hour or two, making a loud twittering noise, and that attracted from other places swallows who had probably forgotten the occasion. They kept that up for several days, until one day the period arrived when they must go, and they went away – some were left behind, some came a little early, and some came too late. Other birds migrate in other ways. And so these human birds migrated from the moon to this spot where the earth began (I don't know where it is – a spot in space – ) and settled down as living beings, entities, not with bodies, but beings, in that mass of matter, at that point in space, informed it with life, and at last caused this earth to become a ball with beings upon it. And then cycles began to prevail, for the impressions made upon these fathers when they lived in the ancient – mind fails to think how ancient – civilization of the moon, came back again when they got to this earth, and so we find the races of the earth rising up and falling, rising again and falling, rising and falling, and at last coming to what they are now, which is nothing to what they will be, for they go ever higher and higher. That is the theory, broadly, and in that is included the theory of the races, the great seven races who inhabited the earth successively, the great seven Adams who peopled the earth; and at last when this earth shall come to its time of life, its period, all the beings on it will fly away from it to some other spot in space to evolve new worlds as elder brothers who have done the same thing before in other spaces in nature. We are not doing this blindly. It has been done before by others – no one knows when it began. It had nothing in the way of a beginning, it will have no end, but there are always elder brothers of the race, who live on. As some have written, we cannot turn back the cycles in their course. The

fire of patriotism cannot prevail against the higher destiny which will plunge a nation into darkness. All we can do is to change it here and there a little. The elder brothers are subject to law, but they have confidence and hope, because that law merely means that they appear to go down, in order to rise again at a greater height. So that we have come up through the cyclic law from the lowest kingdoms of nature. That is, we are connected in an enormous brotherhood, which includes not only the white people of the earth and the black people of the earth, and the yellow people, but the animal kingdom, the vegetable kingdom, the mineral kingdom and the unseen elemental kingdom. You must not be so selfish as to suppose that it includes only men and women. It includes everything, every atom in this solar system. And we come up from lower forms, and are learning how to so mould and fashion, use and abuse, or impress the matter that comes into our charge, into our bodies, our brains and our psychical nature, so that that matter shall be an improvement to be used by the younger brothers who are still below us, perhaps in the stone beneath our feet. I do not mean by that that there is a human being in that stone. I mean that every atom in the stone is not dead matter. There is no dead matter anywhere, but every atom in that stone contains a life, unintelligent, formless, but potential, and at some period in time far beyond our comprehension, all of those atoms in that stone will have been released. The matter itself will have been refined, and at last all in this great cycle of progress will have been brought up the steps of the ladder, in order to let some others lower still in a state we cannot understand come up to them.

That is the real theory. Is that superstition? If you believe the newspapers that is superstition, for they will twist and turn everything you say. Your enemies will say you said there was a man in that stone, and that you have been a stone. You have not been a stone, but the great monad, the pilgrim who came from other worlds has been in every stone, has been in every kingdom, and now has reached the state of man, to show whether he is able to continue being a man, or whether he will once more fall back, like the boy at school who will not learn, into the lowest class.

Now then, this law of impressions I have been talking about can be illustrated in this way: If you look at one of these electric lights – take away all the rest, leaving one only, so as to have a better impression – you will find the light makes an image on the retina, and when you shut your eye, this bright filament of light made by a carbon in an incandescent lamp will be seen by you in your eye. You can try it, and see for yourselves. If you keep your eye closed and watch intently, you will see the image come back a certain number of counts, it will stay a certain number of counts, it will go away in the same length of time and come back again, always changing in some respect but always the image of the filament, until at last the time comes when it disappears apparently because other impressions have rubbed it out or covered it over. That means that there is a return even in the retina of the impression of this filament. After the first time, the color changes each time, and so it keeps coming back at regular intervals, showing that there is a cyclic return of impression in the retina, and as Brother Thomas said this morning, if that applies in one place, it applies in every place. And when we look into our moral character we find the same thing, for as we have the tides in the ocean, explained as they say by the moon – which in my opinion does not explain it, but of course, being no scientist, my view is not worth much so in man we have tides, which are called return of these impressions; that is to say, you do a thing once, there will be a tendency to repeat itself; you do it twice, and it doubles its influence, a greater tendency to do that same thing again. And so on all through our character shows this constant return of cyclic impression. We have these impressions from every point in space, every experience we have been through, everything that we can possibly go through at any time, even those things which our forefathers went through. And that is not unjust for this reason, that our forefathers furnished the line of bodily encasement, and we cannot enter that line of bodily encasement unless we are like unto it, and for that reason we must have been at some point in that cycle in that same line or family in the past, so that I must have had a hand in the past in constructing

the particular family line in which I now exist, and am myself once more taking up the cyclic impression returning upon me.

Now this has the greatest possible bearing upon our evolution as particular individuals, and that is the only way in which I wish to consider the question of evolution here; not the broad question of the evolution of the universe, but our own evolution, which means our bodily life, as Madame Blavatsky, repeating the ancients, said to us so often, and as we found said by so many of the same school. An opportunity will arise for you to do something; you do not do it, you may not have it again for one hundred years. It is the return before you of some old thing that was good, if it is a good one, along the line of the cycles. You neglect it, as you may, and the same opportunity will return, mind you, but it may not return for many hundred years. It may not return until another life, but it will return under the same law.

Now take another case. I have a friend who is trying to find out all about theosophy, and about a psychic nature, but I have discovered that he is not paying the slightest attention to this subject of the inevitable return upon himself of these impressions which he creates. I discovered he had periods of depression (and this will answer for everybody), when he had a despondency that he could not explain. I said to him, you have had the same despondency maybe seven weeks ago, maybe eight weeks ago, maybe five weeks ago. He examined his diary and his recollection, and he found that he had actual recurrences of despondency about the same distance apart. Well, I said, that explains to me how it is coming back. But what am I to do? Do what the old theosophists taught us; that is, we can only have these good results by producing opposite impressions to bad ones. So, take this occasion of despondency. What he should have done was, that being the return of an old impression, to have compelled himself to feel joyous, even against his will, and if he could not have done that, then to have tried to feel the joy of others. By doing that, he would have implanted in himself another impression, that is of joy, so that when this thing returned once more, instead of being of the same

quality and extension, it would have been changed by the impression of joy or elation and the two things coming together would have counteracted each other, just as two billiard balls coming together tend to counteract each other's movements. This applies to every person who has the blues. This does not apply to me, and I think it must be due to the fact that in some other life I have had the blues. I have other things, but the blues never.

I have friends and acquaintances who have these desponding spells. It is the return of old cyclic impressions, or the cyclic return of impressions. What are you to do? Some people say, I just sit down and let it go; that is to say, you sit there and create it once more. You cannot rub it out if it has been coming, but when it comes start up something else, start up cheerfulness, be good to someone, then try to relieve some other person who is despondent, and you will have started another impression, which will return at the same time. It does not make any difference if you wait a day or two to do this. The next day, or a few days after will do, for when the old cyclic impression returns, it will have dragged up the new one, because it is related to it by association.

This has a bearing also on the question of the civilization in which we are a point ourselves.

Who are we? Where are we going? Where have we come from? I told you that the old Egyptians disappeared. If you inquire into Egyptian history, the most interesting because the most obscure, you will find, as the writers say, that the civilization seems to rise to the zenith at once. We do not see when it began. The civilization was so great it must have existed an enormous length of time to get to that height, so that we cannot trace it from its beginning, and it disappears suddenly from the sky; there is nothing of it left but the enormous remains which testify to these great things, for the ancient Egyptians not only made mummies in which they displayed the art of bandaging that we cannot better, but they had put everything to such a degree of specialization that we must conclude they had many centuries of civilization. There was a specialist for one eye and a specialist for the other, a specialist for

the eyebrow, and so on. In my poor and humble opinion, we are the Egyptians.

We have come back again, after our five thousand or whatever years cycle it is, and we have dragged back with us someone called the Semitic race, with which we are connected by some old impression that we cannot get rid of, and so upon us is impinged that very Semitic image. We have drawn back with us, by the inevitable law of association in cyclic return, some race, some personages connected with us by some acts of ours in that great old civilization now disappeared, and we cannot get rid of it; we must raise them up to some other plane as we raise ourselves.

I think in America is the evidence that this old civilization is coming back, for in the theosophical theory nothing is lost. If we were left to records, buildings and the like, they would soon disappear and nothing could ever be recovered; there never would be any progress. But each individual in the civilization, wherever it may be, puts the record in himself, and when he comes into the favorable circumstances described by Patanjali, an old Hindoo, when he gets the apparatus, he will bring out the old impression. The ancients say each act has a thought under it, and each thought makes a mental impression; and when the apparatus is provided, there will then arise that new condition, in rank, place and endowment.

So we retain in ourselves the impression of all the things that we have done, and when the time comes that we have cycled back, over and over again, through the middle ages perhaps, into England, into Germany, into France, we come at last to an environment such as is provided here, just the thing physically and every other way to enable us to do well, and to enable the others who are coming after us. I can almost see them; they are coming in a little army from the countries of the old world to endeavor to improve this one; for here ages ago there was a civilization also, perhaps we were in it then, perhaps anterior to the ancient Egyptians. It disappeared from here, when we do not know, and it left this land arid for many thousands of years until it was



discovered once more by the Europeans. The ancient world, I mean Europe, has been poisoned, the land has been soaked with the emanations, poisoned by the emanations of the people who have lived upon it; the air above it is consequently poisoned by the emanations from the land; but here in America, just the place for the new race, is an arable land which has had time over and over again to destroy the poisons that were planted here ages and ages ago. It gives us a new land, with vibrations in the air that stir up every particle in a man who breathes it, and thus we find the people coming from the old world seeming to receive through their feet the impressions of an American country. All this bears upon our civilization and race.

We are here a new race in a new cycle, and persons who know say that a cycle is going to end in a few years and a new one begin, and that that ending and beginning will be accompanied by convulsions of society and of nature. We can all almost see it coming. The events are very complete in the sky. You remember Daniel says, "A time, half a time, and a time," and so on, and people in the Christian system have been trying to find out the time when the time began, and that is just the difficulty. We do not know when the time began. And the only person who in all these many years has made a direct statement is Madame Blavatsky, and she said, "A cycle is ending in a few years, you must prepare." So that it was like the old prophets who came to the people and said, "Prepare for a new era of things, get ready for what you have to do." That is just what this civilization is doing. It is the highest, although the crudest, civilization now on the earth. It is the beginning of the great civilization that is to come, when old Europe has been destroyed: when the civilizations of Europe are unable to do any more, then this will be the place where the new great civilization will begin to put out a hand once more to grasp that of the ancient East, who has sat there silently doing nothing all these years, holding in her ancient crypts and libraries and records the philosophy which the world wants, and it is this philosophy and this ethics that the Theosophical Society is trying to give you. It is a philosophy you can understand and practice.

It is well enough to say to a man, Do right, but after a while, in this superstitious era, he will say, Why should I do right, unless I feel like it? When you are showing these laws, that he must come back in his cycle; that he is subject to evolution; that he is a reincarnated pilgrim soul, then he will see the reason why, and then in order to get him a secure basis, he accepts the philosophy, and that is what the theosophical society and the theosophical movement are trying to do. Brother George Mead said the other day, in speaking of a subject like this, that the great end and aim is the great renunciation. That is, that after progressing to great heights, which you can only do by unselfishness, at last you say to yourself, "I may take the ease to which I am entitled." For what prevails in one place must prevail in another, and in the course of progress we must come at last to a time when we can take our ease, but if you say to yourself, "I will not take it, but as I know this world and all the people on it are bound to live and last for many thousand years more, and if not helped perhaps might fail, I will not take it but I will stay here and I will suffer, because of having greater knowledge and greater sensitiveness" – this is the great renunciation as Theosophy tells us. I know we do not often talk this way, because many of us think that the people will say to us at once when we talk of the great renunciation, "I don't want it; it is too much trouble." So generally we talk about the fine progress, and how you will at last escape the necessity of reincarnation, and at last escape the necessity of doing this or that and the other, but if you do your duty, you must make up your mind when you reach the height, when you know all, when you participate in the government of the world – not of a town, but the actual government of the world and the people upon it – instead of sleeping away your time, you will stay to help those who are left behind, and that is the great renunciation. That is what is told of Buddha, and of Jesus. Doubtless the whole story about Jesus, which cannot be proved historically to my mind, is based upon the same thing that we call renunciation. He was crucified after two or three years work. But we say it means that this being divine resolves he will crucify himself in the eyes of the world, in the eyes of others, so

that he can save men. Buddha did the same thing long before Jesus is said to have been born. The story that he made the great renunciation just means that which I have been telling you, instead of escaping from this horrible place, as it seems to us. For this is indeed horrible, as we look at it, surrounded by obstructions, liable to defeat at any moment, liable to wake up in the morning after planning a great reform, and see it dashed to the ground. Instead of escaping all that, he remained in the world and started his doctrine, which he knew at least would be adhered to by some. But this great doctrine of renunciation teaches that instead of working for yourself, you will work to know everything, to do everything in your power for those who may be left behind you, just as Madame Blavatsky says in the *Voice of the Silence*, 'step out of the sunshine into the shade, to make more room for others.'

Isn't that better than a heaven which is reached at the price of the damnation of those of your relatives who will not believe a dogma? Is this not a great philosophy and a great religion which includes the salvation and regeneration, the scientific upraising and perfecting of the whole human family, and every particle in the whole universe, instead of imagining that a few miserable beings after seventy years of life shall enter into paradise, and then they look behind to see the torments in hell of those who would not accept a dogma?

What are these other religions compared with that? How any man can continue to believe such an idea as the usual one of damnation for merely unbelief I cannot comprehend. I had rather – if I had to choose – be an idolator of the most pronounced kind, who believed in Indra, and be left with my common reasoning, than believe in such a doctrine as that which permits me to suppose that my brother who does not believe a dogma is sizzling in hell while I, by simply believing, may enjoy myself in heaven.

Theosophists, if they will learn the doctrine and try to explain it, will reform this world. It will percolate everywhere, infiltrate into every stratum of society and prevent the need of legislation. It will alter the people, whereas you go on legislating and leaving this

world's people as they are, and you will have just what happened in France. Capitalists in that day, in the day of the revolution – that is the royalists – oppressed the people. At last the people rose up and philosophers of the day instituted the reign of reason, and out of the reign of reason – mind you they had introduced there a beautiful idea of mankind, that idea struck root in a soil that was not prepared – came the practice of murdering other people by the wholesale until streams of blood ran all over France. So you see if something is not done to raise the people what the result will be. We have seen in Chicago the result of such acts, the mutterings of such a storm if the theosophical philosophy – call it by any other name you like – is not preached and understood. But if these old doctrines are not taught to the race you will have a revolution, and instead of making progress in a steady, normal fashion, you will come up to better things through storm, trouble and sorrow. You will come up, of course, for even out of revolutions and blood there comes progress, but isn't it better to have progress without that? And that is what the theosophical philosophy is intended for. That is why the Mahatmas we were talking about, directing their servant H. P. Blavatsky, as they have directed many before, came out at a time when materialism was fighting religion and was about getting the upper hand, and once more everything moved forward in its cyclic way and these old doctrines were revived under the guidance of the theosophical movement. They are doctrines that explain all problems and in the universal scheme give man a place as a potential god.

Theosophical Convention, April 1892

William Q. Judge

# THE KALI YUGA

A CORRESPONDENT is confused on this subject from the statement in *What is Theosophy* by Mr. Old, that we are in the midst of the Iron or Black Age. Doubtless his sentence, which is on page 28 of the book, is misleading, because "kali" means "black," and hence it would seem that he meant we are now in the middle of Kali Yuga, but reading further it is seen that he refers only to the first part of the Age. Kali Yuga is in length 432,000 years according to the old Indian calculation, and we are now coming to the end of its first five thousand years, that preliminary period being reckoned from the death of Krishna. In passing, it may be justly thought that this five thousand year period is the origin of the idea of the Hebrews that the world is about that age, just as the Greeks in the time of Solon imagined that all things had to count from their former great cataclysm, but which the Egyptian priests showed to Solon was incorrect, for, as they said, "There had been many great cataclysms before that."

In the *Secret Doctrine* is to be found this: "The fourth sub-race was in Kali Yuga when destroyed." This is not amenable to objection on the ground that we who are not that race are in Kali, for each race goes through the various Ages for itself; hence the former races, both primary and sub-, go through all the four periods from the Golden to the Black.

It must follow from this, and such is the oldest teaching on the subject, that at one and the same time races may be on the earth running each for itself through one or other of the periods. Some might be in the Golden Age and others in the Black. At present it is admitted that the Aryans are in the Kali Age, but certain childlike races are not so. Within the present five thousand year period we know that races have absolutely finished their Kali Yuga and gone out of existence. This happened to that which ruled a part of the American continent, and hence for them in particular their Kali Yuga must have begun earlier than ours did. The Hottentots also

disappeared during our memory. This method of considering the subject will clear it up, leaving only to be settled for each race the period which they are in, or the beginning and ending of it. And, as said, for the Aryans the great Kali Yuga began five thousand (odd) years ago.

To find out when the great Kali Yuga for the major race, including all its sub-races, began would be impossible, as there are no means, and H.P.B., the only one for the present who had access to those who held the records, said precise figures on those heads would not be given out. But she and also those behind her who gave her so much information laid it down, as in accord with the philosophy of nature given out, that a division into four was the order for evolution in respect to the life of races, and hence that each great race, whatever its number in the whole seven, would be compelled to go through the four periods from the Satya to Kali, while at the same time the minor races had the same division, only that each part would be shorter than those pertaining to the great race as a whole. For that reason it seems plain that the figures for the various Ages (or Yugas) are only such as relate to and govern the sub- or minor races.

The overlapping of races as to their particular Yuga (or Age) can be easily seen in history. When the whites came to America the Indians were in their stone age in some places, using stone hammers, spears, knives, and arrows. Even in cultured South America the priests used stone knives for use at the sacrifices. We, however, had gone far beyond that. The red Indian of North America would have remained wholly in the stone age had we not altered it to some extent while we proceeded as instruments for his annihilation. Therefore in our own period we have examples of two races being in different Ages while living at the same time on the globe.

The foregoing is the general scheme outlined in the *Secret Doctrine*, where there are numerous pages showing that when a new race, whether a sub or a major one, comes in it does so while many of the old race still exist, the one gradually rising in

development while the other falls. They shade into one another as night does into day, until at last either night or day predominates. This period of shading is allowed for in regard to the Ages, and in the Brahmanical calculation we find that they add twilights and dawns, since preceding a new Age there must be the dawn as following it will come the twilight. The twilight of the one will be the dawn of the other.

Using the Zodiac for the purpose of considering the question of the Ages, we find that, roughly speaking, the time taken by the sun to go round the whole circle is 25,800 years, as shown by the retrograde movement of the equinoctial points. This is the type for the yearly circle, which makes the four seasons and the four seasons in their turn symbolize the four Ages. Their length will be in proportion to the greater swing of the sun. Among the seasons the winter corresponds to the Kali Age, for then all is turned hard and cold, just as in the Black Age, the light of the Spiritual Sun being dimmed, the hardness and coldness of materiality appear in the moral life. Now if the sidereal period be divided by four, we have the figures 6450 years, or the five-thousand-year period with the requisite twilight or dawn added. And it was taught by the Egyptians that with every quarter of the circle of the Sun's great path there were changes caused physically by the alteration of the poles, and spiritually there must be changes due to the inner development of the human race as an entirety. While the materialistic philosopher thinks the changes would be due to the movement of the poles, the teaching from the Lodge is that the spiritual inner changes cause the physical ones through the appropriate means; in this case those means are in the movements of the great heavenly bodies. This is because the whole Cosmos is on the same grand plan, with all its parts working together, each in its own way.

For the present, students will have to be satisfied with the general statement that we are in Kali Yuga. The characteristics of the present time show it clearly enough, for while physical civilization is high the spiritual side of it is low and dark, and selfishness is the

prevailing order. None of us can really pretend to know more than this, for while we have the Brahmanical calculation and the words of the *Secret Doctrine*, yet that is taking the word of another, plausible, of course, and also concordant with all other parts of the system, but still not of our own knowledge. The beginning of this Age and the time of its ending are dark to us; but the general theory, sufficient for our present needs, is perfectly clear, and as good an assumption as any of those indulged in by science certainly better than the incredible ideas of the theologian. Of one thing we are getting more and more proof each day, and that is of the immense period during which man has been on the earth, and with that admitted all the great cyclic lengths given by the ancient and modern Theosophists of weight are entitled to credence.

We can also get great comfort from the theory given out at various times, that in Kali Yuga a small effort goes farther for results than the same when made in a better Age. In the other Ages the rates of all things are slower than in this; hence, evil now seems quick; but in the same way good is also much quicker in effect and reach than in a slower time.

*Path*, November, 1894

William Q. Judge



# AQUARIAN CIVILIZATION

*Our races...have sprung from divine races, by whatever name they are called. . . . Every nation has either the seven and ten Rishis-Manus and Prajapatis.... One and all have been derived from the primitive Dhyān-Chohans of the Esoteric doctrine, or the "Builders" of the Stanzas. From Manu, Thot-Hermes, Oannes-Dagon, and Edris-Enoch, down to Plato and Panadores, all tell us of seven divine Dynasties, of seven Lemurian, and seven Atlantean divisions of the Earth; of the seven primitive and dual gods who descend from their celestial abode and reign on Earth, teaching mankind Astronomy, Architecture, and all the other sciences that have come down to us. These Beings appear first as "gods" and Creators; then they merge in nascent man, to finally emerge as "divine-Kings and Rulers.". . . There were five Hermes – or rather one, who appeared – as some Manus and Rishis did in several different characters.... But under whichever of these characters, he is always credited with having transferred all the sciences from latent to active potency, i.e., with having been the first to teach magic to Egypt and to Greece, before the days of Magna Graecia, and when the Greeks were not even Hellenes.*

*The Secret Doctrine, ii 365-367*

To take the entire subject of cosmic hierarchies at the human level to its sublime heights, one must start with the momentous recognition that many of the "gods" of the ancient theogonies belonged to the First Race of humanity. Human beings in that First Race were gods or devas, and in the Second Race they were demi-gods – celestial spirits still too ethereal to occupy the human form that was being gestated by the lunar Pitris. Then, in the Third Race, with the lighting-up of Manas and the incarnation of the *Manasaputras* into human form, humanity underwent an evolution which passed through several stages. Beginning with the androgynous and bisexual, it proceeded through the protracted dual-sexed epoch of the human race. There was the legendary era of great heroes and giants. The seven divine dynasties were thereafter to be found in the Third Race and again in the Fourth

Race, the Lemurian and Atlantean periods. Instructing humanity in diverse arts and sciences, they laid the primeval foundations of human culture and civilization around the globe.

Within this broad framework, the extraordinarily evocative power of the name and presence of Hermes is especially relevant to the 1975 Cycle and to the civilization of the future. Hermes is a generic name, associated with potent thought, and linked to Mercury-Buddha – a *Dhyani* – as well as with multiple incarnations in the history of humanity. As the god Hermes-Thot, he is the pristine archetype of Initiators in ancient Egypt, where he was revered as Hermes Trismegistus, a name applying to an entire lineage of Initiators. This solar line of spiritual Teachers can be traced back to Shiva as Dakshinamurti, the Initiator of Initiates. The hoary tradition which holds that Hermes taught all sciences to the nascent Mediterranean civilization suggests that he instructed those ready for divine theurgy. The arcane sciences transferred by Hermes from latent to active potency collectively constitute divine *gnosis*, a precise and comprehensive knowledge of the complex laws governing the seven kingdoms of nature. These laws encompass the planes of matter, both visible and invisible, the planes from which noumenal prototypes become precipitated or projected into the phenomenal realm. Science in its essence is concerned with primary causes and is rooted in a mature apprehension of noetic consciousness. This is the true and noble meaning of science, *vidya* in the old sense, which was mysteriously intimated by the Mahatmas to European civilization in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries to counteract the corruption of creedal religion.

Modern science is a recent flower, emerging sporadically after the Renaissance, and, in particular, after Giordano Bruno's activities in Germany and his historic visit to Oxford. The Royal Society was founded by heretical and courageous clergymen, men like the Warden of Wadham, who recognized that Aristotelian scholasticism was throttling the growth of human thought, that theology had become nothing more than a corrosive word-game.

Together with bold patrons in the discreetly pagan aristocracy, these pioneering heretics founded a small club in London which they called the Royal Society. It was concerned from the beginning with the systematic support of all earnest experimental investigation into the natural world. In this, its purest sense, early modern science is one of the minor contributions of the Brotherhood of Bodhisattvas to the post-Renaissance world. Yet, in the context of the ancient meaning of science, it is a limited thing indeed, shadowy and modest. Originally, "science" referred to a system of laws capable of application by human consciousness to what later came to be cherished by a few reticent brotherhoods as true magic or divine wisdom. Magic is an exact and definite knowledge of the noumenal laws of invisible nature. Through the proper use of that carefully transmitted knowledge, one can affect the rates of growth and primary structures of energy on the Akashic and astral planes, and so affect conditions and combinations on the physical plane. Modern science, through its neglect of the primacy of consciousness, can hardly approach such a universal synthesis, fusing meta-geometry, meta-biology and meta-psychology.

In the ancient and archetypal view of noetic magic, there is a summoning from latency to active potency of arcane knowledge that was originally impressed in the imperishable soul-memory of all humanity. Going all the way back to the middle of the Third Root Race, when self-consciousness had been attained, human beings were in astral vestures that were capable of effortless and benevolent use of the spiritual senses. Human beings, therefore, through their intuitive knowledge of the correlations of sound, colour and number, were able to communicate effortlessly. In that Golden Age, shrouded in the myths and mists of antiquity, they showed spontaneous reverence to Magus-Teachers, Hierophant-Adepts moving openly among human beings, teaching in fabled "concord groves" all over the earth. Seated under banyan trees (varieties of *ficus religiosa*), they bestowed divine wisdom upon those who were ready to learn. In that idyllic time the vast human inheritance of spiritual wisdom and scientific magic was

assimilated into the *karana sharira*, the permanent vesture of the Monad. It is in that inmost vesture, which is the container of all soul-memories, that the original wisdom and theurgy of humanity lie latent to this day.

It is suggestive and significant that contemporary physicists, like Roger Jones, have come to see that a great deal of what is known in particle physics and quantum mechanics points to a necessary transcendence of conventional space and time. This is strikingly reminiscent of the recondite concept of the *karana sharira*. A few intuitive scientists find the idea of such a causal field or morphogenetic matrix intensely meaningful because it intimates modes of action that are independent of many of the restrictions that hold in ordinary space and time. Because it allows for what would appear from a physical standpoint to be simultaneous transmission, it suggests the operation of laws very different from those applicable to the objective-seeming world of disparate material entities. Hence, it may have application or relevance to some of the energy fields and the "broken symmetry" that pertain to fundamental particles. Considered in relation to noetic consciousness and benevolent magic, the significance of the *karana sharira* is that it is the ground of the latent knowledge called to active potency by Hermes.

Hermes is the paradigm of the oldest sacred tradition, going back a million years ago to India (*Bharata Dwipa*). There, among the Initiates, the basis was laid in all the Mystery Schools for the Manasic development of the seminal civilizations of the Fifth Race. When the most creative minds of the Aquarian Age gain a sufficient knowledge of Sanskrit, they will come to see that all latter-day sciences are but pale and poor fragments compared with the systematic ontology and epistemology of *Brahma Vidya*, *Theosophia* or *Dzyan*. With reference to astronomy, to physics, physiology and to chemistry, to the mathematical and geometrical sciences, even to mechanics, transmission devices and aerial transport, the lost knowledge of the ancients was overwhelming. Some of this knowledge, still accessible through scattered texts, is being slowly

recovered today by remarkable young scholars like David Pingree, who has dedicated his life to the translation of available Sanskrit texts in astronomy. This is only one small field within a vast body of information, but by the end of the century many such texts should be accessible to those who can effectively use them.

The constructive use of such knowledge requires the timely initiation of a global Pythagorean Academy, so that at the right time those who have the requisite spiritual and intellectual qualifications will be able to participate in the highest level of path-breaking investigation. All of this harks back to that which was in the beginning, to that which was taught to sub-races such as the Egyptian and Greek by the mysterious Hermes-Thot – Hermes Trismegistus. Just as it was before the days of Magna Graecia, the work of Hermes is to summon from latency to activity the innate knowledge of benevolent magic inherent in the *karana sharira*.

The foreshortened view of the emergence and growth of civilization which has characterized the last two hundred years is rooted in a habit of mind extending back over a period of some two thousand years, but nonetheless a minor incident in human evolution. Historians tend to focus upon the material aspects of civilization and cultures, to become obsessed with power and violence; yet since a nation's spiritual decline accompanies its material ascent, such a truncated approach can only distort the truth and mislead the unwary. Any attempt to account for this messianic history of recent millennia must begin fundamentally with a recognition that many human souls were badly scarred in decadent Atlantis, and, having lost the Third Eye, were left merely with an external sense of power connected to a crude conception of energy which still mesmerizes them through awe of tangible bigness and gross strength.

This is reminiscent of Plato's memorable reference to the contest between the Gods and the Giants. Whilst such events go back far beyond even the declining period of Egyptian dynasties, it does not, after all, characterize the entire million-year history of the Fifth Root Race. Certainly, such a shrunken perspective does little or no

justice to the more than eighteen million years of human existence on this globe, or to the immeasurable reservoir of soul-memories garnered in the earliest golden ages. Every major culture reflects, to some degree, these finest and persistent intuitions in human beings. That is what gives many people a kind of reverence, however confused, before the Native Americans and other so-called "primitive" peoples. Even if many of these cultures have lost their spiritual knowledge, and so have fallen to the mercy of inferior races, these same Monads may yet recover and re-enact their wisdom in future civilizations.

This process has recurred again and again. It was played out before the days of Magna Graecia in events that were encapsulated by Herodotus in his brief work, *Euterpe*. Therein he acknowledged the debt of gratitude that the Greeks owed to the grand Egyptian civilization which preceded it. This is even more explicit in Plato, who made Socrates speak of Solon, and the great Egyptian teachers of Sais, next to whom the Greeks were as little children. Yet whilst the reverence of Herodotus for predecessors was genuine, and expressed with almost religious awe, he also wrote that more familiar kind of historical narrative through which he is known as the "Father of History". In an often overlooked passage, he commended the Persians for their exemplary bravery and sense of truth, which, he said, were lacking among the Greeks. The courage to tell the truth and stand by it, the sense of the sacredness of a man's word of honour – these, he thought, were virtues that the Greeks could learn from the ancient Persians.

At the same time, however, Herodotus, in dealing with the Persian legal system, began to generate some of the snobbery that long prevailed among Athenians when they contemplated their *polis* and its democratic institutions. Through dramatized contrasts with the corrupt despotism of Persian institutions, Herodotus managed to compress, and devalue, the scope and successive phases of Persian civilization. In virtually every subsequent account of the supposed history of ancient civilizations, this same compression is found compounded. It arises because of decadence

and the disappearance from active human memory of the greatest epochs of antiquity. This has led to the extraordinary and confusing conclusion that all the collective knowledge of the human race can somehow be made readily available to the common man. Some even insist that the less one knows, the more one has a right to demand all and sundry information.

This puny standpoint is seriously threatened by the fact that the seminal periods of human evolution are hidden and secret, and yet span millions of years which are inaccessible except through initiation. The profoundest truths were never written about in popular chronicles. They were available only in glyphs and symbols, in monuments, in secret libraries in central Asia and elsewhere. They were not for the eyes of curious crowds. In any event, even ordinary people in more mature cultures have a natural reticence about spiritual wisdom. Just as, in old age, those beset by a sense of failure, a fear of death and a feeling of audience deprivation seek refuge in reminiscence, so too cultures grow infatuated with telling their inflated history only after they have begun to decay. They become compulsively autobiographical, repeatedly retelling their life story. The truly creative, mindful of the enormous potency of mathematical and spiritual knowledge, are careful to protect that knowledge. They will make it available to those who can use it constructively; but they will keep it away from those who may abuse it, delude others and harm themselves.

Seen from this perspective, one can begin to appreciate the sense in which much of modern science is based upon the half-baked occult secrets of the semi-esoteric groups that persisted from the days of the early Church Fathers to the Renaissance. Whilst it may come as a surprise to post-colonial Europeans, it is still held by the Ashanti elders that had they been more careful with their accumulated wisdom, modern science and medicine could have avoided their premature and amoral growth. What such wise elders knew, and what was intuited by Pauwels and Bergier – the authors of *The Morning of the Magicians* – is that what is presently extolled as

modern science is significantly based upon the scattered and leaked secrets of medieval and ancient classical knowledge.

The disappearance of alchemy and the authentic occult arts is inseparable from the karmic record of those souls who were not capable of handling theurgic teaching and practical knowledge in relation to the various secret sciences. But something of that tradition remained – in the Platonic Academy, which lasted for nine hundred years, among the early Muslims in Cordoba, and through them, among their pupils in Italy and France. At about the same time, out of small beginnings in a few houses the University of Oxford was born. All these communities struggled towards an understanding of the seven sciences – the *trivium* and *quadrivium*. Respect for these sciences is the origin of what were once sacred terms – bachelor of arts and master of arts. These were degrees going back to old initiations, carrying memories of earlier times. Then they became attached to universities which, since the twelfth century, have helped to bring knowledge to thousands of people who would otherwise have had no access to it. Until Wycliffe, for example, no one who was poor or ignorant of Latin could read the *Bible*.

This breaking down of the closed circle connected with knowledge in general, and sacred texts in particular, is not yet complete. It is thus a vital part of the present climactic Cycle: over the coming decades Sanskrit and Greek will be simplified and taught so that anyone may acquire them. Languages will be rescued from the grammarians. For so-called experts, who have never penetrated the inner meanings of ancient texts, nonetheless manage to discourage the spiritual enquirer from learning the language. At a certain level, this renaissance in ancient languages will be part of the Hermetic work of the 1975 Cycle.

To understand the work of Hermes at a more fundamental level in relation to civilization, one must begin to generate a conception of the cosmic hierarchies in Nature and in Man which unites the spiritual with the physical, and both of these with the moral and the political. This fundamental recognition of the relationship of the



celestial and the terrestrial must be forged through a living link in the psychological realm. That link is Man. Only through the rediscovery within human nature of all orders of being from the gods to the elementals can there be a recovery of the continuity of the Great Chain of Being from the highest to the lowest. All hierarchies – from the *Dhyanis* through the *danavas* and *daityas*, to the *devas* or gods, the *devatas* and elementals – are represented within the individual human being. The five middle principles of human nature, leaving out of consideration the Atman and the physical body, are the direct gift and transmitted essence of the sixfold *Dhyani Buddhas*. That is why even *kama manas* is in essence sacred. It is lent to human beings to show them how to connect and how to discriminate.

If this is difficult to perceive, it is because all of these intermediate principles have been polluted, all have been abused on behalf of the shadowy self, of egotism and separatism. Human beings of the past, like little children in the present, showed an innate confidence that comes from knowing oneself as a ray of the Divine. They recognized themselves as immortal souls, centres of consciousness capable of expansion and contraction, of diffusion and concentration. Thus they could regard the body as an instrument, to be used by the soul as a horse by its rider. The mind is a necessary and useful tool of the soul, but it must be regularly cleansed. A person who senses this does not identify with his clothes in the spiritual and philosophical sense. Instead, he is always turned inward through meditation, and upward through aspiration; he is forever rising heavenward towards the invisible cosmos. It becomes natural for him to start with the cosmic and come down to the human, to descend from *Hiranyagarbha* – the luminous golden egg of Brahmâ – to the recognition of one's own egg, from *Mahat*, or cosmic mind, to *Manas*, his small share in cosmic ideation. Descending from the universal to the particular is essential to the Hermetic method.

Modernity, by contrast, stands on its head, tries to move upward, and thus severs off the umbilical connection between man and

cosmos. This approach, antithetical to the spiritual nature of man, had to be corrected by the Copernican revolution, which clarified the relation of the earth and the sun. But while the contemporaries of Copernicus thought they were discovering new truths, they were, in fact, only recovering the ancient laws of Pythagorean wisdom. If a sense of the right relationship of heaven and earth is to be restored, the sort of reorientation and recentering that has taken place in astronomy must take place psychologically and metaphysically. This can be attempted in many ways. Ordinary people could, for example, develop skill in consulting the *I-Ching*. They would not be able to use it for precise prediction, for that mysterious science requires a great deal of reverence. But by simply considering the *I-Ching*, they will be reminded that there are seasons, and continuous connections between heaven and earth.

A recognition of the correspondences between the celestial and terrestrial is the beginning of wisdom. The fear of God is not the beginning of wisdom. Wisdom is attainable only through love of the gods and recognition of their immanence within the human temple. The realization of human nature as a living psychological link between the celestial and the terrestrial will come about only through meditation and contemplation in the highest sense. Through the awakening of Buddhic feeling, one may feel close to the stars and to the galaxy. But one will also feel close to that which corresponds to *Akasha* within the astral brain and spiritual heart, and also within the *karana sharira*. Without this therapeutic and creative feeling, true learning and science can never progress. A few pioneers have recognized that for three centuries now science has been a mutilated victim of methodological dogmatism. This has led to a mechanistic reductionism, often trumpeted only because people are not good at mathematics. When they are lacking in mathematics in the highest sense, they become addicted to the habit of tinkering with jars and lamps. Owing to the delusion that has shadowed the diffusion of science, the tremendous integrity of the highest mathematical method has been inaccessible to the majority of practitioners, who have become like Shaw's barbarians. They

resemble the civilized savage, who, upon switching on the light, thinks he knows about electricity.

Fortunately, this adolescent state of science is coming to an end. Yet although many people now recognize that science must deal with consciousness, most scientists are still encumbered by a philosophically narrow view of sense-data, sense-experience and inductive logic. As a result, pioneering researchers who want to elevate consciousness have difficulty in doing so. They must meditate, consult maps of consciousness, and employ philosophical criteria, if they are to make any genuine progress. In the Aquarian academies of the future, they will have to submit themselves to certain rigorous tests. They will have to prove that they have the powers, not just of concentration, but also of directing consciousness towards universally constructive connections and correlations. This will involve both analogy and correspondence, intuition and mathematics; it will draw upon meta-sciences as yet only dimly formulated. In general, what is required is a conception of mind correlated with a conception of matter, both of which exist on many levels. Different planes of matter corresponding to different states of mind are richly interconnected with each other in different sets and subsets, systems and subsystems, as well as supersystems. All of this has application to the arrangement of atoms and molecules, but also to what lies beyond what are presently called atomic and subatomic particles. These are but ghostly shadows of the invisible atoms in which inheres the eternal motion of the *Atman* and which may be spoken of as the *Atma-Buddhi-Manas* of the atom.

Science will not truly advance unless it goes beyond the mere analysis of physical matter, the mundane tricks which for a while bewitched hordes of ex-peasants coming out of villages. It was advantageous to have a little vulgar technology in the age of the automobile, the steam-engine and the electric motor. It was comforting to share in a collective sense of automatic progress. But that time is over. The present aim must be to transcend the mere classification of matter which characterizes, for example, most of

modern medicine, and instead to determine critical and relevant factors through theoretical and experiential knowledge of general and universal laws. This capacity must extend not only over the realm of physical phenomena, but also over psychological and moral life, and the social and political realms of human existence. Ultimately, this capacity will derive from strong foundations in spiritual self-awareness that can only be laid through a fundamental inner change. One might say this decisive change will require not merely framing the Hippocratic Oath but directly experiencing a reverence for life and truth. Early in the century such a spirit blessed the scientific academies of Germany, Switzerland and England.

Since 1914, however, much of this has been lost in the tumultuous rush after more technology and mere techniques. That is why the shining example of Mahatma Gandhi is so important to everyone who is authentically concerned with the disinterested pursuit of pure truth, while secure in its indifference to worldly concerns. The celestial was joined to the terrestrial in the West in certain monastic and intellectual communities, but since that connection was lost, to recover it requires something far more fundamental – a discriminating knowledge of metaphysics strong enough to broaden all one's categories and to deepen one's insights.

The radical regeneration of civilization and the restoration of a golden age can ultimately only be understood in relation to the descent of the gods. The golden age is eternally associated with Shiva Saturn and the hosts of the *Kumaras*, whilst its terrestrial incarnation is inseparable from the incarnation of divine dynasties and king-hierophants. Thus, Thot-Hermes was the secretary of King Saturn presiding over the pre-dynastic Golden Age. Plato, in the *Statesman*, speaks of the Golden Age as a time of universal well-being wherein all basic needs were fulfilled. This dream continually recurs in myth and literature, for example, in the vision of Gonzalo in *The Tempest*. But it is more than a dream. It is a recollection of reality. It refers not just to the Third Root Race, but also to certain recurring moments in human evolution. The time of

Rama, a million years ago, was the last great Golden Age. It was possible then for Divine Instructors to move openly among ordinary human beings. As kingship was sacred, rulers in that age could exemplify benevolent magic, exercising a just and compassionate custodianship over their close-knit communities. In the age of Shiva-Saturn, the cooperative hierarchies of human relationships mirrored the cosmic hierarchies of invisible nature.

However, as Plato recognized in the *Statesman*, once the Age of Zeus began, it was no longer possible for Divine Instructors to come openly into the world. Here Plato is referring to the beginning of *Kali Yuga* five thousand and eighty-four years ago. It is a familiar characteristic of the Iron Age that human beings must rely on rules to restrain their weaknesses and vices. But it is also well known that all rules can be manipulated and that in rule-governed systems oligarchy and inequality work continuously. The pervasive recognition that rule-governed societies are only dim reflections of some higher ideal is itself evidence that one cannot extinguish from the human heart an innate sense of devotion to true Teachers, *Gurus* and ethical leaders. One of the crucial contributions of the 1975 Cycle has been to awaken soul-memories in many peoples around the world. This had to be done before the beginning of the present Cycle, because no one can benefit from it until he or she has first been shown how to learn and to respect Teachers. Because all of this was significantly accomplished before 1975, many people are now more open and willing to function in environments that are precursors of the secular monasteries of the future, spiritual centres profoundly hospitable to learning and to oral instruction by true Teachers.

This was wisely anticipated by Damodar K. Mavalankar in the nineteenth century, who understood that the Theosophical Movement has essentially one object and no other. As a natural logician, Mavalankar knew that what he understood, others would also understand, namely, that if *Mahatmas* and Adepts can move freely among human beings, any one of them can solve myriads of persisting problems among myriads of responsive human beings.

One need only open the door to the free movement of such enlightened beings. This could not have been attempted during the last Cycle; if anything it was retarded, first by ignorant misuse of the Teachings, and later by abject cowardice. The lifeless thought-forms, crippled images and paranoid vestiges of the old Cycle must be bypassed in the progressive initiation of the Aquarian *sanghas*, the academies and the lodges of the future. As this Pythagorean fusion attains fruition during the next century, there will around the globe be widespread hospitality to the wisdom and necessity of acceptance of the *Guruparampara* Chain. There will be a willingness to learn, which can draw upon the natural reciprocity and self-validating strength of the relationship between teacher and taught. Like a deep and loving relationship between a parent and a child, this cannot be manipulated by a third party. Its reciprocity arises within the unique context of a particular karmic field, and points to the timeless ideal of the *Guru-chela* relationship.

This universal Aquarian diffusion of the true ideal of spiritual science and lifelong learning will enable human beings to awaken a vibrant sense of universal justice, universal compassion and universal concord. It will enable people to learn anew how to think, how to speak and how to contribute fearlessly yet appropriately to the collective fund of human wisdom: how to evoke benevolent spirits. If one employs harsh words, or even gentle words in a harsh manner, one will attract negative elementals. These, over time, accumulate, blocking the capacity to question or to formulate truths. But, by purifying words, speech and the aura around words and by cleansing one's motivation, one's tone of voice and one's movements, one can reorient oneself and so draw finer elementals into one's sphere. Through this elevation of the orbit of one's consciousness, one may become more benevolent and more magnanimous, while at the same time learning to use potent knowledge with more deliberation, courage and compassion.

The regeneration of global civilization through such a tapping of the inward spiritual resources of humanity is the enigmatic Hermetic and Avataric function exemplified by Hermes-Thot. It is

the sacred function central to every Mystery School in recorded and unrecorded history. It goes back directly to Dakshinamurti, the Initiator of Initiates, and it has never been absent from the earth. It has been self-evidently crucial when the beginnings of civilizations were laid in different parts of the world. To make it now a vital part of a universal outlook in the dawning Aquarian Age, where there is more freedom from competitiveness and more openness to universal truths, could lead to a new kind of soul-etiquette. Founded upon the principle of drawing the larger circle, there could be the elaboration of a new code of relationship between human beings which would be more hospitable to the profoundly paradigmatic teachings of the *Upanishad*, "Sit down near me and let me whisper in your ear." This is the ancient Platonic-Upanishadic method, born with the human race, perpetually nourishing it, and recognized by the noblest precursors of the Aquarian Age.

*Hermes*, December 1983

Raghavan Iyer

## DIREFUL PROPHECIES

THE whole mystic fraternity of Astrologers is now engaged in showing how the heavens portend great changes on this our earth. They agree with H.P.B., who said that her Eastern friends told her of coming cyclic changes now very near at hand. Beyond doubt there is some truth in all these sayings, although here and there the astrologers definitely prognosticating are not supported by fact. Sepharial, for instance, staked his reputation on the death of the Prince of Wales, which did not come off, and now where is the reputation? Just as good as ever, for astrologers know that either the judgment of the astrologer may be at fault from sundry causes, or that the birth-hour may be wrong, or that some saving aspect of the stars has been overlooked. Great earthquakes like that of Zante or the one in Kuchan come up, and the astrologers, while they regularly in those years foresaw earthquakes, did not seem able to locate them for any spot. They were afraid to say Persia for fear it might be in London. But earthquakes were foretold. A steady prognostication of disturbance has been indulged in, and this general outlook would seem right. The disturbances were expected in the realm of mind, morals, and religion by those true astrologers who seldom speak, and the increase of crime like that of bomb-throwing justifies each month the general prediction. Seismic disturbance is the physical sign of disturbance in the moral, psychic, and mental fields. This is an old axiom in the East. In the record of the earthquake said to have taken place when Jesus died we have the Christian reflection of the same idea.

That earthquakes, floods, and great social changes would go on increasing has been known to Theosophists since the day Tom Paine saw psychically "a new order of things for the human race opening in the affairs of America," before the revolution. And ever since the increment of disaster has been great. The motto adopted by the makers of the Union - "A new order of ages" - was an echo from the realm of soul to the ears of men on earth. It marked a point in the cycle. The record of the disasters during the years since then



would be found appalling. It takes in Asia and Europe, and would show millions of sudden deaths by violent earth-convulsions. And now in 1894 even Herbert Spencer, looking at the mental and social fields of human life, says in a magazine article:

A nation of which the legislators vote as they were bid and of which the workers surrender their rights of selling their labor where they please has neither the ideas nor the sentiments needed for the maintenance of liberty.... We are on the way back to the rule of the strong hand in the shape of the bureaucratic despotism of a socialistic organization and then of the military despotism which must follow it; if, indeed, some social crash does not bring the latter upon us more quickly.

Evidently this deeply philosophical and statistical writer feels the pressure in the atmosphere of social and material life. There is much unconscious prophecy in what he says. Earthquakes and deaths from them are dreadful, but they can be avoided when their probable place is known. But social earthquakes, moral pestilence, mental change belong to man, go with him where he goes, and cannot be averted by any alteration of place.

In the *Illustrated American* a writer on astrology gives definite prophecy of disaster. He erects a figure of the heavens for noon of November 12, 1894, showing a conjunction of Sun, Uranus, Venus, and Mercury in Scorpio, with Saturn only fifteen degrees away. Astrologically this is very bad. With the moon at the full in Taurus - the bull - it is ominous of floods and earthquakes. But we may add that in the psychic Zodiac it shows floods and heaving in the moral and social structure of the poor orphan man. Uranus and Saturn are bad planets anyway; they are erratic and heavy, subtle, dark, and menacing. This writer predicts ominously, but remains indefinite as to place. We will add that dying nations like those of Persia and China will feel most whatever effects shall be due; and in Europe, while there will be physical disturbance, the greater trouble will be in the social and governmental structures.

The astrologer then runs forward to December 30, 1901, when he says six planets will be in one sign and in a line, with a seventh

opposite on the same line projected. This, it is said by such an ancient sage as Berosus, will bring a flood when it takes place in the zodiacal sign Capricornus, as is to be the case in 1901.

Many Theosophists believe these prognostications, others deride them. The former ask what shall we do? Nothing. Stay where you are. If you remove, it is more than likely you will run into the jaws of a blacker fate. Do your duty where you find yourself, and if from your goodness you are a favorite of the gods you will escape, while if you are not their favorite it is better for you to die and take another chance at bettering your character. Death will come when it will, and why should we fear, since it is "a necessary end." Theosophists too often occupy themselves with these woeful lookings into the future, to the detriment of their present work. They should try to discover the fine line of duty and endeavor, leaving the astrologers of today, who are more at sea than any other mystics, to con over a zodiac that is out of place and calculate with tables which delude with the subtle power that figures have to lie when the basis of calculation is wrong.

*Path*, March, 1894

William Q. Judge

# THE SEVENTH IMPULSION: 1963–2000

*The great and peaceful ones live regenerating the world like the coming of the spring; having crossed the ocean of embodied existence themselves, they freely aid all others who seek to cross it. The very essence and inherent will of Mahatmas is to remove the suffering of others, just as the ambrosia-rayed moon of itself cools the earth heated by the intense rays of the sun.*

Shankaracharya

A night of superstition, dogma and degradation descended upon the West for a millennium between the politically prudent "conversion" of Constantine and the initiation of the Seven Century Plan. In 1357 a ray of Amitabha, the Buddha of Boundless Time and Infinite Light, appeared in Tibet as the Adept-Teacher Tsong-kha-pa. To purify, preserve and promulgate the Wisdom-Religion, he founded the Gelukpa Order, the third Dalai Lama of which was recognized as a manifestation of Avalokiteswara, "the divine SELF perceived by Self." Tenzin Gyatso, the present Dalai Lama, is the fourteenth incarnation. Tsong-kha-pa initiated a series of seven impulsions to prepare the world through mental and spiritual revitalization to be ready to participate in the formation of the distant sixth sub-race. In the last quarter of each century of the Seven Century Plan, an emissary from the Brotherhood of Bodhisattvas works in the West to further spiritual enlightenment and the continuity of collective growth.

In the fourteenth century two "supreme Pontiffs" were elected to the papal chair, and the resulting "great schism" cast doubt on the claims of the church to absolute spiritual and temporal authority. John Wycliffe (1320–1384) began preparing the ground for a reawakening of *Manas* by translating the Bible into English and teaching that transubstantiation and papal authority are superstitions. His disciples, the Lollards, showed in their lives the

way of simple devotion and charity. Pico della Mirandola (1463–1494) led the Second Impulsion by introducing the Qabbalah to the West, deciphering the philosophical alphabet of the Hermetic teachings, and by founding human dignity upon the freedom to germinate and nourish some selection of the vast variety of seeds of possibility in plastic human nature. Paracelsus provided the transition to the sixteenth-century cycle by teaching that "everything is the product of one universal creative effort; the Microcosm and man are one." The luminous triad of Giordano Bruno (1548–1600), Robert Fludd (1575–1637) and Jacob Boehme (1575–1624) first used the term "theosophy" in modern times. The doctrine of Paracelsus of sevenfold cosmic and human correlations was given a firm metaphysical foundation and fearless exemplification by Bruno. Fludd explained to a surprised Europe that the ancient Mysteries which preserved these doctrines had not perished with classical Greece, but flourished in the East and in secret groups in the West. For the first time in the Seven Century Plan, the central idea that Adepts worked behind the scenes to improve the human condition was intimated. Boehme demonstrated that spiritual intuition was possible, thereby giving crucial evidence for the existence of Adepts, though he made no claim for himself.

In 1675 the Rosicrucian Instructions were issued. Disciples who wished to serve humanity were invited to prepare quietly the ground for the public work of the Movement. In the Fifth Impulsion there arose "four heroic characters who formed a Cross of Occult Light in the eighteenth-century sky" – Saint Germain, whose life is as mysterious as his overbrooding work in history; Louis Claude de Saint-Martin (1743–1803), who purified Masonry and coined the spiritual motto "Liberty, Equality, Fraternity," distorted by the violent passions of the French revolution; Cagliostro, who offered true Masons knowledge of the Lodge of Mahatmas; and Franz Anton Mesmer (1734–1815), who unified the physical, mental and spiritual principles of magnetism into a single therapeutic doctrine and practice.

The Sixth Impulsion witnessed the incarnation of the enigmatic being called Helena Petrovna Blavatsky (1831–1891). Boldly announcing that she was an agent of the Great Lodge, she outlined the fundamental teachings of the Wisdom-Religion even before she founded the Theosophical Society with her associate Henry Steel Olcott and her disciple William Quan Judge. Defining true magic as divine wisdom, she identified science and theology, "the Montecchi and Capuletti of the nineteenth century," as the enemies of occultism, offering *Isis Unveiled* (1877) as evidence for her ideas and *The Secret Doctrine* (1888) as explanation of the philosophy of theosophy. Braving the painful, though sacred, duty of openly naming the Mahatmas who are behind the Movement, she demonstrated the grandeur of the theosophical system and the danger of playing with its Fohatic fire. In expounding the fundamentals of *theosophia* and the basic principles of oriental *philosophia*, she pointed to the underlying roots of all individual and collective progress. Her travels from Russia to America, from India to England, cast powerful magnetic links across the world, so that the Mahatmic vibration could be tapped globally.

When H.P. Blavatsky departed on the completion of her task, W.Q. Judge continued her work in the spirit she had selflessly embodied.

Her aim was to elevate the race. Her method was to deal with the mind of the century as she found it, by trying to lead it on step by step; to seek out and educate a few who, appreciating the majesty of the Secret Science and devoted to "the great orphan Humanity," could carry on her work with zeal and wisdom; to found a Society whose efforts – however small itself might be – would inject into the thought of the day the ideas, the doctrines, the nomenclature of the Wisdom Religion, so that when the next century shall have seen its 75th year the new messenger coming again into the world would find the Society still at work, the ideas sown broadcast, and thus to make easy the task which for her since 1875 was so difficult and so encompassed with obstacles in the very paucity of the language, – obstacles harder than all else to work against.

He reminded his readers that while "at the close of each century a spiritual movement is made in the world by the Mahatmas," they do not wholly withdraw their current. Rather the seeds sown are allowed to germinate.

Our destiny is to continue the wide work of the past in affecting literature and thought throughout the world, while our ranks see many changing quantities but always holding those who remain true to the programme and refuse to become dogmatic or to give up common-sense in theosophy. Thus we will wait for the new messenger, striving to keep the organization alive that he may use it and have the great opportunity H.P.B. outlines when she says, "Think how much one, to whom such an opportunity is given, could accomplish."

As the sun simultaneously passed across the Galactic Equator and the sacred asterism Punarvarsu, the Aquarian Age began its turn as the solar month in the Great Year. Astraea, the goddess of justice, descends toward the Pit, and Aldebaran, "the eye of the Bull," surveys earth from Meru. Into this complex, chaotic and crucial period the Seventh Impulsion is sent. When speaking of this age H.P. Blavatsky warned that psychologists would have their work cut out for them, many accounts will be settled between the races and that the twentieth century would be the last of its name. The forms and traditions, the beliefs and languages which inspired Piscean man over two millennia ago are dead and decaying. Those who cling to form rather than looking to the Spiritual Sun find themselves torn asunder by the collapse of familiar patterns. Riddled with self-doubt and insecurity, not sufficiently resolute in vision to see the soft golden hues of spiritual light among the flashing beams of *maya*, many are easy prey for doomsayers, negators and cynics, and crisis becomes a mode of living. Robert Crosbie founded the United Lodge of Theosophists in 1909 to continue the Work and preserve the foundations of the coming cycle, and B.P. Wadia carried the light of U.L.T. around the world.

Into this contrasting scene of daring and despair the Magus-Teacher of the Seventh Impulsion descends. The Guru alone determines when, where and how he will represent himself, the

levels of language he will use, the modes of teaching he will adopt, and the speed and obviousness with which he will spell out the nature of the culminating Impulsion. His work involves the sutratmic synthesis of the Seven Century Plan. His duty is to nothing less than the whole of humanity, and as the Voice of *Vajradhara*, the Diamond Soul, every word he speaks will be a full account of himself. His teaching will be pure *theosophia* and his expression of it will be as fresh and vivifying as are those of every Guru when first delivered.

The Seven Century Plan is intimately connected with the 2500-year cycle of the Buddha, and the 5000-year cycle with which Krishna inaugurated *Kali Yuga*. Robert Crosbie said that Krishna "was an administrator, while Buddha was ethical intelligence." Vinoba Bhave has reiterated that Krishna was the incarnation of pure love, the Buddha of oceanic compassion. The synthesis of the "royal art" and the science of living, of unconditional love and unerring compassion, sets the archetype for the Aquarian Man: one whose head can feel and whose heart is intelligent, "like twins upon a line" while the star which is his goal burns overhead. The New Teacher will lay down the invisible lines which are the parameters of human development for the next 2000 years.

We have the privilege of being among those who enter a New Cycle under the Seven Century Plan, bringing together East and West so fully that the distinction will fade into history. The golden impulse initiated by Krishna, Buddha and Shankara in the East, and by Pythagoras, Plato and Christ in the West, will be carried forth into the civilization of the future. Those who strive to make theosophy by any name a living power in their lives, one-pointed in consciousness, calm and deliberate in action, may have the sacred privilege of recognizing and serving the Magus-Teacher of the Seventh Impulsion. Those who prepare themselves in the secret sanctuary of their hearts by letting go of all conditions and renouncing all wish for personal gain, may have the thrice-great privilege of working with the *Guru* for the regeneration of humanity.

Retrospective insight into the 1875 Cycle and intuitive readiness for 1975 are indissolubly wedded, with no danger of divorce in a marriage by mutual assent. The Wheel of the Good Law moves swiftly on, and those who are willing to drive out the worthless husks of feverish speculation, psychic excitement and unholy curiosity must seek the golden grain of self-validating truth in the mathematically precise marking of "the celestial dial" on the Solar Clock.  $14 \times 7$  years and 7 months after the birth of "H.P.B.," as well as  $3 \times 9$  years and 9 months after the Aquarian Age commenced, when the disc of the Sun crossed the galactic equator and entered the constellation of Punarvarsu (Pollux), an event took place on earth, under the aegis of the asterism Punarvarsu, containing the key to the 1975 Cycle. This says everything and nothing, in the time-honoured code language of the Wise Men of the East.

*Hermes*, November 1975

Raghavan Iyer



**THE ZODIAC  
AND  
ITS SIGNS**

# ARIES

The fleece of the Ram of Aries turned as golden as the sun and launched the fleet of Jason in pursuit. But it must not be thought, by those who seek wisdom, that the Argonauts sought after wealth. For the golden ram that stands upon its hind legs is the symbol for the living soul of Ra, the great god who came to earth as the first divine Pharaoh over humanity. The graceful glyph of Aries depicts the arching horns of a mountain sheep but its curves also describe a bursting fountain of water or the extended arms of a descending being embracing the concerns of the earth, the soul of Ra come into the world.

Aries has been called the symbol of the creative impulse of spirit at the moment of its inception. It is the ram or lamb of sacrifice, called by the Sumero-Akkadians *Lulim* or *Zue*, 'the Messenger.' Its month was named *Baraziggar*, the time of 'the upright altar of sacrifice' and was marked by the re-enactment – through rituals of oblation – of the descent of the sacrificial lamb of God. The presence of the soul of Ra in the world was believed to be embodied in the sacred rams of ancient Egypt, and priest-kings wore their flayed skins and heads as testimony of their divine communion with the solar source of all life. To kill a ram as an offering to God symbolized the release of the cosmic soul from the confines of matter. To assume its guise indicated that the wearer contained the full potency of solar fire.

In the fieriness of Aries the sun is exalted and in several languages of the Middle East the sun's name is synonymous with that of the ram. The colossal rams guarding the precincts of the temples of Amon in Upper Egypt were retainers of the solar god and keepers of the flame, their name indicating their link with the sun. In the Egyptian book of the Underworld called *Am-Tuat* there are twelve divisions indicating the zones of the zodiac through which the soul, as sun, must journey on its way back to its sacred seat. In the first division of Aries the solar boat is shown bearing

within its shrine the sun as a ram-headed man. The *Book of the Dead* describes this as AUF, the Dead Sun who symbolizes Divine Life limiting itself or becoming 'dead' to its powers in the higher worlds. There is a scarab beetle depicted in the same illustration, representing creation and evolution, a theme further reinforced by an inscription announcing 'the coming into being of Osiris.' In these highly symbolic pictograms Osiris is shown swathed and bound in the wrappings of a mummy, and that encumbrance clearly represents the entrance of the living soul into that death which we call life. We are reminded of another 'son of God' who was brought forth and wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in a manger. In both cases, the infant vessel of pure eternal consciousness becomes entwined in the trappings of the 'living dead.' For just as we think this world is reality itself, so we are misled by the appearances of all things. Even as we 'see' them with the eyes of the world, they are dead. The real life has moved on to hidden places and leaves behind it a mummified shell.

Scattered and faded now is all the foliage  
Which had burst forth beneath the power of Aries  
To beautify the world.  
The gross is withered.

Dante

The new cycle of growth commenced by the fiery birth of Aries is underway and the world is populated with the symbolic foliage of the tree of life. Even as the fire burst forth, it contained within it the elements that would be swallowed up by the earth. The light of Aja, 'the Unborn,' propelled into birth, would become 'swaddled' in the garments of *avidya*, and Aries would be the agent through which this initial process of 'being' took place. The constellation of the Ram marks the zone in heaven, the 'aperture' through which this sacrificial emanation commences. This heavenly pattern of stars was called by the Babylonians *Iku*, and they believed its power to be that of a great archetypal design, a sign of God's manifestation to be emulated on earth. They used the base of four of its stars as the inspiration for the building of the Esagila, the Temple of Marduk.

Up to the time of the Christian era, the spring equinox occurred in Aries and festivals of the New Year included creation rituals. On the fourth day of such rites, the high priest would face to the north and intone the words, "O Iku, thou Esagila, likeness of Heaven and Earth." They believed that the stellar temple-body in heaven was reflected in the seven-storied temple-body in the world and that its cosmic design offered the blueprint for the sevenfold levels of manifestation that were to follow. Indeed, Aries was considered by ancient and medieval astrologers to be the platform of that which was to come – the foundation of destiny – and they taught that the presence of a favourable star in Aries boded well for any work initiated. The four cardinal stars of Aries marked the corners of the Esagila in space and in time, the day on which the priest intoned the mantram ritual of Marduk, the Creator. It is this cardinal nature that lent to Aries the primordial force of the zodiac.

The regally controlled fire of Leo and the subtly refined fiery energy of Sagittarius are anticipated in the primal fire of Aries. Closely related to Aja, the Cosmic Self, Aries vibrates with the force of its personified ray and on the lower plane of incarnated effects the image of a larger selfhood is strongly reflected. The energy of fire incarnate polarizes and concentrates and is the cause of all separations and reunions in matter. As consciousness, it gathers into a strong sense of self which is limited, its movements manifesting as death and rebirth. The spiritual fire becomes locked in the present personality by the centrifugal and heterogeneously separative force of Mars, whose influence promotes the gathering process of soul involution which will persist through the critical point of Scorpio.

Aries is masculine, full of energy and very positive. An individual entering life under the influence of this sign is like Archetypal Man upon the scene of matter. He is like a pioneer who looks about at an untamed wilderness and is moved, by his powerfully reflected sense of self, to impose his will upon it. He likes to think he has arrived at his present position by himself, that he is totally self-sufficient and independent. He imagines that there

is great merit in getting his way and is often unaware of the feelings of others. In his sense of wholeness and independence, he may suffer from pride and tend to confuse his strong desires with higher will. An Aries dictator could easily believe that his personal ambition was a reflection of divine cosmic will and his delusion would be based upon the almost innocent-seeming *avidya* or unknowing which characterizes this initial phase of the zodiac. He may persistently mistake obstinacy for strength of character, desire for will, and the unreal for the real but may manifest the characteristics of creation which are conducive to innovation and proliferation. There is promise in Aries for a new beginning, a new opportunity, but there is also the painful loss of cosmic vision which manifests as an inversion of perception and marks the re-entry of the soul into the old cycle of *Samsara*.

In Pisces the soul was weighed in the balance and either merged like the drop into the Akashic sea or waited for its inevitable redescend into matter. Those who did not fully grasp the ultimate opportunity of Pisces through consciously experiencing the death of their personal, separative self, but were, instead, caught in the flood of worldly emotions, were bound to begin the ever-revolving process of births once more. The cord that unites the two fishes of Pisces, which respectively point to involution and liberation, passes under the foreleg of the Ram of Aries and the unliberated soul is caught by that cord just as surely as we are now caught within our bodies. With very few exceptions, the incarnated individual has indeed arrived at his present position by himself, but not through the exercise of his higher will as he may wish to think.

Plato believed that Aries was ruled by Pallas Athene, the dynamic war-like goddess who created the life-giving olive tree and who sprang fully armed from the head of Zeus. She was the inventor of weaving, and renowned for "her mastery of the spider web" of creation. Of all the arts, weaving is the most symbolic of manifestation, and one can imagine the *Dodecatheoi*, the twelve gods of the zodiac, establishing upon a vast celestial loom the lines of

force through the warp and woof of the world's design. The same idea has been beautifully expressed by Goethe, who says:

Thus at the roaring loom of Time I ply,  
And weave for God the garment thou see'st Him by.

Only the smallest details of texture, colour, and local embellishment would be affected by the actions of incarnated beings, and the struggles of the world would be subsumed within the cosmic weave. The only truly free individuals would be those who understood the design and could move from colour to colour, detail to detail, with effortless ease. Manifesting an Aquarian overview, they would have slowly woven their way in consciousness, knitting up the loose threads of karmic debt until they had synthesized the whole of the cosmic design in their own being. Thus would they come to understand something of the nature of the divine beings that initiate the cycle of Aries.

The Age of Aries commenced around 2300 B.C., and it was about that time that the ram became sacred to Amon, the solar deity of Egypt. Showing himself to the world in the guise of a ram, Amon, 'the Hidden One,' usurped the role of Shu who, in earlier times, was believed to have formed the world by separating the earth and the sky. Amon, becoming like the wind, stirred up the waters of Nun, and began the work of creation. He is described as emerging out of the primal flood on to the mound of Hermopolis. There, it is said, he was received by his female counterpart in the form of a cow, upon whose back he floated to many shores, giving birth to the various ram-gods of creation. Symbolically, Amon ordered time and the seasons and in this was much like Khnum, whose name meant 'to create.' Khnum, an ancient god of the first cataract of the Nile in upper Egypt, 'controlled' the place of the source of life and was believed to be the creator of gods and men, whom he fashioned of clay on the potter's wheel. He was said to fashion the body of every child born, providing the clay vessel that would hopefully contain the waters of the soul. He was shown as a man with a ram's head whose horns curved out horizontally, indicating that the ideas of early dynastic times were inspired by the appearance of an

animal which actually became extinct during the later Middle Kingdom.

The Hindu counterpart of Amon and Khnum is Daksha, whose activities as 'Chief Progenitor' are described in the *Vayu Purana*. Daksha, who bears the ray of 'the Hidden One,' is also associated with the wind that stirs up the water. In the act of creating physical man, a great strife broke out among the gods causing Daksha to 'lose his head.' This head was replaced by that of a ram called Kasi-Khanda, whose form is a phallic symbol of generation, marking the era of men engendered by sexual intercourse. Daksha himself represents the early Third Race which was holy and pure and still devoid of individual ego. But the incarnation of self-consciousness necessitated then, as it does now in the individual birth, the separation of the pairs of elements making up the world, the realization of Self in a body requiring a re-ignition of the Fohatic spark between the negative and positive poles of manifested being. This method of procreation was not perfected all at once and it is said that many monsters were created and were all destroyed by Shiva before the five-pointed human form emerged. This progression is described in *The Secret Doctrine* in archetypal terms, proceeding through the 'Sweat-born,' egg-born, vapour-born, and so forth, until finally man was born from the womb, the microcosmic reflection of the entire manifested cosmos.

The replacement of Daksha's head with that of a ram is extremely suggestive when related to the fact that Aries is linked up with the head and face. In Hindu esoteric astrology Aries, called *Mesam*, is considered the reflective symbol of *Parabrahm*, the undifferentiated whole, and the Original Cause of the thunderbolt which emerges from the *Akasa* of Pisces. In Egyptian cosmology, it is from 'the Hidden One,' 'the Unknown Force,' that the initial impulse through which the potential becomes active bursts forth to become the Logos, the Heavenly Man who as the manifesting Sun of the Hidden Father, Aries takes on the guise of that symbolic concentration of forces which will in turn rule the brain and head of physical man. Thus the ram governs those centres in man which

control both physical and spiritual energies, just as *Parabrahm* rests at the centre of all potential cosmic forces. Through this reflective process, that which has no being and is pre-cosmic and eternal becomes Being related to darkness and *avidya*, symbolized in Buddhist tradition by a blind woman who sits beside a lighted lamp.

*Avidya* is the first of the twelve *Nidanas* of Buddhism and represents the loss of awareness of one's real nature. Corresponding to Aries, it is the first in a series of causes which bind the soul to the wheel of existence through that sense of ignorance which relates to spiritual awareness. It implies nescience, and though the Transcendent can have no opposite, *avidya* is truly the antithesis of *Bodhi* or enlightenment. It is, however, positive as well as negative in that it involves wrong views or Platonic 'double ignorance.' The individual immersed in *avidya* views the phenomenal as noumenal and the noumenal not at all. He does the same with the conditioned and unconditioned as well as the painful and pleasant. There is a confusion and inversion whereby the non-eternal, impure and evil are taken to be the eternal, pure and good. The ability to perceive that an event occurs because of a certain cause or condition and will not occur if the cause or condition is absent, is obscured. *Avidya* is that state where endless effects are manipulated in an effort to control causes while the causal plane is totally lost from view.

This ignorance manifests because consciousness has become involved in matter. That which is boundless is made to assume the limitations of matter. It is deprived of the knowledge of its eternal, self-sufficient nature. This is brought about by a transcendent power inherent in the Ultimate Reality which is called *Maya*. How and why this happens can only be known by those who come face to face with the Truth that underlies manifestation which, by its very nature, is incommunicable. To know this is the end of the search, not the starting point, and since enlightenment is the goal, the elimination of that which obstructs it should be the methodological beginning of spiritual teaching.



The fundamental privation of knowledge brought about by *Maya* at the beginning of an evolutionary cycle is the cause of *avidya*, and the uninterrupted practice of the awareness of the Real is the means of dispersion of *avidya*. Discrimination between the Real and the Unreal is possible only when we have experienced Reality. The individual must begin by searching within himself for the spark of the reflected ray of the Real. Once he has discovered it, he must tenaciously cling to its light, ever re-aligning his consciousness to it. Only in this way can *avidya* be destroyed and rebirth into the cycle of Aries be assumed as a purposeful act of the higher will.

In Aries, the strongly etched shadow of cosmic will, while manifesting as inverted wilfulness and delusive self-sufficiency, is, nonetheless, suffused with the potency of the creative impulse and can be sharpened like an artist's tool to mould the raw material of life into better modes of expression for the future. It is in recognition of this that Initiates, who worked and created on behalf of man, were portrayed by the Egyptians as ram-headed men. In the *Book of the Dead* a command is given that a certain chapter should be read in the presence of a "serpent with two legs" whose head is adorned with the discus of the sun and ram's horns, over which are represented the two mystic eyes of Amon. The struggling soul must swim through the miasma of *avidya* toward the light of that discus which is supported in the world by the ram's horns. He must fasten his gaze upon the pointed glow within his head and, while all around him darkness grows, he may advance slowly and steadily toward the celestial aperture that gave him birth. He may open the Book of Nature and partake of the wisdom writ therein.

*Hermes*, May 1977

Helen Valborg

# TAURUS

*From father plow descend the Furrow-Sons,  
Thro' whose rich loins a num'rous issue runs.  
From parent blossoms, daughter's fruit succeed;  
As Phorcus comes before his numerous breed.  
Thy laws personified still rule the whole,  
Of which thy Minos is the life and soul.*

Neither the elegance of his sculpted throne, the fullness of his grain stores nor the loyal villages that graced the slopes descending from his palaces were enough to arrest the doubts of the Minoan king. So deep was his uncertainty that Minos prayed to Poseidon to send him a sign of his true sovereignty. The myths tell of distant times when bull-leapers performed along lofty parapets beside walls decorated with graceful dolphins. This ancient tale reaches us through the mists of old harbours lapped by the waters of Poseidon who sent to Minos the proof he sought in the form of a mighty and beautiful bull. Surging across the dark waters, the magnificent animal ascended to the royal palace and entranced its inhabitants. The bull from the sea symbolized man's kingly right and the responsibility of his reign. He embodied the material that had floated as foam upon the water's current, fragmented and semi-dissolved just a moment before. Now, gathered together, that matter was solid and powerful, and stood before Minos as a concrete answer to his searching question.

Like the Bull of Minos, Taurus represents impressed matter, agglomerated from the strata of past thought and desire and thrust into the present like the topsoil of the earth. Taurus emerges as the gathering dark cloud, giving form to the precipitation of latent cause against the shapeless sky. It is related to the second *Nidana*, *Samskara*, and reflects the results of former states of being, the karma upon which the soul will work. *Samskara* etymologically suggests the improvement and refinement of impressions left upon the mind and form. It carries the germs of propensities cultivated in

previous lives to be developed in this and future births. Linked to Vach, Taurus establishes the key note and basis for subsequent activity. The ancient Akkadians recognized this in the name they bestowed upon the celestial bull – *TE*, 'the Foundation Stone.'

The forces of Taurus are those of virgin matter, the vehicle of becoming. They are like clay to be moulded by the skilled potter who can discern the texture and consistency needed for sculpting a water-tight vessel. The earth itself offers up material which will eventually form a vessel capable of containing the most ethereal fluids of manifested life, but the potter must select, refine and mould this material upon the wheel of karmic existence. The entire process of becoming reflects the relation of the manifest to the unmanifest intimated in *The Voice of the Silence*: "Before the Soul can comprehend and may remember, she must unto the Silent Speaker be united, just as the form to which the clay is modelled is first united with the potter's mind." Taurus is both the plastic earth which bears form and the causal force which penetrates and vivifies it. If Aries, whose ruler is Mars, can be seen as the father, Taurus, ruled by Venus, can be seen as the mother, "the web upon which is woven the garment of the soul." Being an earth sign, there is a feminine aspect to the symbol of the bull even though its nature is masculine. However, the Eddie god Thor, the Egyptian Osiris, and several Hindu sky gods are also identified with the bull, suggesting that Taurus is related both to *Purusha* and *Prakriti*. Hymns in the *Rig Veda* describe heaven and earth as a closely united pair, one a prolific bull, the other a multi-coloured cow. As productive and generative powers in nature, they represent the merging of firm soul-awareness with the plastic power of consciousness, the birth of *Viraj* out of *Vach*.

In the *Puranas*, *Viraj* is described as the *Logos*, the male *Manu* created in the female portion of *Brahma's* body by *Brahma* himself. "Having divided his body into two parts, the lord became with one half a male and with the other half a female; and in her he created *Viraj*." Thus, the cow is the symbol of creative nature, while the bull is the spirit which vivifies nature and renders 'the Word' into

manifest sound. The Egyptians symbolized this by the light of the sun which, as a bull, hid in the body of a cow each night to be born anew at every morn. They called the sun 'the Bull of his Mother,' a symbol of the penetration of the humid by the fiery. Taurus is related to the moon as well as the sun, and its zodiacal glyph depicts a crescent over a full moon, symbolizing the waxing and waning forces of natural life. The Babylonian lunar deity was the god Sin, whose emblem was the bull. Just as there were successions of lunar and solar cults in the East, so there were lunar and solar aspects attributed to the Heavenly Bull. Despite the shifts of religious emphasis, there was an intense and constant interest in the stars of Taurus, which included the earliest astrological signifiers connected with agriculture.

Taurus is the first of four signs in the zodiac which, as equinoctial points, mark the beginnings of *yugas*. Representing the four elements, they are points in a wheel which seems to undulate, relative to the earth, like the track of a winding serpent. This serpentine motion is related to *Fohat*, and its phases may be seen in the curves of the glyphs belonging to Taurus, Leo, Scorpio and Aquarius. *Fohat*, latent in Taurus, stirs into activity in Leo, fully awakens in Scorpio and is synthesized in Aquarius. Phoenician cylinder seals depict the lion devouring the bull, the commencement of a progression which culminates in the total synthesis of the man-lion. *Fohat* conceals motive powers in Taurus. When tamasic, this engenders an asuric secretiveness, but in its positive aspect, it indicates a profound capacity for assimilation. The earthly forces of production associated with Taurus need not be dispersed but may be contained and ruminated upon slowly and steadily. The unrefined earthy potential of this sign is reminiscent of the rough soil of primitive man before the dawn of civilization, a pristine condition symbolized by the Sumerian hero Enkidu. He was depicted as a bull with a man's breast, arms and face, whose visage was adorned with bovine ears and horns. This was man before his acquisition of the 'soul of life,' which the Sumerians believed to have coincided with the creation of goddesses of flocks and grain. The connection between such bull-men and the feminine

principle in nature is intimated in myths about monsters which arise from the sea and must be conquered by the masculine principle. They represent morphological cul-de-sacs of evolution, or premature graftings of the divine on unrefined matter. Like Jason and his crew on the Argo, who met and conquered the Cretan Bull, the soul must cross this celestial Bosphorus (*bos* = bull) in order to cultivate the fields of life.

The bull is the paramount symbol of the fecundating sky. Its blackness links it with the lower heaven of death, while, as thunder, its bellow conveys the voice of the unmanifest. The Egyptians spoke of the 'heavenly wild bull' whose black colour represented the depth of the sky which, though remote, was full and therefore finite. The transformation of his nature from the solar to the lunar is strongly suggested in Cretan ritual where the sun was represented as a bull. The labyrinth was an orchestra formed in a solar pattern in which the dancer imitating the sun masqueraded as a bull. The myth of Minos provides a clue to this transition when it describes how the king found the Bull from the Sea so beautiful that he could not kill it as a sacrificial offering to Poseidon as he had been instructed. The Bull, roaming about freely, attracted the unnatural love of Queen Pasiphae, who eventually gave birth to the anthropotaurine monster called the Minotaur. Pasiphae was not only the wife of a man who desired assurance of his divine right to rule but also a daughter of Helios. As an offspring of the sun, she became the agent through whom brutal nature grossly manifested due to the failure of Minos to sacrifice the bull. Her fascination with the Bull is paralleled by the worship of Dionysius in bovine guise, a practice perhaps related to an unconscious urge to escape into 'pre-time,' a realm of primitive expression. In the Minoan myth, the bull is a necessary element in the deeper quest of King Minos, who through vivifying passive nature precipitates the necessity of the conquest of brute nature by the man who would be king.

Taurus governs the throat and the voice, projections of 'the Word made flesh.' In the *Vedas* and *Upanishads* the Heavenly Bull is called *Rsabham*, and is related to *Pranava* or AUM. Dyaus, the Hindu

equivalent of Zeus, is called the Bull "who bellows downward, his thunder penetrating the lower heavens and striking the earth." Thus Indra releases *Vach* in the form of the captive cows. The Babylonian Enlil, "whose head rivals the Heavens, whose foundation is laid in the pure abyss, who reposes in the land like a furious wild bull, whose horns gleam like the rays of the Sun-god," hurls down the thunderous 'Word' which echoes through the world. Nandi, the sacred bull of Shiva, was brought from Bharata to Sancha to meet Rsabham every *kalpa*, but when the Atlanteans became black with sin, then Nandi remained forever in 'the White Island,' and those of the Fourth World lost the AUM. Here the role of Taurus as the agent of the manifesting Word is compounded in the guise of two bulls, one of which is white and attends the transcendental dance of Shiva in Chidambaram, while the other is black and watches over the races of the world.

Taurus wears an adornment of pearls shining with great beauty, the Pleiades, the central group in sidereal symbolism, the septenary applied to space, sound and action. They are identified with the Assyrian Bulls, the Seven Kabiri, and the Seven Rishis who govern the Seven Races of man. The Seven Sisters of the Pleiades begin the great precessional cycle and around them "our universe of fixed stars revolves, the focus from which the divine breath, MOTION, works incessantly during the *Manvantara*. Hence in the Occult philosophy and its sidereal symbols - it is this circle and the starry cross on its face, which play the most prominent part." The Egyptians depicted the circle and the cross as the sun and Tau between the crescent of the bull's horns, indicating the vehicle through which the divine breath audibly breathed. The Kabbalah speaks of the Pleiades as being born from the first manifested side of the upper triangle, the concealed triangle. The manifest side is described as Taurus, whose symbol is the figure I or the first letter of the Hebrew alphabet, *Aleph* (bull or ox), whose synthesis is ten (10) or *Yodh*, the perfect letter and number. The plane above is No Number or Zero while the plane below becomes One. Milton's account of creation in *Paradise Lost* poignantly captures a moment in primordial manifestation beheld by the unseen witness:

Dawn and the Pleiades before him danc'd,  
Shedding sweet influence.

As if to echo the bright sphere of No Number on the plane below, Aldebaran, 'the Eye of Taurus,' shines forth with a brilliance of the first magnitude. It is the guide that marks 'the Furrow of Heaven' and the herald of *Kali Yuga*. Seekers of mystery are told to "go forth at night, and talk with Aldebaran, where he flames in the cold forehead of the winter sky." He is *Dil-gam*, 'the Messenger of Light' and was called by the Latins *Palititium*, 'to proclaim.' Thus the star that brings the 'message of light' is linked with the proclamation of sound. Both signify the point in the ecliptic from which men in ancient times measured longitude, regulated their calendar, and navigated ships at sea. In these, as well as in other hidden ways, Taurus sets the 'tone' which governs the manifestations of the mathematics of Karma.

In *The Epic of Gilgamesh* the hero weeps when he learns that his friend Enkidu is fated to die, though the destiny of the valiant bull-man is necessary in the progress of Gilgamesh, who then searches for the plant of immortality. Minos, in failing to kill the Bull from the Sea, ensured the prolongation of evolutionary trials. The hero Mithra, however, destroyed the bull created by Ormazd, recognizing that it was the 'germ of sorrow' and that he had to "kill the finite seed so that the plant of immortality might grow." The bull was the first animal created by Ormazd, the Supreme Being, and it was the task of Mithra, the Soul, to capture and tame it. The bull escaped, whereupon the Sun commanded Mithra to slay it, and when this was done, plants sprang from the fallen body of the great beast. "The seed of the Bull, gathered and purified by the moon, produced all the different species of useful animals. . . and all the useful herbs and plants that cover the earth with their verdure. From the spinal cord of the animal sprang the wheat that gives us our bread, and from its blood the vine that produces the sacred drink of the mysteries - and from the death which he had caused was born a new life more rich and more fecund than the old."

In the history of humanity, the birth of agriculture and animal husbandry through the demise of the wild bull symbolizes the beginnings of the ascendancy of man over animal. The domestication of flora and fauna represents the entry of man into an age of complex cultural expression far beyond the nomadic life of hunting. But the bull did more than sacrifice its life for this development. It gave its crescent-shaped horn as inspiration for the plough. Just as the Babylonians said of Enlil, "He has caused the ploughshare to impregnate the earth," so throughout the Mediterranean world the horns of the bull symbolized the plough which opened mother earth, that she may be impregnated with seed. Cultivation of the earth became the reflection of the hidden and deeper development symbolized by Taurus.

'Cultivation' and 'culture' spring from the same Latin root, *cultus*, 'care' or 'adoration,' derived from the Greek *kyklos* or 'circle of becoming,' and the Sanskrit *chakra* or 'wheel' and *char*, 'to move.' 'The Word' reflected in the human power to symbolize through language is the crux and foundation of culture, enabling man to grow in awareness through complex mental and cultural relationships within a geometric or cumulative process. Human nature itself depends upon the development of this ability to impress matter by thoughts and deeds and to respond to impressions with a dialectical ability to transcend the limits they present. Man may potentially grow from generation to generation, from life to life, but he must learn what Taurus has to teach. The strength of the forces emanating through the constellation of *Rsabham* is based upon the capacity to assimilate and digest, to ruminate slowly like the bull, ever refining the clay of future moulds. The whole force of Taurus encompasses an archetypal process of fecundation, proliferation, assimilation and refinement. The dark bull with the crescent horn manifests in the realm of death and must be conquered in the search for immortal life. But if one "goes forth at night" and meditates upon the Eye of the Bull, one may intuit the Zero beyond the One. For the Eye of the Bull is Aleph, whose synthesis is ten, the perfect number, the sum of all,



involving and expressing the mysteries of the entire *Kosmos*, and manifesting itself in 'the Word' or generative Power of Creation.

*Hermes*, June 1977

Helen Valborg

# GEMINI

In a time so long ago that it barely lingers in the memory of aged medicine men, two sons were born to Sun-Carrier and his consort Changing Woman. They were Nayanezgani and Thohadzistshini, who overthrew the monstrous ones and brought an end to the Age of Giants. They heralded a new race and ushered in the Fourth World, where every colour existed and a snow-covered mountain stood at each of the four cardinal points. The Navajo say that four gods created the first man and woman from ears of corn. To this pair came five births of twins, the first of which were hermaphrodites. The four that followed intermarried with the Mirage People who dwell in this world. Their children slowly forgot their ancestry and even failed to see the significance of the birth of twins.

The heavenly twins of every mythology have some striking affinities. The sons of Sun-Carrier and Changing Woman are reminiscent of those of Adam and Eve or Zeus and Leda. Sometimes they are male and female offspring, standing like two pillars side by side. They, like the Navajo brothers, are symbols of the brilliant white and red stars which for thousands of years have been identified as 'the Twins.' The pillars of Hermes and Hercules, as well as Jachin and Boaz at the entrance to Solomon's temple, are derived from the great myth of Gemini. The glyph that describes them all is a graphic indication of their nature: two columns supporting a crossbeam over a threshold. Used in this form by the ancient Spartans, the glyph was later translated into the image of two amphorae with snakes twined around them. The glyph stands for the Portal of the Temple of Humanity. The ancient Euphrateans called the twins *Mun-Ga*, which designates 'the making of bricks' and refers to the building of the City of Man. Similarly, Romulus and Remus, who despite their differences, built 'the Holy City' of Rome stone by stone, reflect a conception of the temple of humanity common in Mediterranean cultures. Gemini is also associated with fertility, and Finno-Ugric people still carry twins into the fields to

ensure an abundance of crops. The celestial twins suggest a link between the evolving human vehicle and the increase of life in general through the divided, overbrooding Spirit, which quickens the processes of division and fructification.

Like Romulus and Remus, the twins of legend and sacred lore are often in opposition to one another. They may, like the brothers depicted in the *Cahuilla* creation myth, separate to their respective positions in the nether and upper worlds. Or, like Odin and Ollerus of Eddie mythology, they may alternate with one another, representing summer and winter and other cyclic patterns. They may be like the twin warriors who embody the ever-contending forces of creation and destruction, life and death, their struggle being the cause of all change. They precipitate externally the nature inherent in Changing Woman and bring face-to-face with itself the duality intrinsic to manifestation.

Gemini may describe two hostile brothers, but in Hindu and Egyptian tradition the twins are brother and sister. In *The Book of Knowing the Evolutions of Ra*, which describes the nature and exploits of the children of the Creator Temu, Shu and Tefnut are described as the right and left eye of Ra. Their father Temu declared the twin birth: "Thus from being one god I became three out of myself." Shu and Tefnut, side by side, represent the union of past and present, space and light, life and order. The Gate of the Pillars of *Shu* was recognized by Hierophants as the entrance to the Path. The divine nature of androgynous twins points to a state of wholeness which existed prior to the subsequent divisions of evolving existence. An occult analogy can be found in the process of fertilization of a single mother cell which produces, in human generation, identical twins. In such cases the ability to provide the entire complex genetic structure for multiple individuals lies within one fertilized egg. The psychic closeness that twins experience seems to mirror their monogenesis, as well as an even higher and more abstract form of sharing than any they experience on the physical plane. Coming from that which can reproduce itself, and seeming to move, think and feel as one person, twins have inspired

philosophers from many cultures to see in them the first emanation of the Creative *Logos*.

The dual nature of Gemini, as the central theme of the symbol, is shown in various ways. If the twins represent the forces of creation and destruction or the upper and lower worlds, they are both loved and feared. Where the Finno-Ugric peoples rejoice at the birth of twins, some African peoples fear them. It is often said that Heaven kills as well as creates and is associated with the unexpected, like lightning and other awesome phenomena. With the birth of twins the unexpected occurs and they attract both good and evil. Knowing not which is which, some people abandon both in the forest. It is not always a simple task to tell Cain from Abel, and sometimes the dual nature of Gemini, which is usually present in single individuals, becomes separated out in two twins as though one were the dark shadow of the other. In modern times the extraordinary example of two French brothers seems to echo the ancient biblical crime. The innocent and virtuous brother was so repeatedly plagued by the perverse misdeeds of his twin that he finally lost control and in a fit of exasperation strangled him. The mystery as to why the good brother kills the evil one is compounded by the fact that in the biblical allegory the brother rejected by God kills the one accepted.

Whether good and evil, or both purely divine, the dual forces symbolized by the twins are inextricably bound together. As Manilius wrote, "Tender Gemini in strict embrace stand clos'd and smiling in each other's face." The *Aswin* twins of Hindu tradition are always together, guiding their horses through the heavens. In the Tarot cards the twins symbolized 'the Lovers' and their masculine and feminine activities are like two reflections of one will. The heavenly twins express opposites fused together, like twin beams from one light. The image of Castor and Pollux, seen by the Romans as the Double Light, was placed on the bow of ships in the belief that their dual presence could nullify or blend the powerful negative and positive forces working during electrical storms at sea.

Their salvific power was suggested in Shelley's translation of Homer's *Hymn to Castor and Pollux*:

Ye wild-eyed muses! sing the Twins of Jove,  
 . . . . . mild Pollux, void of blame,  
 And steed-subduing Castor, heirs of fame.  
 These are the Powers who earth-born mortals save.

The Greeks and Romans often called the two brilliant stars of Gemini the Sons of Leda. Castor and Pollux were separately termed 'the Starry One' and 'the Lightful One,' names indicative of their respective natures. Castor symbolizes the Earth while Pollux is the emblem of Spirit, reminding us of the ancient edict which states that it takes Earth and Heavenly Waters to create a human soul. The Greek myth achieves its most sublime expression in Pindar's version. Leda is united in the same night with Tyndareus, King of Sparta, and with Zeus, King of the Olympian gods. From this dual union emerge two sons, the mortal Castor and his immortal brother, Pollux. Bound together by a common mother and intense fraternal devotion, they journey on adventures throughout the world. In a ferocious battle with the sons of Aphaereus, *Idas*, 'he who sees and knows,' mortally wounds Castor. Pollux finds his brother dying and appeals to his divine father to allow him to perish also. "Thou art of a divine race," Zeus replies, "Thou canst not die altogether." Nevertheless, just as the brothers have shared all things in life, they may both share death and immortality. Pollux gives a portion of his immortality to Castor, and thus the twins live alternately, one during the day, and the other at night, in the heavenly abodes. As an allusion to the evolutionary history of humanity, Castor represents the purely mortal man, unconscious in its personality and a mere animal until united with the immortal individuality, signified by Pollux. He is *Manas*, the informing fire of consciousness which transforms animal man by linking him to the immortal individuality, *Atma-Buddhi*. Lower man becomes conscious, and Higher Man can behold the world through his less favoured brother. Thus Castor symbolizes the egg-born Third Race

humanity, unconscious until awakened to Manasic awareness by the informing god - Pollux.

Gemini is ruled by the planet Mercury, and the twins are often depicted as children using their budding intelligence to play life's game with a cleverness which mimics innocence. Gemini represents the forces of both the Higher and Lower Mind which when ideally combined result in an airy and mercurial balance of self-consciousness. Like the union of past and present symbolized in the Pillars of *Shu*, Gemini brings into emergence the delicately balanced confluence of the rivers of mind and matter. In China it is represented as an ape with dual qualities related to *Yin* and *Yang*, whereas in Tibetan Buddhism it is symbolized by a monkey climbing a flowered tree. The agile primate with his humanoid characteristics climbs upward to grasp the opening bloom of self-conscious intelligence. From this point the light of awareness will disperse through writing and education as well as the arts of commerce. Its benefactors will be many, and some great poets and thinkers attribute the source of their genius to Gemini. Hesiod wrote, "To them I owe, to them alone I owe, what of the seas, or of the stars I know," and Dante intoned:

O glorious stars,  
O light impregnated - with mighty virtue,  
From which I acknowledge - all my genius,  
What-soe'er it be.

In occult tradition we are told that the source of this genius is the First Androgyne whose essence is eternal and who emanates a pure ethereal light. It is a dual light which is not perceptible to the physical sense but which carries the seed of the Dual Man. It is the Androgyne who completes man, "whose ethereal form is emanated by other divine, but far lower beings, who solidify the body with clay, or the 'dust of the ground.' " The progressive manifestation of twins suggested here is reminiscent of a Babylonian account of creation which states that "In Heaven and Earth 'faithful twins' had been brought into being" who were all to be the gods of the three worlds.

Gemini as a symbol of the Higher and Lower Mind points to the process whereby the whole of evolving existence leads to the pivotal point inherent in the dual nature of man. The duality symbolized by and inherent in Gemini suggests the dynamic unity of the mind, the crucible of the Aquarian Age. Like the two amphorae encircled by serpents, Higher and Lower Mind have complementary functions. When separated, *Kama Manas* is the calculating mind which apes its superior twin, fantasizing images of the world which deny significant occult import to events, and ruled by projected desires rather than spiritual aspirations. As the shadow of *Buddhi-Manas*, it can concretize any conception and exploit spiritual language for its own inverted ends. *Buddhi-Manas* is ever indifferent to all but universal truths; it abstracts the formless core from the world of form, synthesizes the mathematical harmonics of the world of change into the one fundamental vibration which precedes and pervades every manifestation, and transcends every level of insight, each of which becomes a step on the stairway to pure Spirit. When *Kama Manas* is wedded to *Buddhi-Manas*, its relational side is weaned from the snares of *tanha*, the thirst for embodied experience, and it becomes the vehicle through which *Buddhi-Manas* can manifest in the world. Gemini represents the realignment of the inverted mind.

Emerson likened friends to diamonds and opals, the one pure and impenetrable, the other variegated. The adamantine Higher Mind is multi-faceted, reflecting every colour from within itself while remaining colourless. The opalescent Lower Mind reflects all the colours of the world because they are lodged within it. When brought together in fraternal friendship, Lower Mind is purified so that it picks up and refracts only the colours emitted by Higher Mind, pouring its light forth into the world. Lower Manas must achieve a philosophical negation - refusing to identify with name and form - so that Higher Mind may manifest. If the lower aspect of dual Mind is positive, the higher aspect must be negative. The Aquarian Path is the process of reversing these polarities. Then the potentiality of the Akashic light, contained in the crystalline amphora of Higher Mind, can reflect in the potency of the pristine

astral light poured forth from the translucent amphora of the purified Lower Mind. Thus the two aspects of Mind stand in the same relationship as did the first awakened Third Race humanity to its spiritual Instructors.

Twins in the world are like witnesses to the archetypal transition from the wholeness of the androgynous race to the duality of the separation that marked the lighting-up of *Manas*. They are a testimony to this, though few of them actually divide the opposing forces of higher and lower consciousness. Usually they blend the two individually as well as collectively, although there are few cases where the divine and animal natures pit themselves against each other as two separate persons inexorably linked in a desperate struggle which can only end in the death of one or the other. But this too is a reflection of the inherent potential unleashed with the awakening of self-consciousness. Adam separated into Cain and Abel (male and female), who are his own 'allegorical permutations,' and from the seed of this First Androgyne issued that series of twins which would, like the Navajo hermaphrodites who married 'the Mirage People,' produce the mortals of the earth. The 'killing' at the archetypal level has to take place, for without this sacrifice there can be no descending issue. The killing on the worldly level is a shadow of this mythical 'crime.' In its own sad and convoluted way, this illustrates further the painful involvement of purity and wisdom with that which is steeped in the mire of ignorance.

In *Isis Unveiled* H. P. Blavatsky suggests that Adam, Cain and Abel can be likened to the sephirothal triad of Crown, Wisdom and Intelligence. Correlating the *Sephiroth* with the classical zodiac, it follows that Abel symbolizes Gemini, marking it as the point where pure creative force is divided in two, such that one half is elevated and the other half descends into the multiplicity of phenomena. Adam is the collective name for man and woman or Cain and Abel, indicating that the separation of the sexes is only being alluded to analogously at the stage of evolution depicted in the myth. All stories concerning a seemingly objectivized Eve separated from Adam or separated siblings are merely indicators of the potential



which lies latent at the dawn of the Third Root Race. These allegories do not refer to beings of flesh but rather to states of consciousness embodied in the most ethereal garments. Abel, the female aspect of Adam, is 'killed' because it enters into generation, and this is done as sacrifice by Cain or Jehovah, the masculine and creative aspect. Adam itself is the androgynous issue of *Adam Kadmon*, the sexless and pure Unmanifesting *Logos*. The allegory in occultism describes the development of the First purely sexless Race, the inactive androgynous condition of the Second Race, and the emergence of the 'Separating Hermaphrodite' which marks the Third and last semi-spiritual Race. It is in subsequent races that woman and man separate further and come, increasingly, to fight the battle of the dual self each within herself or himself apart. There is a karmic reflection of the androgynous commingling of forces in the relationship existing between man and woman today. While the shedding of the blood of Abel symbolizes the sacrifice of virgin consciousness, thrice-blessed is he who realizes the synthesis of the long separated forces within himself and through his relations with others.

The Heavenly Twins of Gemini are beautifully typified by the *Aswins*, the divine charioteers of Hindu mythology. They are depicted riding in a golden car and possess many forms. They are "the bright harbingers of *Ushas* the dawn" and represent the transition from darkness to light, both cosmically and metaphysically. It is said that at one time the gods refused them access to a great sacrifice on the grounds that "they had been on too familiar terms with men." Identified with both heaven and earth, these divine twins can show a negative character, due to the alliance of light with darkness which they characterize. But when they sacrifice themselves as a bridge, like the reins they attach to their wild steeds, they are known as the *Aswini-Kumaras*, the reincarnating 'principles' in the *Manvantara*. Their natures are endlessly reflected in the manifestations of Gemini in the world, but also represent a great and sustained sacrifice which, in its earliest stages, the stars of Gemini channel into the cosmos.

In man, the dramatic manifestation of this is in objectivized, reflected intellect. The *Nidana* traditionally related to Gemini is *Vijnana* or 'I-consciousness.' Of the twelve *Nidanas*, the first and second have to do with the last life or the past, while the third or *Vijnana* has to do with this life and the present. Therefore its nature is very dependent upon the 'karma-formations' and the *skandhas* of consciousness predominating in the previous birth, which can be seen as a 'causal mind-base' for the present. As a phenomenon like any other, it arises through dependence upon conditions. *Vijnana* is the collective term for all evanescent mental states, and to understand it requires the raising of fundamental questions, such as "Why do we think that matter exists?" and "What is the cause of the illusion of objective consciousness?" In Buddhist philosophy this has been put in terms of a contrast between Absolute Mind which is changeless and unreal image-making which obscures the light of the Absolute Mind. This Mind is called *alayamjnana* and refers to stored consciousness, whereas the unreal image-making is a product of evolving consciousness or *pravritti-vijnana*.

According to the *Yogacharya* School, cosmic will produces effects stored in *alayavijnana* which result in potential touch, mental activity, feeling, perception and further extensions of will. This first transformation of consciousness from the Changeless is followed by a second involving the evolution of ego-consciousness out of *Alaya*. The third transformation completes the process and ushers in that condition where sense perceptions are wrongly interpreted as descriptive of objective and subjective worlds, each independent of the other. Here, built into the dynamic duality is a system of perpetual inversions which is the realm of phenomena, the endless house of mirrors. The focal point of the inversion is like the central aperture of an hourglass through which sand flows back and forth. Creative Nature (*Natura naturans*) and Created Nature (*Natura naturata*) endlessly intermingle, the one being like the wearer, the other like the mask. As in the Babylonian god Nergal, who has two heads and two sets of wings and eyes that can rest and act simultaneously, cause and effect merge in Gemini. They twist and turn and reflect, sending the soul through the Pillars of *Shu*. From

Absolute Reality, the Self partakes of the relative reality belonging to the realm of the pure hermaphrodite, the divine Twins. But evolution demands full descent and the separated ego enters into a long passage through the realm of imputed reality where the unreal imagination has full sway and the memory of the divine Twins is barely discerned. The struggle between Reality and its shadow begins.

Like the original moment of a vow taken with the first light of self-awareness, Gemini recalls the beginning of the quest. It reminds us of the awesome struggle of humanity for eighteen million years, and it points to the purpose of our existence, which is to uplift nature and bring her back to self-conscious unity with the One. This process is intimated in *The Secret Doctrine*: "The universe hath a Ruler (Rulers collectively) set over it, which is called the WORD (*Logos*); the fabricating Spirit is its Queen: which two are the First Power after the ONE." These Two Inseparables remain in the Universe of Ideas so long as it lasts and then merge back into *Parabrahm*, the One Changeless Source which rests unmoved at the centre of the great zodiacal wheel.

*Hermes*, July 1977

Helen Valborg

# CANCER

A fable of Argus tells of a time when the constellation of Cancer was at the South Pole, opposite the Goat at the North. The Earth then lay on her side, the terrestrial and the ecliptic poles coinciding with one another. During this ancient age the Mother created from her own bosom and the Lords of the Moon brought forth men of their own nature. The Fathers of the Sacred Flame had not yet come but the form of man was made ready by the sacrificial workers. This may be why, in Chaldean and Platonic philosophy, Cancer is called the Gate of Men, the oldest constellation and the witness of the first acts of creation. As the eighteenth of the Hebrew Paths of Wisdom, called the House of Inflowing, it was the gate through which souls descend after passing through the pillars of Gemini. It may have marked the polar entrance of the earth through which the souls poured in, and perhaps, when at her northerly extreme, it will be the exit through which they leave. The soul, having passed from the monad into the duad, now extends itself out through the vehicles of name and form in the domain of Cancer.

The sign of the Crab is overbrooded by the moon and symbolizes the realm of the personality or mask. Through the forces emanating from its gateway, the budding self-consciousness of androgynous Gemini becomes focussed on the distinction between the objective and the subjective. Consciousness begins to trace out impressions upon the fine veil of matter. In a Burmese legend, the *Bodhisattva* Hkun Hsang L'rong took the shell of a crab in his hands and said, "If in truth this world is to be the abode of rational beings and the birthplace of the five Buddhas, then let this be for a sign, that where the shell of this crab falls, there shall a lake be found." Thus Nawng Hkeo, the sacred lake of Wa, was formed at the place in the motherland whose inhabitants were to be the parents of all generations of men. With the sign of the Crab, the *Bodhisattva* created an impress in the earth to contain the reflective waters needed to mirror the will of the overbrooding host of deities. An Indonesian legend reveals an additional dimension of this picture.

The *Kayan* of Indonesia say that at the dawn of manifestation there was only primeval sea and over-arching sky. Out of this airy expanse appeared a great spider's web into which dropped a tiny stone that grew and gathered particles, slowly becoming soil. Upon this soil, which increased to form the earth, dropped a crab with great claws. It dug and scratched in the ground, forming the myriad mountains, valleys and river beds of the globe.

In both legends the crab is associated with the formation of the earth's surface and its differentiation into high and low places. This seems to corroborate the symbolic relation of Cancer to the process of objectivization. The lake of Wa in the Burmese legend is also an objective focal point and the source of the further generation of form. In Euphratean tradition, the Akkadian name for the stellar crab was *Nagarasurra*, which means 'the workman of the river bed'. The name suggests that it is along the ducts and valleys created by the work of Cancer that the waters of life will flow. Thus, the formative power inherent in this sign holds the possibility of great positive or negative developments having far-reaching influence over patterns of subsequent growth on the earth.

In a vision experienced by an intuitive student of occultism, the glyph of Cancer was seen to undergo an interesting metamorphosis. What are usually interpreted as the two claws of the crab became instead two lily leaves of translucent fibre revealing their inner cellular structure. Consciousness was seen to pass into the cells and thousands of workers were busily engaged in the metabolism of elaboration, breaking down and building up food through the energy of sunlight. At the core of this insightful perspective lies the archetypal process of nutrition, growth and unfoldment, the work of maternal nature nurturing the development of the fledgling Ego. This gestation is intimately linked to the moon for, while the sun brings life to the entire solar system, the moon influences only our earth. It is a diminished and reflected extension of solar powers, but totally focussed upon our globe. This is only natural, considering that the moon is said to

have given over, wave after wave, all classes of her lives to the earth, her own fledgling offspring.

The influence of the moon upon the earth takes place on the astral plane through a transmission of consciousness from the realm of the lower astral light to the realm of solidified material. Cancer is governed by the moon in the performance of its symbolic role as mediator between the formless and form-filled worlds. It is significant that H.P. Blavatsky, who gave freely of her own astral essence in order to lay down the lines of the Theosophical Movement in the world, was born under the constellation of Cancer. In the past several hundreds of years, she, more than any other being, provided the spiritual nutrition and the impress upon the psyche of the world necessary for the growth and elaboration needed by the Ego if it is to acquire true self-knowledge. Emissary of the solar Lodge of Adepts, she was an incarnated ray of their wisdom, like the moon reflecting solar light into the world. In her person these beneficent ones took on a form and breathed forth the substance of their will as though through a focalized form of maternal nature. Acting as the Cancerian mediator between the ethereal and concretized worlds, she made herself subject to the laws of change affecting the grosser realm and suffered the painful modifications inherent in that condition. Much of this she endured on the physical plane but few will know what she may have suffered on more subtle planes as she permitted the objectivized extension of herself to serve as the material matrix around which the work of the movement would grow.

The symbols of the crab and the turtle are linked since both creatures possess a hardened carapace or shell. It represents the density of matter in which spirit is clothed at this stage in evolution. This hardness consolidates the formations in pure ethereal matter, and several mythologies describe the world itself as being supported upon the back of an armoured creature. Out of the wateriness of the astral sea, the shell supports and permits the growth of all the forms we associate with the last several million years of evolution. Greek myths describe the first acts of the

newborn Hermes, which involved the slaying of a tortoise and the use of its shell to fashion a lyre. The symbolism here reveals the other side of the work of Cancer, which is the destruction of form in order to liberate sound so that its melodious essence may accompany the further activities of the Sun's divine messenger, illustrated by the fact that at one time Cancer was ruled by Mercury, an influence echoed in the loftiest examples of Cancer's work in the world today.

In Egypt the *scarabaeus* beetle replaced the crab or tortoise as the sign of *Khepera*. This beetle stood for the objectivization of a primeval god depicting the type of matter which contains within itself the germ of life about to spring into a new existence, the dead body from which the spiritual body prepares to rise. While *Khepera* was the creator of the forms of existence, he himself was unknown and hidden, his substitute being the Divine Disk. This symbolical designation marks the phase in soul-evolution where the divine germ, clothed in a dense vehicle, is beginning to unfold and evolve.

The characteristics conventionally attributed to the sign of Cancer are those of changeableness and a concern with public service and opinion. The individual born under this sign is supposedly fertile, democratic, easily affected by others, mutable in opinion and mobile like water. Being ruled by the moon, Cancer is changeable only on the surface. Depending upon the inner development of an individual born in Cancer, this mutability in action will either result from an externalized desire to maintain the goodwill of others, or from an internal commitment to serve the needs of others on whatever level is appropriate to their circumstances. This great contrast in interpretation of traits, possible in considering any of the twelve signs of the zodiac, is particularly relevant in understanding the force-field operating through the great work of a spiritual Teacher. Many sketches of the characteristics of Cancer stress qualities of showmanship, and the native is portrayed as living entirely by his relations with the public. Obviously, it is critical whether such outgoing behaviour is motivated by self-interest or by service. Among individuals with a concern for something far

deeper than superficial relations and personal gain, any showmanship and seeming fluctuations are mere guises used to engage interest in the hidden side of things. Buddhist texts urge the *Bodhisattva* to practise 'vivid appearance' for the sake of the *dharma*. The democratic tendency seems to contradict the natural hierarchy of the chain of spiritual beings who impart divine teachings to those below them on the ladder of self-knowledge, but in a Teacher's work in the world among those starved for the want of soul-wisdom, there can be no exclusion. Many who associated H.P. Blavatsky with the zodiacal sign of Leo thought of her in terms of a powerful imposition of will upon a situation through the sheer force of character. Cancer, exoterically associated with the incarnation of popular will, seems to belie the nature of her work. But if one considers the deeper esoteric role that Cancer plays in relation to the moon, it becomes apparent that the entire process whereby the great Lodge took on the sheaths of earthly existence, enabling it to introduce a critical spiritual impulse in the dark age of *Kali Yuga*, may be subtly grasped in terms of the symbol of the crab. The constellation of Cancer is not boldly apparent to the physical eye and, like the great Lodge, it is a nebula-like zone of profoundly occult influence, its stars sharpening and individuating only to the gaze of one who has knowledge of the precise inner instruments which can reveal their nature.

The *nidana* or cause of existence traditionally associated with Cancer is *namarupa*, name and form. Pictographic renderings of this condition display a ship symbolizing the body and containing four passengers who are the four mental aggregates manifest at this stage of egoic evolution. One of the four, consciousness or *vijnana*, is the first embryonic physical body as well as the mental *skandhas* of feeling, perception and volition. Though consciousness is causal to these, it is none the less an effect and, combined with the other mental *skandhas* and the physical body, it produces the personality focussed upon existential phenomena. This is natural because *rupa* itself is not merely matter but a congeries of events involving matter, a heterogeneous conglomerate whose nature is constantly changing and proliferating. *Rupa* is composed of the four primary



material phenomena of cohesion, undulation, radiation and vibration as well as the twenty-four secondary phenomena including sex and race. The other *skandhas* constituting *namarupa* are *vedana*, the bodily and mentally pleasant, painful and neutral feelings; *samjna*, the perception of phenomena through sense-organs and a special mind-organ; and the *samskaras* or formations in an active sense which embrace fifty mental phenomena. Of these latter, eleven are broadly psychological, twenty-five are moral, and fourteen are karmically unwholesome qualities. Personality is neither simple nor is it composed of simple elements, and if one translated it in terms of the scattering of energy, the sad noise and futile discord of the world would be explainable.

The Sanskrit name for Cancer is *Karkatakarn* which, if translated numerologically, represents the sacred Tetragram, the *Parabrahmatarakarn*. It is the *Pranava* or *AUM* resolved into four separate entities corresponding to its four *matras* or sacred syllables. In Hebrew tradition, its secret lay in the four-letter name of God, *IHVH*, which combined the Sephirothal aspects of *Chochmah*, *Binah*, *Tiphereth* and *Malkuth*, the latter being the tenth *Sephira*, the final syllable of the Tetragram who is called the Queen or Veil of *Ain-Soph*. Known as the *Tetraktys*, the One under its four aspects was considered by the Pythagoreans to be the primeval triad merged in the divine monad. It was by the Sacred Four that these disciples swore their most binding oath and committed themselves to many lives of walking the difficult path leading to enlightenment. They treated the four syllables as points which formed the base of the Pythagorean decad and recognized the significance of there being four levels composing the entirety of it. The One is at the first level and signifies the impersonal force of God. Two are on the second level and indicate pure matter. The third level holds three points signifying the combination of the monad and the duad which will produce the phenomenal world, and the four points on the bottom of the decad express the emptiness of all, pointing back to the ten making up the entire cosmos. If one looks at these levels in terms of the zodiac, one can see that the first level relates to Aries, the second to Taurus, the third to Gemini, and the fourth to Cancer.

The symbol of the crab, being related to both material phenomena and the knowledge of the emptiness of it, is revealed as having two functions. It is both needed to bring form into being and to reveal its unreality.

The eighteenth enigma of the *Tarot* depicts the moon suspended over a huge red crab which gathers up that which lies around it. In this dramatic illustration, Cancer is shown as devouring all that is transitory and represents the volatile element in alchemy. It is oddly appropriate, perhaps, that the disease known as cancer manifests as an abnormal cellular growth which literally devours healthy bodily tissue. The fact that in occult philosophy cancer is seen as the effect of greed seems to indicate that the abnormality of human avariciousness in relation to material existence renders the Ego incapable of expressing its higher nature and attracts those forces in nature which will dissolve the selfishly impressed vehicle with a swiftness and finality that dramatically permits a deeper understanding of the many-leveled workings of Karma. The anatomy of the physical crab seems to reinforce both this devouring nature and the symbolical function of the zodiacal sign, for it possesses six awesome pairs of jaws and has forelegs which can clutch and grasp as well as dig and penetrate. It is omnivorous, like the lunar forces of nature which take all away through disintegration and death but give all back in new life and growth. Its hard material shell is supported by ten feet. As a decapod it symbolically relates to the Pythagorean decad and suggests that the four points of Cancer at its base are metaphysically convertible into the ten points of the cosmos. Though the carapace is empty transitory matter, it contains the infinite germ of the eternal.

Representing the relatively dark constellation of Cancer, the crab as a shrouded unknown entity which seizes or swallows but also guards the light that lies concealed behind it, is the emblem of the Mysteries. It is like the *Sephira Malkuth*, the Veil of *Ain-Soph* who comes to earth as objectifying nature but who secretes in her bosom the highest divine truths. Like great Teachers who mirror her, she introduces the impress which provides the vehicle of spiritual

growth and simultaneously ensures the death of all that is devoid of the living germ of spirit. For this reason the presence of such emissaries in the world is like a death-knell to effete institutions and causes. Their teachings only mirror that which points beyond form and they immediately reveal the lifeless character of mummified religious and social structures. The great lesson to be learned through the force of Cancer in the world is extended through *namarupa*, name and form, and serves to teach that the mask is false, the form is hollow, the show unreal. The astral essence given forth to the world by H.P. Blavatsky was given freely not so that men could partake of more names and forms but so that they could gain access to the solar impress which the substance of her consciousness so generously conveyed. Like the queen Moon, she faithfully reflected the light of the great *Dhyān Chohans*, and her entrance into the world was made through the gate of the human soul, the northern gate of the sun. She came as an emissary of the oldest constellation which witnessed the first acts of creation and which remains in the heavens as the silent watcher over the earth, observing the development of whole races of beings upon its shifting continents, hastening where Karma permits the divine process of spiritual evolution.

*Thou hast seen this form of mine which is difficult to perceive and which even the gods are always anxious to behold. But I am not to be seen, even as I have shown myself to thee, by study of the Vedas, nor by mortifications, nor alms-giving, nor sacrifices. I am to be approached and seen and known in truth by means of that devotion which has me alone as an object.*

Sri Krishna

*Hermes, August 1977*

Helen Valborg

# LEO

Like a vision of Merlin, the romance of the Holy Grail sprang from an unseen source and lives timelessly in the imagination of men. Tendrils of mist shroud the beginnings of such ideas and their emerging forms only later become crystallized in the shape of a vessel, a precious stone, or the leonine guards at the gate of Castle Mortal. Every man dreams of the divine, and it is in the greater passion that the impetus for its pursuit lies. The longings of a Lancelot may become ensnared in the coils of earthly beauty but the chaste strivings of Percival succeed in bringing him face to face with the awful beasts which guard the object of his quest. Some men have approached the two lions, red and white, and have trembled for a moment. Those whose hearts were greater than fear pressed forward and entered the fray.

Sir Percival was instructed by his uncle to put his trust in the white lion, which would reveal to him the intent of God, and if he sought to further this intent, he would win his way past the nine bridges into the castle. The red lion would continually burst forth from its chains to oppose the progress of the brave knight, but if he persisted and followed the revelation given him, he would arrive finally at the last bridge. There, he was told, the white lion would slay the red, and the usurper-king, deprived of his roaring defenses, would then capitulate and slay himself.

The knight who begins the quest kills neither the false king nor the raging beast but pins the success of his mission in the trust he sustains for the noble white lion who alone can vanquish the foe. But how does one distinguish the white from the red when approaching the goal through a thick, opalescent mist? Their shapes loom large, silhouetted at the edge of a long and darkly overgrown pathway. A quickening in the heart signals their presence, but the discovery of their real nature requires meeting them face to face. The teachings of Peter in his *Second Epistle* warn, "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion,

walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." One may hold fast to that darkened pathway, prompted by the inner voice that informed Blake, "The wrath of the lion is the wisdom of God."

Leo corresponds with the *nidana*, *sadayatana*, the six *ayatanas* or powers of perception. These depend upon *namarupa* or name and form, and comprise the five physical senses as well as the mind considered as the organ of mental perception. At this stage of the involution of spirit into matter, name and form interact in complex, ever-changing ways with the mind as well as the five senses. The consciousness which arose in the *nidana* corresponding to Gemini now manifests through the conditioned interstices of the screen of *namarupa*. The powers that first developed on the astral plane and which formed centres in the astral body now rush forth in the fiery force of *kama*. The primary sensations which were evolved in response to the action of subtle external stimuli become feelings which act upon the mind and engender emotions. All the elements or entities existing *in potentia* prepare to separate into distinct entities under the next three phases of the zodiac. The ultimate union of these elements brings about the dissolution of the phenomenal universe, while their separation builds it and brings into view the picture gallery of *avidya* or *maya*. The emotions which gather force through the fiery sign of Leo are, in their pristine form, the vehicles through which the separation takes place. Attaching themselves to form, they reflect the activity of spirit galvanizing the elements into the riot of phenomena. Leo witnesses the awakening of the motive power of evolution which lies dormant in the sign of Taurus. The soul is propelled forward into the realm of limitation where it experiences passion and pain.

In classical times Manilius depicted Leo as the lion who "inclines men's minds to hunt and fills our noble's spacious halls with grinning spoils". Indeed, Leo is like the raw youth who stands firmly upon his own feet, indomitable but overextended, fearless but cocksure. The whole force of *kama*, in its unadulterated form, rushes outward as passion which may accumulate unwanted results. But the child of Leo is courageous and imposes himself

upon a situation by sheer force of passion and personality. Individuals born under its influence often appear as powerful and imperious agents, straightforward, unhypocritical champions of what they believe. It is said that those born at sunrise, noon and sunset in the sign of Leo are of kingly heart and wholly simple in their love of the good. Goethe, who was born at noon when the sun was in Leo, expressed this when he wrote, "Poetry presupposes in the man who makes it a certain good-natured simple mindedness, in love with the Real as the hiding place of the Absolute." The lover of the Real does not, however, pursue his quest easily, for the truth painfully eludes all but the most passionate seeker and the requisite passion may consume as well as reveal. To kindle such fires and control the effects of their heat needs much wisdom as all too easily the blaze runs wild and swallows up the very memory of one's intent.

The unchecked passion separates into the mundane and sordid details making up the play of life. There is no greater degradation of true and lofty feeling than that flood of unrefined emotion which reduces the dignity of introspective suffering to the marketplace of sighing and crying. As Prince Hamlet put it, "In the very torrent, tempest, and, as I may say, the whirlwind of passion, you must acquire and beget a temperance that may give it a smoothness. O, it offends me to the soul to see a robustious periwig-pated fellow tear a passion to tatters, to very rags . . ." Even great passion which may inspire the loftiest human drama runs the risk of folly in its nearsighted exuberances. Shakespeare wrote that "The hind that would be mated by the lion must die for love" and the example of such heedless ardour tends to divert others from the path of discrimination. But if the fire of passion is dangerous, it is also necessary. The Akkadian name for Leo was *Nenegar*, the 'fire-making fire'. They considered it to be the burning of the fire of *Bahu*, or the Great Deep of Aquarius, the sign opposite Leo on the zodiac and representing man. Mystics of ancient times believed that Leo kindles the fire of passion which will spark the final pilgrimage of the human soul. This double-edged nature of passion is hinted at by Robert Burns:

Misled by fancy's meteor ray,  
 By Passion driven,  
 But yet the light that led astray  
 Was light from heaven.

Hegel emphasized the unavoidable necessity of the fiery quality in his assertion, "We may affirm absolutely that nothing great in the world has been accomplished without passion." It is only when passion is fixed upon a limited object that cannot bear its intense focus that it rebounds upon itself and blinds the weary seeker. But the great force of *kama* which is often exercised on behalf of the separate self can be fruitfully placed at the service of the greater Self of all. He who succeeds in doing so becomes the hero. The change in the direction of force is brought about by a transformation of the object of desire. As an occultist wrote, "Make that change – and it is sometimes done by a flash of illumination – and then the whole of that energy will be turned towards the achieving of the higher end."

The Chinese word *shib* means both 'lion' and 'teacher'. Leo is related to the illuminating sun. There can be no mistaking the influence of this fiery solar sign in the life of H.P. Blavatsky who, in addition to her role as the parent of the Theosophical Movement, exemplified the courage and nobility of Leo throughout her lifetime as a compelling teacher of soul-wisdom. It was as though, with this additional fiery sheath, she was able to disperse the force of spiritual desire necessary to give life to the teachings and to the astral structure of her work. The meaning of the epithet 'Lion-Hearted' given to such a great Teacher-Adept can be traced in the ancient practice of garbing prophets and seers in lion skins. To this day some African tribes recognize a prophet by this emblem draped across his shoulder.

Of the stars in the constellation of the heavenly lion, Regulus is the brightest, this name having been given by Copernicus who believed that its brilliant white and blue light ruled the affairs of heaven as well as that of men. In India Regulus was called *Magha*, the Mighty, while in Persia the name *Mrjan*, the Centre, was assigned and the Turanians called it *Masu*, the Hero. It was said in

the days of Nineveh, "If the star of the great lion is gloomy, the heart of the people will not rejoice." Regulus marks the heart of the lion and since Leo is the house of the sun, it is considered to rule the human heart. Together with Fomalhaut, which rests at the feet of Aquarius, Aldebaran, the Eye of Taurus, and Antares in the constellation of Scorpio, Regulus forms one of the four celestial cardinal points. It is one of the guardians of heaven which are said to act of themselves. They are cardinal *lokas* which oversee the processes of evolution. They contain the mystery that lies behind the throat, the heart, the generative organs and the earthbound feet of the great sacrifice which is man, the microcosm.

In Hindu cosmology one of the *Avataras* of Vishnu is Nara-Simha, the Man-Lion. As his *vahan*, Garuda is the emblem of cyclic and periodic time and is coeternal with both Vishnu and the *Mahakalpa*. Simha is the emblem of the solar cycle, representing the life and duration of the sun. The sun is the heart of the solar system and its being symbolized by the lion who rules the human heart suggests something of the mystery of Leo in connecting the hidden fire of the spiritual sun to the fire that lights the spiritual heart of man. A connection between the heart and the eye is analogously suggested by the ancient Egyptian belief that the eye of the sun was the great lion-form of *Shu*. In fact, the lion was often spoken of as dual and the sun as "Thou, luminous through the two lions", suggesting the guarding or transmitting role of Leo. These two lions were spoken of as the dual force or power of the two solar eyes, or the electro-positive and the electro-negative forces. The perfect balance of these powers may produce the white lion of Sir Percival, and the imbalance the red.

The glyph of Leo can be seen as a serpent beginning to move. Instead of accepting the traditional interpretation of the glyph as the lion's mane, one may consider it as an emblem of the uncoiling power of *kundalini* awakening into activity at this stage of development. From the zodiacal phase marking the painful fall of pure spirit into conditioned manifestation in Aries, the vital spark of divine light spread throughout the finest matrix of *Akasa*. From



the Mother, *Vach*, through the guise of Taurus, manifested universal *Mahat*, the androgynous consciousness of the emerging microcosm. From this consciousness, impressed upon the Mother Deep, arose the astral plan of the names and forms to be, Cancer doing the work of unfolding. All this was then vivified by the spirit from beyond manifested life, the fiery Breath, the electric fire of all life which in our world system is the visible, life-giving sun. In ancient times this fiery breath was spoken of as Agni, Vayu and Surya, or fire, air and sun — the three occult degrees of fire. Allegories of the *Puranas* speak of the sacredness of these fires and their manifestation in man: "Every fire has, in its essential nature, a corresponding relation to one of the human psychic faculties, besides its well determined chemical and physical potencies when coming in contact with the terrestrially differentiated matter." The sacred triad of fires are all considered sons of Agni representing *Atma-Buddhi-Manas*. In Leo the electric fire of *Pavaka* awakens like the serpent, the solar fire of *Suchi* streams forth from the sun's eye, and the friction fire of *Pavamana* is sparked by the complex interaction of mind with the senses as well as name and form. This fiery force spreads through every atom of existence and spills over into the receptive soil of Virgo the Virgin, who is inseparable from Leo and who marks the last signs of the zodiac, which are agents of spiritual involution. The fire which builds the prison is also that which releases, and one can see in its dual power the alternating dance of Shiva and his *shakti* which takes place throughout the passage of all twelve signs of the zodiac. Perhaps Leo holds the vital key which unlocks the mystery of the positive and negative electric powers of life coiled in the complex interactions' of air, earth, fire and water, the progeny of the divine Flames.

The Hindu name for Leo is *Simham*, which word is said to be powerful in its utterance and to reveal mysteries to seekers of occult wisdom. Subba Row wrote that *Simham* had two synonymous terms — *Pancasyam* and *Hari* — indicating its relation to the five *Dhyani Buddhas* and to Narayana the *Jivatma*. He points out that the unfoldment of *Jivatma* is placed by ancient Upanishadic texts in the fifth sign of the zodiac, as it is the house of the son and *Jivatma* is

the son of *Paramatma*. This corresponds to Leo as the house of the sun in that *Surya* is the son of the light of its hidden parent, the invisible sun. Narayana is the name for Vishnu in his aspect of Spirit moving on the Waters of Creation. In the *Rig Veda* Vishnu, the Pervader, is described as being a manifestation of primal solar energy. Striding through the seven regions of the universe, he envelops all things "with the dust of his beams". If Narayana is the primal manifestation of the life principle, spreading out in infinite space, *Jivatma* is the One Universal Life itself and the divine Spirit in man. The *Secret Doctrine* states that before evolution *prakriti* was in a *laya* state of absolute homogeneity. Then it became *anu* or atomic, the particles of the dust of Vishnu's beams being called *suddhasatva*, a substance not subject to the qualities of matter. Out of this luminiferous essence the bodies of the inhabitants of *Vaikuntaloka*, the Heaven of Vishnu, are formed. This is the realm of the three sacred fires which are parents of the Gods, of the highest *Dhyanis*, of the five *Dhyani Buddhas* called the Fiery Lions. In them *Paramatma* manifests as *Jivatma*, pervading every particle of subsequently manifesting matter, vitalizing and electrifying the whole of nature.

The *Stanzas of Dzyan* reveal that the hierarchy of creative powers resides in the twelve great orders of the zodiac. The chief among these are the Four and Three related to the great quaternary and the *Panchasyam* or five *Dhyani Buddhas*. These Fiery Lions and their esotericism are said to be securely hidden in the zodiacal sign of Leo which itself is the nucleole of the Superior Divine World, a sacred aperture through which streams the emanating spiritual light of the hidden source of the sun. Perhaps for reasons connected with this arcane phenomenon, the ancient Egyptians referred to the Eye of the Sun as a lion and thus symbolically clothed one of the greatest occult mysteries of creation in the garb of seemingly fanciful myth. The manifestation of gods in the Divine World and the subsequent spreading of their fire through all realms of *prakriti* marks the spiritual anthropogenesis which precedes material cosmogenesis, the merging of the divine into the human which creates the visible universe in its descent into matter. Aries, Taurus,

Gemini and Cancer are all preparatory to the actual manifestation of vitalized matter and the entry of *Ishwara* into human form. This can be seen in the long curve of vast cycles of zodiacal evolution where an entire epoch is characterized by the expression of divine substance permeated with divine fire, or it can be seen in the limited cycle of a time in human life when the fire of mental awareness quickens the very metabolism of the still plastic material vestures of the Ego.

Leo is the eternal and everlasting nucleole of the Superior Divine World. According to *The Secret Doctrine*, the nuclei "form part of the Absolute. They are the embrasures of that black impenetrable fortress, which is forever concealed from human or even Dhyanic sight. The nuclei are the light of eternity escaping therefrom." It is that light which condenses into the forms of the Lords of Being – the highest collective Being, the *Jivatma*. It is that light which is the *Logos* appearing at the beginning of every new *manvantara*. The aperture of Leo is thus a channel of birth for vital substance, a conductor of light and life experienced in the world. In the ancient Egyptian teaching, at creation the sun arose near Denebola in the sign of Leo, which was considered to be the home of the sun.

The Copts called this home or birthplace *Titefui* or 'the forehead', reminding one of the kingly fire of the central spiritual eye. The legends that surround the Holy Grail hint that it came from the East, from the place of the source of illumination. The grail was said to have been fashioned by unseen hands from a rare jewel which dropped from Lucifer's forehead as he was hurled into the abyss. The Christian patina covering this myth does not hide its strong allegorical similarities to arcane teachings concerning the third eye of Shiva. The loss of the grail is symbolic of humanity's loss of the eye of spiritual vision and its pure arcane light of wisdom which was the attribute of divine Spirit before its engulfment in matter. The quest for the Holy Grail, therefore, is the search for the mystic centre which inspired the Round Table, the heart of life and light symbolized by the sun, whose mystery can be fathomed only by grasping the significance of the connection between the sacred eye

of the forehead and the central spiritual sun. The eye, the heart and the sun form a triangle which contains the secret of the divine Flames.

Within the mystic heart of the seeker, the fire of passion born in Leo must be purified so that its heat gradually reduces to ashes the thralldom of identification with name and form. The separate bonfires of delusive emotion must be refined and unified within the well of Universal Selfhood. It is not the separate self that slays the devouring beast; it is the pure fire of the white lion, the holy force of the divine *Dhyanis* working through human vestures that conquers the foe. Man approaches the gateway of the Lion across the bridge of evolution. The flames within him purified, he stands before their divine archetypes, prostrates himself and enters into their light. Through their illumination he sees that he is none other than the *Jivatma* which entered the human form prepared for him and he realizes his true origin. He perceives, in a glorious revelation, that he is a spark which hangs from *Ishwara*, the Flame, by the finest thread of *daiviprakriti* which, after millennia of involvement in the inherent limitations of conditioned existence, is now returning home.

*Hermes*, September 1977

Helen Valborg

# VIRGO

When the Golden Age was coming to a close, men and women slowly forgot their virtuous ways, and the gods, one by one, left the earth. The last to leave before the light of the soul was eclipsed was Astraea, the starry virgin of the zodiac. Symbolizing purity and justice, she remained as long as she could, but when the brazen forces began to appear, she departed with dignity, leaving humanity to pursue its earthbound longings. The virgin is depicted in various myths as leaving the world by abduction into the underworld or by falling into the clutches of the Great Dragon. As Astraea, Persephone, Isis, Ishtar or Virgo, she is the pure vessel made clay, the fresh waters tainted with the "monsoon's muddy torrents". Both her departure and her involuntary descent are linked up with the fall of spirit into matter and the heroic struggle of the imprisoned soul to maintain its link with its divine origin. Kanya Kumari, the Virgin Maiden, was degraded in time to an idol of debased worship, but her purity shines at the side of Shiva in a beatific state of boundless potential energy.

Virgo is related to the Buddhist *nidana* called *sparsa* or contact with the outer world. This is the stage in the wheel of life which ushers in the activities of the lower sheaths of the soul. *Sparsa* literally means 'touch'. The soul, equipped with senses and sense-organs (including the mirroring mind) contacts the world through the astral medium. *Namarupa*, name and form, as well as *sadayatana*, the sensorial and mental sheaths, cohere through *sparsa*, symbolized in Buddhist tradition by a man and woman embracing. Out of this arise the coordinated sensations in response to external stimuli, which we call emotions. The lower mind learns to analyze, codify and restrain these emotions, and this effort gives rise to the mental powers of judgement and reasoning which might be misused in the servile reinforcement of irrational cravings.


Behind the concentrated manifesting power lie the six primary forces in nature which are synthesized in the heavenly virgin

Kanya, the *mahamaya* of objective existence. These six are the *shaktis* which, in their unity, become seven and are represented by the Akashic-astral light, or that substratum in the cosmos and in man which contains within itself all potential energies and ever remains on the verge of birth or precipitation. The first of these powers is *Parashakti*, the supreme force which includes light and heat. The second is *Jnanashakti*, the power of knowledge, which under material conditions permits the interpretation of sensation, memory, anticipation, generalization and the notion of self through the connection of remembered ideas. Liberated from gross material conditions, the power of knowledge is responsible for abilities such as clairvoyance and psychometry. The third power is that of the will - *Ichchashakti* - while the fourth is *Kriyashakti*, the ability to produce phenomena through deep concentration on an idea. *Kundalinishakti* the fifth power, is the force that moves in a serpentine path, combining attraction and repulsion, the effects of which are electricity and magnetism. It is the universal life principle and continually adjusts internal to external relations, providing the karmic basis of reincarnation. The last primary force is that of *Mantrikashakti*, which resides in letters, speech and music, and which echoes through the astral matrix the power of the manifested *Logos*, the ray that illuminates the virgin womb of matter. Kanya, containing the six *shaktis*, is symbolized in the two triangles of ascent and descent, the crown in their centre representing the seven facets of her unified essence, and the triangles indicating the elements of fire and water.

Virgo is the link between the immortal soul and the astral body in man and as such, it governs the cerebellum and sympathetic nervous system as well as the viscera. The electrifying impulses contained within the ocean of life are transmitted to the lower sheaths of man's being, and his ability to assimilate only their pure essence is symbolized in the natural functioning of the digestive organs. Thus the soul touches the world, and because of this contact Virgo is associated with the earth, although in a different way than in Taurus, which is related to the manifesting Word and the cow's milk of *Akasa* and symbolizes a more formless and non-specific

contact with matter. The trials of the soul in the sign of Taurus differ from those experienced at this critical stage where the soul has actually submerged itself in dense matter.

In the Egyptian *Book of the Gates*, the sixth division in the sun's pathway is that of the kingdom of Osiris where souls must be judged before they can enter. This judgement has as a standard of balance Thoth-Mercury, and the issue that must be weighed is how far the soul has succeeded in mastering the passions of the house of Leo and in withholding sense-perceptions. Thoth, being bound as a mummy, suggests that the soul is being weighed in the balance of the lower mind, indicating that Virgo presides over the negative house of Mercury. This gate of judgement is related to Virgo in the guise of Astraea, goddess of justice. The Greeks and Romans believed that after her departure from earth, she rose to take her place among the twelve gods of the zodiac where she rests near the scales of Libra. In the Middle East, Virgo was known under various names designating aspects of Ishtar and was often considered a deity of the harvest, symbolized by the ear of corn or wheat she holds in her hand. The Akkadians believed she disappeared every year on the Errand of Ishtar - the descent of the goddess into the underworld in search of her bridegroom. In Germanic tradition she was *maeden*, which appellation in time became commonly fixed upon the serving-maid. Indeed, the old Attic name of Kop or 'maid' carried with it connotations of service which were originally bound up with religious ritual. A characteristic of good and faithful service to others is associated with Virgo, and the emblems which show the virgin riding the lion indicate that the soul, after fiery assertion, has become cognizant of the wider world and seeks to establish a balance.

The glyph of Virgo is variously interpreted in Greek, Jewish and Christian traditions. Some see in it the Hebrew *Yod* or ' which symbolizes the active power or agent, the wand or rod of Moses and Hermes. This *Yod* was then connected with the serpent of Scorpio to produce the familiar glyph , suggesting the ancient occult link between the two signs. Some have interpreted the glyph

as representing the first syllable of the word Παρθενος or *Parthenos*, a name of Astraea emphasizing her virginal nature. Another interpretation suggests that the glyph may be the initials 'MV' of the Virgin Mary, pointing to the similarity of the Christian virgin to those of older astrological origin. The Akkadian legend of the Errand of Ishtar describes the difficulties experienced by the virgin goddess as she descends into the underworld in search of her bridegroom. As she passes through the gates of the nether regions, she is stripped of her powers and finally stricken with disease, which symbolizes how the soul becomes painfully enmeshed in physical experience and sensation. Ishtar, having lost her innocence, is only saved by the messenger of Ea who heals her with the waters of life. This restores her crown, the synthesis of her six unified powers. Thus, in this myth, the chaotic astral light is made whole and pure and the goddess restored to her bridegroom's side. In the underworld of darkness and forgetfulness, the soul gains painful but necessary experience symbolized by the cultivation or consumption of the ear of corn or sheaf of wheat. In Egyptian tradition Osiris, in the sixth stage of the underworld, is accompanied by twelve gods who bear large ears of corn which are actually members of his body. The corn is consumed as divine food by the dwellers of this region who, with its power, enter the realm of experience through contact with the outer world. The corn, a symbol central to the Eleusinian Mysteries, represents the vesture that will feed life on earth as well as the cycles of life and death which accompany all evolution.

Through these complex myths the virgin is connected with the cycles of the soul: sowing and harvesting, as well as the cyclic balance between spirit and matter, virginity and fertility. As the supernatural worlds passed away and the natural or delusive worlds began evolving along the descending microcosmos or the arc of the great cycle, Virgo became Virgo-Scorpio. *Adam Kadmon*, the pure, androgynous, spiritual man, manifested from his side the pure virgin powers which eventually fell into generation in the sign of Scorpio. Man in the world finds himself within a physically engendered body and vaguely perceives the virginal power which



resides within him and was responsible for pushing him forth into the world. But he somehow intuits that this virgin, to whom he gives a female form, holds within her many veils the key to his self-understanding and salvation. Perhaps he dimly recalls within the memory of his soul what was generally accepted in ancient occult traditions; namely, that when the work of the separated Virgo and Scorpio are completed, they will become one again in the perfected man. In the meantime, the *Yod* of Virgo ideally acts as a restraint upon the passional tendencies of the serpent of Scorpio. In his present condition man must look to this cosmic mother in order to escape the snares of the matter-bound Eve.

Wherein the Son of Heav'n's Eternal King,  
Of wedded maid and virgin mother born . . .

Milton

It is a great mystery how a virgin can be made fertile and still remain pure. The Tunja Indians of the northern Andes believed that the sun assumed human flesh in the body of a virgin, causing her to bear that which was conceived from the sun and yet remain a virgin. This archetypal idea, so widespread in the world, is partially explained by the ancient Greeks. Virgo was *Parthenos*, the maid, ruled by Demeter, the Mother Earth. As her daughter, *Parthenos* was called Persephone and, being ruled by her, was subject to cycles pertaining to the earth. Thus the virgin daughter, abducted by Hades into the underworld, was compelled to spend half the year under the earth before rising again to its surface (see *The Eye, Hermes*, March 1976). In her agricultural aspect, she was represented by seed corn, which is reaped in the autumn, stored underground for three months, and then sown in the earth to appear once more in the spring. Virgo as the earth is fertilized by the rain and in her womb the seed germinates, yet she also grows anew and virginally fresh every spring as though for the first time. The mother becomes a virgin and the virgin a mother through endless cycles of appearance and disappearance. These cycles echo vast sidereal periods marked by the appearance and disappearance of Virgo over the horizon of the ecliptic. The Virgin marks the

coming and going of gods on this globe and holds the key to the door of the ancient Mysteries. The worship of Demeter and Persephone continued at Eleusis for ages and marked the high point of the Mysteries during the third sub-race of the Fifth Race. Eratosthenes identified Virgo with Isis, who clasped in her arms the sun-god Horus, the last of the Divine Kings. She is the prototype of the Virgin Mary holding Jesus at her breast, alluded to by Shakespeare as "the Good Boy in Virgo's lap". In keeping with the fertility attributed to her nature, the constellation of Virgo comprises the densest nebular region in the heavens, with more than five hundred nebulae in this celestial stable of nativity. Of the stars marking the fixed points amidst these churning vortices, the most brilliant is Spica, the Wheat Ear of Virgo, held in her hand. Homer called it "εσπερο or Hesperus, the brightest star that shines in heaven, while Isaiah called it Lucifer or Phosphorus, names identifying it as both a morning and evening star and emphasizing the inherent duality of the forces in this sign.

As a symbol, Virgo has always been associated with the birth of a god or demi-god, a supreme expression of the dynamic consciousness of Divine Will. The ancients held that Mercury, the messenger of the gods, was created in this constellation. Hence Virgo was often depicted with a caduceus as well as wings. From the lap of the celestial virgin, he who interprets and mediates was thought to have sprung forth and begun his sacred task. He was called by the Gnostics *logos spermatikos*, 'the Word scattered throughout the universe', and was believed to contain an unlimited capacity for transformation and penetration. When she is cast down into the world and stripped of her purity and virtue, he becomes her bridegroom and restores the crown to her. By tracing the levels of these symbolical relationships, the cosmic mystery unfolds through the descending layers of the mother's garments, providing the archetypal pattern for all subsequent virgin-births.

Behold, a virgin shall be with child,  
And shall bring forth a son,  
And they shall call his name Emmanuel,

Which being interpreted is,  
God with us.

*The Gospel According to St. Matthew*

In Greek mythology it is said that when Astraea forsook the earth at the beginning of the age of bronze, Zeus carried away Aquarius (Ganymedes), and when he had safely secured him, he threw Astraea head downward, back to earth. Cast out of heaven, the virgin disappeared below the southern horizon. This is curiously substantiated by the zodiac at Dendera, which has three figures of Virgo in three positions upon its face. *The Secret Doctrine* teaches that these figures between the Lion and the Scales indicate that the equinoxes have processed within the plane of the ecliptic three times since the beginning of Egyptian zodiacal records. To use the metaphor of the Greeks, this would mean that Zeus had cast Astraea or Virgo below the horizon three times where she remained, inverted, within the Dragon's Pit until she again rose up, marking the end of another phase of evolution. Like Persephone who disappears beneath the earth in an annual cycle, Virgo also disappears below the celestial equator but in a much vaster cycle.

Recent myths and larger cycles record and echo cosmic events that marked even greater changes affecting life upon the earth. Occult commentaries on the *Stanzas of Dzyan* show how the earth lay on its side three times since the middle of the Third Root Race. In those times as now, as the earth revolved around the sun, the days and nights during the two equinoctial periods were of equal duration. But during the solstice periods, the northern and southern hemispheres alternated in experiencing months of total darkness and light, accompanying the struggles of tribes of men living out the collective Karma of the great global Races. The positions of the three zodiacal virgins of Dendera recall the first three divine or astronomical Dynasties who taught the Third Root Race, later left the Atlanteans and redescended to earth during the third sub-race of the Fifth Race to save humanity and to reveal the mysteries of their birthplace in the sidereal heavens. The carrying away of Aquarius by Zeus represents the ascension of perfected men at the

end of an evolutionary age, while Virgo's falling toward the South Pole or Pit marks the defilement of the soul but also the eventual birth of a new spiritual impulsion.

Virgo or Kanya, containing the six primary forces represented by the astral light, governs the invisible region surrounding every globe and corresponding to the *linga sharira* in man. This region, hovering next to the earth itself, is the Great Dragon, or what Paracelsus called the sidereal light. Metaphysically, it is ether and is said to contain the realization of the potency of every quality of spirit. It reflects every condition, good or evil, expressed in life and is the basis of spiritual and human worship of nature. *The Secret Doctrine* teaches that the six forces of the sidereal light are actually "the six Hierarchies of *Dhyani Chohans* synthesized by their Primary, the seventh, who personify the Fifth Principle of Cosmic Nature, or of the 'Mother' in its Mystical Sense." Thus the powers of the messenger of the gods have their origin in the cosmic *Dhyani Chohans* who are living conscious entities at the head of each of the *shaktis* which emanate from them.

The birth of divine wisdom can take place within the faithful devotee who treads the path of true knowledge of *Jnanashakti*. Through long ordeals of trial and effort, he who cultivates the power of spiritual will may tap the primary force of *Ichchashakti* which enables him to develop the deep unwavering concentration necessary to direct *Kriyashakti*. But before this is possible, he must have mastered the effortless control of the vast energies of *Kundalinishakti*, whose serpentine forces achieve a perfect balance within the caduceus of his being and resonate harmoniously through the uttered power of *Mantrikashakti*. The Logoic light accompanying the Word will expand through the heat of the supreme force of *Parashakti* in the mighty heart of one who approaches selfless perfection. With the cool synthesis of these vast forces in nature, the crown of Kanya is achieved, signifying total purity of soul in its clear reflection of *Daiviprakriti*, the Light of the *Logos*. The perfected man who wears upon his head the crown of Virgo belongs to the arcane ranks of those who think, feel, move and breathe with the breath of Divine Will. Through Virgo, the cold flame of the radiant, formless realms of highest *Akasa* becomes the

dispersed fire of the astral light; the cold Virgin becomes the Mother. As the layers of her garment reach ever closer to the earth, the heat of fertile liquification ensures the irrigation of the fields of life. The corn and the wheat stalks will bring forth a harvest and the illuminated soul will experience the joyous interplay of the varied powers within and without its sacred tabernacle.

Every patient pilgrim-soul passes beyond the psychic and astral planes of nature and seeks the supreme source of the cosmic forces reflected in the lower avenues of human experience. Moving along the highly sensitive pathways of the nervous system, which acts as transmitter and transformer within the astral body, the noetic levels of the electrical source of nervous energy are sensed. Pushing back to more cosmic and causal planes, the immortal soul may eventually reach beyond the fire of electricity to the cold flame of *Fohat*. The sacred connection between Kanya and the human nervous system is a pure reflection of invisible nature in which the divine Flame or Light of the *Logos* is radiated through the holy Builders of the universe and through the thickening layers of the Virgin-Mother. The fact that Kanya is also associated with the viscera demonstrates how the manifestation of the same light and energy appears as the *vaishvanara* fire by which food is digested. All food should first be offered to Bhagavan before it is eaten, so that it may become transmuted into higher forces. This act of consecration facilitates the sacrificial transformation of the earthly harvest into the sacred corn of the body of Osiris. It requires the cleansing and spiritualizing of all that is touched through the contact of the six primary powers with the world and a drawing in of the Buddhic essence of these to the inmost centre of one's being where the six are unified and made pure and whole. If the immortal soul persists in this heroic endeavour, it can elevate the entire astral matrix within which all manifested life evolves and thus provide a powerful spiritual impulsion to material nature and human evolution.

*Hermes*, October 1977

Helen Valborg

# LIBRA

*If the heart is innocent,  
It is equal in weight to Truth.*

In the seventh division of the underworld, in the centre of the hall, stands a great balance surmounted by the symbol of Thoth-Hermes. Beside it stands Moot, the personification of the spirit of justice, observing the scales to see that the pans are balanced and the heart of the deceased uses no trickery. Her feathered hieroglyph, resting in one pan as the symbol of Truth, is weighed against the heart, the seat of intelligence. If Truth and the heart are of equal weight, the doors open before the soul so that it may come to learn the deeper working of the Law, the balance and measurements of the vast action of universal Karma, the causes embodied in the effects, "when Day and Night are weigh'd in Libra's Scales".

Libra is the sign of equilibrium in the Three Worlds. It is the scale which designates the balance between the solar world and the planetary manifestations, as well as between the spiritual and personal ego of man. Its name changes from the Italian *libra* to the French *balance*, the German *wage* and the Anglo-Saxon *pund*. The Greeks called it σταθμος (*stathmos*) or the weight-beam, while another name, λιτρα (*litre*), made its way into the Sicilian dialect and eventually gave birth to the Roman *libra*. In all these names for the celestial scales, the standard of weight, measurement and even payment on earth is an echoed reflection of a greater cosmic balance, a justice which oversees all levels of manifestation. If the wages of sin are retribution through karmic law, so the wages of the worthy toiler are payment for the energy, for the days and months and years spent in the service of a larger work. The ignorant man asks only for what is due to him from the world; the wise man seeks the greater balance within himself.

Within the heart of the wise man lies the inner harmony which balances the conscious and unconscious self, the world of good and evil, the sublimation of Virgo and the desire of Scorpio. Within the heart lies the wisdom of the higher mind. In the judgement scene depicted in the *Papyrus of Ani*, the soul is weighed against the symbol of *Moot*, the female counterpart of *Thoth* and personification of the higher mind. The soul is weighed against the symbol of absolute truth and perfection rather than against relative goodness. The soul enters the gate that leads to conscious self-mastery where cosmic justice is gradually understood through the intelligent harmonizing of the inner and outer nature. Man naturally seeks to do justice, but he succeeds only when he has gained knowledge of himself.

In Sanskrit, Libra is *Tula*, the emblem of *Nara*, the earthly Adam or Man. That man can find universal balance and justice within himself rests upon the fact that he is the axial point of all evolving life, the pivot through which matter-bound spirit begins to consciously rise towards self-conscious godhood. In this fundamental and awesome reality lies the germ of that deepest sense of responsibility which alone is compatible with a knowledge of true justice. Archetypally, the germ finds the conditions it needs in the seventh stage of the zodiacal wheel, and its initial growth marks the commencement of the second cycle of six signs which affect the evolution of individuality. Perhaps this is why the Greeks called Libra the 'tongue of balance' and associated it with both speech and the number five, which falls midway between one and nine. How the seven could become five may be explained by the classical idea that the first two signs were preparatory and therefore not counted. The Greeks thought that Libra, correlated with the number five, depicted the harmony established by Venus between the sun and the moon. They arrived at this assumption by adding the moon of Cancer, the second sign in this numerical order, to the sun of Leo, the third sign. This they interpreted as harmonizing personality and individuality. They believed this necessary balancing had already taken place on a cosmic scale, as is borne out by the words of Homer: "The Eternal Father hung His golden scales

aloft", to which Milton much later added, "Yet seen betwixt Astraea and the Scorpion sign. . . ."

It is often said that Libra was designated when the constellation was on the equinox and so equilibrated day and night. Indeed, one of the Latin names for Libra was *jugun*, indicating the autumnal equinox. Just as night and day balance one another in the universe, so also life and death hang in equipoise, forever counteracting, forever interlacing the dual forces that form the substratum of manifestation. The Babylonians believed that the judgement of souls in relation to future lives and states after death took place in the autumn, the time when causes set in motion were gathered in and weighed against the karmic curve of the soul and effects were dispersed through its reincarnating vestures. The rhythmic action of cause and effect echoes the cosmic pulsation of the universal heart, the centrifugal and centripetal forces operating throughout the cosmos. At the heart of these out-breathing and in-breathing currents, man stands in the balance. Perhaps it is the heightened awareness of this critical position that causes individuals born under the influence of Libra to be unduly sensitive to the equilibrium of circumstances in their lives. Seeking balance, harmony, peace and fair play, they seem to personify temporary compromise in human interaction and, while at times appearing timid and indecisive, they may be influenced by a vaster sense of justice than is indicated in any particular context. A number of famous lawyers have been born under the sign of Libra, indicating their concern for justice as well as an ability to weigh both sides of a question. The strong relationship that Libra has with the planet Venus tends to reinforce this concern for harmony and equilibrium and serves to unite a love of beauty for its own sake with the concept of justice in the sense of universal law and goodness itself. A Libran seduced by illusory forms of evanescent beauty or engulfed in indecisive eclecticism parading as tolerance has focussed his or her concern for harmony and justice upon a limited material field. Such a category mistake results from a lack of the sense of cosmic balance.



According to archaic Euphratean symbology, the glyph of Libra -  
 - designated the top of an ancient altar which was located next to Scorpio in their zodiac. They associated this with the Holy Mound of *Tul-Ku* which was a tower, like that of Babel, which symbolized speech and was surmounted by an altar. This latter feature reflected the fact that several stars in the constellation of Libra described in their juxtaposition to one another a celestial altar which they called *Toshritu* or Holy Altar, the name also given to the seventh month of their year. The Akkadians, relating Libra to the Scorpion, depicted the glyph as a sun disk or a censer clutched within its outstretched claw. The censer was the vessel that held the lighted incense of sacrificial oblation. The sun disk was a solar lamp burning in the vessel, a *φάρος* or *pharos*, such as the great lamp of the lighthouse of Alexandria which served as a representation of the zodiacal altar. The light upon this beacon-altar was symbolic of the Word in the world of appearances, reminding us of the relationship of Libra to Venus-Lucifer, who is also said to be identical with Aditi and Vach.

The Egyptians called the glyph of Libra *Khu* and believed that it represented the horizon with the disk of the sun rising behind it. They also interpreted it as depicting Isis on the verge of giving birth to Horus. But whatever the vessel, be it the altar of the horizon or the womb of Isis, it is linked with the manifestation of light in the world. Libra was depicted by Pythagoras and the ancients in terms of light. Both the light and the vessel are suggested by the glyph, and perhaps this relationship between the Logoic source, the manifest flame and the vessel which contains it is enshrined in the central balance symbolized by the scale of Libra. The vessel or censer contains the incense which is kept burning by the flame and the sacrificial smoke of that fire awakens the light of the higher god. It is for this reason that incense purifies and helps the devotee maintain his equilibrium while attempting to move forward along the path of spiritual awakening.

The act of worshipping at the altar is vividly portrayed in the Hindu representation of Libra or *Tula*, which depicts a man

bending upon one knee and holding in his hand a scales. *Tula* is also symbolic of fire, indicating the altar blaze tended by the disciple who would balance the forces within and without in his efforts to maintain its flame. The posture of worship requires a bowing of the lower nature before the light of the higher, a balanced bending wherein the back gracefully curves in inward recognition of the divine. Perhaps the fact that Libra is believed to rule the country of India as well as the lumbar region of the human back indicates something of the nature of this sacred posture. It may even be wondered if those who suffer from pride and the resulting lack of resiliency tend to suffer from maladies afflicting the back. The bending upon one leg and the balancing of the scales seems to suggest both obeisance and a willing preparation to rise up and join the Higher Self. The illustration captures the balanced moment, marking the presence of both attitudes, far different from the proud posture of a Leo or the fluctuating positions of Gemini.

According to Hindu calculations, *Tula* is numerologically equivalent to the number thirty-six, which stands for the thirty-six *tatvams* born out of ignorance or *avidya*. T. Subba Row explains that *Jivatma* can be said to differ from *Paramatma* in being encased within these thirty-six *tatvams* which prepare the way in which the heavenly man becomes human as we know him. *Tula* is also associated with *vedana*, the seventh *nidana*, which brings into action the influence of the higher mind upon the senses and their relations with external objects. It illuminates the lower nature with the light of knowledge typified by this stage of development. In Buddhist teachings *vedana* is translated as 'feeling' or 'sensations', although feelings in the seventh *nidana* are conditioned not by way of simultaneity but as the result of karma. In the *nidana* of *vijnana*, associated with Gemini, the neophyte stood within the temple precincts and received the light. In that zodiacal stage, "the darkened veil of *Avidya* is withdrawn and the soul perceives the outer world". In the seventh stage, related to *vedana*, "the light is more fully revealed as the neophyte stands before the Holy Altar on which burns the inextinguishable lamp of the Spirit", and as a result

of the fuller revelation, the onus of choice rests more heavily upon the human soul in the sign of Libra.

The *tatvams* symbolized by *Tula* are derived from *TAT*, or that which is the essential being of a thing. *Tattva* means 'thatness', while *TAT* plus *tvam* or 'That' and 'you' blend in the dictum, "That thou art." In Sankhya philosophy there are twenty-five *tatvams* or fundamental principles through which the Divine becomes human. They are the powers that lie behind the feelings and sensations associated with *vedana*. First there is *avyakta* the unmanifest; *Buddhi*, the perceptive faculty; and *ahankara*, the perception of Self, followed by the five *tanmatras* or rudimentary elements of sound, touch, sight, taste and smell. These are followed by the five *mahabhutas* which are derived from the *tanmatras*. They are aether, air, fire, water and earth. It is interesting to recall that sound precedes aether just as *sparsa* or touch precedes air. These *mahabhutas* are followed by the five organs or senses of perception, each of which is ruled by a *deva* related to the *mahabhutas*. Finally, the *karmendriyani* or organs of action permit the expression of these channelled powers. The voice, the hand, the foot, the anus and the generative organs permit the enactment of creation from Brahman downwards as *Hamsa*, the Swan in Time, slowly comes into existence. If thirty-six *tatvams* are identified, the number divides into multiples of twelve related to the triad or nine relative to the *Tetraktys*, whereas twenty-five signifies a five-fold pentagram, the symbol of man. The triad and the *Tetraktys* when fused become numerically seven, the prime irreducible number which marks the phase of Libra. Seven expresses diversity in complex unity and signifies a wealth of completed scales or cycles and corresponds to the six directions in space with the centre as seventh. It is represented by the cross and the sword which is the symbol of pain. Perhaps it is this pain which is referred to in the *bhava chakra* where the *nidana vedana* is represented by a picture of an arrow piercing the eye. The awakened perceptions and the consciousness of sensations in Libra bring the soul to the threshold of incarnation. The pain is analogous to what one feels as the world begins to impinge upon one when awakened from a sweet cosmic sleep into the perplexing awareness

of being imprisoned in time and ensnared in the space of one's body. The arrow in the eye is the pain of the imminent loss of spiritual vision which awaits the soul, the clouding of the Third Eye. It is the concomitant anguish of the macrocosm becoming the microcosm. It is also the creative suffering which marks the condition of a person who stands in the balance seeking to reverse the tide, ready to crucify his or her lower nature and take firmly in hand the sword of spiritual striving.

*Tula* is the emblem of *Nara*, the immortal soul, the individualized incarnation of spirit prior to eighteen million years ago. *Nara* is the original Eternal Man as a unit reflection of the overbrooding macrocosmic potential. The human soul is now endowed with perceptive powers which allow it to weigh in the balance of the higher mind the experiences of the phenomenal world. The immortal soul in close communion with the Divine is *Nara-Narayana*, for it is *Narayana* (man-wheel or cycle) which is the divinity that becomes manifest in man. As a title of Vishnu, *Narayana* is the primordial aspect of Holy Spirit moving upon the waters of creation. "In esoteric symbology it stands for the primeval manifestation of the life-principle spreading in infinite space." *Lakshmi-Narayana* or the incarnation of God in man is the sacred inauguration of the pivotal union of spirit and matter. *Nara* as the original Eternal Man is manifested in Great Beings such as Hermes, Enoch, Osiris and Krishna. They are '*Metatrons*' between soul and body, the "Eternal Spirits which redeem flesh by the regeneration of flesh below, and soul by the regeneration above, where humanity walks once more with God." Their position in evolution can be studied in terms of the unfolding signs of the zodiac which are related to *Parabrahm*, *Pranava* or the Word, the Androgyne, the Tetragram, *Jivatma-Narayana*, *Sakti-Maya* and *Nara*. This is followed by Vishnu expanding, the nine *Prajapatis*, the incarnating *Kumaras*, the mastery of the *lokas* and the synthesis of the elements. The work of the *Metatrons* is poised between these descending and ascending qualities of the zodiac, the harmonization and transcendence of which is dependent upon a conscious assumption of their sublime pivotal position. This is what the Divine Incarnations represent and

it exemplifies the supreme compassion of the exalted *Bodhisattvas* who renounce *nirvana* in order to continue their sacred communion with human souls who are bound to the wheel of change.

The mythical Libra-Hermes-Enoch stands at the critical juncture where the physical man overshadows the spiritual. Like *Nataraja* he portrays a *swastika*: one arm points to heaven signifying boundless regeneration, the other points to earth signifying endless generation. "The visible but the manifestation of the invisible; the man of dust abandoned to dust, the man of spirit reborn in spirit." Thus finite man is the son of Infinite God.

Libra is the eternal equilibrium between the macrocosm and its reflected microcosm. It marks the beginning of the separation of Virgo and Scorpio, the emergence of the Second Adam from the androgynous *Adam Kadmon* through the fall of pure Virgo into the generation of Scorpio, which took place at the time of the separation of the sexes. When the one androgynous sign became two, a secret sign was placed between them the name of which was known only to Initiates but which was later called Libra.

Libra's proximity to Virgo is significant, for the scales are held in the hand of the Virgin and she is often depicted as a personification of Justice standing with sword and scales. Gandhi had Virgo rising with the sun and moon in Libra, which perhaps indicates his creative ability to sympathize with opposing points of view and his uncanny sense of wisdom in action which enabled him to realize the deepest hopes of many concerning social justice and spiritual concord. The relationship between Libra and Scorpio is suggested in pictograms of Chaldean or Babylonian origin which show Libra as the lamp either held by the Scorpion's claw or as the claw itself.

While Libra's relationship to Scorpio is double-edged, it is clearly the exaltation of Saturn, the planet of righteousness, which in retrogradation "does not wander away making loops to the north and south, as the other planets do, but remains sternly at the same distance from the ecliptic". In an analogous position to Libra, Saturn is like the bridge between higher and lower *manas*, the Great Sifter

who exacts the payment of karmic debts. One can see Venus as divine grace and Saturn as divine justice, each on either side of the scales. The human soul watched over by Venus and increasingly confined by separative existence, turns inward to find the unlimited and is pulled through desire (Scorpio) toward the Great Sifter, Saturn. It is this Bringer of Old Age who strips away the layers of *maya*, but he does so through the costly temptations of Scorpio. The desire for wholeness and harmony, if externalized, will either expand out through seeds of generation or seek to ingest the whole through acquisition or gluttony. If internalized, it will seek the balanced scales within, weighing with equal measure joy and sorrow, knowing that "all that lives must die, passing through nature to eternity", and that the purpose of life is to learn persistently to see through and transcend the pairs of opposites. Within self-conscious man alone lies the potential power to harmonize the inner and the outer nature. The *yogi* harmonizes his Self with the outer world, through the performance of *vijnana yajna* or sacrifice by developing wise compassion and thoughtful consideration towards other beings. Thus refining the mental, astral and physical vestures, it causes the micro-centres of consciousness to reflect their macrocosmic sources. In this way the Self is harmonized with the *tatvams* and their presiding intelligences, and the *yogi* becomes a creative agent in helping on the work of cosmic evolution. To do this requires controlled exercise of free will which can only come from a man who perceives mind and consciousness both within and outside himself.

Macrobius surmised that Venus appeared in Libra at creation, and that she bound together couples under the beam of marriage, beautifully suggesting the harmonizing of the inner and outer of Virgo and Scorpio. Thus the yoke of balance upheld the scales which could reunite the severed earthly Adam and cause the divided tongues of men to become once more the One Word of Venus-Lucifer, the Giver of Light to the world. To express the pure Light of Truth, the innocence of non-separativeness must be won, and to attain this lofty state the developing disciple must accept all of the limitations of his own past karma with unfailing equanimity.

If he perceives the profound justice of his own circumstances he will be able to learn the lessons that they have to teach him, and in this way he will come to discover the intricate ways of karma in the world of effects. Through this spiritual wisdom the pilgrim-soul comes to understand the hidden meaning of that Law which rests in equipoise at the centre of all manifested existence. By effortlessly exemplifying this balance within himself, the Magus-Teacher mirrors within his whole being *Nara-Narayana*, the sacred and blissful communion of the human with the Divine Soul. The secret heart is equal in weight to the supernal Truth of *Brahma Vach*, the Word of God, the Voice of the Silence.

*Hermes*, November 1977

Helen Valborg

# SCORPIO

*Hoar-frost and hail and blight spring from the excesses and disorders of this element of love, which to know in relation to the revolutions of the heavenly bodies and the seasons of the year is termed astronomy. Furthermore, all sacrifices and the whole province of divination, which is the art of communion between gods and men – these I say are concerned only with the preservation of the good and the cure of the evil love.*

*The Symposium*

The honey bee brings down the nectar of the gods and only its barbed sting reminds us of its relation to the scorpion which has been its symbolic antithesis from ancient times. The sweeter agent of growth is sharply contrasted with that dread creature whose sting can deliver death and whose grasping claws seem to threaten even the celestial bodies. The flow of love through the spatial spheres is arrested in the sign of the Scorpion and its force explodes in outbursts of starry matter, in fiery emissions of cosmic seed.

The constellation of Scorpio lies in that region of the sky where many brilliant temporary stars have appeared. The violent activity in this part of the heavens undoubtedly led the ancients to attribute to Scorpio a malevolent force, and the immensity and brilliance of the great red star Antares possibly encouraged them to emphasize the influence of the warlike planet of Mars. Antares lies in the direction of the centre of our galaxy and has been known for millennia as the heart of the great Scorpion. It is several hundred times the sun's diameter and thousands of times more luminous; its throbbing reddish body radiates out a fiery aura about which whirls a vast and intricate nebular cloud. The constellation near Antares is the only group of stars forming a curve which bends back upon itself, thus actually describing a scorpion shape. Its explosive nature was echoed in the Euphratean names Bilu-sha-ziri, the Lord of the Seed, and Dar-Lugal, the King of Lightning, or Luga Tudda, the Lusty King. In the Akkadian lunar zodiac, Scorpio was called Girtab, the Seizer and Stinger, and the ideograph 'Gir' was rendered as a blade, a sting or a pointed tail and meant either 'to



strike' or 'lightning'. The relationship of the striking of lightning to the idea of the Lord of the Seed is echoed elsewhere in the world. Even in recent times the Hopi have enacted a mystery play wherein the fertilizing of the corn maiden is symbolically accompanied by lightning shafts dropped down upon an altar. There are suggestions in Middle Eastern cultures that a being might strike himself, as it were, and in the twelfth century B.C. the Babylonians carved boundary stones depicting men with scorpion tails, stinging themselves.

At one time Scorpio was believed to arch across a far greater portion of the heavenly vault than is allotted to it now, and its influence upon the neighbouring signs was recorded. The Scorpion's relation to the centaur-like archer of Sagittarius inspired the Babylonians to depict the latter with a scorpion's body or with the scorpion shown under the horse's belly. Some show the archer's arrow aimed at the scorpion's heart, while others graphically indicate the grasping claws reaching around the *membrum virile* of the archer's horse. The relationship of Scorpio and Libra is complicated by the fact that in esoteric tradition Libra is said to have been inserted in the midst of Virgo-Scorpio, which once comprised a single sign – the sixth of ten celestial centres of influence. This would have placed Sagittarius in the seventh position, which suggests that the creation linked with this sign is in some sense completed by the seventh stage of evolution, but due to the separation of Virgo and Scorpio, it actually appears only in the ninth stage. There is a striking analogy in human conception, a process which is completed at seven months though the conclusion of nine months is required for the visible appearance of the new life. Sabean astrological doctrine guarded the teaching that within the double sign of Virgo-Scorpio was hidden the explanation of "the gradual transformation of the world from its spiritual and subjective into the 'two-sexed' sublunary state". Perhaps in this lies a clue which may suggest the mysterious gestation inherent in the process of foetal development between the seventh and ninth month.

Hindu tradition teaches that Virgo or Kanya represents the energies of shakti while Scorpio or Vriscikam symbolizes the universe expanded just prior to its coming into material existence. Between these two is Libra or Tula which paves the way to Nara, the earthly Adam. The *Vishnu Purana* speaks of the Seventh Creation as that of man while the Eighth is called a 'blind' and refers to a purely mental process leading to the cognition of the Ninth Creation – that of the *Kumaras* – wherein the fruits of the labours of those *Dhyanis* who incarnated within the senseless shells of the first two Root Races was realized, culminating in the creation of self-conscious divine men. The signs of Virgo-Libra-Scorpio are critically important in attempting to understand this great mystery, for in them the potentials that slumber in Leo become distinct and separate elements, a necessary condition for manifested creation. Thus the necessary separation of Virgo-Libra-Scorpio results in manifestation and generation, while the union of the three brings about the destruction of the phenomenal universe.

From Aries through Libra the creative life-force has been operating externally. In Scorpio it becomes indrawn to form a reservoir of energy for the soul's later efforts. The motive power of evolution is *Fohat*, which ever works in an undulating motion – a creative dialectic between the latent and the active, the ascending and the descending. Its hieroglyphic symbol is that of a serpent, and is illustrated in varying forms in the glyphs for Taurus where the energy is latent, Leo where it is activated, Scorpio where it is fully awake, and, ultimately, Aquarius where its duality is transcended. In Scorpio this serpent is poised and ready to strike, and with its awakening, *Fohat* compels and must be brought under control. Legends abound of heroes who have conquered this serpent just as Hercules slew the nine-headed hydra of Hernae and Saint George slew the dragon. In Scorpio the serpent begins to uncoil in man and stretch up through the wheels or chakras corresponding to the various plexuses of the body until it finally reaches the Third Eye of Shiva, wherein man recovers his sense of the eternal.

From the solar plexus, the vital force is awakened when stung by the dagger of desire, and by ascending to the realm of the higher mind, it can help to heal the wound inflicted by itself.

In the zodiac, Vrischikam or Scorpio is placed opposite *Pranava* the Word, for the universe of thought, Vishnu or that which is expanded, unfolds downward from *Pranava*. The expansion of the primitive germ into the universe is said to be possible only because the tattvams associated with Tula are interposed between the *Jivatma* of Leo and the maya of Virgo. This separation between the Lion and the Virgin leads to the drowsy state called *svapnavastha*, associated with Vishnu. "The dreamy state is induced through the instrumentality of the *Tatvams*," The Ego, having ceased to experience the limitlessness of *sushupti*, is drawn back into the realm of the subtle interplay of feelings and sensations that mark the period of sleep just prior to its waking to the utter limitation of physical space and time.

When woman issues from the rib of the second Adam the pure Virgo is separated, and falling 'into generation', or the downward cycle, becomes Scorpio, emblem of sin and matter.

In Scorpio the separated self has become a well-defined centre enclosed by a wall. It marks the soul's objectification of the self under the aegis of conceptual consciousness. This separation is epitomized in the division of the sexes which accentuates 'the Fall' of unified spirit into the diversity of matter. Scorpio corresponds to that period in man's collective life "which lies under the threat of death, for the Fire of *Fohat* awakened is far more dangerous than flames that may burn the flesh. The ignorant man, foolishly pursuing his desires, is apt unknowingly to commit the error of Phaethon whose desire to drive his father's solar chariot plunged him to his death. The impatient son grabbed the reins of power and the uncontrolled car scorched the earth in its course. Perhaps the greatest threat of death is that inherent in duality itself and in the downward generation that resulted in the separation of the sexes. Speaking of this mystically, it may be said that the dualism of religion is theoretically superficial. In actual fact, there is always

something extra – a third term which prevents the two opposing terms from cancelling each other out, forcing both these principles to yield, to function alternately and not simultaneously. This third term seems to encourage the persistence of the dual state and it certainly serves to keep the twin currents (ascending and descending) of alchemical solution and coagulation in perpetual rotation.

The constellation of Scorpio is said to be in the negative house of Mars, which represents the creative undulatory force in nature. Ancient astrologers claimed that Scorpio was the birthplace of fiery Mars, a close association which merits attention. H.P. Blavatsky depicted Mars as "the lord of birth and death, of generation and destruction, of ploughing, of building, of sculpture or stone cutting, of architecture. ... He was the primeval principle, disintegrating into the modification of the two opposites for production." Mars intensifies in Aries and holds the birthplace of the day just as he holds the place of its death which is Scorpio. In the positive martial sign of Aries lies the beginning of the separative process, whereas its culminating phase lies in Scorpio.

Scorpio's double-edged nature seems to have been reflected in the early translations of cuneiform texts where it was termed the Double Sword or 'the place where one bows down'. This latter is reminiscent of Libra depicted as a man bowing while balanced upon one knee. It also suggests the curved tail of the scorpion arching over its back, and perhaps the prospect of the lightning strike of this fiery sting encourages true humility in the attempt to control the good and evil potential of the mighty forces of Vrisikam. That this may be trying for those whose natal position places them under the fierce influence of this sign is borne out in the nature of the characteristics which it tends to manifest. Where many ancient Roman astrologers stressed the destructive and even treacherous nature of Scorpio, Firmicus suggested a more balanced approach. He recognized the tendency toward temerity and impetuosity while at the same time he pointed to the spontaneous

generosity and stout-heartedness that accompany the tempestuous desires which sometimes bedevil the native of Scorpio.

The central propensity of Scorpio is desire manifesting as a riotous energy which rules the native and propels him to rush into action. To the unrestrained Scorpio, nothing is too much trouble. There is no point in hesitation, shirking or temporizing. He will plunge into a task for its own sake, treating work as a natural expression of overflowing energy. The individual impelled by this massive force may bring to life an abundant generosity which cannot be sustained without this energy. He is not held back by caution for himself, although he can appear selfish through a lack of consideration for the timidities or susceptibilities of others. This lack of compromise and tact, the tendency to run roughshod over things and to overdo without any sense of limit, well typifies the negative and dangerous aspect of this energetic nature. Radical interference is almost an irresistible and sometimes fatal temptation to the native faced with a tiresome situation. He would rather bring the house down with him than suffer what he imagines to be hypocrisy, and he can easily be the agent through which powerfully destructive forces may work, resulting in his tragic downfall.

*Trishna*, that thirst which makes the living drink  
 Deeper and deeper of the false salt waves  
 Whereon they float, pleasures, ambitions, wealth,  
 Praise, fame, or domination, conquest, love,  
 Rich meats and robes, and fair abodes and pride  
 Of ancient lives, and lust of days, and strife  
 To live, and sins that flow from strife, some sweet,  
 Some bitter.

Sir Edwin Arnold  
*The Light of Asia*

In Buddhist iconography the *nidana trishna* is depicted as a woman offering a drink to a seated man. This thirst arises out of the kamic sensations and feelings of *vedana* which are produced through the senses and through consciousness. This hunger or craving for activity, excitement, this feverish unsatisfied longing, is *tanha*, the flame of desire that ensures generation and rebirth. With

*trishna* begins the karma-bhava or the generation of karma in the present life, when passive feeling becomes active desire, and sensation becomes craving, for in the separated sign of Scorpio lies "the degradation of the whole universe in its course of evolution downward from the subjective to the objective". Said the Buddha:

What, O Monks, is the origin of suffering? It is that craving which gives rise to ever fresh rebirth and bound up with pleasure and lust, now here, now there, finds ever fresh delight.

As Aristophanes said in the *Symposium*, "Hoar-frost and hail and blight spring from the excesses and disorders of this element of love", and it is with the activation of desire that good and evil love manifest, laying the ground for the battlefield of spiritual life. This is fought through the complexities of human relation, for "all human problems are of relationship, and all relationships are symbolized in the zodiac". Scorpio dramatizes this truth especially, for the greatest desires and difficulties arise from the seeming separation that subsists between man and woman. Plato taught of a time when man was one whole spherical being which craved not itself but rested content in its completeness. It came to pass that this being divided into halves, each becoming separated from the other, each doomed to suffer longing and discontent while searching for its other half. It is this anguished state of consciousness that Scorpio represents when men and women seek the lesser *eros*. In the *Timaeus* Plato spoke of the sexes as living as if independent from the beings that experience them, and that their union reflects the greatest initiatory truths which transcended the laws of biology – a sort of dialectic in psycho-transference, in Jungian language. The gleam of desire in restless eyes is lit by the same fire that at the highest level brings down into manifestation the electrical energy of creation.

The artificial antagonism that exists between the sexes is aggravated by alternating waves of craving and pain which envelop all earthbound love and ensure its inevitable frustration. Craving is born in the longing for a completeness which can never be found externally in the world, while pain is the child of an

ancient wound brought about by the apparent loss of one's wholeness. The loss is that of Virgo falling from purity, from her celestial seat upon the lap of her lion-king. Her loss is suggested also in the separation of Scorpio, for he is like the progeny that resulted after she was plucked from Adam's side, the biblical Cain who was cast out of paradise. Each half of the once whole sphere looks for its other half. Each sex looks to the other and in so doing, blames the other for its sense of loss, its incompleteness. While men and women crave one another in this faltering and futile manner, they simultaneously blame one another for being the painful reminder of their own lack of wholeness, their loss of the innocence that is synonymous with the radiant purity of oneness. Human history is marred with the silent or noisy rebuke that men and women show each other. If the claws of the celestial Scorpion are under the influence of Venus desiring union, its tail is totally under the influence of Mars and carries the poisonous thorn concealed beneath the rose.

Horus saith: 'O my serpent Khet, thou Mighty Fire, from whose mouth cometh forth this flame which is in my Eye, whose undulations are guarded by my children, open thy mouth. . . . The fire which is in this serpent shall come forth, and shall blaze against these enemies whensoever Horus decreeth that it shall do so.'

This serpentine force fashioned the universe, creating man within it, and man in his turn can use this force for creation. This Fohatic force can destroy the forces that bind down the soul in matter but only if man will overcome craving. The conquering of *trishna* within the battlefield of the human heart requires the transmutation of the energy of desire, which must find coherence in a secret place secluded from the outward arenas of human existence. The alchemists knew this well and held Scorpio in high regard, for they understood that only when the sun was in this sign could iron be transmuted into gold. In man this transmutation must be brought about in consciousness but without disdaining the physical temple and its activities. The Buddhist seeks to do this through sacramental exercises which involve the harnessing of the energy of desire as

well as the emotions for spiritual purposes. This is seen to be critical because of the fact that the greater part of the total energy available to the personality is dammed up within lower channels. The sacraments which must take place in the mind are believed to be efficacious because they reflect the transcendental reality of interpenetration. It is known that man can experience this expansion of reality through a profound alchemical transmutation within his vestures. He can learn to engender within himself the *vivṛta* form of the *Bodhichitta* (Wisdom-Heart) instead of the grosser vital essence which, if dissipated, binds him to the realm of sense perceptions. The higher spiritual energies can never be released if their transmutation is short-circuited through lower avenues of expression.

In this tradition the whole world is said to be divided into a passive mental 'womb-element' and an active material 'diamond-element', or into infinite combinations of wisdom and compassion, *prajna* and *upaya*. They represent the converging currents flowing within the individual, and their perfect detached balance alone releases the highest Fohatic energy. The pure reflection of *prajnopaya* at the individual level is extremely difficult to realize, and the attempt to achieve it through external manipulations is detrimental and even dangerous. The magical power of sacramental exercises lies in the fact that they must be carried out mentally with a concentration of feeling which involves the sublimation of emotion by means of meditation upon the transcendental significance of the act of communion, the concordant unity of wisdom and compassion, *prajnopaya*. The central problem of the spiritual life is dynamic. It is not only a matter of theoretical understanding but also one of practical exercises in directing psychic energy. This latter is essentially the energy of cosmic desire, and everyday emotion is an exaggerated and wasteful way of expressing it. What the Buddhist seeks to do through sacramental exercises, and what other spiritual disciplines foster through varied psychological and devotional methods, is to facilitate the concentration and sublimation of feeling in the heart and a



subsequent conservation and re-direction of emotional expenditure of energy.

Apep, the evil serpent of human passions, was conquered by Osiris and bound down in the underworld. There the soul said to this vanquished foe, "The Scorpion has hurt thy mouth", and the Scorpion is "the worm that never dies". Curiously, this reflects the double nature of Scorpio and affirms its role as that which stings and electrifies consciousness, awakening the soul to the task at hand. *Fohat* is indrawn in Scorpio and released in Sagittarius, and if desire is gathered up into the higher centres, the enclosing wall of the separated self can be shattered by the lightning strike of Uranus, the Scorpion's powerful sting. The volcanic force of Uranus, the Breaker of Bonds, is especially strong in Scorpio, and when indrawn and conserved within this sign, can release a power which may burst the strongest personal fortification. This mysterious force is the usable material of alchemical transmutation, and its subtle refinement within the lotus chakras of the human temple can tap the reservoir of the Wisdom-Heart and activate the Eye of Wisdom, the Eye of Shiva. The electrifying currents, when unleashed, must be mastered much as the undulating serpent is made an obedient servant and held securely beneath Shiva's foot. If the Archer's arrow does not succeed in penetrating the heart of Scorpio, then the Scorpion's claws may succeed in dragging down the Archer into the mire of sensation.

The second tablet of the Epic of Gilgamesh depicts the creation of Ea-Bani, who corresponds to Taurus and who became a wise counsel and friend of Gilgamesh, the hero-soul. At the end of the eighth tablet, corresponding to Scorpio, Ea-Bani is shown meeting his death, and Gilgamesh, "smitten with sickness", journeys henceforth alone to the land beyond 'the Waters of Death'. The theme of this story is echoed in the later Mithraic tradition where Mithra slays the bull and Scorpio is shown seizing its genitalia in its claws. This powerful and poignant symbolism represents the fall of pure Akashic energy (Taurus), which initially pervades and accompanies the emerging soul, but which in its lower astral aspect

(Virgo's fall) is pulled down into generation (Scorpio) and dies. It is from the urge to avoid this death that the soul struggles on to the Eternal City lying at the hub of the zodiacal wheel. The unfoldment of this awesome process is suggested in the *Stanzas of Dzyan* depicting the long process of anthropogenesis. They reveal glimpses of the great forces marshalled by the gods of the zodiac, and the desire to comprehend them may itself be said to spring from the energy conserved in Scorpio. The destruction that flows from the restless force of desire brings sorrow in abundance, but the man who seizes the flame of *trishna* and stores its fiery liquid within his heart, creates in himself a sacred altar which may attract others in search of a deific vision. It is solely in the Wisdom-Heart that the radiant knowledge of *prajna* and the "skilful means of bringing people to enlightenment" – *upaya* – can be joined in perfect interpenetration. merging mind and matter, theory and practice, into a pure and contented wholeness. In this way *trishna* can be quenched, *tanha* may be stilled, and the insane longings of human existence seen for what they truly are. When this is calmly completed, man may proceed with the sacred task of preserving the pure love, the compassionate ray that springs upward from *Bodhichitta* and illumines the whole world.

*Hermes*, December 1977

Helen Valborg

# SAGITTARIUS

On the grassy soil of Pelion lay Chiron, the aged centaur. Teacher of Achilles, friend and mentor of Heracles, this son of *Kronos* had suffered a wound which afflicted his immortal frame. Celebrated for skill in prophecy, he knew the causes of the titanic struggles of the gods and the reason why Prometheus had stolen the celestial fire. He knew that Heracles had shot the tormenting eagle that so cruelly punished the Titan and he prepared himself to fulfil the prophecy by sacrificing his own immortality, descending into Hades in exchange for the restoration of Prometheus to his Olympian home. Ancient myths and temple carvings convey this tale of selfless heroism and reveal that to reward the wise and courageous centaur, Jupiter placed him among the constellations where he became Sagittarius.

Though the stars in the celestial hemisphere designated as Sagittarius do not appear to depict the outlines of a centaur-like figure, it is in this zone that ancient astronomers located those cosmic influences that could be symbolized in the form of an archer with the body of a horse. He is a man-horse with drawn bow and arrow, sometimes depicted with wings, sometimes with two heads, one facing forward and one turned back. In Baby Ionian tradition this elaborate zodiacal symbol had the head of a human as well as that of an animal and, like its Egyptian counterpart, wore a crown upon the forward-looking human head. The Latin name *Sagittarius* is taken from *Sagitta* and refers to the arrow, while its Hindu name, *Dhanus*, refers to the bow. These implements are extremely meaningful: the upper and human portion of the body both directs the lower animal portion and draws the bow and arrow. The human torso and arms are always powerfully depicted in ancient as well as modern illustrations of the symbol, while the head is uplifted, its eyes steadily fixed upon a distant target. The glyph that represents Sagittarius is of even more ancient origin than the iconograph and, like the other glyphs of the zodiac, tells a complex story in one or two simple lines. The archetypal form suggests the

essential aspirational character of Sagittarius by an arrow with a cross-member denoting a bow.

The attributes identified with Sagittarius are those of that celestial zone or house which has been linked up with an affinity for collective thought-structures. The ruling planet of *Dhanus* is Jupiter, which accounts for this universalist tendency, and involves both an aspiration to lofty and broad ideals and a desire to manifest them as systems of thought. *Dhanus* is a fiery sign. It is active, ardent and keen. People born under this sign burn with enthusiasm. They crackle and consume, give delight as well as pain. It is also a mutable sign, indicating an adaptability based upon a richness of experience garnered in the past. Sagittarians are lovers of abstract ideas who have the potential to place spiritual laws above the desires of the personality and who are straightforward and mentally quick in implementing plans of action once they have perceived a possible mode of manifesting the ideal socially. It is also true that *Dhanus* is a double sign, pointing to the development of a dual nature. It is incumbent upon those evidencing these masculine and optimistically assertive characteristics to advance in consciousness beyond the limited plane of common thought-forms. If the horse begins to control the archer, his idealism can become fanaticism, and his great organizational and leadership qualities can become tools for self-aggrandizement and totalitarianism. His native mental quickness can degenerate into a tendency to leap to conclusions.

The soul, circuiting like the sun through the twelve houses of the evolutionary wheel of life, passes through the first six and then doubles around through the second six, experiencing something of a recapitulation of the qualities existing on the opposite side of the zodiac. Thus the intelligence and versatility of Gemini can be developed at a more refined level in Sagittarius, or can be squandered like arrows lost among the wild wheat shafts on a hill. The multiples of three linked up with the quality of mutability indicate four points in the wheel where the elements of fire, earth, air and water condition the vibration, tone and colour of the energy

typifying the three great *gunas* in nature. The fiery manifestation of the powers of Sagittarian adaptability can produce men of high creativity and aspiration, but their strength of vision is based upon the fruits of experience garnered in analogous situations in the past. The drive and energetic growth of *Dhanus*, correlating in the human body to the hips and thighs as well as the pituitary gland, derive their source from past accomplishments. The ancient Babylonians recognized this and referred to Sagittarius in terms of a 'gathering of the fruit.'

In the tropical system of Western astrology, Sagittarius is designated as presiding over the period of November 22nd to December 21st, while the older sidereal system reflects the celestial changes of precession that have occurred over the last two thousand years, indicating that Sagittarius governs the period from the Winter Solstice to January 19th. To understand how different time periods could relate to the same characteristics, one may reflect that man, in general and particularly in the West, has slipped away from his awareness of himself as a soul and of larger cycles relative to many lives. Thus he has tended to forget what the ancients saw as a natural relation, the analogy between the cycle of the soul and that of the sun. Instead, being focused upon the personal cycle linked up with a worldly, one-life view of existence, he tends to concentrate on the attributes of the social and physical self. It is thus not surprising that the Western astrological system should attach the characteristics of a particular sign to people who are now actually born in the next sign. In adhering to an exoteric and inflexible system, there has been a slipping back by failing to move ahead with the rest of the universe. Though there is a certain validity in the Western system, it is mainly in relation to the more superficial and tropically determined characteristics of personalities rather than to the sidereal force fields that operate at a more causal level.

In Greek mythology, Chiron was the child of Time, and the man-horse symbol beautifully suggests the nature of that which Time begat. Chiron, as Sagittarius, marks a transition phase, a change of

consciousness from desire to the higher mind. The dual nature is fully manifest at this stage but the human aspect is clearly in ascendance. The Egyptian double symbol with its human and leonine heads suggests a transition from the fiery Leo centre to the refined crucible of Sagittarius. The fire moves to the head, a concept strongly indicated in the Sumero-Akkadian name for Sagittarius, *Papilsak*, which means 'the winged fire-head.' The ascendancy of the spiritual is further indicated in the description of the 'Scorpion Men' in the epic of Gilgamesh who were delineated as double-headed centaurs with scorpion tails and said to be two-thirds divine. The teacher of Chiron was Artemis, the goddess of the hunt and sister of Apollo who was linked with the Sun. Therefore, one aspect of Sagittarius is reflected in hunting itself, which involves a seeking out and gathering of the fruit, an assimilation of all lower forms of intelligence. This can be readily identified in the impulse which exists in the collective psyche of many cultures where men have used the horse to facilitate the 'gathering' process of the hunt. There are cultures such as those of England and the North American plains where the horse has been exalted as an aspect of man himself, and the ritual of the hunt clearly involved a perfect mastery of the animal as well as a shooting of the prey. It may be significant that on the day of the coronation of William the Conqueror the sun was sidereally in Sagittarius.

The arrow or *Sagitta* is a symbol of the light of supreme power. It has feathers and flies, as if with wings, straight to its goal. It is free to find its mark and it moves, like the intuitive mind, to its conclusion without explaining how it got there, much as Pindar intimated when he wrote: "I have many swift arrows in my quiver which speak to the wise, but for the crowd they need interpreters." To understand how the arrow hits the mark is to understand the power of *Dhanus* the Archer. To attempt to understand it mechanically is to have failed to arrive at that House in which the gathered fruit is synthesized. The mechanics of the process have been mastered on the lower planes of mind and body long ago. Now the analytical mind must open up like the lotus flower to release the shaft of pure intuition which alone can 'hit the mark.'

The hand must release the arrow but not under the duress of conscious thought. It must release it as the entire being releases its claim to separateness and becomes one with the whole.

The bow, full drawn and ready to let fly, is the emblem of divine power embodying the tension of spiritual force. It is the 'Dayspring,' called *Pa* and *xut*, related to the rising sun at that time of year when the sun begins to turn northward again. At places like Sippara in the Middle East, sculptures of Sagittarius appear in full glory, marking the solar nature of those cities which stood near the meridian point of the annual serpentine cycle of the sun as it completed the bow-like arch of its progress toward the Tropic of Capricorn during the Piscean Age.

The bow must be drawn effortlessly as a great and unconscious breathing in and breathing out. The light of supreme power must be released, as though it had never been held, to flow over the horizon and illuminate the earth. The star called by the Arabs *A Wazl* marks the junction where the arrow, the bow and the hand of the archer meet. It is the centre of all the potential power in Sagittarius which can become the perfect instrument of Logos light. Through the hand of the fiery *Kshatriya* who grips the bow, the arrow will be released. He mirrors the power of the creative *Logos* and ever draws upon the source of spirit. At rest he does as did the Lord in the book of *Genesis* when he said, "I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be a covenant between me and earth."

In the world the arrow of spirit has been repeatedly aimed at the breast of another, and so the exoteric description of Sagittarius is often bound up with war. But in the stars, the Archer ever aims his missile at the heart of the Scorpion. As the evolutionary experience of the human soul involves reactionary phases of expression, so each sign of the zodiac may be seen in part as a reaction to the extremes of the preceding sign. This is clearly indicated in the scorpion tail which clings to the Sagittarian man-horse in Babylonian sculpture. The extremes here alluded to would have to do with the antagonism resultant from a separation of the sexes and the warlike influence of the planet Mars in the sign of Scorpio. The

scorpion thus pursues the horse as its tail, and in some pictograms it is shown curved under the belly of the horse in an attempt to clasp its penis. This symbolism conveys quite graphically the tenacious power of separative and materialized creative forces. The true *Kshatriya*, in mastering the horse, will emerge fully from the scorpion's claws and carry forth the spiritual fruit of its sting. It is the sting of the scorpion which electrifies the consciousness of the pilgrim soul, awakening it fully to the task that lies ahead. *Fohat*, which seems to expand and contract with alternating signs of the zodiac, was indrawn in Scorpio but now expands to rend the bonds of the separated soul.

Sagittarius has been described in terms of a vision wherein it was seen as a seven-knotted hollow rod with a pine cone at its end. It is through this narthex or 'Rod of Mysteries' that the divine fire of heaven is brought down to earth. Aeschylus described this in the words of Prometheus who said, "Yea, stored in a fennel stalk, I captured fire's stolen spring that hath proved the teacher of every art to mortals." The Fohatic power in man is conducted by this 'Rod of Mysteries,' the caduceus which guides the soul from life to death and back again, and which kindles the third fire of the ninth stage when a plateau of garnered experience is approached.

The soul gathers the fruits, and the results of strivings with *trishna* (thirst and desire) become evident. A chance arises now for a new beginning through organization and development of the vehicle for the potential man. Now the critical *Nidana* asserts itself and the will to achieve through expansion of this base becomes paramount. The evolving man is touching the hem of the material cause of Being, behind which resides the incognizable Causeless Cause. He is approaching from below a condition involving consciousness and matter, reflecting one of the earliest phases of that primordial manifestation which ages before commenced from above. The expansive manifesting power of Jupiter in Sagittarius and the fiery rod of Prometheus provide a bridge between the Divine that ever IS, and the man who will be divine.



One of the names of Jupiter is *Heru-ap-sheta*, the 'Revealer of Hidden or Secret Things.' In Orphic theogony he is the *Demiurge*, the creative power of the sensible world corresponding with the creative soul in man. In the human cycle this influence harmonizes, and establishes a link between, higher and lower consciousness. This role of manifesting agent is well portrayed in Hindu stories concerning Jupiter as *Brihaspati*, the personified *Guru* of the gods and the symbol of exoteric religion. In opposing *Budda* or Secret Wisdom, *Brihaspati* reveals the dangerous tendency that accompanies the urge to make the abstract concrete. He represents the Sagittarian power of tapping the highest wisdom and causing it to manifest through systemic thought, but he also demonstrates the dogmatic concretization of thought-forms that can result in worldly consciousness. A mode of safeguard against this trap is suggested in The Egyptian *Book of the Dead* where the Solar Bark, in passing through the deadly perils of the underworld, is protected from the attacks of the evil serpent *Apep* by the use of 'words of power' and magical ceremonies suggestive of the use of the 'Rod of Mysteries.' The fluidity of the intuitive mental quickness and the adaptability of Sagittarius can be brought to bear by the watchful soul in continually breaking up the tendency to concretize sacred ideas. This constant watchfulness is critical in resolving the tension in the dual nature of the Archer and placing the power of that tension at the disposal of the higher.

*Dhanus* is traditionally linked to the Nine *Prajapatis* who assisted the *Demiurgos* in constructing the material universe. These Holy Ones are the same as the Nine Kabalistic *Sephiroth*, the THREE TRINITIES which, together with the One, represent the Pythagorean mystic *Decad*. They are "THE VOICE OF THE LORD SVABHAVAT, THE NUMBERS, FOR HE IS ONE AND NINE." Thus the Nine, corresponding to the 'Ninth Creation,' are the totality of creators which blend in One and become the Ten. In *The Secret Doctrine* it is said that the Ninth Creation is that which took place in the 'Sea of Fire,' the radiant *Mulaprakriti*, or undifferentiated Cosmic Substance. This is the fire which generates *Mahat*, the sacred gift of Prometheus. First there is the One which

becomes Two plus One, giving the Tetrad or Four. The number becomes Four and Three and Two. "TAKE THE FIRST TWO, AND THOU WILT OBTAIN SEVEN, THE SACRED NUMBER OF LIFE; BLEND WITH THE LATTER AND THOU WILT HAVE NINE, THE SACRED NUMBER OF BEING AND BECOMING." If seven is life, then nine is generative life and symbolizes masculine energy and cyclic existence. It is through the Nine *Prajapatis* that the potencies of Brahma are subsequently generated for the work of creation. The Invisible Point expands from within, producing its garment and, in turn, the brightness of this latter also expands. Thus, through a constant 'upheaving motion,' the world originated. The Spiritual Substance sent forth by the Infinite Light is the first *Sephira* or *Shekinah*. *Sephira* exoterically contains all the other Nine *Sephiroths* in her. This exoteric unfoldment describes the ninefold emergence of man.

Before the separation of the sexes in the mid-Third Root Race there was no sign of Libra, and Virgo and Scorpio were one. After the division there were thus two extra signs. The fruit gathered is that of the gestated man, plus the energy of the separation and union. This separation mirrors the cosmic division of the One and produces a tension symbolized by the balance of Libra, or the bow between the two, and marks the manifestation into the visible world of that which has developed on the unseen planes. Thus there is a new duality producing a trinity on earth, the energies of which must be raised up into the triangular point of the aspiring arrow of Sagittarius.

There is a striking analogy here with the fact that the human foetus is fully formed at seven months and yet remains unmanifest in the womb for two more months. During the last two months the foetus triples in weight, taking on a thick layer of adipose tissue. It is taking on grosser sheaths in preparation for emergence into the world. There is a further refinement of sexual development during this stage which corresponds to the cosmic process whereby the seven became the nine. This is clearly linked up with the potencies (of Brahma) that are to be generated (through the Nine *Prajapatis*)

for the work of creation. The mystery of the ten female gates and the nine male gates can only be solved by Buddhist intuition. H.P. Blavatsky declared, "When the Western Orientalists have mastered the real meaning of the Rig-Vedic divisions of the World – the two-fold, three-fold, six- and seven-fold, and especially the NINE-FOLD DIVISION, the mystery of the cyclic divisions applied to heaven and earth, gods and men, will become clearer than it is now."

The zodiacal sign of Sagittarius marks the rise of the soul to an Apollonian grasp of destiny. Well it may heed the courageous example of the selfless Chiron who sacrificed himself so readily in an effort to restore the fallen Prometheus to his rightful Olympian throne. A steady gaze, firm stance and complete openness to the heartbeat of the universe are required if the pilgrim soul would loose the arrow of its being from a perfectly balanced bow and strike the very centre of the Spiritual Sun.

*Hermes*, January 1977

Helen Valborg

# CAPRICORN

*King of Wisdom, maker of intelligence.  
Far-famed leading goat, adornment of 'the House of the Deep.'  
Enlilbanda, the skilled, the protecting angel.  
Valiant one of Eridu, advisor of the Igigi.  
To the great gods thou givest counsel.  
O Ea, by thy incantation of life, raise the dying!*

He is 'the One-Footed Goat' who symbolizes the swift movement of lightning striking the hardened earth. He is the climber of lonely heights, the hoofed one from the sea. He is *Makara*, the watery dragon of primeval antiquity, having a dolphin or crocodile form. This *vahan* of Varuna-Poseidon merges with the mountain goat to become a powerful and mysterious sign of the ancient zodiac.

In Egypt the stars of Capricorn were identified with the crocodile which was to them a sacred animal signifying the meeting of water and air upon the earth. The amphibious nature of the crocodile suggested fecundity and, like the dragon, became the symbol of knowledge. In Coptic Egypt he was called 'Οπῖύζυς. While retaining the meaning of the original symbol, he was actually depicted as a mirror. The concepts of lightning and fire, the earth, the air and the watery depths had been consolidated in the profoundly simple phenomenon of reflection. But the mysterious form of the goat-fish persisted in far-flung cultures such as that of the Aztecs, who portrayed the constellation as *Cipoctli*, the narwhal or unicorn of the sea.

As centuries unfolded, the ancient dragon became known as the 'scaly-one,' a representative of the fallen Satan. The goat was often identified with Pan, who was denigrated into the symbol of lustful desire. Forgotten were the ancient meanings that must have prompted Plato to write:

Beloved Pan, and all ye  
Other gods who haunt this place,  
Give me beauty in the inward soul;

And may the outward and inward  
Man be one.

The fish-tailed goat ceased to be associated with the mirror of mind and the inward beauty of the human soul. Since the occult implications of this sign are barely suggested in the lists of personal attributes assigned to those born under it, the beginning student of human nature must look at the outward indicators with the aim of correlating them with what is intuitively glimpsed regarding the indwelling ego and the more general process of soul evolution.

Tradition teaches that Capricorn is the birthplace of Saturn, bringer of limitations and old age. If one translates cosmo-chemical affinities and influences into human character traits, it follows that the child of Capricorn expects little from the gods. By nature he is ascetic in his ways, does not rely on others' opinions and is coolly conscious of his own limitations. He is economical in speech, action and thought. Single-minded and capable of devotion and focus of will, he does not squander the few boons he has worked so hard to achieve in life. Expecting little, he gets little but he is not distracted by idle hopes. His faith is born of hard experience, not wishful thinking. The Saturnine influence in Capricorn reflects the basic economy which reigns in the universe and which, though seemingly bountiful at times, in the end eliminates all that is superfluous to discover the bedrock necessities affecting the evolution of the soul.

Capricorn was considered by the Platonists to be the Gate of the Gods. It was held that the souls of all men released from the body ascended through this constellation into heaven. During the time of Plato, Capricorn was in the place of the winter solstice, 'the Southern Gate,' and was thought to be a natural symbol of death and resurrection. On the cosmic level, Hindu tradition teaches that the world will be destroyed at a time when all the planets meet in Capricorn. It is written that "when the sun passes away behind the 13th degree of *Makara* and will reach no more the sign of *Meenam* (Pisces), then the Night of Brahmā has come." As man lives and dies, so too do worlds have their cycles. Everything in nature is

interdependent and mutually correlated. The metaphorical teaching that during cosmic manifestation there were seven steps taken in the direction of the four cardinal points is mysteriously reflected in the twenty-eight stars of the constellation *Makara*. The twenty-eight stars appearing with the newborn infant Buddha echo something of the hidden nature of these astral forces.

The Buddhist *Nidana* or cause of existence traditionally related to *Makara* is *bhava* which signifies 'becoming,' a giving of birth and the organization and development of the *Namarupa*. This process is naturally linked up with the earth or the realm of form, and *Makara*, along with Taurus and Virgo, are earth signs involving different expressions of spirit in matter. Taurus demonstrates fixed stability and slow, logical thoroughness, while Virgo manifests the same traits at a more critical level. *Makara*-Capricorn reveals a refinement of these tendencies, coupled with the potentiality of a lofty spiritual perspective suggested in the symbol itself. *Makara* is the *vahan* of Varuna, 'the Universal Encompasser,' 'the All-Embracer.' This oldest of Vedic gods fell, in time, into generation, becoming a sort of Neptune, and his *vahan* is linked up with 'the Fall' of spirit into matter. Out of the sea of chaos, 'the Dragons of Wisdom' manifested their fruits and through the form of the goat they seek to uplift matter to the heights of spiritual consciousness. *Makara-Ketu* is a name for the personification of *Kama*, but it also signifies the desire which the *Rig Veda* says led to the eventual generation of conscious life.

*Ma* means 'five' and *karam*, 'side,' indicating that *Makaram* is a name for the pentagon, the symbol of thinking, conscious man. *Kara* also means 'hand' and refers to the five fingers as well as the five extremities of the human body which cause it to resemble a five-pointed star. *The Secret Doctrine* mentions that five symbolizes "the Spirit of life eternal and the Spirit of life and love terrestrial in the human compound." It is the quintessence, the whole of the material quaternary plus the centre and the essence of *Eros* or Desire made manifest. This noble concept eventually degenerated into baser ideas centred around the Kamic deities of Hinduism and the

Hellenic god Pan. The desire expressed in the Sacred Fifth 'Creation' of *Makara* or the *Kumaras* is connected with the birth of the spiritual microcosm or man. It is closely related to the fact that this zodiacal sign will mark the dissolution of the physical universe. *Makara* represents both the manifest macrocosm and the microcosm, and illustrates the compassionate descent of spirit into matter, as well as its ascent out of it.

According to Plato, the phenomenal universe is a dodecahedron which has emerged from the icosahedron of the astral world. The five, related to the pentagons of *Makara* making up the twelve faces of the dodecahedron, has precipitated from the three of the triangular faces of the icosahedron. The Triads of the Third Hierarchy of 'Creation' become the Pentagonal *Dhyanis* or *Kumaras*, which name is an anagram for *Makara*. From the centres of the triads, the vertices of the pentagons come to be placed so that the faces of the icosahedron are convertible into the vertices of the dodecahedron. This process can be reversed so that the five becomes the three. In either conversion the lines of the edges of the faces always cross one another perpendicularly. Thus the twenty which is twice ten is linked to the twelve of the zodiac through the three and the five. The Fifth Creative Hierarchy contains the spiritual and physical poles of the universe designated as twice five or ten, the Gate of the Gods.

#### BEHOLD THE BEGINNING OF SENTIENT FORMLESS LIFE

The hierarchy of creative powers is four and three, or seven esoterically, within the twelve great orders symbolized in the zodiac. The seven involved with manifestation are connected with the seven planets, all emanated from the One Divine Flame. The first hierarchy is that of Divine Fire, the *Logos* at three descending levels. The second is Fire and Ether or the *Atma-Buddhic* prototype of the incarnating monads. The third hierarchy is that of the Divine Triads (*Atma-Buddhi-Manas*), while the fourth involves the noumenal elements that contain the germ that will fall into generation. The fifth hierarchical group is that of the *Dhyanis*, 'the Dragons of Wisdom' who are connected with the crocodile and

have their abode in Capricorn. These are the Five *Kumaras* who "gained exemption from passion" and have within them the soul of the five elements. They bear the primal germ of mind which connects entity with non-entity. These mind-born sons took on the task of presiding over the constellation of Capricorn, "to inform the empty and ethereal animal form and make of it the Rational Man." It is they who enact 'the Fall' of once pure spirit into material form by bringing down the flame. *The Book of the Dead* intones the mission:

I am the god (crocodile) presiding at the fear... at the arrival of his Soul among men. I am the god-crocodile brought for destruction.

The Egyptian *Book of Tuat* describes that division of the Underworld where the union of Khepera and Ra occurs and the germ of new life is introduced into the body of him who will be the living god ready to emerge into a new day. All is in preparation for the coming of man. But the 'boneless' Fathers of esoteric tradition could give no life to beings with form and bone, and it is only later, with the production of 'the Egg-born,' 'the powerful with bones/ that the Lords of Wisdom said, "Now shall we create." Capricorn marks the formation and hardening process, the work of *Fohat*, which is critically related to the individuation of self. The weary soul within the body aspires to come out and be separate. The Ego knows it must gain knowledge of itself in order to attempt the climb ahead and perhaps this very motion of individuation inspires the symbolical linking of Capricorn with the human knee. Of all the bodily parts involved in locomotion, this is the one which is indispensable to climbing.

The knee joint is like a bridge between the lower and higher leg, while the ligaments secure the relationship of the bones to the joints. This development takes place with the onset of true bone formation in the fifth month of foetal life, and represents the condensation of young connective tissue. The knee is the largest joint in the body, sustaining the greatest stress, and its principal functions are flexion, extension and length rotation. The knee is the



link which enables the movement from the flat and shuffling plains to the mountain top. It is an analogue of the *Antaskarana* bridge between the lower earthy man and the aspiring god within, and mirrors the bridge extended by the Divine *Kumaras*.

The ascending goat of Capricorn has a natural love of high places which are stony and hard. The seductions of softness and moistness are overcome by deep thought and steadfast aspiration towards that place where the soul will be tempted by the promise of worldly power. The Akkadians called Capricorn *Abba-E*, 'the Cave of the Rising.' They believed he was born from rock and was ever-subject to the austere influence of Saturn. The denser, limiting and solidifying vibrations enable the soul to know itself thoroughly as a self-conscious being, such that the ideal of Capricorn may be to become like a crystal: impervious, compact and brilliant. Reduced to the smallest possible space, there is nothing superfluous about it, nothing redundant. Naught else would serve the constellation in which the vehicle of the new man will be built.

Many times will an individual soul pass through this sign before it can pass the tests of Saturn, the planetary ruler of Capricorn, and become born into the freedom of a new life.

The traditional description of the Saturnine influences stresses restriction, limitations, even disasters and defeats. Thorough realism and constant reliability are continually tempered by deprivation. As Keats wrote:

Deep in the Shady Sadness of a vale  
Far sunken from the healthy breath of morn,  
Far from the fiery noon, and eve's one star,  
Sat gray-haired Saturn, quiet as a stone

Just as *Fohat* hardens the atoms until they reflect 'the Self-Existing Lord,' so the sad separation from the gathering of the common herd slowly isolates the lone climber with his heaven-bent horns, Saturn, 'Bringer of Old Age,' 'Revealer of Truth.'

The Babylonian god Ea, who walked with a fish-shaped cloak and came out of the sea to teach the people of Mesopotamia, was

called 'the Antelope of the Ocean.' He came from the wetness unto the dryness of land and marked the rising and falling of rivers by the progress of the moon in his sign of Capricorn. In Egypt when the moon was full in the goat-fish's tail, the Nile began to rise. The rising of the waters corresponds to the moisture of expanding life, while the drying up and solidifying process involves a concentration and focusing of energy related to the gradual separation of the soul from the ever-changing stream of physical consciousness. In cosmic evolution the pure light of Spirit becomes the cold flame which, in turn, becomes a fire. The fire gives forth heat which generates the waters of life. The soul, travelling back along that path, moves from the external heat to the internal fire and aspires, increasingly, to reach the sanctuary of the cold flame. It moves from the astral waters to the rock of the unchanging.

In his search for immortality, the hero of the Epic of Gilgamesh comes to the shores of the Waters of Death. He is transported across by the servant of Ea, 'the Antelope of the Ocean.' He seeks *Tsit-Napishtim* ('Offspring of Life') on the farther shore and the bark of Ea which transports him thither is the vehicle by which the change of planes of consciousness is effected. It is the bridge between personality and individuality which purifies and refines through the steady sober action of Saturn. It is the *Antaskarana*, 'the Chastener,' the divider of the pure from the impure and hence the necessary source of sorrow and pain. Passage over this bridge is like a reflected recapitulation from below-above of that which has taken place cosmically. From the Divine *Arupa* World, *Fohat* took five strides and built the wheels for 'the Holy Ones' and their armies. These are the essences, the flames, the elements, the Builders, Numbers, *Arupa* and *Rupa* - the force of Divine Man. The *Lipika* circumscribed first, the triangle, secondly, the cube, and then the pentacle within the egg. THIS IS THE RING CALLED 'PASS NOT' for those who DESCEND and ASCEND. This is the Gate beyond the bridge which the hero hopes only to approach, only to mirror in the form of his fully realized quintessential self. He has left behind the common waters and followed the solitary path of the antelope. He has crossed the abyss of the great watery mother

on the raft of the goat-fish to approach the realm of the Great Sacrifice.

In occult tradition 'M' is held to be the most sacred of all letters. It symbolizes the waters of the deep and their denizen, the serpent ^^^, and great dragon *Makara*. *Ma*, signifying 'five' is the binary symbol of the two separated sexes as well as their progeny. It is the secret name of Maitreya, the Fifth Buddha, spoken of in Hinduism as the Kalki Avatar who will come as the last Messiah and culminate the Great Cycle. It is intoned in the names *Monas*, *Monad*, *Mahat*, *Maya* and *Manu*, and is the third element of the mystic syllable AUM. As *Makara* it reaches a sublime and compassionate fruition in its aspect of the *Kumaras* whose chief is Sanat Sujata, the Great Dragon of the Waters.

The *Kumaras* are the fashioners of the inner man, the Solar Deities, the Sons of the Flame. They are the progenitors of the true spiritual Self in the physical man of bones and flesh who reappear in the *Vaivasvata Manu* period for the progress of mankind. They are the seven sons of Brahmā in Rudra or Shiva, and of their number, five play an active role in relation to man. As sons of Rudra-Shiva, 'the Good Gardener of Nature,' they aid in his destruction of human passions and senses and are ever-involved in the development of the "higher spiritual perceptions and the growth of the inner eternal man." They are like the Archangel Michael who presides over Saturn (Shiva) and every *Kumara* bears the prefix of *Sanat*: *Sana* is the name of Saturn.

Saturn, 'the Chastener,' is the seventh and last macrocosmic emanation in the solar system. His rings or girdles are symbolic of death to the physical body. Yet Saturn, like Shiva, is intimately involved in the bringing down of the flame of knowledge. In ruling *Makara*, the 'scaly-one,' Saturn is also related to Satan who bears the shame of generation and who entered into bondage as did the *Kumaras*. Like Saturn, "he compasseth with bonds and limits all things. . . ." The *Kumara* 'Rebels,' being Virgin-Ascetics, would not 'create' will-less irresponsible men, nor could they give men only a reflection of their attributes. Like Satan and Prometheus, they

taught the knowledge of good and evil which would initiate the path of man toward self-conscious godhood. They preferred the 'curse of incarnation' and endless rebirths to the passive observation of the mindless automata created by the lunar gods. They take up an earthly abode for an entire *Mahayuga*, "exchanging their impersonal individualities for individual personalities." As incarnations of Shiva, they enlighten the races of man and engage in continual destruction and remodelling of the human form. The Virgin *Kumaras* sacrifice themselves for the sins of the world and the instruction of the ignorant.

*Though unseen, they are ever-present. When people say of one of them 'He is dead,' behold, he is alive and under another form. These are the Head, the Heart, the Soul and the Seed of undying knowledge. Thou shalt never speak, O Lanoo, of these great ones before a multitude, mentioning them by their names. The wise alone will understand.*

H.P. Blavatsky

*The Secret Doctrine*, Vol. ii

*Hermes*, February 1977

Helen Valborg

# AQUARIUS

*The Good, the Pious, and the Just are born  
When first Aquarius pours out his Urn.*

*Manilius*

In the silent visage of the great Sphinx is etched the attitude of the timeless Watcher who waits "through the ages for the coming of man who shall rend his earth-wrought chains and achieve the destiny of his race." On the opposite side of the zodiac, the Lion looks to the full emergence of the Aquarian Man. The great potentialities of Leo in their highest aspect await the time of their manifestation in the ascending sign of the Water-Bearer. In air the most refined and powerful fire abides.

Aquarius represents the ideal toward which humanity is moving. The name itself is a haunting reminder of the hopes for a better world that many bury along with their all-too-fleeting youth. 'The Age of Aquarius' seems to hesitate in its dawning, whetting the longings of a world-weary generation. But no thoughtful observer of nature's process could presume that a new birth, transcending these limiting expectations, would take place until the old dead forms had disintegrated and become mere compost for the future. It has been known since ancient times that Aquarius was bound up with destruction and rebirth. This is why the Water-Bearer is linked with the great floods and with Him who rides out the deluge and lays down the seed of a new order.

The water glyph of Aquarius is thought to hark back to Atlantean times and was followed by the simple emblem of a water jar. This seems to have illustrated the repeated process whereby the soul passed through life after life, drinking the turbid waters of the world. But with the increased manifestation of spiritual man, the emblem shifted its emphasis from the water jar to the being that bore it and the design took on the symbolic embellishments that we are familiar with today. Like the Hindu *bhisti* who walks the town

prepared to quench one's thirst, the Water-Bearer is shown with a vase that overflows with waters which nurture the soul. The Sumerian god Anu was believed to keep the bread and water of immortal life in heaven, and because of his overflowing vase, was identified in lesser forms as the god of springs and rivers. Another name for Anu was *Gula*, 'the great star,' the Sumerian astronomical designation for Aquarius which literally means 'the Great Urn.' *Gula* was seen as a goddess who was identified with the 'dark waters' and saved the soul from death as it passed into rebirth. The Euphratean designation for Aquarius was Ramanu, 'the Exalted,' who is depicted in one bas-relief as a deity holding an urn from which flows a double stream of water. Another relief shows Ramanu clothed in a robe ornamented with symbols of five planets and holding a thunderbolt in each hand and accompanied by a leashed dragon. The connection can be made here between thunder and the giving of water through rain, but much more is implied in this elaborate and bold symbol. These meanings are echoed in the Assyrian tablets which depict the Nimrod Epic. In the eleventh tablet, representing the eleventh sign of the zodiac, the god Rimmon is shown together with the emblems of thunder, lightning and rain. The zig-zag lines projecting from the hands suggest the serpentine motion of water as well as arcane electricity.

Aquarius is sometimes identified in the mythological figure of Ganymede, the cup-bearer of Jupiter who holds an inclined urn which pours forth a river that runs from his feet and makes its great tour over the entire globe. He was believed to have been carried away from earth by Zeus who admired his youthful beauty. In fact, Ganymede was reduced to the personification of the object of lust. This is, lamentably perhaps, borne out in the personal characteristics of the Aquarian, who is often envied by many, sought after, loved and poorly appreciated by those who may be ungrateful for his bounty. The Aquarian may squander his gifts and even endanger his own interests while friends look on and despair. But he is always saved at the 'eleventh hour' by his keen intellect and the protecting hand of 'God.' All that he has squandered is replenished easily, to be lavished once again. The Buddhist *Nidana*

ordinarily associated with Aquarius is *Jati*, which belongs to the future and marks the time when the soul shall break its bonds and realize its unity with its brethren. *Jati* means 'birth' and is strongly reflected in the Aquarian's inclination to give freely of the fruits of his labour. He knows that they cannot but stagnate in his clutches, so his hand is always open, always seeming to deplete his riches but never closing to contain them. Ideas in thought, speech and the written word are constantly forthcoming while the inner nature maintains a cool agnosticism and confident distance from froth. The inwardly reserved person abstains from identifying with the outer vestures which his soul-powers may assume. Thus, the fully developed Aquarian is not protective of any form but acts to break them up and permit the birth of ever-new modes to take their place. If an Aquarian does not manifest the positive potential of this sign but instead is passive, this tendency to disintegration of external forms may express itself as a hypersensitivity to criticism and an inclination to 'fall apart' with its impact. Instead of transcending the pairs of opposites, the weak Aquarian becomes crushed by them. If Capricorn symbolizes a solidly independent, rock-like stance, Aquarius represents a crumbling hillside of granite. The lessons of Capricorn must be learned well before the soul is ready to blossom fully in Aquarius.

It is after passing the tests of Saturn that *Fohat*, which was previously propelling man, now becomes his self-conscious instrument. The lightning and thunderbolt are symbols of the mighty force that has been emerging with increasing strength from the sign of Scorpio onwards. The wavy glyph of Aquarius signifies the final manifestation of the undulatory forces of evolution. Like two serpents, the one above is reflected in its lower counterpart, the lines indicate both electricity and its fluid medium, water. The sting of electricity is like that of the scorpion which propels Scorpio into conscious awareness of the evolutionary task ahead. This sting reveals the influence of *Fohat* which, like a quick bolt, breaks up the complacent stance of the personality and forces it to abandon obsolete perspectives.

If, after countless lives of drinking the turbulent waters of the sidereal cup, the soul comes to know and refuse the draught of Lethe, its vestures may still be inadequate to retain the waters of Reminiscence, gathered in golden moments, in the drab contexts of everyday life. Hence the poignant story of the 'leaky jar' in Plato's *Gorgias*. By contrast, the rare soul, gifted with the power of unerring choice, may turn to the Supernal Vase and partake of the nectar of the gods, the living water of the fabled Holy Grail. At a climactic point in its pilgrimage, it may lave in 'the Elixir of Life,' the waters of immortality. When this moment is reached by that one soul among millions, the highest spiritual source can flood the entire being, conferring boundless benefit to the whole of humanity.

The sacred alchemical phenomenon of self-transmutation is powerfully symbolized in a vision experienced by a gifted seer. In this vision there were two vases linked together with a golden chain. The upper vase was beautifully sculpted of translucent amber and filled with a shimmering liquid. The lower vase was fashioned of crude earthenware and contained dark and muddy water. A hand appeared and gently tilted the amber vase, allowing its luminous contents to pour gently into the clay jug below. The waters mingled and wherever the shimmering liquid fell, the dark fluid seethed and boiled. Bubbles rose and burst upon the surface in many colours, while the murky waters slowly began to change. Gradually, with steadily altering aspect, the waters became as clear and pellucid as the contents of the amber vessel. The unification of the Higher and Lower Self had been brought to a final and irreversible consummation. Thoth-Hermes succeeds in reconciling Horus and Set in that age yet fully to emerge – when the transmutation of the lower by the higher is universally possible.

In Egyptian symbology the Nile was closely associated with Aquarius in a dual sense reflecting the double wavy signs of the glyph. There were two rivers in their conceptual system, which existed in heaven and on earth. The Celestial Nile was believed to flow from beneath the throne of Osiris while the Terrestrial Nile arose in 'the place of the Two Rocks,' a stone cavern reminiscent of



the rocky birthplace of Capricorn. It was on an island in the Celestial Nile that Horus was born, symbolizing *Jati* or the new birth, and it was in a similar setting along the worldly Nile that men were afforded the means of obtaining a 'new birth' in consciousness. The androgynous god Hapi held the vessels that overflowed with the waters of celestial and terrestrial life, and the Ego could choose between the two streams. In one, he embraced Divine Wisdom or Thoth-Hermes and entered fully into Aquarius; in the other he plunged again into the River of Forgetfulness.

At Esneh in Egypt there is a planisphere which depicts the goddess Maat with her arms fully outstretched like the beam of a scale. She represents unchanging Truth and Equilibrium and is seated beside Hapi, the Water-Bearer, who is the 'Man made Perfect.' Her two arms point to the past and future and her head is an upraised feather which balances the consummation of evolution. The combined figures symbolize the equilibrium of balanced harmony and synthesis which are the hallmarks of the Aquarian influence. After the breaking up of the old, the loosening of the bonds, there is a formation of the new which reflects the essentially synthetic nature of soul-evolution. After ages of culling the wheat of wisdom from the dead chaff of form, it is brought to the portals of culmination. Thoth-Hermes is repeatedly connected with Hapi as both the bearer of the water vessel and keeper of the Gates of Heaven, as Nebo was the Lord of Wisdom at Bab-el, the Gate of the Gods. The Egyptians held that drinking the Supernal Waters provided the key to the Immortal Gates. The *Book of the Dead* records this in vivid prose:

May the abyss of water be opened to me by Tehuti-Hapi (Thoth-Hapi), the lord of the horizon in my name of Opener.

The horizon alluded to here is the meeting place between heaven and earth, and Thoth-Hapi, its Lord, is the Divine Wisdom which becomes manifest in the fully Aquarian mind. Both reason and intuition become balanced like the arms of the goddess Maat. Like the other airy signs, Aquarius tends to harmonize and synthesize that which, in some contexts, would seem to be at odds. But to

express fully the fruits of this ability requires a separation out from common lines of thinking and a courage to fully explore entirely original modes of thought and expression. In this sense Aquarius and the other airy signs are like spiral movements which permit the completion of an upward curvature along the evolving zodiacal wheel. That this takes place in the case of isolated individuals, there is no doubt, but it is the universalization of this ability which is longingly anticipated by all those who are not steeped in either gross materialism or pathetic salvationism.

The increased occurrence of this inward growth is perhaps related to the accession of the influence of Uranus, which, although not one of the seven sacred planets, is associated by some astrologers with Aquarius. It is not agreed as to which, if any, planet rules Aquarius, and there are several who have suggested that Saturn continues to hold sway over the sign just as it does over Capricorn. However, given what is known about the lessons of Capricorn, it becomes clear that, as we move steadily further into the Age of Aquarius, man will become more and more open to subtler influences. At this time most men are affected by Uranus only on the plane of the unconscious mind. The vestures of the lower mind and body are too gross to pick up the current.

Uranus represents the Will and cannot express itself through the wilfulness that motivates the personal man, and so the affinity that it has for Aquarius remains mysterious and remote to us. There are in Greek mythology several clues as to the nature and place of Uranus in the cosmic scheme of things. These are revealed in the story of how *Kronos* mutilated his father *Uranos* or 'Heaven.' As the Heavenly Father, *Uranos* existed outside of Time, and though he begat offspring, he consumed them so that they were reabsorbed into the One. Eventually, however, with the impulse of creation, *Uranos* became *Kronos* who, as a symbolic son, mutilated and cut himself off from his father and fell into Time, which marked the second phase in the process of 'creation.' Significantly, *Uranos* is related to the Second Race while *Kronos* is related to the Third, which first experienced self-conscious separation. In the great

process of evolution through the Fourth and Fifth races, man now approaches a condition which will permit him to begin to tap the vast potentiality that existed at the opposite descending arc of the cycle. Only now he will begin to permeate his consciousness, while in a physical vesture, with the Wisdom of Timelessness.

The originality of thought necessary for this transformation can be acquired, in a time still heavily encased in the old modes of consciousness, only by swimming valiantly against the current of Lethe's waters. At every turn, the true Aquarian will find himself at odds with the sentiments of the present. He will be one of that lonely tribe that ventures onto the uncharted continents, turning away from the limiting guidelines of contemporary civilization. He will fight his way against the prevailing tide and find the source of the river itself and, in doing so, will discover Aquarius face to face. The river is like the lines of life that stream out like arteries from the solar source. Great indeed must be that being who holds their initial flow within his vessel. Like the heart of the sun containing, in the rhythm of its beat, the fluid that enlivens the world, the vessel passes on the precious water.

Water, according to Thales, was, in its non-physical sense, the first principle of things. He believed, like other ancients, that it was the potential fluid of boundless space, the Alkahest or "the one and the *invisible*, the water, the first principle, in the *second* transformation." Physical water is the symbol for the world deluge which marks the end of the formal universe and the completion of a cycle through the destruction of the power which caused its components to cohere. With their disintegration, they return to the realm of Chaos which is *Akasa*, the luminous, fiery water of the Abyss, the metaphysical and alchemical Universal Solvent. The true Aquarian exemplifies the work of this arcane process.

In the presence of this personification of hidden wisdom the images and forms of the concrete mind disappear and are reformed and given to those who are born and come into being in the earth.

The Alchemists identified a powerful solvent which they called *Aqua Regia* because of its ability to dissolve the 'noble' metals. It is

composed of hydrochloric and nitric acids and acts in such a way that the hydrogen ions are released, rendering the oxidizing agent in the compound capable of breaking down and rebinding the metal substance. Prior to its release, the hydrogen itself acted as a bind upon the oxidizing agent. Symbolically, this is suggestive when it is borne in mind that hydrogen is the most pervasive, universal and ontologically prior element known in the physical universe. If one further recalls that Uranus in Aquarius represents the Will, one can interpret the released hydrogen as being freed to merge with the Universal Will, thus enabling the dissolution and reformation of new forms to take place. Locked-in hydrogen atoms can be seen as the shadowy binding force of the personality's wilfulness, while the liberated atoms immediately permit the work of evolutionary progress. This is the work of the mystical Alkahest which eventually will restore all compounds to their primeval essence and man himself to his spiritual home.

If the soul is not to be swept away in the flood, never knowing the reason for its births, it must take command of the vessel that will cross the Abyss. When Gilgamesh, in the Babylonian Epic, reached the land beyond the sea, Tsit-Napishtin informed him how he himself had escaped death. The eleventh tablet of the Epic describes the deluge and how Ea provides the vessel which will carry Gilgamesh to the place where he will be "washed clean of leprosy" and provided with a pure vehicle, a *karanasharira*, through which the liberated man can manifest. The Egyptian *Book of Tuot* in its eleventh division corroborated the importance of dissolution of the old mental and physical vehicles when it speaks of "the entrance to the circle which judgest bodies." The vestures of the soul are tested here to see if it must descend into rebirth or ascend unto the gods. Since the vestures are the result of true knowledge, it is clear that this knowledge must be from within-without, from without-within, and through every atom of one's manifest being. By taking in the Waters of the Supernal Cup, the fully realized Aquarian obtains the perspective of the highest plane of the Astral Light, the Universal Solvent of *Akasa*.

The ethical and social expression of Aquarius is yet to unfold in this world of narrow moral and political categories. But its tone has been suggested in all the world-shaking ideas put forth by the Great Teachers of the human race. These ideas are the precious drops that presage the approaching monsoon. The ideals summed up in the beautiful 'Aquarian Axioms' are the cosmic and individual basis for the social and ethical forms of the future when all men will fully understand that "Life is built up by the sacrifice of the individual to the whole." When men know through the laboratory of their own seven-fold nature that "Harmony is the law of life," and that true self-knowledge and spirituality "is the power of perceiving formless, spiritual essences," then the whole world will be ready for the revolutionary forms of the Aquarian Age. But this can only happen when the old forms have been completely dissolved, for it is truly axiomatic that "You cannot build a Temple of Truth by hammering dead stones. Its foundations must precipitate themselves like crystals from the solution of Life." The earnest seeker of the New Age will never cease looking for that solvent within himself which will break down the barriers of pseudo-objective consciousness and reveal the oneness implicit in the concept of universal relativity and relationship.

In a crucial article which exemplifies the Aquarian mode of consciousness, H.P. Blavatsky intimated the importance of understanding the Universal Solvent of *Akasa*. Many great minds in this confused age are seeking to discover the correlation between higher theories in physics and the forces operating in moral, social and political relationships. They seek to discover the Alkahest that will dissolve the old methodologies and presuppositions which bind their perspectives. They strive, these few courageous ones, on the intuitive edge of their rational minds, for glimpses of the new synthesis. To them, anything is possible; nothing is impossible. Given their efforts, why then indeed do we –

... who inherit so much tend to narrow the universe and put it in a little box, instead of mirroring the universe in a grain of sand and seeing it there mirrored? Instead of doing that of which the poets and the mystics speak, why do we try to behave like those

individuals who, when the Bodhisattva in the guise of an elephant came striding majestically, simply clung to their particular metaphorical plank of salvation which the compassionate elephant swept aside on its way?

Raghavan Iyer

*Universality and Sectarianism*

When will we let go the myriad forms and emulate the heroic pioneers of mankind who struggle ceaselessly against the 'evidence,' against the muddy tide? We who are privileged to live in the present can alchemize our entire sphere of influence by focussing steadily upon the Akashic archetype of the Man of the Future.

*Hermes*, March 1977

Helen Valborg

# PISCES

Long ago, before the days of art or legend, Eros and Aphrodite stood for a moment on the bank of the river Euphrates, Seeking refuge from the pursuing Typhon, they plunged into the swirling waters and became two fishes. Their celestial destination is suggested, for the Euphrates was seen as a sacred channel of the heavenly waters surrounding the earth.

O Dark Waters of Ancient Days  
O depths that hold the living seed;  
What monsters lie within thy fold  
What gods are mirrored on thy wave?

Tiamat, the tumultuous sea, the chaotic mother of space and the primordial waters, was killed by the godly hero Marduk. He destroyed the monsters she had spawned and wrested order out of chaos. He cleaved her body "like a fish in two parts" and from one half fashioned the heavens, from the other half the earth. He organized the world and the fish above became reflected in the fish below. The stars we call Pisces contain in their design the secrets of these ancient allegories, constituting the heavenly record of an arcane division and an implicit unity. The dual fish 'Ιχθύς and 'Ιχθύες are identical to one another but are each depicted as facing away from the other. The left fish can be seen as symbolic of the process of involution, or the beginning of a new cycle, while the right fish signifies evolution, the progression out of a cycle.

The actual constellation has a forked appearance and contains no bright stars. The two fish appear to be tied together with a cord which lies beneath the forefoot of the Ram. The Arabs called these stars *Al Risha*, or the 'cord' which unites the fishes, while the Akkadian name for Pisces was *Dur-Ki*, the 'palace of the cord.' It is suggested by some that this represents the binding afresh of the soul to the wheel of *samsara* or the zodiac. Indeed, Pisces, as the twelfth sign, did mark the end of the old cycle and the beginning of the new, and the month when the sun was in its zone was called *Se-*

*Kistl*, the 'sowing of the seed.' Between the involuting and evolving fishes lay the seed which could either bind back the soul or permit it to realize unification.

In Euphratean symbolism the original glyph for Pisces described only one fish which represented the sun hidden in the waters before its rising. This is reminiscent of Surya, who in Vedic tradition was 'drawn by the gods' from the ocean and placed apart in his celestial ark. The identification of the fish with the sun can only be understood in terms of the soul rising from the waters of chaotic matter in the form of that fish which the Chaldeans called 'The Intelligent One,' Ea, the father of Marduk, the purveyor of Soul upon the Waters.

H.P. Blavatsky wrote that the constellation of Pisces "shines as a symbol of all the past, present and future Spiritual Saviours who dispense light and dispel mental darkness." The sign of *Ἰχθύς* the Fish does not merely relate to Christ but to all world reformers. It is the 'Sign of Jonas,' the sign from heaven of the sun reborn in Pisces, the rising from the waters of Cannes, Ea, and of Quetzalcoatl, who in his feathered scales represented the man-dragon, the serpent of the deep risen to enlighten the world. It is this rebirth out of the waters that lies behind the universal traditions which describe the coming of gods out of the Dark waters. Men who long to be born again only imitate this immensely powerful symbolism when they submerge themselves in the rite of baptism. A *Zohar* allegory tells of a stranger who taught the Law and said that his father "had his dwelling place in the Great Sea, and was a fish therein. He was great and mighty and swallowed all the other fish." Thus it was that the early Christians called themselves *pisciculi* or 'little fishes' and talked of "so many fishes bred in the water, and saved by one great fish." How great was the privilege accorded Simon and Andrew when Christ said unto them, "Follow me and I will make you fishers of men."

As in the sign of Makara, the sacred letter 'M' signifies the presence of the Great Sacrifice in the world. The Fish Avatar of Vishnu was called Matsya, while the word Messiah itself suggests



the nature of the work of great teachers symbolized by *Meena*, the Sanskrit name for Pisces. The Babylonians called the phase from Capricorn to Pisces 'the Field of Ea,' the man-fish, and believed that it was in these signs that man was instructed in the wisdom which would truly make him human. From the legendary boy on the dolphin to Cannes who rose from the Persian Gulf, the symbol of the man-fish moves in and through the signs of Makara, Capricorn, Aquarius and Pisces. Cannes was believed to have made four appearances at intervals of over thirty thousand years, while Quetzalcoatl was said by the Aztecs to have gone beneath the waters to re-emerge at a future time of man's development. These 'Scaly Ones' are Initiated Adepts. They are healers, givers of health, spiritual and physical, and of enlightenment. Their influence upon mankind in general can be critically potent from January to April, while those individuals born in 'the Field of Ea' have a concentrated opportunity to recognize and manifest the process of accelerated spiritualization that commenced with Capricorn and culminates with Pisces.

Capricorn involves a shedding of everything extraneous to the process of soul-evolution. The Ego experiences the full limitations of Saturn and can benefit by becoming concentrated and powerfully focussed upon the task at hand. In Aquarius, the Ego becomes engaged in expansion. Great mental gifts are freely shared and a lack of protective self-interest permits a continual drawing of the larger circle. The mind reaches a peak of expression and old modes become fodder for new ones. In Aquarius there is the strong tendency to break away from form, but it is in Pisces that the final movement of dissolution is played out. The cord of Pisces will either bind the soul to the left-handed fish of involution, ensuring his rebirth through Aries the Ram, or it will lead to liberation, the dissolution of all ties with earthly existence.

Like other signs of the zodiac, Pisces has a higher and lower potential. If the soul has partaken fully of the Lethe waters prior to its birth in Pisces, the emotional character of this sign will manifest overwhelmingly, creating karmic bonds which will ensure a

submergence in *avidya* and an entrance into a whole new series of births. If, however, the soul has drunk of the Supernal Cup, these powerful feelings can embrace the whole of mankind and the forces of love and sympathy released can actually transform the lives of others.

Always looking for something beyond, the Piscean is drawn powerfully by the mystical but may live a succession of fantasies causing his or her life to degenerate into indiscipline and a fusion between fact and fancy. This tendency to expansive excess and love of mystery can express itself beautifully as it did in the poetry of George Russell when he wrote:

When the breath of twilight blows to flame the misty skies,  
All its vaporous sapphire, violet glow, and silver gleam  
With their magic flood me through the gateways of the eyes;  
I am one with the twilight's dream.

But if the tendency to excess and indiscrimination are expressed by an individual who is self-centred, then indulgence mars the work and the great heart-potential of the Piscean becomes a trap of ever-growing delusion and a source of continual self-dramatization. The feelings that could have been so lofty, so pristine, become an emotional wallowing ground for low-level translations of love and suffering as well as hope and aspiration.

Being a mutable sign, Pisces is like a 'hinge' which directs the soul one way or the other. It thus reflects, as do all watery signs, either the higher influences or the lower. It is one of the most impressionable signs and can take on any form. It may be moulded by inner promptings or outer currents. But while it is fluidic, it propels, becomes steam, stirs up things to activity and, in its Sanskrit name *Meena*, is revealed as related to the five elements, the senses, and the causes of suffering. Of the elements, water in the sense of the Universal Solvent is its most important correlate, and indicates that the dissolution culminating in Pisces is strongly linked up with action altering the human senses.

Traditionally, Pisces was believed to have been ruled by Jupiter, which is an expansive and optimistic influence. However, in

modern times, the influence of Neptune is also thought to be relevant. While the expansiveness and synthesizing powers of Jupiter may manifest, the heavy hand of Neptune is prone to sow the seeds of chaos, death and destruction. Echoing the twelfth *Nidana*, *Jaramarana*, which denotes death and decay, the sign of Pisces simple indulgence or one which marked the end of a search for ultimate meaning. Venus, exerting her influence in *Meena*, moves the Ego to seek expansion and unity. The unrefined Ego will pursue this through pleasures but the fully refined Ego will suffer the depths of collective feeling while experiencing conscious unification with the rest of humanity.

Perhaps a clue to the way in which the emotional Piscean arises from the mentally acute Aquarian lies in the fact that the parts of the body related to this symbol are the feet and the left eye. The feet upon which man, the thinker, stands are often thought of in terms of clay. They are related to the lower serving caste in India and they constantly rest upon the least spiritual aspect of nature. How, then, can they be associated with 'fishers of men' or saviours? What connection could they possibly have with the left eye? It is necessary to consider the complexity and importance of the feet to come to an appreciation of this symbolic relationship. Not only do they permit movement along any path upon the face of the earth and support the total external vehicle of the indwelling soul, but the feet contain a most complex set of nerves linked with all parts of the body, permitting, through proper manipulation, the healing of many of its ailments. The feet act as a synthesizer of the senses, as does the brain, but in a way that permits effects to be compensated from below above. The higher power of *Mahat*, developed in the Aquarian stage, comes to focus through the left eye of Time and is brought down through the whole body of man to become reflected in the delicate movement and condition of the feet. Thus the lotus marks the sacred feet of all *Bodhisattvas*. Surely it may be said of them that they would move in complete harmony with the Universal Mind and that the earth upon which they stand would be thrice-blessed. All Great Ones who sacrifice for humanity take on feet of clay, the fish's body, in order to swim in the worldly current.

The chaos related to Pisces has to do with the Mother Sea which resides in seeming oblivion beyond the order introduced by Marduk. It is also linked with the destruction and dissolution of form wrought by the symbolical and actual deluges that mark the end of cycles. The Great Teachers who pass among men for a short rime on earth personify the death of the personality and have taken on form only for the sake of others. It is deeply significant that such beings often suffer failure, betrayal and even violent death. The soul is willingly 'crucified' on the cross of matter in order that men may catch a glimpse of that which they truly are. When Jesus was crucified, this seemingly terrible agony was a re-enactment of the death of the lower aspects of the personality as they fell away from the liberated *Christos*. The dissolution was that of the lower quaternary, while the universal solvent which made it possible lay in the realm of pure *Akasa*, the watery realm of the fully realized Pisces.

*"THE SPARK HANGS FROM THE FLAME BY THE FINEST THREAD OF FOHAT." IT JOURNEYS THROUGH THE SEVEN WORLDS, BECOMING METAL, STONE, PLANT AND ANIMAL. "FROM THE COMBINED ATTRIBUTES OF THESE, MANU, THE THINKER, IS FORMED. WHO FORMS HIM? THE SEVEN LIVES; AND THE ONE LIFE. WHO COMPLETES HIM? THE FIVE-FOLD LHA. AND WHO PERFECTS THE LAST BODY? FISH, SIN AND SOMA."*

The Secret Doctrine teaches that Fish, Sin and Soma are conjointly the three symbols of the 'Immortal Being.' They are related to Joshua, who caused the walls of Jericho to tumble; to Jesus, whose life dramatized the Fall of Spirit in matter; and to the Lunar *Pitris*, who provided the necessary vehicles for human incarnation. Further, the Hebrew god Sin, who inspired the name of Mt. Sinai, was fructified by Jehovah who "manifested on the lunar mountain," which was a terrestrial symbol for the Ark intimately related to the deluge. These elements again suggest the idea of the Fall into matter, the provision of the lunar vehicle and the destruction of form. In several traditions the earth is supported by a huge fish.

According to the Altaic people, his head is toward the north, and when it bends down there are floods in the northern hemisphere. The cord which tilts the head is believed to be held by the Bodhisattva Manjusri. This symbolic concept describes the cycles of the tilting of the earth's axis. The sinking of Atlantis was brought on by such a shift, and it was the Matsya Avatar who enacted the key role of Preserver in that mighty deluge.

In the *Mahabharata* the story is told of Vaivasvata who sat in meditation by the side of a river. As he reposed, a fish appeared and begged his protection from another larger fish. Vaivasvata put the fish into a jar which it quickly outgrew. It continued to increase until finally it had to be placed in a great ocean, whereupon it told Vaivasvata of the impending flood. The fish was Matsya, the Avatar of Vishnu, and it ordered an ark built to carry Manu and the Seven *Rishis* or races of men. The ark bearing the seed of life was guided by Matsya to Mount Meru, the birthplace of the new race. The cleansing destruction of water is like the fire of *Akasa* in which the dissolution of all form takes place, mirroring the glorious process which will perfect the 'last body.'

Pisces symbolizes a force which is intimately bound up with emotion and feeling, and all goodness and pleasure in this watery sign is brought on through their expansiveness. This force reflects the all-pervasive nature of *Akasa* and would seek to discover no limits to its expression. The prime attribute of *Akasa* is sound symbolized in speech, which is beautifully manifested in the teaching abilities of Great Spiritual Reformers. *Akasa* is also the indispensable agent of every magical performance. It stirs up the power lying latent in Brahma in much the same way as the words of an Adept-Teacher stir the hearts of men. The higher feelings possible in Pisces enable an activation of the higher sheaths of the soul and the development of a condition where feelings derived from the senses are synthesized totally into one powerful radiating force. This is achieved through the fusion of the five senses into one, which takes place when the higher astral sheaths are activated.

Thus the non-discriminating tendencies of the lower Piscean nature are supplanted by a unifying force on a higher level of evolution.

The word 'emotion' means to 'move out or away,' strongly suggesting the stirring up, the agitating motion which characterizes *Akasa*. However, uncontrolled or poorly understood emotions, far from partaking of *Akasa*, repeatedly damage the higher vestures and bring certain destruction and death in their wake. The expansive potential of that type of emotion which 'feels' with the whole of humanity requires tremendous powers of control in order to manifest. The *Sadhaka* has rigidly to exclude any impure thoughts and emotions if he wishes his *manomaya kosha* to vibrate with the highest realms of Akashic purity until the base material of the vehicles has been dissolved and completely replaced by subtly refined matter. One of the most important steps in controlling emotion involves the total mastery of the mirrored Akashic attribute of speech. In preparation for the Great Renunciation made by the 'Fishers of Men' endless self-denials, especially in the realm of speech, must be made. Robert Crosbie wrote of such control in connection with the building of the permanent astral, stating that as this mental control increased, "what were merely centres of force around which organs were builded now tend to become separate astral organs." These are built up into a complete astral body which synthesizes all the organs of the physical body. The disciple is now beyond the dominion of the physical senses and has the power of the astral body, which is extremely effective on its own plane, with a wide range of action through its 'seven super-senses.' The expanding brilliance of relationships exemplified in Aquarius has now totally activated the waters of the heart and the entire being is given over to an expression of expanding light. Immense suffering is necessary to produce the heat required to dissolve the last walls of separative consciousness that bind the soul, which has now become what Shankaracharya describes as *Kutichaka*, 'the hut-builder who has reached the place of peace,' the builder of the eternal vestures who will receive birth but once more.

In these last stages of evolution, the 'feeling-soul' is compelled by suffering to enter into a profounder sense of self-reflection. This reflection grows with the power of *Ananda*, from which fertile soil passion rises into reason and knowledge. As self-knowledge reasons outward, it progresses through the development of *chit* into universal sympathy. It is then that emotions reach their consummation and all passions expire in giving birth to "an eternal sentiment of justice and love, which are ultimately One" – *Sat*. A total union with the One leads the pilgrim soul beyond the cycling of the zodiacal wheel of life. At this point the soul must decide whether it will pursue its liberation or renounce it to enter once again the circuit of the wheel, to come again among men as part of that Lodge of the Holy Saviours of men. 'The Field of Ea' has been traversed and man has risen to the calm Akashic regions of ideal spiritual life where there labour, "unhastening, unresting," the *Rishis*, *Munis*, Saints and Prophets. He may rest now among the Immortals or rise from the Waters like Oannes to move among those who rejoice and weep from life to life, chained to the wheel of karmic action.

*Hermes*, April 1977

Helen Valborg

# **THE ZODIAC FAMILY**



# THE SUN

*Let us adore the supremacy of that divine sun who illuminates all, from  
whom all proceed, to whom all must return, whom we invoke to direct  
our understandings aright in our progress towards his holy seat.*

*The Gayatri*

Where is the birthplace of the radiant sun that the Greeks rose to meet at dawn with a kiss upon their upraised hands? From whence came Helios, son of Hyperion "The High Going" and Euryphaëssa "The Far Shining"? What is the source of the light that shines from *Loka Chakshuh*, the Vedic "Eye of the World"?

The Egyptians symbolized the birth of the sun through descriptions of the infant sun-god Horus, who arose from within the petals of a sacred blue lotus floating upon an endless sea. This sun was the "Eye of Ra," the "good eye of heaven" as the Samoyeds say. The idea of the eye of god was and is very widespread in the world. The fact that many people have conceived of the sun as both a youthful hero and an aged father merely suggests the cyclic rebirth of the orb's penetrating gaze.

*Loka Chakshuh* or Surya is depicted in the *Vedas* as the Godhead of Supreme Truth and Knowledge, the Lord of Light. His two functions are luminous vision and luminous creation, suggesting that the vision of Truth and Knowledge is followed by the creation of Light. The medieval alchemists spoke of the *sol niger*, the black or invisible sun which they related to prime matter and the unconscious. The visible sun is at the nadir, out of which depths it must ascend toward its zenith, the invisible apex that oversees the creation of light.

"Chaos ceases at the effulgence of the Ray of Primordial Light helped on by the Word of the Central Sun." During the active periods of being, this central, invisible source gives rise to a stream of ceaseless energy whose vibrating currents become more active at

each descending rung of the sevenfold ladder of being. The equinoxes and various other cyclic phases and periods of the visible solar course are only symbols of the singular truth which remains hidden. The activity of this energy, increasingly involuting into gross matter, can be seen as a demonstration of numerical patterns which are arcane hieroglyphs containing the keys that yield an ever greater abstract knowledge of solar reality. *The Secret Doctrine* describes the Central Sun as an unseen point in sidereal space which constantly attracts our solar system. It is the Centre of Rest to which all motion is ultimately referable. It is the "reservoir within which divine radiance, already differentiated at the beginning of every creation, is focused." This focal point is everywhere and yet – like the logos – it is somewhere. As the earth is attracted to the sun in our solar system (though obviously the centripetal forces in the system are counterbalanced by the centrifugal), so our sun is a servant to a more remote centre around which it revolves. One may imagine increasingly expanded systems ultimately resolving themselves within a solar centre which encompasses all but which exists on an inconceivably homogeneous plane of matter. One may analogically imagine all systems resolving themselves into an essential, primordial point in endless space. In our cogitations, we are wise to remember the admonition that not even the *Dhyani Chohans* can penetrate the mysteries of the boundaries separating the millions of solar systems from the Central Invisible Sun.

In *The Book of Dzyan* the Central Sun is portrayed as causing the mysterious force called *Fohat* to collect primordial matter into globules and impel them to converge together as aggregates. This recommencement of spiralling motion, brought on by the heat of the Great Breath, creates the conditions necessary for the birth of the first 'primitive family,' the differentiation of matter into elements and sub-elements or what Occultism calls "temporary appearances." Such heterogeneous and temporary appearances are the prototypes of the visible suns and systems of planets as well as all the various combinations of life that they sustain. The principle activating and extending this process is the centrifugal energy of the universe – Lucifer, *Lux*, the light made visible in our solar

system. It conveys the radiant energy flowing from the Central Sun which thus called into being and electrified the visible sun and earth and created the tension responsible for the revolution of the latter around the former. The activating principle of the earth can be traced through the physical sun to an energy that rises on a less mundane plane of existence.

In this vast and multifarious universe, there are grades of solar bodies which are like 'organs' acting in the whole process of creation in conjunction with electrical channels that convey their collective influence to the earth. The Fiery Breath which resides beyond manifested nature emanates the Central Spiritual Sun, parent of electricity, the fire of life and the manifested universe. Through seven planes of being, like the many-storied universe envisioned by Siberian people, the suns beget sons which become solar centres of life energy at progressively more concretized levels. The *Dhyān Chohans*, the Seven Divine Sons of the One Light, are luminous suns existing in an incorporeal condition like divine parents of subsequent septenate life. These Holy Ones embody the emerging primal elements in their most pristine essence and harmonious balance. Like rays from a virginal fire, they give of their essence, instilling divine intelligence into the progeny of their sovereign lineage.

It was the descendants of these Lords of Light who took on increasingly material garb and eventually walked upon the earth among men of many races and conditions. These great Heroes, like the rising sun, always came from the East. As Divine Races among men, they gave out sacred teachings and provided the foundations for the development of all the great civilizations that have existed in human history. These were the Solar Races around whom religious cults developed in every inhabited part of the world. These cults reached great heights in India, Egypt, Africa and the Americas, including the complex form which developed in Peru. There the *Ynca*, the first children of the sun, were placed by their Father in Lake Titicaca, one of the highest lakes in the world. From this solar brother and sister issued a lineage of royal descendants who were

all known as children of the sun and called *ynca*. They ruled as Divine Kings and through elaborate ritual maintained a living link between the Sun as Godhead and the people of the mountainsides. In India the *Surya Vansa* or 'race of the sun' laid down its dynasty in Ayodhya. The *Rig Veda* speaks of them as solar kings. Later these kings became deified and their worship was the earliest anthropomorphization of the great primeval faith which considered the sun as Master of Life and Death. From this early and inspired devotion eventually arose ancestor worship which, wherever it exists in the world, is usually associated with a cult of the sun. As the sun is eternally reborn, so men are inspired to seek the source of their own rebirth and immortality. In allegorical fashion they achieve a sort of lineal immortality by keeping alive the psychic link with ancestors who are reborn again in the children of devout worshippers.

The sun is sometimes symbolically described as the 'heart' and 'brain' of the solar system. From it sensations radiate into "every nerve center of the great body." But it is only a "window cut into the real Solar Presence" which reflects the interior work. From within there is a circulation of vital fluid that passes through our solar system like the circulation of blood within an organism. The sun contracts and expands like the human heart, its systolic and diastolic phases marking the eleven-year sun-spot cycles which are intimately connected with solar eruptions affecting the earth and other planets. Each year the solar 'blood' passes through its 'auricles' and 'ventricles' before washing out the lungs' and passing into the 'veins' and 'arteries' of the system to complete the eleven-year cycle.

Through a telescope, the appearance of the physical sun is that of a disk with sharply defined edges, its brightest area being at its centre. During a solar eclipse, the corona may be seen to radiate out from this edge like a luminous halo, its shape varying with the phases of the sun-spot cycle. Spectroscopic findings reveal that sun-spots are merely indicators of activity going on within the sun. Like tubes, they penetrate through the convection zones toward the

central zone. Here atomic radiations, which are largely reabsorbed due to tremendous gravitational pressures, counterbalance the centripetal force by a steady radiation pressure. One could say that the work of the centre is 'pushing out,' which is significantly reflected in the Sanskrit word *Surya*, whose root *su* means 'to press out' and is compounded in the term *asu* meaning 'to breathe.'

During solar storms great streams of highly ionized particles spiral in colossal arcs out from the sun's surface. These predominantly hydrogenate particles rush through space and impinge upon the earth's atmosphere, vastly affecting its climate, stirring up its atmosphere and affecting rates of change and growth around the globe. These currents run along the 'nerves' described in occult doctrine and recharge the system, breaking down and refining material with their fiery sharpness. The hidden 'heart' of the sun expands with this ionized 'blood' and washes clean the lungs' of space within the solar system. With electrifying power it fills the 'veins' and 'arteries,' revitalizing all aggregates of life within its system. Despite their enormous effect upon the earth, these 'storms' are really minor aspects of the sun's own colossal cyclic scale. Given the amazingly balanced reserve of energy that the sun continually maintains, it is, relative to this larger perspective, almost calm and unchanging, as the poets and mathematicians say. At the solar centre, mass is extremely concentrated and, due to enormously high temperatures, only the most 'elemental' forms of matter could exist there. Chemical modification occurs as energy is convected out towards the surface of the sun where conversion to light energy takes place. The 'heat' in the dense solar centre is quite different from that which is produced by the radiating rays at its surface where the density of matter is less than that of air. This central heat, which continually maintains itself, involves a concentration of matter that suggests activities of incalculable power, controlled by an arcane principle of complete equilibrium at a primal level. To put it in terms of the solar 'heart' and 'brain,' the massive and thunderous beating of that 'organ' is contained by an autonomic system, as it were, which reflects the dictates of a highly synthesized and anterior light. This is directly analogous with the

function of the pineal gland within the human brain which synthesizes light and regulates the performance of all the bodily rhythms. It is also the basis, intuitively or cognitively, of the frequent reference made by classical writers to man as a sun.

The *Puranas* tell how the *Devas* asked the *Rishis* to bring the Sun into *Satya Loka*. The Sun-God warned them that if he left his place the world would be destroyed. One of the *Rishis* offered to put his 'red cloth' in the place of the Sun's disk and thus originated the visible shell of the sun. In fact, the sun is thickly surrounded by a red shell of matter, and it is only during a solar eclipse that we can gain the "indisputable evidence" of the real sun. This 'robe' of the sun, as the ancients called it, is made up of all the chemical elements to be found on earth and on every other planet but they exist in a more 'developed' state of matter, and our globe must necessarily become far more 'refined' before its elements could match the condition of those within that chromosphere. The whole magnificent process, involving the replacement of our earthly molecules with the 'giant atoms' from the Infinitude 'above,' is a grand symbol of what takes place microcosmically along the *Guruparampara* chain between teacher and disciple. Like the magnetic sun, the teacher attracts the *chela*, but the very centrifugal force of his luminous power forces the disciple to discover his own orbit, that he may eventually become a source of light himself. And just as the 'storms' upon the sun's surface seem to almost overwhelm the humble planet, so the forces surrounding the *Guru* must be slowly approached and assimilated by the disciple. An infinite process of exchange and refinement must take place.

We are advised that in order to acquire an understanding of the refined condition of the solar photosphere and chromosphere we must possess a knowledge of the sixth state of matter. In man this would correlate with the lighting up of *buddhi*. To achieve this one must work backward from the *kama rupic* vehicle to the awakening of *manas* which, *The Secret Doctrine* states, is endowed by the "spirit of our Visible Sun." In wedding *manas* to *buddhi*, man approaches the "Equatorial Sun" at the third level of manifestation. Beyond this

radiates the "Polar Sun" which gives to man the spark of *Atman* from the Central Spiritual Sun. In pursuing upward along this vital channel within his being, man gradually realizes the *Kshetrajna* within, "The Soul's Spiritual Sun."

At all levels the sun is the most perfect symbol for this divine process. It not only points to the source of all process itself but commands the central position of omniscience in the universe. As the *Vedas* teach, all the gods attain to vastness by following *Surya*. Being exalted, He sees all and therefore knows all and, as one who takes in the whole world at a glance, He was invoked by the ancient Greeks in taking oaths. Not only does He make clear the path of goodness and purity to those who seek to walk in it, but He is pure Himself. As Kepler understood, He is physically at the spatial centre of the solar system and is symbolically representative of abstract Oneness. He is *Sol*, Solar, the absolute 'Good' overbrooding Plato's Divided Line. Like the seed of the arcane ancestor, the sun never dies but is always reborn. The transformation of a mere one percent of its mass from hydrogen to helium supplies enough energy to insure radiation and life-breath for at least a billion years. The extinction of our sun lies so far in the future that countless stages of refinement shall have affected all life within the entire solar system, producing forms and levels of consciousness few men have dreamed of on this earth. "Before the hour of the 'Solar *Pralaya*' strikes on the Watchtower of Eternity, all the other worlds of our system will be gliding in their spectral shells along the silent paths of Infinite Space." All the compassionate and stormy exchanges between spirit and matter that will have produced the perfected harvest of this solar system will be completed and their refined essence will have moved on to other arenas of universal evolution.

The Tarot relates the sun to purification and tribulation, "the sole purpose of which is to render transparent the opaque crust of the senses so that they may perceive the higher truths." Man, in his efforts to purify himself, unites himself by degrees to his prototype in heaven. As he does, he is drawn higher and higher, into successive rays, each of which supersedes the one lower, causing it

to break away, until he is at last drawn into the highest beam of the Parent-Sun. It is taught that upon the death of one who has attained *moksha*, the soul goes from the heart of the body to the crown of the head, traversing the *sushumna* nerve. Thence it goes to the region of *Surya Mandala* along the solar rays and, entering into the Sun, is released into *Paramapadha*, the realm of the essence of the body of *Ishwara*. *Tat tvam asi* – THAT THOU ART.

*Hermes*, August 1976

Helen Valborg



# MERCURY

SAID THE EARTH, "LORD OF THE SHINING FACE (*the Sun*),  
MY HOUSE IS EMPTY SEND THY SONS TO PEOPLE THIS  
WHEEL (*Earth*). THOU HAST SENT THY SEVEN SONS TO THE  
LORD OF WISDOM (*Mercury or BUDHA*). SEVEN TIMES DOTH  
HE SEE THEE NEARER TO HIMSELF; SEVEN TIMES MORE  
DOTH HE FEEL THEE. THOU HAST FORBIDDEN THY  
SERVANTS, THE SMALL RINGS, TO CATCH THY LIGHT AND  
HEAT, THY GREAT BOUNTY TO INTERCEPT ON ITS PASSAGE.  
SEND NOW TO THY SERVANT THE SAME!"

*Stanzas of Dzyan*

Mercurius, mercurial, Mercury. Fleet-footed, quicksilver god. With your rising the weather smiles, the crossroads bustle with quick-witted commerce and volatile laughter ignites the air. God of eloquence, messenger of heaven, patron of traders, thieves and roadways, you are known and worshipped by many names. The fifth day of the week is yours, bright shining *Mercredi*, Woden's celebrated *dag*. As Woden or Odin, you are "the far-traveller", the wanderer who, adorned with hat, moves swiftly while carrying your potent staff. As Odin, Mercury and Hermes, you have ever conducted the souls of the dead, guiding them into the underworld and back through the gates of resurrection. All Greeks of ancient times adored you as their divine ancestor. You were worshipped as the Interpreter of the Logos by philosophers, as Michael, the Angel of Vision, by the Hebrews, as Hermes-Christos by the Gnostics, and as Nebo, the Keeper of the Tablets, by the Akkadians and Babylonians. As Thoth-Hermes of the Egyptians your glory will never wane, nor as Anubis-Sirius, counsellor of Osiris, will you ever be forgotten. Little wonder that the Sun has given you his Seven Sons and called you the Lord of Wisdom.

But, O Lord, how is it that you are called Patron of Thieves, and what is your business with all the deception of the highwayman or the merchant's sleight of hand? Even Homer's famous verse would cast you in this light. In his hymn to your name he celebrates your birth from your mother Maia's womb and describes your precocious infancy, extraordinary even for a god. With poetic strokes he chronicles how you walked abroad on your first day and shaped the sweet-strung lyre from the shell of a willing tortoise. He also notes in detail your descent to Apollo's lands and immortalizes deeds filled with cunning and crafty plan. You picked out fifty of Apollo's cattle and drove them to the banks of the Alpheios, where you invented fire by friction and burnt two heifers in sacrifice. A busy day's work for a newborn, one which moved you to placate Apollo with the gift of your silver-toned lyre, for which he gave in exchange his golden caduceus. Your mercurial career was launched in deceptive clouds, only to beam forth brilliantly in the serpentine rays of the sun.

In the Hindu *Puranas* a connected theft marks the beginning of the great War in Heaven. This theft was committed by Soma, the spiritual ruler of the moon, who stole from Brihaspati (Jupiter) his beloved wife Tara and carried her away. Their union resulted in the birth of Budha, the Hindu counterpart of Hermes-Mercury, and the great celestial struggle that ensued was known as the Tarakamaya. This war is the archetype of the war on Olympus between the gods and the Titans, and the war between the Ases and the Vanirs of Nordic tradition. Brihaspati represents the materialization of divine instruction, and Tara is the personification of the powers garnered through initiation. Tara longs for true wisdom, and with her abduction she is initiated by Soma, giving birth to the esoteric wisdom of Budha. Soma, father of Budha-Mercury, is sometimes referred to as the male moon. He is also the beverage whose mystical powers can open the gates of spiritual vision, leaving physical sight behind. He is not to be confused with the moon, even that moon considered to be parent of the earth, for his power derives from a source much closer to the sun.

Through Budha, Soma and Tara gave birth to the cosmic moist principle. In alchemy, Mercury is considered to be the "radical *moyst*", the primitive or elementary water containing the seed of the universe fecundated by solar fires. Tara's nature can be traced to the Gnostic Sophia, the Hindu Sarasvati or the Christian Holy Ghost, the great Deep from which the sun and Mercury have their being. The Egyptian solar barque floating on the water of space corresponds to this idea in that the sun in the barque represents the Hermetic basis of gold or the "philosophical sun". The water is that same basis or substance made liquid, whilst the barque symbolizes Nature piloted by the Sun, who conducts his work upon the Moist or Mercury. Thus, Mercury or Budha brings forth from the Deep the moisture of life suffused with the fiery Logoic spark of his father. In this sense, Mercury is more occult and mysterious than any of the other planets and is the perpetual companion of the sun, standing between it and the moon.

Symbolically adorned in a pale golden hue, Mercury is the watcher over earth, mistaken by the latter for the sun itself. It is noteworthy that Emperor Julian prayed through the intercession of Mercury to the occult sun every night, and Vossius wrote that "all the theologians agree to say that Mercury and the Sun are one". Viewed as standing between the sun and the moon, Mercury acts as the Egyptian Thoth, who was called the Reconciler between Horus and Set, the symbol of the mind of man. Thus, Mercury in man is the thinker, the reincarnating Ego and link between spirit and matter, the messenger between the divine within and the personality. This merging of mythical solar and lunar elements is reflected in the belief surrounding the duality of the planet's influence. In man, this operates variously, depending on whether the mind is reflecting the activities of matter or turned inward upon those of spirit.

Mercury, by whatever name, conducts the departed souls of the dead into the underworld but also functions as their releaser. Accompanying the disembodied entity, he acts as a guide through death and rebirth, sleep and dreams, and is thus associated with

magic and initiation. The souls of the living are also watched over by him as they travel through the world. This is why in ancient Mediterranean lands images of Hermes were placed at crossroads. He thus oversaw the junctions of choice made by men as they mirrored the give and take of cross-cultural power and trade. In this way he was viewed as playing an important role in the early stages of international law, to which he lent the eloquence of his gift of the spoken word. As the conductor of souls, Hermes-Mercury was also worshipped in the guise of a shepherd. Just as he cunningly herded Apollo's heifers, he also watches over the flocks of incarnated human beings who, more often than not, like sheep move unquestioningly from meadow to meadow, permitting their appetites to act as their guides. Standing at the crossroads, Hermes was sometimes depicted as a herm, or pillar with a phallus and surmounted by a bearded head. The characteristic of fertility this implies is further reflected in the fact that Hermes became the father of Pan and was associated with strength and virility in young men. These beliefs echo a more occult characteristic which credits Hermes or Mercury with having transferred all the sciences from latent to active potency. Cynocephalus, the Egyptian hieroglyph of the planet Mercury, as well as the god, is always shown near Isis and Osiris as their minister. It was believed that, without Mercury, neither Isis nor Osiris could accomplish anything in the Great Work.

Mercury conducts the souls of the dead with his caduceus, and with its serpentine power he raises them to life. The evolution of gods and atoms is represented in this caduceus, the *axis mundi* of the universe being symbolized by its rod, which descends at the beginning of every *manvantara* from the two dark wings of Kalahansa. This association with time was reflected in ancient astrology, wherein the planets were seen as clock hands pointing on the dial of our solar system to the hours of periodical events. "Thus, Mercury was *the messenger* appointed to keep time during the daily solar and lunar phenomena, and was otherwise connected with the God and Goddess of Light." As the keeper of time, Mercury yet remains above it, and from his caduceus the sparks that fly are of

timeless akashic essence. Descending into time and ascending into the timeless, Mercury is involved in issues on every side and yet remains uninvolved. In the story of Prometheus, Hermes taunted the fire-bringer in his captivity, but assisted Herakles so that the latter could free him. In the great planetary dramas of many mythical traditions, Hermes played on both sides of the board. The ancients often thought of Jupiter and Venus as beneficent and of Saturn and Mars as malicious, but Mercury was usually held in this sense to be indifferent. This is reflected in the positive and negative poles of the rod of the caduceus and in the dual nature of its dark and light intertwined serpents. The physical planet seems also to embody this counterbalance in the fact that it possesses such an insignificant magnetic field and yet is capable of rebuffing the better part of the solar wind.

In Mesopotamian mythology, the double serpents of the caduceus are associated with Nebo, who conquers the serpent-dragon Tiamat. This conquest signifies control of the highest to the lowest astral light and all the powers of good and evil which they entail. In some of these traditions it is Marduk, father of Mercury-Nebo, who conquers Tiamat, "killing" her and making the vault of heaven out of her belly, wherein were fixed the motions of the moon. The conflict takes place between light and darkness. First there is darkness, then light which must struggle to be. The darkness with which light must struggle is identified with the waters, the name Tiamat literally meaning "the bitter ocean", the dragon of watery chaos and foe of the sun god. This is echoed in the Egyptian tradition wherein Mercury assumes the guise of the white ibis, sacred to the moon, and the black and white ibis which exterminates winged serpents and eats crocodile eggs. This latter ibis can be likened to *Kalahansa*, the swan of both eternity and time. In conquering Tiamat, before the world was created, Marduk-Nebo obtained the tablets of fate, keeping them thereafter on his breast. Among the Babylonians, these tablets were symbolically written at the beginning of each new year. By annually observing this ritual they believed they could bring down, from the realm of eternity into the world of time, the balance and justice of manifesting law

immanent in the wings of the great bird adorning Mercury's akashic staff.

The name Nebo literally means "prophet" or "herald", the creative Logos and bearer of the tablets of Enki, among the old Sumerians. His Akkadian names were Salpa-uddu, the Messenger of the Rising Sun, and Sak-vi-sa, the Face, the Voice of Light. Josephus spoke of the tablets under the pillars which were tables of Egyptian hieroglyphs synthesizing the wisdom passed down from the mid-Third Root Race to the Fourth. The ancient pillars actually existed in temples at Luxor and elsewhere, and were the source of the wisdom of Egypt. When Moses came down from Mount Sinai, he brought tablets containing this wisdom, but when he found the Jews worshipping the golden calf, he broke them. Returning from Sinai a second time, he brought a more limited and exoteric doctrine in the form of the *Torah* and the Ten Commandments.

In his own archetypal descent and ascent, Mercury bears the Word, the Law rendered in speech and written form. He is the Writer of the Armenians, what the Siberian Ostiaks called the Writing Man. This wonderful epithet springs to mind when one discovers that, at the time of the writing of *The Secret Doctrine*, Mars was in obscurity and Mercury was just beginning to come out of it. In the Christian tradition, however, the Writer was confused with the Angel of Death, reminding one that the lunar side of Mercury has often been considered dangerous. The Egyptian *Book of the Dead* describes how the deceased fear "the pen and inkstand of Gebga" (Thoth-Hermes in his lunar aspect). This has to do with judgement according to the law of karma, checked and balanced by the intertwining duality symbolized in the serpents of Mercury's staff. The Day of Judgement so feared by all seems to confront only the dead, but in reality it is a never-ceasing action exerted and monitored by the Great Shepherd.

From the luminous matrix of Maya, Maia, Vach or Sophia, the God-mind was born. The Greeks called this *kurios*, the pure, unmixed intellectual wisdom which is Hermes-Mercury, Thoth-Hermes says, "I am Thoth, the perfect scribe, who causeth

wrongdoing to cease, the judge of words and their essence." He goes on to assert, "I have scattered darkness. I have made Ra to set as Osiris, and Osiris setteth as Ra setteth. I have made him to enter into the hidden habitation to vivify the heart of the Still Heart, the Holy Soul, who dwelleth in the heavenly places." It is not difficult to perceive the connection between this proclamation from the *Book of the Dead* with the cubic-formed Hermes found at crossroads. The absence of arms and legs on these images signified the fact that limbs are not needed to express speech and thus identified Hermes with the manifest *Logos*, the seminal principle scattered throughout the universe, the fiery, radical *moyst* of Mercury. When this cube unfolds it becomes the cross which bears the archetypal man into human life and eventually crucifies him as the son-initiate. This is echoed in the Christian scheme wherein the Sun is the Father, Mercury the Son, and Venus the Holy Ghost - the spirit of wisdom, love and truth associated with Christ. As the Son of the Father, Mercury receives seven times more light than any other planet. Occult knowledge of this led the Gnostics to call Mercury-Christos the sevenfold light. Orbiting so close to the sun, Mercury can be seen only for very brief periods at sunrise or sunset during certain times of the year. Even then it appears like the Son who is one with the Father and cannot be readily separated from Him.

Barely distinguishable from the solar Marduk, Mercury-Nebo was the overseer among the seven deities of the planets. The great ziggurat sacred to Nebo at Borsippa represented the seven planets in platforms spiralling from base to summit, where the shrine of the presiding god "who controls the seven decrees of Heaven and Earth" existed. These platforms each had their own colour and represented the *hypsomata* or stations created by the father, Marduk. They related Ishtar-Venus to Pisces, Sin-Moon to Taurus, Shamash-Visible Sun to Aries, Nergal-Mars to Capricorn, the aspected Marduk-Jupiter to Cancer, Ninurta-Mars to Libra, and Mercury-Nebo to Virgo. The Babylonian sages believed that Marduk created a world when he placed the constellations, and that these (the visible constellations as well as their platform symbols) were but reflections of their noumena. Thus, the *hypsomata* are like diluted

loci functioning analogously in relation to our solar system as the twelve stations of the zodiac through which the visible Marduk passes each year. With each of these lesser passages, a greater and more subtle passage is mirrored, one which affects the rulers of the planets through the channel of their overseer, Hermes-Mercury. In this way, the divine Mercury perfectly reflects and passes on the Logoic effects of unchanging solar Truth, a process repeated in a simple but dramatic way on the earthly plane when the glass of a mirror is coated with the substance mercury.

Occultism teaches that the lords of the planets are called the Seven Sons of Light and that, through their respective planets, they supply humanity with its inward and outward characteristics. The vital forces stream from the spirit of the sun through his son (Mercury) to each of the other planetary *Dhyanis* who, in turn, overbrood the seven primordial human races. The human principles are also thus provided, mankind receiving its *buddhi* from the essence of the *Manasaputras* presiding over the planet Mercury. Translated down through the descending levels of manifestation to the visible solar system, it can be said that all seven planets were comets and suns in their origins, evolving from primeval chaos through the process of aggregation and the accumulation of the primary differentiations of eternal matter. It was thus that the "Sons of Light clothed themselves in the fabric of Darkness" and came to exist as formless intelligences unseen in their planetary homes. All planets and celestial bodies are born through the effects of heat (from the Great Breath drawing in the etheric radiations of the universe and expelling them in a spiralling pulsation that replicates itself at every level of being), attraction and repulsion, the three factors of motion. All planets are born, grow and die, to be reborn after *pralaya* when the *Dhyanis* once again, under the guidance of Him who overbroods Mercury, commence to "clothe" themselves.

The word "planet" comes from the Greek *πλανήτης* (*planetes*), which means "wanderer", and is thought to have been inspired by the observation of the way the planets wander against the backdrop



of stars. But it might well be that the term *πλάνησις* (*planesis*) is the inspiration, referring as it does to "a dispersing". In addition to these etymological possibilities, it is interesting to note that ο *πλάνος* (*o planos*) is a name given to a deceiver, reminding one of the entertaining exploits of the infant Patron of Thieves. Among the ancients there were seven planets, a counting that can be explained in terms of occult modes of reckoning rather than limitations in scientific knowledge. Modern science recognizes nine planets belonging to our system, following the definition that a planet is any body except a comet, asteroid, meteoroid or satellite orbiting the sun. It is now thought, from a purely material point of view, that some planets may be formed by the gravitational collapse of part of a proto-star, others by aggregation of the grains of its dust. Planets like those in our system could not form in systems having two or more suns because of their competing fields, but they find ideal growing conditions in the environment of a solitary star of about the same mass as our sun. Piecing together patiently garnered data concerning our sun, scientists hypothesize that the primeval sun's magnetic field turned through gas, which was dragged along like grit through the nebula until the nebula in turn caused a drag, slowing the sun's spin. As it slowed, its angular momentum was transferred to the nebular gas and much of it was carried out in an expanding solar wind. Solid microscopic mineral grains condensed out of this gas, their chemical composition depending on the cooling rate and the degree to which early grains were available to mix with later material. Major condensates were the silicates and ices. As the temperature lowered further, water played an increasing role, its vapour and gas reacting with some of the dust grains to form complex hydrated minerals. In even colder regions, ices became so abundant that they covered the rocky materials that had condensed earlier, forming ice-enveloped planets. This whirling, marvellously creative process is believed to have resulted in the order of planetary composition existing in our solar system where bodies close to the sun possess a silica-rich density and the outer icy bodies do not.

The music of the spheres may have arisen thus from one note, one sound, capable of releasing all others in intervals of the tones and half-tones which became the voice of Nature. Tiny dust grains nestled to form clumps held together by electrostatic forces which increased their motion. Larger bodies grew to have a strong gravitational effect on smaller ones, which would rush towards them, sometimes rebounding to escape, sometimes adding to the mass of the larger body. This collisional accretion thus joined the process of aggregation in forming the planets. Impact cratering and vulcanism are the two most significant processes shaping the history of the planets, whilst additional evolutionary factors are size (affecting subsequent thermal evolution), chemistry (ratio of iron to silicates and relative abundance of volatilized and radioactive materials), distance from the sun (affecting chemistry), and the sources of energy available throughout the planet's history. Underlying all these processes, two major tendencies are thought to have been at work. One has been called equilibrium condensation, an orderly formation of planets, from the most dense nearest the sun to the least dense furthest away. The other is catastrophic, a mode suggested by the formation of Mercury, which has increasingly come to be viewed as the key to understanding the development of the rest of the solar system.

Those who feel that planets do not grow in an orderly way point to evidence which suggests that there may have been a proto-Mercury, twice the planet's present size, which experienced a collision so enormous that it melted and its heaviest elements sank towards its centre, leaving only a thin, lighter shell on its surface. During the course of these catastrophes, Mercury wandered around the inner solar system, colliding and being deflected by the magnetospheres of other growing bodies until it settled into its present orbit around the sun. One finds the competing theories of uniformitarianism and catastrophism in all branches of science, and it is clear that both forces are continually at work. Things may appear to be uniform relative to a known framework, but other processes may appear catastrophic simply because a frame of reference big enough to make sense out of them is not known. One

can liken the uniformitarian and catastrophic processes to the action of the positive and negative forces which form the fundamental duality manifest throughout the entire universe. One can also see this basic interaction symbolized once again in the intertwining dark and light serpents of Mercury's magical caduceus.

Just as the Great Breath breathes in and out, so the sun breathes out a vast solar wind of hot, ionized gas from its corona. This wind is continually present in interplanetary space, streaming radially outward for billions of kilometers until it merges with the nearby interstellar medium and loses its identity. The gases spiral outward and the sun's magnetic field tends to move along with them. They flow around the magnetic barrier of a planet, being repelled by the planet's own magnetosphere. They also induce a transverse electric field across the planet's magnetic field, injecting a small fraction of the surrounding interplanetary plasma into it, some particles ultimately diffusing down into the planet's atmosphere. Material carried off into interplanetary space from one planet can thus come to influence the evolution of another. The magnetospheres of the sun and planets affect one another as well; the sun dominates but the interplanetary forces cause perturbations, with the result that the planets and their satellites follow an elliptical course around the sun. Some perturbations may work so that one body may have a period which is a regular fraction of the period of a neighbouring body, such commensurability being called resonance. The resonance of Mercury's rotation with regard to its orbital motion depends on the planet's elongated shape, but the two to three ratio of periods (a fifty-nine-day rotation on its axis to an eighty-eight-day revolution around the sun) is only possible because of the high eccentricity of its orbit.

The planet Mercury has an appropriate name because, like the god it honours, it seems to be constantly hiding its secrets. It is visible for a brief moment just before dawn in late October and early November before it vanishes again with the glare of sunrise. It is the smallest of the planets and closest to the sun, having a pinkish

colour with some dark regions indicating ancient lava flows. Because Mercury is usually hidden in the sun's glow, many astronomers have never seen it at all. Photographs taken from the spacecraft *Mariner 10* show closely clustered moon-like craters strewn across lava plains, but because Mercury rotates so that it tends to keep the same side towards the sun, only thirty-five percent of its surface has been examined. Much of what we know about Mercury is based on inference rather than direct observation. Scientists feel confident that it possesses an iron core encompassing a surprising seventy percent of the planet's mass, but it is conjectured that Mercury's overall chemical makeup may be the most atypical of any body in the cosmos.

Throughout its history, Mercury has been bombarded over and over again. Although a greater number of meteors cross the earth's orbit than Mercury's, because of their crowding together near the sun Mercury is much more likely to be hit than is the earth. In addition to this, meteors and comets travelling near Mercury move much faster than when travelling near the earth, making more violent impacts and forming proportionally larger craters. The formation of the Caloris Basin on Mercury's surface was the result of a collision so powerful that shock waves travelled through the entire planet and disrupted the landscape on the other side. To get an idea of the magnitude of the impact, one can compare the size of the basin to the state of Texas. Because so many craters dot its lava plains, it is thought that volcanic activity on Mercury ended long ago, leaving a surface which looks like that of the moon and appears to be geologically dead. Along with its craters, however, Mercury possesses many scarps hundreds of kilometers long, which suggests that the interior of the planet has shrunk, leaving a surface resembling an old wrinkled apple. After its formation, there must have been a planet-wide obliteration of surface features, leaving the smooth plains which were subsequently bombarded. During this process, the cooling of the large iron core would have resulted in the contractions producing the wrinkled scarps.

The ancient age of the scarps seems to imply that the internal engine of Mercury's heat died down long ago. One should not therefore expect there to be a molten core or moving currents of core material to generate a magnetic field, and it is unlikely that the planet's rocks retain magnetization from an ancient magnetic field which existed when they were first formed. But the fact remains that Mercury does have a weak magnetosphere (about one hundredth that of the earth) which may be the result of an intrinsic dipole interacting with the planet's iron core as well as with the solar wind through which it passes in its orbit. In addition to this, Mercury appears to have very little atmosphere. Whatever it might once have had, low surface gravity and low escape velocity are factors capable of explaining its dissipation. High temperatures on Mercury's surface (711 degrees Fahrenheit at equatorial noon) would also have contributed to the boiling away of its atmosphere, but it may be that its near non-existence is due to the planet having had less volatile material to begin with. Another more interesting possibility, however, is that it could have released its gases in very early times and might have originally had a much more substantial atmosphere. In any case, the emission lines in Mercury's spectrum indicate the presence of sodium and potassium in a very thin atmosphere.

The planet's reflected spectrum shows no absorption of light identifiable with specific minerals, leading some to wonder if its surface is composed of substances which happen to be spectrally featureless. It is also possible that interactions between minerals, magnetospheric particles and the impinging solar wind have neutralized any spectral features by blackening the mineral grains. Looking at it from a more occult point of view, one might consider that the minerals on the surface may exist in such molecular patterns that they produce a cross-neutralization of spectral effects. This would imply that the molecular makeup of the material on Mercury's surface is something like an extremely refined puree, compared to the chunky stew analogous to the molecular patterns of the earth's surface. The cross-neutralization effect could also be seen as yet another illustration, on the molecular level, of the

process of interaction between the dark and light serpents of the caduceus, the dipole being the rod around which they are entwined.

As we have seen, the evolution of gods and atoms is represented in the caduceus of Mercury. The rod, as the *axis mundi*, traces through the realm of time the spiralling descent and ascent of the life-force. On the physical plane, this was echoed in the great movement outward of the nebular solar gases as they were transformed and distributed through the spiralling journey of the aggregating Mercury which, reeling and colliding, made its way hither and thither throughout the solar system. In this manner, the Son of the Sun gave forth its atmospheric and magnetic potencies, which then became measurable in the more physicalized manifestations of other planets. Thus the positive and negative nodes of sequential existence were brought into being to be expressed in an infinite series of spiralling, orbiting and interacting forms from the atom to the largest planet. These became the knots of *Fohat*, the stations belonging to the planetary *Dhyanis* on which myriad levels and shades of evolution would take place. It is significant that Mercury, having finished this great work, returned to its parent and remained there, its gigantic iron core being just adequate magnetically for the planet to maintain a separate identity from the sun while actually remaining manifest in the solar system.

One may wonder why human evolution has taken place on the earth and not on Mercury. From an occult perspective, the answer must have to do with the fact that the earth is an arena of so much magnetism, so much that is positive and negative, that it is a perfect field for the development of the discursive, rational mind. Mercury has given up the atmosphere and field connected with this and sustains instead a rarefied field which is porous to pure solar light. This is appropriate to Budha-Soma, expressing itself in man as the principle of *buddhi*, that which receives light without reservation (without a magnetospheric defence) and distributes it throughout the rest of the system. One will recall that *manas*, represented by the planet Venus, must align itself with this mercuric and luminous

potential in order to bring down into consciousness (while in a body) the unchanging light of solar Truth. In the scheme of the involution of spirit into matter, it is Venus who "falls", not Mercury, and Mercury receives seven times more light than the earth, whilst Venus transmits two-thirds of its light to our globe. Thus, the spiritual potencies follow a spiralling route from the sun through Mercury to Venus and thence to the earth, where their serpentine fluctuations play themselves out in the periodic cycles so intimately affected by the moon. Just as Budha-Mercury combined the moisture of his mother with the fire of his father, so too the earth comes to receive the moist influence of its parent moon, together with the fire of the visible sun, the psychic influence of a dead moon being a potentially dangerous and low-level reflection of the akashic emanations transmitted through Mercury.

When Budha-Mercury was born to Soma and the abducted Tara, even Brihaspati, overwhelmed by his beauty, rushed to claim him as his son. And this is not surprising, for those who are called the Anointed, the great Initiates of all races, have been given his name. The star of Mercury (Sirius) is called the great instructor of mankind before other Buddhas, and Thoth as well as Hermes are generic names given to seers, prophets and adepts. The same is true of Nebo, Asclepius and Vishvakarman, who are all connected symbolically with the dual serpents of descent and enlightenment, and who are all Sons of the Sun. Initiates into the great mystery of life are crucified, as it were, upon the cross of the descending, unfolding cube of Mercury, but they awaken to behold "the fiery aura of the "Hand of Lhagpa" [Mercury] extended in protecting love over the heads of his ascetics" and their ear is opened to the sounding of the Law. As the patron of thieves, Hermes-Mercury wanders the highways of the world, but his gifts of deception and cunning are the reflections of the operation of a higher divine justice which continually adjusts matters of the world. They are also reflections of the dramatic work of creation symbolized by Hermes releasing the celestial heifers, the moist clouds which will manifest as the substance of the world to be. Thus the Thief fosters the world, bringing forth the pure, luminous Word of the Unmanifest

Logos from the realm of becoming into that of being; the cube unfolds to become the cross, the dual caduceus in the world.

*Quicksilver god!  
Streaming like liquid fire  
Through the hidden veins  
Of existence.*

*Hermes, January 1989*  
Helen Valborg



# VENUS

*What though in solemn silence all  
Move round the dark terrestrial ball?  
What though nor real voice nor sound  
Amid their radiant orbs be found?  
In reason's ear they all rejoice,  
And utter forth a glorious voice,  
Forever singing as they shine,  
"The Hand that made us is divine."*

*Joseph Addison*

Long before the coming of Zeus, before the advent of time and planetary formation, Ouranos reigned over that vastitude called heaven. He overbrooded its untroubled depths until his emanated son, Kronos, rose up against him and cut away that part of his ethereal body which carried the seeds of potential generation. Severed from his limitlessness, the mutilated member fell into the hitherto barren sea, only to burst forth as Venus-Aphrodite, Beauty's bright goddess, born of the unfolding wave. In Hesiod's poetic lines, the beginnings of time and form are thus told, placing the goddess at the very threshold of manifestation and identifying her with the heavenly love that Plato called Uranian and invested with male attributes. Her birthplace was not the earthly foam spawned by Zeus but the spiralling swell of cosmic energy bursting forth upon a new stage of being. It was as the goddess of procreative love and reproductive powers that Aphrodite was immortalized by Homer. He extolled her dazzling beauty, describing how it aroused irresistible desires in humans. Nor were other creatures immune to her spell. Seeing animals, she "rejoiced in her heart and sent desire into their breasts; and they lay down two by two in shadowy dells". In this more earthly guise, amongst the scattered peoples of the ancient world she was worshipped under many names by those seeking fertility and celebrating love. Often becoming the focus of ribald rituals, she was the inspiration for

nautch girls and temple prostitutes. To the Assyro-Babylonians she was Venus-Ishtar, fallen to become Kilili, bringer of distractions and distress to men. In their cities she sat as a statue in the recesses of walls "to entice men to their perdition". To exorcise her spell, a eunuch sang a lament to her, whereas the afflicted prayed to her higher aspect as Ishtar for their release. Similarly, the old Norse showed a shrewd recognition of her higher and her fallen natures in the complex blend of characteristics belonging to their goddesses Frigg and Freya, and also gave the latter's name to Friday, the day assigned to Venus.

In her loftier aspect, Venus-Aphrodite can be likened to the Hindu Lakshmi, the lotus floating at creation during the churning of the Sea of Milk. From these waves she springs forth as the emanation of the objective out of the subjective. As the mother of Eros, she brings into being the fiery action of divine will and the fervent desire to manifest through creation. As the personification of the sea, she signifies the waves of its unfolding lotus petals; she is the Mother Virgin of the Great Deep who becomes, only at the grossest level, the froth upon the wave. In this sense, Venus is all that is female in the universe. She is lunar, like the Babylonian Ishtar who was shut up in the ark and who sent forth a dove in search of dry land. She is the female Noah, the ark, the ever receptive *yonis* floating upon the timeless waters. Symbolizing divine love, her beauty unfolds as a revelation of the creative principle in the macrocosm and the microcosm. Through her arise will, imagination and all the other powers by which the universe evolves. Hers is the germ of divinity which rests in the human heart and enables it to illuminate the mind. Working together with Mercury, she bears light from heaven and returns it laden with sacrificial offerings.

Thus, there is a heavenly and an earthly Venus, two goddesses of love who share mixed attributes which may be designated as masculine and feminine. Though called by a feminine name, Venus is closely linked to masculine traits. Plato spoke of the higher goddess of love in these terms and ascribed feminine characteristics

to the fallen goddess. This mutability is further complicated by the fact that, in some cultures, Venus has been identified as entirely masculine. The Eskimo name for the planet is 'He who stands and listens', whilst the early Egyptians called it Nuter Dua, 'the rising god'. Among the ancient Semites the name Ishtar seems to have come originally from Athtar, a male god of the southern Arabians. The name evolved into its female form only after the Semites came into contact with the Sumerians, who worshipped Inini as the mother-goddess associated with Venus. Interestingly, while Athtar became Ashdar and Ishtar, it also branched off to become Astarte, identified ultimately with the earthly Aphrodite.

As the morning and evening star, Venus was perceived in Baltic lore as two sons of their most high god. Being lovers of the daughters of the Sun, the two built a bridal chamber for them in the middle of the sea and thus enticed them to bring down to earth their solar dowry. This myth blends several significant elements involving the transference of solar light to the world, and it places Venus in the dual role of bringing down light and also husbanding it. Among other ancient peoples, the morning star was sometimes recognized as male and the evening star as female or androgyne. Venus, appearing as bearded god or bewitching temptress, hermaphrodite or queen, blended in many guises masculine and feminine traits, thus aligning her with both solar and lunar forces operating through the various levels of her being. The consequences of this are intriguing when one associates the fertility of Venus with divine kingship and traces the distinction that developed so fully in the early Fifth Race between solar and lunar worship and diverging lineages, such as the Suryavansas and the Indovansas of the Mahabharatan War in the Hindu tradition.

In the Great War in Heaven described in the *Vedas*, Venus (as Shukra) fought alongside Soma against Brihaspati. Affirming a masculine aspect, Shukra aligned himself with the mystical generation of Budha (Mercury) and took his stand in opposition to the forces struggling to sustain an exoteric order. For this transgression he was degraded to the station of an *asura*, a demon

amongst a vast and very mixed host of beings which included low-level trouble-makers, monsters of great evil and pious sages. After some time Shukra left the *asuras* and went to the realm of the gods, where he undertook to obtain boons from Lord Shiva which would make him more powerful than Brihaspati. In return, Shiva imposed on him the terrible *tapas* of hanging head downward for a thousand years over a fire of chaff. While he was thus engaged, the gods waged war on the *asuras*, causing Shukra's mother to try to protect them by rendering Indra powerless. Indra sought the help of Vishnu, who, tackling the problem faced by his ally, cut off the mother's head. When Shukra learnt of this, he cursed Vishnu to be born seven times on earth for the good of the world, a twist of the story related to the seven Races of mankind rather than to the Divine Avatars of the *Logos*. Many details in this myth are pregnant with symbolic meaning, but generally speaking, the tale outlines the struggle of the 'fallen gods' to assist in the emergence of humanity against the opposition of the gods who were content with blind, unconscious manifestation.

As a deposed god, Shukra lends a masculine aspect to a fallen Venus which has a different quality from the denigration associated with Aphrodite. He is similar to Lucifer, another fallen god whose name has been defamed. Lucifer, the Dawn-Bearer, is the descending angel whose radiant torch sheds the light of truth upon the earth. To the ancients of the Mediterranean world he was the morning and evening star, Phosphoros and Hesperus, one with both Venus the spirit as well as the planet. In borrowing many of the characteristics of Christ from the pagan Lucifer, the early church fathers felt obliged to eliminate him as a competing figure by inverting his role and casting him as the dark angel who sinned against God and was thrown out of heaven. Once exiled, he became Satan, the devil, whose evil reposes in the sulphurous glow and foul smell of brimstone. With this shameful manipulation of ideas, even the sign of Venus-Lucifer became confused with evil. In fact, it represents a progression of cosmological stages beginning with the circle, advancing to the circle with a central point, the circle divided by a horizontal line and then by a vertical line, forming a cross

within the circle. The cross dropping below the circle symbolizes the manifesting *Logos* macrocosmically, and in the microcosm it signifies the Third Root Race at the point where it is ready to 'fall'.

In *The Secret Doctrine*, H.P. Blavatsky referred to this sign in terms of pure pantheism, not to be confused with the covert phallicism of the uncircled cross, which became the emblem of Christianity and the gross physical manifestation that has come to have such a dominant influence over human consciousness. These stages can be identified with the various planets in our solar system in many occult ways, if one keeps in mind more than their material representations. The sun is the region of the mightiest gods of our system, Mercury is the domain of the archangels synthesized in the being of Hermes-Budha, and the gods of Venus are called Principalities, through whose combined essence the objective emanates out of the subjective and divine ideation passes into visible form. This emanation is depicted by the springing forth of Venus-Lakshmi, who opens the understanding of the creative *Logoi* so that they see the archetypal forms they must copy and build upon.

On its way to and from the earth, the human monad, born in the boundless light symbolized by the sun, passes through seven planetary regions, including that of Venus. The rulers of each give of their substance ("out of the tears of their eyes, and the sweat of their torments"), endowing the monads with a spark of divine light. These rulers are the Rebellious Angels, the Seven Gods making up two triads plus the sun, the downward-pointing triad being Mercury, Venus and Mars. Venus and Mercury form the two upper points of this triangle, representing a trinity of Mother and Son, completed by the sun as Father. Venus thus relates to the sun in a manner similar to that of a *shakti*, a mysterious relation which, when intuitively understood, embraces all the masculine and feminine characteristics assigned to her. She falls in the descending triangle but she also rises out of the wave, out of the darkness of the pre-dawn. The candidate for initiation in ancient Egypt prayed to her as the phoenix arising from the sun of Osiris, hoping "that I may

come forth like the Bennu bird, the Star of Morning". This prayer from the *Book of the Dead* refers to the fact that Osiris represents the bound sun (the divine spark in man) which, though limited on the lower planes, can become a manifesting flame under the nourishing influence of Venus (divine love). It reveals Venus as the mother of the morning sun (Son) but the daughter of the evening sun which slips away into the mystery of darkness.

Venus is the *sol alter* identified by Pythagoras as the third of the seven places of the sun. She is the most radiant planet in the heavens, who receives twice the heat and light from the sun that the earth does, and gives away one-third of it to our darker globe. Thus, she is earth's *alter ego*, its occult sister-brother, Venus-Lucifer. The Seven Sons of Light (as regents of the planets) have direct astral and psychic communication with the earth and its Guides and Watchers, morally and physically. But Venus is the earth's immediate spiritual prototype, and when the two planets are on the same side of the sun and closest together, Venus always shows to the earth the same face. In the Vedic myths about Shukra the relationship is affirmed by references to Shukra's car, which is said to be drawn by eight earth-borne horses, and to the changes in Shukra, which are said to be felt and reflected by the earth. It has often been asserted that geological changes affecting Venus-Shukra and the earth take place simultaneously, an idea which inspired St. Augustine to apply changes of configuration, colour and orbital path to Venus that belonged in fact to the earth.

The *Vedas* tell us further that Shukra was a preceptor of the *daityas*, giants of the Fourth Race, who once ruled the earth and whom the Greeks called Titans. One myth suggests that Shukra adopted the earth because he had no satellites of his own, but that the earth gave its parent much trouble in return. The regent of Shukra, loving his adopted child, incarnated as Ushanas and gave the earth perfect laws. But these were disregarded and rejected in later ages, bringing about the loss among humans of their conscious connection with their spiritual parent and mentor. This was paralleled by certain dramatic changes affecting the planet Venus

itself, symbolized by the great trials undergone by Shukra when he strove to protect the *daityas* from the fighting gods. His great *tapas*, wherein he hung with his head downward and imbibed the smoke of chaff, is a striking penance symbolizing the great inclination of the axis of Venus, amounting to fifty degrees, and to its envelopment in eternal clouds.

It would be folly to place all one's hopes for deeper understanding of the cosmos on the visible sun and planets and "thereby compress lofty philosophic concepts of darkness and light into these familiar orbs". It is wise always to keep in mind that "there is an immense and immeasurable gap between the Divine Wisdom of the *Mahatmas* and the progressive formulations of modern man". Occultism teaches that the visible planets are merely representations on our physical plane of their own septenary global chains. The *Dhyanis* or regents of the planets overbrood each of the seven Races of our planet, their physical natures coming from the planet of their particular *Dhyani*. The Third Race was specifically overbrooded by Lohitanga, who is Venus-Shukra. When Shukra cursed Vishnu to be born on earth as the seven races for the good of the world, he was forcing that solar god (who had been an ally of Brihaspati) to bring down, through the planetary regents, his spiritual potential. These complicated influences between the sun, the planets and earth take place on septenary levels involving Races, and are made more complex by the fact that each globe of each planetary chain goes through seven Rounds. Venus is said to be in her last Round even though great philosophers like Plato, associated with the wisdom of Venusians, are called Fifth Rounders. But which of the globes of Venus is one referring to when assigning it its last Round?

Who or what are 'Venusians'? What sort of beings are indicated by this name? The idea of physical humanoid life on the visible Venus is certainly fraught with difficulties. Long before science understood anything about its chemical makeup, observers were aware that the planet was far less adapted for human life than the earth. Its seasons were recognized as far more extreme, its changes

of temperature more sudden, and its exposure to the heat and light of the sun much greater. But this does not necessarily mean that no form of life is possible, even on the physical plane. How can we assume that there existed neither plant nor animal in the infinity of space before the protozoic formations here on earth? One must not insist on using the conditions for life that exist here on earth as a standard for the entire solar system and sidereal worlds beyond. The great early scientist Flammarion made a bold assertion which has never been disproved, namely that on several worlds inorganic and organic life had evolved a great variety of beings, constituted according to the physiological state of each inhabited globe. The prerequisites for life, according to modern scientists, are liquid water and an atmosphere in which complex carbon-based chemistry can proceed. They also insist that these conditions must have lasted long enough for a specific degree of complexity to have evolved. Apart from the earth in our solar system, planetary conditions which would permit the development of long-term bodies of liquid water are not specifically known to exist, thus prompting many scientists to question the probability of extra-terrestrial life. But we should ask what is meant by 'life', and we ought to consider that we may be farther from 'aliens' in evolutionary time than in physical space. Even if another planet started evolving at the same time as ours and possessed the biochemistry necessary for producing creatures like us, such creatures are not likely to be in a phase of evolution similar to ours.

Contemporary science defines life as the most complex state of organization of matter known in the universe. Living systems achieve this state by using energy that they extract from their environment and converting it into forms that are characteristic of themselves. This is what science calls metabolism, a requisite which forms, along with growth and reproduction, the necessary ingredients of life. An exacting application of these criteria actually excludes such remarkable possibilities as the virus or the crystal. If, however, one probes the origin of the physical matter involved in these processes, one arrives at a contemplation of the elements, which are largely the by-products of nuclear reactions in stars and



galaxies forming the early universe. All the heavier atoms in our solar system were created inside a generation of stars that evolved and died before the birth of the sun and planets. By embracing a broader and more subtle concept of life, one can readily see that on this physical as well as on more ethereal planes we are truly children of the universe.

Matter, spiralling out from its solar source, differentiated and formed into increasingly complex combinations in an expansion and gradual definition of form. Like the embryo developing in the human womb, it evolved specific physiological organs and members, providing the indwelling intelligence with the subtle and grosser sheaths it would require to express itself. Looked at from this perspective, planets can be seen as specialized arenas or 'organs' functioning as parts of one system which is in reality One Being, One Logoic Intelligence manifesting as a particular expression of the one unchanging Deity. The material utilized for this expression evolves from primordial substance, the direct emanation of *daiviprakriti*, which finds its gradually concretizing veils worn by entities whose function is to bear Logoic Intelligence forth into full self-conscious manifestation. The philosopher Kant wrote of such a primordial substance when he attempted to explain how primitive impulses were imparted to planets through a universal matrix or cause.

Modern science addresses this question obliquely when it holds that the isotropic nature of the universe can only be understood in terms of a simultaneity of beginning. By analogy, consider two runners who are prepared to run in two separate stadia. One starting gun is used to start them, but they are seen to start simultaneously before they could have possibly heard the report of the pistol. How did the runners know when to start? In like manner, the observed homogeneity of the universe implies that all parts must have commenced expanding in unison, and yet science knows of no physical agency through which different regions could have communicated so as to synchronize their histories. Without knowledge of the intelligence which operates through, fecundates

and informs ethereal and gross matter, this mystery will never be solved. Nor will the role of Venus as *sol alter* and *alter ego* of the earth be understood.

By carefully observing the orbit of Venus, Galileo noted that the planet was sometimes in front of, sometimes in back of, and sometimes east or west of the sun. He also noticed the phases revealed in these positions, and that when the planet's illuminated crescents were narrowest, Venus seemed seven times larger than when it was fully illuminated, a phenomenon only explainable in terms of the planet's revolution around the sun. Thus Venus played a key role in reawakening the minds of the Middle Ages to the fact of a heliocentric universe. This marked an important reassertion of enlightened knowledge over superstition and opened the way for an increasingly rational study of our solar system. Since then, though much of the occult knowledge of the ancient astronomers and philosophers has remained obscure, a good deal of descriptive information about Venus has been accumulated. We know that it is one-fourth nearer to the sun than the earth, but that it is very similar to the latter in size and mass. Thus it is assumed that there has been a similarity of formation and that Venus has an interior chemistry and structure much like that of the earth. Venus has the slowest rotation of all the planets (243 earth days), which is slower than its revolution (224.7 days), giving it a day which is ten percent longer than its year (i.e., 8 months to 7 1/2 earth months). In addition, the direction of its rotation is retrograde, opposite to its orbital motion, so that the sun rises in the west and sets in the east.

The surface of Venus is marked by broad plains which appear to be old and static and to have few craters. Highlands rising above the plains cover perhaps twenty-four percent of the planet, culminating in great peaks loftier than Mount Everest and abruptly dropping into canyons up to sixteen hundred kilometres long. Surface material gathered by Russian spacecraft suggests a mainly basalt composition, similar to that on our ocean floors, with some granitic material in the plains. Many of the rocks photographed are smooth, showing strong evidence of erosion and corrosion except at sites of recent volcanic activity. The frequent lightning on Venus is

believed to accompany this vulcanism and there may be many active magmas under the high peaks. The great rifts suggest a crustal crumpling due to poorly developed plate motions, a condition attributable to the thick lithosphere of Venus, which inhibits plate tectonic disruption of the surface but allows for volcanic eruptions.

There is no liquid water on Venus now and very little in the atmosphere. Long ago it may have had the same amount as the earth, but this was decomposed by solar radiation and heat, the hydrogen escaping into space and the oxygen being absorbed in the surface rocks. Another factor bearing upon this is that Venus may have accreted from hydrocarbon-rich planetesimals having about one-quarter as much water as the earth's planetesimals. The available water would then have simply been consumed in oxidizing the hydrocarbons and, perhaps, the iron minerals. The lighter hydrogen would have escaped into space after these reactions, leaving the carbon dioxide-rich atmosphere behind. On earth, there was water left over after this process, but on Venus there was none. The subsequent dryness of its atmosphere raised the melting-point of the planet's mantle, leading to the development of its thick lithosphere and resulting in a surface which is reminiscent of our globe but not as well developed.

The atmosphere of Venus is dramatically different from that of its adopted planet. The mean temperature near the surface is four hundred and eighty degrees Celsius, increasing to a high of eight hundred and ninety degrees. Early probes which landed on its surface and operated for less than one hour are believed to have been silenced by heat and the overwhelming air pressure which exceeds by ninety times that existing at sea level on earth. The high temperatures create a 'greenhouse effect' comprised of thick clouds which enshroud Venus, forming a deck stretching from thirty-one to sixty-eight kilometres in altitude. At their highest level they are whipped by winds of one thousand kilometres per hour, while an eerie lull prevails beneath them near the planet's surface. Solar radiation which manages to reach through them joins the planet's internal heat and the gases upheaved through vulcanism to

produce an atmosphere dominated by carbon dioxide. Near the surface, a carbon dioxide and sulphur compound is formed which, when carried to high altitudes, interacts with traces of water and oxygen in the clouds to form droplets of sulphuric acid. The surface air beneath this is heavy, having a density about fifty times that of earth, and appears something like a very cloudy day on our planet. Powerful lightning strikes through the clouds near the huge volcanic peaks, and creates an environment of oppressive intensity and lethal potentiality, suggesting little that humans would find hospitable. The beauty of Venus seems much more safe and attractive from a distance, where an admirer can observe a curious, unaccounted-for feature which presents itself as a faint glow on the dark side of the planet. This is especially noticeable when the planet's dark side is directed towards the earth, revealing a coppery-coloured effulgence poetically referred to as the 'ashen light'.

On earth the temperature has permitted water to condense as a liquid, but on Venus the strong carbon dioxide greenhouse effect, plus the planet's initially warmer condition, raises the temperature so high that the evolutionary path of water misses the liquid state. Instead, it joins with the elements of carbon dioxide and sulphur to produce an acid that could have deadly effects upon life as we know it. But it is the presence of the sulphuric acid clouds around Venus which is responsible for its reflection of eighty percent of the light that it receives from the sun, a phenomenon which may be viewed as corresponding symbolically to the occult process whereby Venus gives one-third of its light to earth. From this point of view, the element sulphur assumes important significance in the occult as well as the physiological relationship between Venus and its adopted child. We know that sulphur is an oxidizing as well as a reducing agent and that all metals except gold and platinum combine with it to form sulphides. In alchemy, sulphur is associated with the spirit, quicksilver or mercury with the soul, and salt with the body. As spirit, sulphur is the masculine, fiery principle associated with dryness, hardness, unification, rigidity and theoretical knowledge. Also, sulphur fixes the volatile mercury

(represented by the planet Mercury) "but requires the interplay between the two generative forces as it remains limited and unfruitful until dissolved by quicksilver into living understanding". Alchemically, sulphur and quicksilver, acting upon each other, were believed to become the volatile spirit, a far cry from the brimstone assigned to the devil by Christianity.

The alchemists taught that sulphur relates to quicksilver, as the male to the female, to form the first principles of metals. In ordinary metals (other than gold and platinum), sulphur has not fully done its work of purifying and refining, and so they combine with it and are acted upon by it. This refining role is demonstrated practically by sulphuric acid, which is used at some stage in the development of almost all industrial products and can act as a refining catalyst, as in the formation of ether from alcohol. Integration and disintegration in the cosmos proceed together with the differentiation and synthesis of consciousness. The role played by sulphur and sulphuric acid in this process is that whereby metals are dissolved and formed in a series of reactions corresponding analogously to the way in which consciousness is broken up, dies and is reborn. They represent, on the physical plane, the instantiation of divine intelligence in matter and its subsequent purification in the rational and intuitive levels of the human mind. From the perspective of great beings living on another globe of the Venus chain, the role of sulphur as a purifier takes on an even more mysterious meaning. It is said that they have been involved in a process which finds an analogy in the conditions prevailing on the visible globe. The remarkable chemical conversion that has taken place in the history of Venus and created its vesture of sulphuric acid clouds can be seen as the manifestation of the residual effect of a process which has taken place on a far more ethereal plane. The sulphuric clouds are thus a vesture left behind as the result of an invisible meta-chemical activity involving beings operating on a less concretized globe of the Venusian chain.

In a vast process of *tapas*, these Venusians gave up the 'water' which would have enabled the further differentiation of vestures to

occur and chose instead the crucible of their own refinement. The intense heat of their efforts, the volcanic explosions of lower nature which they endure, the lightning shafts of self-imposed discipline – all these austerities leave behind a planet which seems undeveloped and hostile to ordinary human consciousness. The visible planet is thus only the effect of an invisible mystery, but not an inconsequential one. The great beings of Venus have not abandoned the manifest Venus any more than they have abandoned the earth. The penance they have undertaken is not for the sake of themselves but on behalf of the whole solar system, and particularly on behalf of humanity. Therefore, they remain involved, hanging like Shukra with their heads enshrouded in the smoke of chaff, the sulphuric clouds, so that they can continue to nurture the earth with a highly refined and awakened light of the sun. They have 'fallen' into this involvement, manifesting the highest form of compassionate love, and they rise through the inspiration and growth of their adopted child.

Joining the brilliant light reflected from its clouds, the coppery glow of the ashen light of Venus casts its soft effect upon the world, transmitting the indigo ray of higher manasic intelligence, which is sharp and pure and penetrating. It has the power to reawaken, as it did Galileo, and to channel its spiritually charged electricity to the minds and hearts of earthlings. As her enormously long days unfold, the retrograde rotation of Venus gathers the centrifugal energy beamed from the sun through Mercury and converts it into the centripetal force of *mahat*. In this way the *buddhi* of Mercury is made masculine and active. It blends with the feminine substance of Venus as *shakti*, rendering her a storehouse of *mahat*, the very substance of which she beams into the atmosphere of the earth. For *mahat* too must have its vesture, and Venus, as *shakti* of the sun, gives it thrust and direction and mass with the fabric of her being. Thus, divine ideation passes into objectivity through her, the understanding of the Builders is opened and creation takes place. Among humans this occurs when the germ of divinity in the heart opens like a lotus to illuminate the mind. From time to time a sprinkling of such beings are born on earth, possessing an

extremely refined creativity and abstract intelligence. They represent a foreshadowing of what is yet to come for humanity. Like Plato, they are Fifth Rounders, individuals for whom the showing of love is a sharing of the Good, a universal and unselfish emanation filled with compassion.

We of the Fifth Race should have come to reflect this potential far more than we have. We have not gained sufficient control over the emotions tied up with the lower vestures to realize what has been possible. Only a few poets and thinkers have touched the garment hem of Venus and revealed to the world a glimpse of love manifesting at the highest kriyashaktic level. If one attempts to awaken oneself and subdue the lower vestures of Aphrodite, with all their convoluted patterns of froth and passion, one can begin to bring into action the force of Venus as *sol alter* and tap the kriyashaktic potential within. Such creativity goes far beyond the personal. It is suffused with compassion and nurtured with complete manasic awareness. It combines Fohatic and shaktic power from above and blends together the head and the heart, filling the vestures with a sense of liberated joy and wonder. It is the gift of Venus, one that can be fully accepted when the purification is complete and when one is fit to look upon the face of true universal Beauty. Until then, human beings gaze upon Venus and feel her beauty burgeoning in the vast indigo sea over which she reigns. They feel her presence in the early pre-dawn, throbbing in the electrical currents igniting their minds and awakening their souls, and they worship her with a sense of approaching enlightenment, with a glimpse into a brilliant promise shrouded in a dark, mysterious sky.

In a vast indigo sea  
 You rise, pulsating . . .  
 Sending shafts of luminosity  
 Inflaming the heart,  
 Igniting the mind.

*Hermes*, February 1989

Helen Valborg

# THE MOON

The moon passes along the curve of its nocturnal orbit, dimly lighting the darkened world with its uncertain lustre. Its fullness probes the shadow and fixates the wandering heart, only to shrink away in darkness, casting off its open glow. Oh, inconstant moon! Artemis of hopeful waxing; Selene of lighted face; Hecate's dark foreboding with the waning of the whole. Each phase falters and matures into the next, bringing growth and early promise to a dark, celestial grave.

In a sense, the whole of nature is a symbol made up of complex symbolic aspects, each of which offers a pregnant clue to the understanding of the whole. Such symbolic aspects obtrude themselves upon human consciousness. We do not choose them any more than we choose our gods. Whatever fascinates us and holds our attention has within it the power that the Polynesians call *mana*. The values we attach to symbols may lose their mystery as we settle various levels of their definition, but the symbol remains a representative of a deeper truth. Men who worship the moon, fear it or measure their lives by it, may be closer to sensing its hidden truth than those empiricists who have set conceptual limits upon its function in the physical solar system. For both, it remains an enigma largely understood in terms of its effects. Others may intuit its deeper role in the scheme of things and trace out its secrets in the workings of nature itself.

Throughout the world the young moon is believed to bring increase, causing seeds to germinate and plants to grow. For millennia men working the soil have planted their crops with the waxing moon. They chose this time for shearing so that the new wool would grow quickly. Around their necks and at their brows they wore the crescent moon. They engaged in great wars and embarked upon perilous journeys when its curved radiance graced the heavens. To this day, many peoples herald its youth and



promise with gifts saying, as do the Finno Ugrics, "Be greeted, new moon; to me health, to thee a whole loaf!"

The moon's changing faces have long been watched and studied, and myriad magical practices mark its phases as they fluctuate to aid or menace mankind. The ancient Akkadians gave the moon the name 'Saba' in recognition of each new quarter within the twenty-eight day lunar cycle. According to *Isis Unveiled*, it is on the seventh day, or Sabbath, that the Adepts of the Secret Science meet as they have met for thousands of years to become agents of the occult powers of nature, linking the practice of the greatest divine magic with the changes of the moon. Not all lunar magic, however, reflects this larger wisdom and many sects emphasize protective ritual or astral travel, if not overt black magic. The approach to the moon is beset with dangers, for through these regions of ghosts and water lies the lunar way of shamans who move in trance through dim-lit halls opening onto visions and even madness. Many are the tales describing the hapless child or aging man who becomes imprisoned within the moon, swallowed up in its waning darkness. The dying moon either captures or diminishes and it is during this time that trees are felled and hay or grain is cut so that their severed stalks will wither and dry quickly. The *Satapatha Brahmana* suggests that when the moon is dark it comes to earth and waits in the places of sacrifice. Then men and women must fast and abstain for protection's sake even while they suffer the temptations of the moon's power. This is a time when sorcerers attempt to "draw down the dark moon" and "perform Hecate's suppers" at the forks of roads.

The eighteenth enigma of the Tarot depicts the moon as a silver disk bearing the outlines of a woman. The whole scene, with its juxtaposition of unexpected objects, illustrates the strength and the dangers of the world of imagination. Womankind is not only identified with the moon but also shown to be strongly influenced by its fluctuations. The solar nature of woman which is linked with growth and creation is, in fact, regulated by a cycle that corresponds precisely with that of the moon. Perhaps because of

this the moon is often called 'The Lord of Women' and some, like the Eskimo, believe that 'He' can impregnate a woman while she sleeps uncovered beneath 'His' full gaze. Many cultures, perceiving the relationship between plant growth and the lunar cycle, logically associate women with horticultural enterprises. Indeed, it is true that women tend to be the world's gardeners and men become involved only when animals come into the picture as they do when the plow is used in larger scale agriculture. Most of the horticultural societies in the world are matrilineal.

Many people have marked the connection between the cycle of the moon and that of women, and in many languages the word for the two is the same. In Mandingo the word *carro* serves for both while in the Congo it is *njonde*. In Armenian the word *amis* is used, while in Latin *mens* is the root of 'menses,' 'moon,' 'month,' 'measure' and 'mental.' The American Indian women simply refer to their menstrual cycle as their 'moon.' The moon cycle in women is thus biological but productive of effects which may be even more pronounced on a psychological or spiritual plane. So many cultures in the world observe segregative taboos regarding menstruating women as to suggest that such practices must have been universal at one time. This short monthly separation suggests an attempt to cope with the daemonic lunar effect women are believed to exercise, especially upon men, during this period. That men fear the lunar nature, both in themselves as well as in women, seems to be indicated in their almost universal desire not only to control women but to create social spheres which are exclusively male and which permit the 'rational' elements of their nature to dominate. The 'feelings' and 'intuitions' of women are seen as erratic, like the inconstant light of the moon itself, and it is widely believed that without the protection of rational structures the moon deity, in its daemonic form, can act upon men directly. This is supposedly quite different from the way in which its powers work in and through women. The lunar and the solar distinctly exist in all humans but their balance is understood, perhaps, only at a deeper level of consciousness. Symbols like the sun and the moon, male and female, weave a link between the conscious and unconscious mind,

between the rational or solar and the intuitional or lunar. According to the Jungian school of thought, "the ancient religions of the moon goddess represent the education of the emotional life . . . through initiation." By the practice of Hierogamos the initiated woman became the daughter of the moon, the pure embodiment of *Eros*, or what Jung called "psychic relatedness." This wholeness which lies potentially within woman includes all aspects of the generative principle in nature as well as the matrix through which it operates. It reaches back to the deepest layers of racial history and surges forth within the pulsating cycles of nature. It is, perhaps, the task of women to understand and make human the untamed lunar power within, for it is woman who knows its nature most intimately.

At every point the symbolism of the moon suggests ambivalence. It is both good and evil, threefold in character, twofold in sex and related to subhuman as well as human form. In its evolution the moon deity seems to have originally been masculine and related to the vegetable kingdom. Later it was identified with animals which eventually became goddesses attended by animals or humans with animal masks. This suggests that the animals represent the 'spirit' of the subsequent goddesses and provide a clue in understanding their mixed daemonic and loving characteristics. The fierce and voluptuous beauty of the tiger symbolizes this well as was recognized by the early Chinese. The moon in its masculine form presents an equally great mystery. Its ambivalent character is strikingly reflected in the many manifestations of the great god Shiva as he represents universal forces of creation and destruction. In relation to the *Trimurti* of Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva, it is said that lunar magnetism generates, preserves and destroys life psychically as well as physically, but it is Shiva who generates and sustains through *yoga*, dances in the graveyard, and wears the crescent moon upon his brow.

In the older traditions of the East, occult lunar rites were based upon knowledge of physiology, psychology, mathematics and symbology. The worship of the moon was equivalent to that of nature and natural law itself for the moon was recognized as the

"guide of the occult side of nature," directly concerned with all the mysteries of the earth. In ancient times there were Lunar Dynasties which co-existed with the Solar and people came to be divided on the question of their relative significance as well as the sex of the moon. *The Secret Doctrine* tells us that it was this complex fundamental divergence of interpretation involving the overlap of the Fourth and Fifth Races that led to the epic events described in the great Mahabharatan War.

The moon, worshipped as the goddess Ishtar, was known as 'the Mother of all' or 'the Opener of the Womb.' She was the forerunner of Mary, moon goddess of the Catholic Church, who is often shown adorned with a crescent moon on her crown and a star-studded veil borrowed from the Egyptian goddess Isis. As mother, the moon gives birth to a son who in turn becomes her husbandman. Thus Isis gave birth to Osiris who, in becoming her divine spouse, completed the pattern whereby the son becomes his own father. In his descent into and birth out of lunar nature, the son lives to die and be resurrected as the immortal sun – husbandman to the moon. It is this sacred symbolic mystery which was distorted and concretized in the ancient Greek story of Oedipus and later grossly materialized by Freud. This sacred resurrection or rebirth linked with the immortal sun is symbolized by the ever recurring new crescent moon, the emblem of the hero, the crest of Lord Shiva.

In occult philosophy the moon is referred to as the *Parent of Earth*, the *Giver of Life to the Globe*, standing to earth as the sun does to the solar system. For this reason, it is said, "the liquid portion of our globe ever strives to raise itself up to its parent." Perhaps one could say that the moon attempts to draw upon earthly moisture, having given over her own as life passed from her to the earth chain. There are rills along the edges of the vast lunar maria and long cracks that appear to be the product of erosion but are thought to be due to cooling. Faults and many other signs of violent 'moon quakes' and eruptions mark the hemisphere of the moon facing the earth. Interestingly, there is a relative lack of maria and signs of lava flow on the far side of the moon which, according to mythological

accounts, is 'smiling' at the sun. Perhaps the physical 'scars' on the earth side of the moon relate to a prolonged throwing out of waves of life forms and a subsequent pulsation of attraction and expulsion that is bound to occur between any life-giving body which is dying and its progeny which is struggling to establish its own equilibrium.

Ancient teachings reveal that the wheel of the earth is regulated by the spirit of the moon through its waters. The earth, like any offspring, seems to be receiving the sustained guidance of its parent while it is yet a child. The moon, along with the sun, provides the main force that moves the poles in the precession of the equinoxes, and through its gravitational attraction it distorts the shape of the earth which yields immediately to the tide-raising forces. Modern science, while still insisting that the moon is approximately coeval with the earth, is, none the less, moving closer to occult teachings by recognizing that at one time the moon was much closer to the earth than it now is. Calculations based on ancient records of solar eclipses, as well as direct observations, show that our day is increasing in length by .001 seconds every century. It is believed that during the Devonian Period, four hundred million years ago, tides on the earth were perhaps a mile high, continuously affecting the entire topography of the globe, and that our day was twenty-two hours long, corresponding to a lunar month of twenty-one days. In examining this from the perspective that the earth is 'child' of the moon, one can see that the parent has been exerting an albeit slowly diminishing influence upon its offspring. To paraphrase *The Secret Doctrine*, the moon has given to the earth everything but her corpse. She is the shadow dragged after the new body into which her living principles have been transfused. But like all corpses she is dangerous, the particles of her decaying body being full of active and destructive life. She is dead but living. Astronomers say she has no weather, no clouds, rain or air and therefore has no atmospheric sound. They say a spider web stretched across a dim recess in a lunar cave would remain perfect and unchanged for millions of years, and yet, occult science teaches, she is dangerous. The physical moon may not have physical sound but she speaks

through her disintegrating astral matrix to the entire astral plane of this globe. Men who suffer lunacy and feel the pull backward in evolution away from future growth know her dangers well. She provides the rhythm of growth but not the eternal goal to which it tends.

The lunar chain is inferior to the earth chain and it is on the latter that the monads of lunar ancestors have to become 'men' so as to reach a plane of higher conscious activity. These Lunar *Pitris* passed through the mineral, vegetable and animal forms in order to clothe themselves in the nature of the newly formed earth chain. They represented the human element for the first three and a half Rounds on this globe, but Nature unaided cannot evolve self-conscious existence and the *Manasaputras* or Solar *Pitris* had to descend into these bodies and light them up. This awesome 'descent,' in a sense, is still in progress, but its initial occurrence was the inspiration for the mysterious triple symbol of Fish-Sin-Soma which represents the Avatar falling into generation. It also relates to the great 'War in Heaven' during which the turbulent powers in Chaos are brought into order by the Solar gods. This 'War' is initiated by Soma, the moon, who carries away Tara, wife of Brihaspati, and thereby becomes the 'illegitimate' father of Buddha-Mercury, Hermes, or Wisdom. Soma, being sovereign of the vegetable world and representative of early lunar waves of evolution arriving on the earth chain, thus links Wisdom, through initiation (represented by Tara), with a physical body. Only after the 'War' does Soma make an alliance with the Solar forces.

This pattern is echoed in the beliefs concerning the moon goddesses who give birth to sons whose sojourns on the physical plane lead through death to ultimate resurrection. The celestial Soma should be distinguished from the terrestrial. He is related cosmically to the mind as was suggested by the Latin word *mens*, the root of 'moon,' as well as '*menses*' and 'mind.' In the *Aitareya Upanishad* it is taught that King Soma is the symbol of Ananda from which the mental being of man is drawn. He is a lunar deity born from the sense-mind in universal *Purusha* and is expressed in man

as his sense-mentality. The secret delight (*Ananda*) of existence is translated into physical consciousness experienced through sensation. It is said that this delight or 'wine' of Soma is concealed in "the growths of the earth, the waters of existence, and in our physical beings." This essence is so powerful that only those "baked in the fire" of suffering and experience can assimilate it and accommodate the overflowing, violent ecstasy it brings. The 'wine' must be purified with the strainer (*pavitra*) which has been spread out wide in the 'seat of heaven' to receive it, *tapas pavitram vitatam divas pade*. Its fibres are made from the purified mental, emotional and heart consciousness won through *tapas*. Its seat in heaven is the realm of pure mental being.

The fibres of the strainer are tempered and made strong by the heat of the higher purpose of the *Manasaputra* within man. Through their cleansing agency the diffusive vital force of Soma can be activated in an upward-tending direction. Man must tend the progress of the lunar within nature like a shepherd his flock, because he himself is that nature as well as being its source. For this reason he cannot bypass the lunar and establish an independent 'alliance' with the solar. It must be remembered that it was *Soma* who 'found' the light of the sun and made it shine. Though he is not the legitimate father of that light, it is through his moisture that its lightning beam' could strike the earth and bring to it 'fire.' This beam which lights up the moon is the *Sushumna* Ray of the sun. It is the occult force in *Soma* and in his 'wine' or essence, and it is the vital spiritual force in man. For this reason man can truly worship the moon as transmitter of life, and, if he tarries not in the lunar 'graveyards' of the world, he can sustain an attitude of balance, acting in and through the lunar while focusing his eye upon the sun.

The 'wine' of *Soma* is within and around us whether we recognize it or not, and sooner or later it must be purified by the 'heavenly strainer.' Though we attempt to avoid *tapas*, suffering itself will always catch us out and tug at our sleeve until we face it squarely. Instead of permitting thoughts and emotions to contract and quiver

in their attempts to defend us from pain and excess shock, we must try to extend them out freely, with the strength to receive and convert into ecstasy all contacts with life. One must "bake in the fire" until he can accommodate the overflowing power of *Soma*.

This is at the heart of the symbolic lunar initiation whereby the worshipper becomes the 'child' of the moon goddess and, through knowledge of her, becomes her husbandman. The Self is the fruit of the knowledge of Isis, the fruit of the union between Isis and Osiris, Eros and the Logos. The man who accomplishes this within his heart and mind raises up the crescent moon of offering within his brow and resolves the 'War in Heaven.' The woman who accomplishes this within the mystery of her ten-gated being becomes a mother of solar light. Thus in both man and woman the 'Queen of Night' may assume her rightful position at the side of her Solar Lord.

*Hermes*, September 1976

Helen Valborg



# MARS

*This royal throne of kings, this sceptered isle.*

*This earth of majesty,*

*This seat of Mars.*

O shield-bearers of Hellas, embattled kings and warring nations, which of you has worshipped the god Mars better than the House of Thebes? Which of you has known the strife so pitilessly visited upon this lineage, so relentlessly persistent from the time of Jo's flight into Asia, right through the reign of her great grandson Kadmos and his issue? Brother to Europa, who suffered the harassments of Zeus, the young Kadmos wandered the ancient world until he came to a sanctuary where he sought to win his destiny through sacrifice to Athene. To fulfil this desire, he learnt that he must bring water from a spring jealously guarded by a dragon-child of Ares, the Greek name for the god Mars. He slew the dragon, and seizing its teeth out of the great gaping mouth, he scattered them broadcast like seeds, which sprang up after one season as a host of armed men called Spartoi ("the Scattered"). With these dauntless warriors at his command, Kadmos founded the fabled city of Thebes and established a great centre for the worship of Ares. Smiling benevolently upon these achievements, Zeus crowned his success by giving to him in marriage the divinely born Harmonia, daughter of Ares and Aphrodite. But little of the quality associated with her name would prevail in the line she and her husband were destined to further. Their children were mostly daughters, including the lamentable Agave, who married one of the Spartoi and mothered the arrogant Pentheus, whom she would one day tear to pieces whilst in the throes of a dionysiac ecstasy. Some of her sisters were driven mad or their spouses fearfully murdered, whilst her brother died prematurely, to be followed to the grave quickly by his son. Nor was this the end to the woes which plagued this lineage of Ares worshippers. Soon to follow was the tragedy of Oedipus and the tyranny of Kreon, which resulted in the ruthless

and unjust deaths of Polyneikes, Etiokles and Antigone, who spent her last agonizing hours encased in stone.

Strife and pestilence follow like a plague in the wake of Ares, and yet are accompanied by creation and sacrifice. To the ancient Assyrians he was Nergal, god of death and warfare, whom they nonetheless called the Great Hero. The Romans named him Mars and placed him on the highest pedestal of worship as the source of their martial energy, ensuring the continued expansion of their empire. By whatever names he has been known throughout the Indo-European world, he has been depicted as an armed hero bearing a sword, a whip, a spear or an arrow. His attributes typify that which is positive, masculine, active, passionate and courageous. He is both feared and praised as an ideal, the source of death and creation alike. As Mars he is the offspring of Jupiter; as Ares, the son of Zeus and Hera. The Greeks worshipped him as the god of war and strife but his name takes its origin from the root  $\alpha\varrho$ , which is also to be found in  $\alpha\varrho\epsilon\tau\eta$ , indicating the first notion of goodness – that of manhood and bravery in war.

This paradoxical mixture of elements reached a pinnacle of expression amongst the Romans, who began their old calendar with the month dedicated to Mars (March) and the rebirth of life-energy. They celebrated new life even as they made offerings to Mars for success in killing and conquest on the eve of going off to war. A portion of the spoils was dedicated to him and his most famous temple was known as Mars Ultor, Mars the Avenger. The Campus Martius (Field of Mars) was the open space outside the gates of the ancient city of Rome where men assembled under arms and practised military skills. Sacred war dances were also performed there each spring by the priests of Mars. What had once been an agricultural deity associated with spring and regeneration became increasingly the champion of the battleground. The Romans had gradually turned from farming to war and they brought with them their God of the Borderlands lying between the farmsteads and the wilds. Now the "borderland" over which he reigned had come to be an ever-expanding perimeter of a vast empire.

Though powerful, the Roman Empire was not the greatest the world has ever known. Daniel Webster wrote of "a power which has dotted over the surface of the whole globe with her possessions and military posts, whose morning drumbeat, following the sun, and keeping company with the hours, circles the earth with one continuous and unbroken strain of the martial airs of England". Whilst not overtly worshipping Mars, the builders of such dominions certainly mastered his arts and placed the warring soldier uppermost as an ideal of courage and manhood. Possessing "an eye like Mars, to threaten and command", the hero has been envisaged time and again, leading to an almost irresistible glorification of war. The deeply entrenched human instinct to glorify war is possibly rooted in an intuition that the spirit of moral greatness alone conquers all partisan claims. Perhaps it is even more fundamental and subliminal. It may be that the human race shares a dim awareness of an ancient belief identifying blood with the first bloodshed of primordial conception, an idea translated only secondarily to refer to the bloodshed of war.

The translation links the polar opposites of creation and death and echoes the arcane conception that creation emerges only through an original sacrifice, and that its product can be preserved only through periodic sacrifice and recurrent war. Oddly enough, the twin-peaked mountain on the planet Mars which bears the name Janus is an apt symbol of inversion between the upper invisible world and the lower world of forms. The intercommunication between them involves a titanic conflict between life and death on the threshold of primordial order. It is the old notion that every life demands a death and thus lays the basis for the unspoken assumptions behind constant sacrifice and inescapable war. Of course, this involves an inversion in consciousness analogous to the translation alluded to earlier, but from the perspective of creation and death viewed as two sides of the same coin, Mars may be considered in terms of the grim necessity of bloodshed in Nature and the cosmos.

Astrologically, Mars governs Aries and Scorpio, the burgeoning and disintegration of strength. These zodiacal signs mark the beginning and the end of each year. Aligned with birth, Mars, like Venus, is seen as beneficent. Aligned with death, he is the evil counterpart of Venus, the lord of the ecliptic, the borderland, the balancing line of adjustment between the opposites. Ancient Egyptians referred to the planet Mars as the Star of Death, and this is echoed in the broader Semitic reference to the Death Spreader. The Pleiades are the celestial weapons of Mars in the ruthless decimation of mankind, but they also aid him in its protection. This is vividly portrayed in the Puranic tales of the Krittikas, who nursed Karttikeya (the Hindu Mars) and clothed him in time and form.

The begetting of Karttikeya was made possible through Lord Shiva and the creative power of Parvati, one aspect of Shiva's consort and counterpart. Karttikeya is the "spurt of sperm", the leap or descent of spirit, which is shed or split. He was received by Agni (the only one of the gods capable of enduring contact with the burning seed), who took the seed in his mouth and sought relief from its heat by cooling himself by a lake where the Krittikas (the wives of the Saptarishis) were bathing. Agni made of himself an accommodating blaze around which they could take warmth after their bath and was thus able to pass the fiery semen to them through their opened pores. Their husbands were not pleased with this and, abandoning them, left the Krittikas to run to the peak of snowy Himavat to rid themselves of the burning seed. It fell into Ganga, who rolled it up on a bank of arrow reeds, through which it emerged as a beautiful boy. Thus Karttikeya was born of fire (Agni) and water, fire around a pool of water into which the seed was symbolically dropped. The seed falling in the centre signifies the beginning of cycles, the commencement of objective existence suggested fundamentally in Karttikeya's name, which comes from the root *karta*, meaning "separation of existence" or "cutting off from the togetherness of the parent's domain".

With the example of Karttikeya, the paradoxes of Mars increase, for Shiva's offspring is a celibate and yet the personification of generation and the springs of life. He is a Kumara who preferred the curse of incarnation rather than witness the misery of the shadows, but is said to have been precipitated into matter in order to halt the activities of the demon serpent Taraka. By killing him, Karttikeya became the prototype of the dragon-slayers, a mystery to do with the fact that, as chief of the Rudras (the mysterious beings holding the sacred fires, the most arcane potencies of Nature), he also signifies the central life force ruling over and controlling all lesser life forces operating in Nature and within the vestures of human souls. He is also closely connected to *Kama-deva* or *Eros*, the primeval desire which is the germ of mind, connecting non-entity with entity, and which is the energy behind downward desires. If Mercury, Venus and Mars constitute the sacred triangle of involution, then Mars is its sharp angle, pointing downward, dipping most deeply into the waters of manifestation, marshalling the mental troops of the most volatile and irrational elements in subtle Nature in the service of monadic evolution.

Orbiting in the outermost region of the inner solar system, Mars flanks the earth on its left, so to speak, while Venus revolves on its right. The red planet keeps in its orbit about 2.17 astronomical units from the sun, limiting the inside extension of the asteroid belt which separates the inner from the outer solar system. The eccentricity of the orbit of Mars is almost five times that of the earth, and the planet completes its circuit in twice the time it takes our globe to make its rotation (*pradakshina*) around the solar orb. But because Mars is one and a half times further away from the sun than is the earth, its day is similar in length to our own. The tilt of its axis is also similar to the earth's, and observers of the planet thought for a long time that its seasons could be traced in shifting patterns of vegetation in its northern and southern hemispheres. It is recognized now that these are periodic changes of the bright and dark regions of the planet's soil, brought about by many small dust storms and an annual major wind storm obscuring and shifting about a large part of the surface. This great storm starts when Mars

is close to its perihelion, beginning at about the same place in its southern hemisphere and spreading up around the globe. The surface temperature, which exceeds freezing only on the warmest days, now increases under the influence of an atmosphere which can heat up as much as fifty degrees Kelvin (one hundred and twenty-two degrees Fahrenheit), due to absorption of solar radiation by the dust. Normally, however, the atmosphere is cold, dry and very thin, with clouds and ice only at the poles. The surface of Mars in general is also cold and dry, its water frozen at the poles, leaving vast arid plains to the north and south of them carved with enormous dry riverbeds.

Mars is circled by two satellites, Phobos and Deimos (Fear and Panic), whose existence was predicted by Johann Kepler in 1610 on the basis of his mathematical calculations concerning the progression of the solar system. They revolve around a planet which is half the size of the earth and has a reddish surface owing to oxidized iron minerals marked by lines tracing the history of vertical plate movements. A further vertical distinction can be found in a comparison of the northern hemisphere, composed mostly of smooth lava flood plains, and the mountainous southern hemisphere with its many craters. The source of this distinction is not known to modern scientists, who now tend to leave their hypotheses about the unknown a little more open-ended than earlier observers who developed elaborate theories about the canals on Mars which they believed were built in order to drain polar waters, but which turned out to be optical illusions. One feature, however, about which no one harbours any doubts is a remarkable mountain three times higher than Mount Everest and seven hundred kilometers wide at its base. It is the largest mountain known in the solar system and, together with others on Mars, comprises a mass so heavy that a crust much thicker than that of the earth is necessary to support it.

The gigantic planet Jupiter, which orbits outside the asteroid belt, exerts an influence on its neighbours, producing gradual changes in the earth's orbit and in the inclination and orientation of

its axis. Being closer than the earth to Jupiter, Mars experiences these effects even more, the periodic changes in its axis and in the shape of its orbit being far greater than those of our planet. From a mystical perspective, this relates to the idea that humanity cannot come under the direct influence of the regal and esoteric Jupiter until it has conquered greed, anger and craving. Meanwhile, Jupiter exerts a subtle influence through the mediation of Mars. It will act more directly to bring to light hidden aspects of science, philosophy and religion and the latent mental and psychic powers in man only in the future. It is intriguing to ponder how much Jupiter's physical effect upon Mars corresponds to this and has to do with its vertical plate movements and the differences noticeable between its northern and southern hemispheres. It is possible that its influence is partially responsible for the periods experienced every few million years by Mars when the climate is thirty degrees Kelvin (eighty-six degrees Fahrenheit) warmer than it is now and some of the polar ice and permafrost melts. Evidence of these periodic melts lies in the present-day dry riverbeds on the planet's surface which are up to thirty kilometers wide and hundreds of kilometers long and make the Amazon seem a paltry stream by comparison. In the belief that it was indeed water that carved out these channels, modern scientists call Mars, along with the earth, a water planet, one which, in the past, is thought to have had a "friendly" climate. It is held that such a climate could have once supported vegetation capable of releasing oxygen into the atmosphere through photosynthesis, thereby encouraging the development of more complex life forms.

Such are the generous speculations of modern science. But, one may pause to ask, on what basis do we think that water or other elements held to be the criteria for life on earth must also be the exact criteria for life elsewhere in the solar system? If one examines this question open-mindedly, one may come to discern the irony in such a geocentric perspective, especially after recalling how we have congratulated ourselves for centuries on having transcended the shrivelled geocentric theories of the Dark Ages. Instead of adopting a thoroughly heliocentric view of the solar system,

however, we persist in applying geocentric criteria when addressing larger questions about the presence of life outside the earth. From a truly heliocentric perspective things may look entirely different, with radically different criteria arising. The very notions held regarding the nature of solids, liquids and gases may be altered. As an imaginative scientist of the last century suggested, "On Mercury, water would rank as one of the condensible gases; on Mars, as a fusible solid." One may take this further and examine it from a metaphysical heliocentric point of view, where the true Spiritual Sun is the invisible centre around which the cosmic hierarchies connected with *Buddhi*, *Manas* and the other principles revolve like planets. Then one might ask, "Is there life on *Buddhi*, life on *Manas*, etc.?" One might also wonder what place earth has in this design since man, the microcosm of the whole cosmos, finds his home there.

Behold Migmar, as in his crimson veils his "Eye" sweeps over slumbering Earth. Behold the fiery aura of the "Hand" of Lhagpa extended in protecting love over the heads of his ascetics. Both are now servants to Nyima, left in his absence silent watchers in the night.

*The Voice of the Silence*

Like silent watchers, all three planets – Mercury, Venus and Mars – orbit around the inner solar system on either side of the earth. Mercury and Venus relate symbolically to the intuitive immortal soul, whilst Mars represents forces propelling it into an incarnated and limited condition, the *karta* or "cutting off from the oneness of the parent's domain". Proclus put it succinctly when he wrote that Mars "is the source of division and motion, separating the contraries of the universe which he also perpetually excites, and immutably preserves, in order that the world may be perfect and filled with forms of every kind". He is not the ultimate source of motion but the focus, as it were, through which the Divine Breath throbs in the manifest world. The seed of Karttikeya enters through the doorway of the Pleiades into the galactic system and a sevenfold parthenogenesis takes place, starting a process of division which multiplies and occurs incessantly throughout the vast cycle



over which he broods. This requires the "disintegrating into the modification of two opposites for production", and it necessarily entails death as well as creation, sacrifice as well as growth and strength.

Mars carries forth the Fohatic, creative energy that lies at the very root of manifestation, and in ruling Aries and Scorpio, it marshals this primordial force which on the human level is good or evil depending on the motivation, use and level of concern for the *Agathon*, Universal Good. Aries signifies the serpentine fire which compels the ego to evolve. This is conveyed by the planetary influence of Mars and relates to the centrifugal state wherein the soul becomes a more individuated centre of force. The culmination of the combative phase in human evolution is reached in Scorpio, the watery, negative house of the red planet. Up to this point, the creative force had been acting externally, but now it becomes indrawn to form a mighty reservoir of energy needed in the latter half of the soul's pilgrimage. This brings the enlightened individual to the threshold of the great final battle where avidya and *trishna* (ignorance and thirst for sensation) must be slain for the gaining of conscious immortality. This final battle involves the timely self-limitation of Saturnian justice and the bond-breaking, centripetal influence of Uranus.

Aries marks the descent of spirit into matter, making of man a "living soul". This is an act of *vidya* (*gnosis*) converting to avidya (nescience), symbolized in the ram of sacrifice. Aries begins the year in the sense that it begins the first division of the twelve "hours" through which the soul must pass in the underworld. According to the Egyptian Book of Am Tuat, the journey through the dangerous realm of the watery dragon must be made before one rises up into that of Horus like an upsurge of water from a fountain. This journey is made time after time, through sleep and death, but also through incarnation in the world. Small cycles within vast cycles, the entire process encompasses a long struggle as the human soul strives to grow towards the light. The roots of the tree of this process of evolution are found in Aries and Scorpio. They are the

two poles of the influence of Mars. But the sap rising from these roots nurtures ignorance and craving as well as the heroic strength needed to slay them. The weapons of the Lord of the Battlefield of Life will either result in self-destruction or conquest of death, depending upon how they are perceived and used.

The colour of Mars is red, crimson as blood sacrifice or bloodshed on a battlefield. Water is the blood of the earth, the element connecting it with the generative gods such as Adam-Jehovah, Brahmā or Mars. Is there a corresponding relation between the planet Mars and the earth on the basis of water? The earth has water in liquid form in abundance, but that of Mars is frozen, locked up, to be released only every several million years. Is there an arcane significance to this which could provide a key to understanding larger cycles of generation taking place on our globe? Is the force of the seminal principle operating in the solar system focussed and released through Mars in impulsions expressed in the release of its frozen waters? Do these impulsions have any bearing upon the climatic changes on earth or the sudden disappearance of entire species, followed by the development of new lines of life forms? And what part does the powerful influence of Jupiter play in this scenario? The calculated periodic changes in the inclination of the axis of Mars, brought about by the effect of Jupiter, are ten times greater than the earth's. These inclinations alter the relationship between Mars and the earth, subjecting the latter to different exposures of the many faces of Mars.

In the Puranic myths, Karttikeya is depicted as having six heads, one for each of his "mothers" (the seventh Kritika remaining hidden). Mars turns these faces towards the earth in succession. Some of them are smooth lava plains bearing the marks of ancient explosions now quiescent, whilst others support gigantic weapon-like promontories whose volcanic apertures seem to be aimed and ready to fire. Some faces are pock-marked with craters and scarred with the wounds of bombardment and erosion; some take on the intense rosy glow of blood seeping close to the surface, promising excitement, fecundity and death. As the axis of Mars tilts, it exposes

different hemispheres, and with them the influences of creation and fusion alternate with those of sacrifice and strife. Even the vertical plate movements on the surface of Mars can be seen as representing shifts in the emphasis and character of alternating expressions of the central life force.

Karttikeya was born of the sweat and semen of Shiva and the earthly progenitors (the "mothers" who clothed him). The sweat of Shiva, though potent beyond all comparison with embodied elements, can be likened in its lower manifesting aspect to water or blood. In this sense, Karttikeya's birth is echoed in the Mosaic utterance that "it takes earth and water to create a human soul". Latter-day interpretations of the symbolism associated with the gods of generative powers drag such ideas down to the level of a perceived necessity involving the shedding of blood to gain life, even to the point of mixing it with the soil of the earth in the belief that such a mixture would engender new life and energy in the land. The water or blood of which Karttikeya was engendered is to earthly water or blood what the desire that first arose in It is to the craving of the senses. They are related but not to be equated with one another. Born without the intervention of woman, Karttikeya came into the world as Lohita the Red, the "First man". Like Mars, he became a god of war and bloodshed only secondarily, the primary idea of bloodshed associated with him having to do with an archetypal conception on a plane of far subtler motion and division. The first notion of goodness, associated with manhood and bravery in war expressed by the old Greeks in the word *ἀρετή*, relates back to this primordial conception rather than to the slaughter and strife represented by its etymological namesake, Ares, god of the House of Thebes. The force of desire operating in matter need not result in the inversions and repressions responsible for the ignorance and bloodshed so rampant in the world. The weapons of Mars are good or evil depending on who wields them. In like manner, the influence of the planet Mars upon the earth can be good or evil. It is not possible simply to wish away this potent force any more than one can wish the red planet away.

In coming into being, Karttikeya washed up on earth in the shara or kashi reeds used in ancient times as arrows and spears. Like his weapons, he was a reed, a narthex reed through which the flame of enlightenment descends. As such, he is the vesture of this flame which passes through the seven sections or chakras of the reed, awakening each centre as it touches it. In this way, the first man can be found in every human being, who, like a reed-vesture containing *chakra* nodules, is a miniature of the cosmos with its seven times seven *dvipas*. In man the *manipura chakra* lying between the lumbar and the navel is the centre wherein the fiery gastric juices of digestion and food processing lay the foundation for the life force. This is the seat of Karttikeya or Mars, whose energy promotes growth and differentiation within the human microcosm as in the greater cosmos. But it is also the field of Mars whereon *Fohat* gathers his forces and begins to march them through the higher chakras towards the Agni realm of creative contemplation. Thus those who have been cut off through fascination with the lower region of lunar forms are now indrawn into the primordial cosmic source of all light, life and energy.

The cutting off marks the first sacrifice of the central life force wherein the virgin Kumara, Karttikeya or Mars, marries and governs the energies operating within the world of differentiated forms. This enormous potency lends a seemingly inexhaustible energy to the lesser vital forces bound up with the vestures used by the lower mind and the five senses. As long as the body is alive, these seem to flourish and drive the consciousness of the deluded individual in myriad directions, sparking and exciting and separating it into endlessly changing forms. One can imagine the plight of the slavish glutton who lets himself be dominated by desires clamouring in the hollow pit of his stomach, convincing him that there is some secret ingredient, some unique morsel, which will satisfy the craving armies of elementals which have gained control over the communication network between the inner ruler and the outer persona. Such a desperate condition necessitates all-out warfare in order to depose the pretenders and place the conserved creative power of Mars in a position of complete control by the

immortal soul, the *Manasa*. Now the cutting off must take place in reverse. But instead of separating off from unity, the process involves cutting away from endlessly multiplying diversity and fragmentation in consciousness. Only by disentangling desire from the countless forms it can take can one purge it of selfishness and render it a worthy weapon for altruistic contemplation upon Universal Good and the supreme Godhead.

If this is true in relation to the individual, so too this can pertain to circles of ascetics dedicated to self-study and self-conquest in the service of humanity. Each seeker has to disentangle the desires extraneous to the sacred goal of human solidarity and see them very clearly for what they are. To permit these tangled skeins and objects of desire to obtrude themselves into one's separative consciousness so that they become mixed up with self-transcending motives and concerns is to weave an opaque shroud around one's powers of perception. Such a laggard soul will be unprepared for the decisive moment of choice when one crosses the borderland marking off the wild deserts of endless discontent from the verdant Field of Mars wherein the inward ascent is to take place. At this point, one needs to be well equipped and firmly disciplined to do battle with the legions of darkness and egotistic stagnation.

In sport, the finest athletes are those who are wholly concentrated upon the highest imaginable skill, stamina and morale they can bring to their endeavours. Each and every aspect of mind and body is focussed upon the task at hand. Every selfish desire they have ever indulged is now transmuted into a single-minded current of ideation focussed upon the motionless target of spiritual archery. Materialists refer to this as the "killer instinct", likening such a man to the tiger unwaveringly intent upon its prey or the owl who swoops unerringly to catch up its hopelessly fleeing meal. But this is not merely an irrational instinct. The positive power of Mars released by the morally courageous ascetic requires the persistent and patient training of the spiritual will. It involves the reinversion of the centrifugal process of division and proliferation downward and outward so that a kind of death of ego takes place to permit the

birth of the regenerated and purified self, ready to enlist in the Army of the Voice.

The procreative power of division and possession can thus be transmuted into the energy of altruism and the bliss of transcendence. But ceaseless sacrifice is needed to sustain the energy of selfless creativity and spiritual self-abnegation. The renunciation of lesser loves and longings, self-regarding hopes and goals, and the very sense of self is required for the spiritual ascent. Mars enters the world in sacrificial descent so that embodied forms of creation can unfold. Mars is thus born in man, igniting the creative aspects of mind and body. But he is merely a blind force, a weapon in the hands of an untutored child, unless his overlord's sweeping eye is fully in charge over the armies rightfully belonging to him. If men and women heroically struggle on the moral battlefield and take control over the lesser vital forces within, Mars is spiritually reborn, in harmonious relation with Venus and Mercury, with the wisdom of sacrificial love and the light of noetic insight.

On the muddy, blood-soaked battlefields of this globe, souls have often shown heights of moral courage far greater in magnitude than the mundane cause for which they risked their lives. It is as if they have been ignited and raised up to a level of love so purely motivated and perfectly focussed that their personal delusions fell by the wayside and they were fearlessly catapulted into the sacred tribe of selfless heroes. Some have died such a glorious death, others have lived to descend once again into the hopes and fears of worldly existence. But the spiritual warrior does not wait for the external call to battle. He begins the work of honing mind and will, thus preparing for accurate aim the concentrated energy of spiritual resolve. The neophyte may die on an earthly battlefield or of pestilence or old age, but none can run away from the real war, and its implacable demands of intelligent sacrifice. The heroism of terrene battles may be intuitively seen as educative, transcending the limits of the separate serf and the role-playing actors on the stage. We sense the deeper battle awaiting and are aware that in the

isolated act of heroism we have glimpsed what lies latent in all souls. We have glimpsed the radiant Mars within each person, rising up to the source and summit of wisdom, compassion and oneness of being.

*O Migmar, thy sweeping Eye of Wisdom  
Mirrors the circled door of the Mysteries  
By which the Divine Breath of Life  
Descended from Heaven to earth.*

*Hermes, March 1989*  
Helen Valborg

# JUPITER

*Is the dwelling place of God anywhere but in the earth and sea, the air and sky, and virtue? Why seek we further for deities? Whatever you see, whatever you touch, that is Jupiter.*

Lucan

One of the seven wonders of the ancient world, the colossal statue of Jupiter by Phidias rose to celebrate the celestial realm. His creative potency exulted in the generous expression of the sculptor's hands, though they produced only the palest reflection of his demiurgic rulership. For, muted was his voice in stone compared to the roaring vastitudes of his uttered word. Diminished and circumscribed was his kingly visage in the far-flung presence of the universe, his cosmic face. His effigy, though awesome to the eyes of the ancients, was like a grain of salt extruded from a depthless sea, to crystallize for a moment in the sun before dissolving in the solution of its source. His noble image took shape out of the dust of celestial substance, mirroring in anthropic form the emergence of the great planet which bears his name.

Planets shape their lives, crystallizing as they swirl forth from their hidden source. Some are like gods in formation, mysterious and shrouded, whilst others are small and dense, like the earth. But only one vies with the sun itself in grandeur and size. Only one commands the heavens like a universal sky god, ruling over the inner and outer globes as a surrogate of the solar orb. Like the colossal statue named for it, the planet Jupiter surpasses all others of its kind. This is only fitting, for the supreme throne of heaven could not be thought to reside in any lesser mansion, nor could celestial rulership be conducted from a dais less dazzling. From the earliest dawn of human history, men and women have approached the majesty of the god and his planet as supplicants bowed in prayer, seeking grace which only the king of the gods could bestow. The very mantras and chants they intoned were believed to be



given through his grace. The word of worship on their lips was his Word, and their obeisance before him was complete and central to their grasp of reality. He was always the Alfader, the All-encompassing One made manifest, whose remote orb in the heavens shone more brightly than any others and seemed less dim than Venus only because of the latter's proximity to our globe.

His abode is far more distant, lying beyond the belt of asteroids in the glacial fields of outer space. Those who approach his throne do so only by travelling immense distances and submitting themselves to a vastitude so great as to eclipse utterly their egotistic sense of independent origin. One may imagine oneself in a powerful spacecraft flying out through darkness for months and drawing gradually closer to an orb so enormous and of such brilliance that it would absorb the darkness all around it and become the whole of one's vista. As the craft drew closer and entered the powerful fields and radiations of Jupiter, one would be overwhelmed by what would seem a great wall of gleaming, gaseous bands set with swirling jewels of opal and ruby hue. Riffles and eddies of azure and golden clouds would flute their way through the folds of this regal vesture, which seems to be crown and robe and sceptre all at once. One would be utterly overpowered in this presence. There would be nothing other than it to contemplate, and even its satellites, which are as large as Mercury or our moon, would seem like tiny ball-bearings rolling between its looming immensity and one's infinitesimally small spacecraft. Be one astronaut or seeker of God, there is little doubt that the initial encounter would envelop one's consciousness and permanently alter one's sense of place in the cosmos, as well as one's sense of selfhood.

Jupiter has come to signify the supreme virtues of judgement and volition. As supreme ruler, he embodies cosmic law and divine justice, marked by the four pillars of space, the four corners of the square and the four elements. Bounded space and Pythagorean limit belong to him, as also the power of organization and intellectual direction to establish order. He is the wise benefactor of

the cosmos whose influence upon humanity is harmonizing and conducive to realignment with the source. Meru is the name of his throne which, though associated with his planet, is also linked with the heavenly pole or pole-star, the door leading from the invisible to the visible world. The Greeks of Alexandria appended the title Ammon to his name, calling him Jupiter-Ammon or Amen, which means 'concealed or hidden'. The priests of Egyptian Thebes declared that he contained the mysterious power which created and sustained the universe, and hence joined his name to that of Ra, the supreme solar god. But they also called his planet Heru-ap-sheta, 'the revealer of hidden and secret things', an aspect of his arcane nature which relates to the Vedic function of Brihaspati, who protected and concealed the sacred Word while also being involved in its authoritative pronouncement.

Brihaspati is the ruler and spiritual guru of the gods, who are transmitters of the creative forces of the cosmos. When his wife Tara (signifying a seeker initiated into Gupta Vidya) leaves him for Soma, who has the initiatory power to make a new person of the reborn postulant, Brihaspati is revealed to be the upholder of the letter and form of scriptural sanction instead of its intuitive realization in the immortal souls of ardent aspirants. Brihaspati thus represents the exoteric or ritualistic form of worship which one finds in all popular or folk religions. But the Rig Veda also alludes to him as Brahmanaspati, "the deity in whom the action of the worshipped upon the gods is personified". This suggests that the magnetic action upon the gods by the material object of worship evokes a grace which is released through Brahmanaspati, the object of worship being, ultimately, none other than himself. In this way, he is the indispensable agent (*hotri*) for the descent of grace through ritual worship and religious ceremonies. But though these may degenerate in time into mechanical observances maintained by hereditary priestcraft to preserve a profitable and vicarious interaction between man and God, the Word made flesh can continue to transmit the vital germ of the potent sound of primeval hierophants. Magic may linger in mystery temples wherein sacred mantras were uttered in days of old by Initiates who knew the

language of the gods, whom they invoked in the 'tongue' of their respective element with sounds, numbers and figures. Such sacred mantras are the talismanic keys opening the door between mortals and immortals. They are the immemorial gift of Jupiter to the meditative and magnanimous mind and must not be confused with the exoteric ritual of orthodox and self-perpetuating élites.

Jupiter is the Orphic Demiurgos whose creative will releases in the constellation of Sagittarius the generative powers of the nine Prajapatis who cooperate in the architectonic construction of the cosmos. These nine form with Jupiter a decad, which unfolds as three successive triads — initial, creative and manifesting — each bringing forth the descending emanations of the Divine Mind which expands, radiates and ultimately illuminates the mental vestures of gods, monads and atoms. Thus, Jupiter is the androgynous Logos, the *pater omnipotens aether*, the omnipresent deific essence of the imponderable *akasha*. When contained in manifestation he becomes Jupiter Mundus, the *deus mundus*, or one mundane god who incorporates all others into himself and is variously known as Adonai, Jehovah, Zeus, Odin, Pan-Jupiter, Brihaspati and by many other names. He is that power which creates the specific terrestrial symbol, and the physical and material fabric of the latter, "which proves the Energy manifesting through it as extrinsic ". Embodying the whole and ruling over it, the very nature of his embodiment, his order and his organization suggests a necessary limitation which cannot be ascribed to the inexhaustible Divine Source.

As the invisible Logos, with its seven hierarchies (represented or personified each by its chief angel or rector), form one POWER, the inner and the invisible; so, in the world of Forms, the Sun and the seven chief Planets constitute the visible and active potency; the latter 'Hierarchy' being, so to speak, the visible and objective Logos of the invisible and (except in the lowest grades) ever-subjective angels.

*The Secret Doctrine*

The descent of the active potency is dramatically conveyed in the story of Leda, who, when suddenly pursued by Zeus, assumed the form of a swan. This form is associated with the commencement of Time's cycles and is productive of the fabled egg mentioned in many ancient tales, ultimately signifying the World Egg. Not to be frustrated in his fervour, Zeus gained his mate in the guise of the Divine Swan, thus ensuring the formation of the egg and the birth of Castor and Pollux, night and day incarnate. In fathering the World Egg and the Egg-born, Zeus or Jupiter represents the immutable cyclic law of evolution which inexorably determines human progress. He overbroods karma and arrests the downward tendency of each Root Race after attaining the zenith of its glory. With the egg-born Third Race, humanity began to determine its own destiny within the framework of cosmic law. Each human race, developing through a series of collective causes and shared effects, weaves its own greatness and eventual decline. The spiritual truths which each keeps alive are protected, concealed and preserved by Jupiter, whose beneficence thwarts the forces that would corrupt them. He does this by unleashing tremendous cataclysms, such as those which resulted in the submersion of Atlantis, when all the gods under his leadership abandoned the earth, whose meridian then became parallel with the ecliptic of the sun.

The celestial order commanded by Jupiter may be seen as the reflection of the cosmic ideation (chit) of Vishnu Narayana. The primordial utterance of the Word on descending levels provides the basis and inspiration for all sacred mantras, sovereign laws and sacrificial ceremonies. The Supreme Energy marshalled through his majestic rulership has its origin in the supernal realm of Non-being, in the Divine Darkness of Parabrahm. Out of this mysterious Unknown pulsates the pristine ray of the First Logos, followed by the akashic resonance of the Second Logos, from which the formation of the cosmic egg surrounding mahat, the Third Logos, is made possible. This ordered progression lays the basis for the invisible cosmos emerging from chaos. Subsequently, a more material expression of chaos is emanated through the descent of the *Kumaras*, and this is construed in mythic terms as the War in

Heaven. Out of this war re-emerges order in a concretized form, but it is an *order inversus* which, from the human standpoint, must be seen as a mere shadow play of the celestial order.

Jupiter rules on all these levels of emergent order as the surrogate of the sun, whom Pythagoras called his guardian. At the highest and most ethereal level, he acts on behalf of the hidden Spiritual Sun and, descending, he acts on behalf of its masks, until in the physical world he appears to rule as a delegate of the visible solar orb. For even on the purely physical plane there is a special relationship between Jupiter and the sun. Calculations of the thermal history of the planet show that when it was formed, Jupiter was ten times bigger than it now is, and its central temperature was fifty thousand degrees Kelvin (as opposed to its present temperature of thirty thousand degrees Kelvin). Its initial brightness was one percent of that of the sun, yet now (although it is by far the most brilliant sphere in our system apart from the sun) it is only one-billionth as bright. Such a remarkable history has stimulated observers to surmise that Jupiter may have originally been an unequal partner in a binary star system rather than merely a product of the sun.

In the last century, Mahatma K.H., responding to enquiries about the satellites of Jupiter, which are two hundred and eighty-eight times more dense than their primary, wrote that "the centrifugal theory of Western birth is unable to cover all the ground". Other questions also not adequately treated by it are why Jupiter, having an equatorial rotation speed twenty-seven times that of the earth's and being one-fifth as dense as the earth, should be compressed seventeen times more than the earth at its poles. Modern science straddles these various facts, hypothesizing along the lines of a binary assumption while keeping alive more conventional explanations. Some have thought that the origin of the giant planet may indeed be like that of a star. In the nebula from which the sun condensed, there may have been a second region wherein the density was sufficient for matter to collapse under its own gravitation. Owing to its low mass (relative to that of the sun), the

internal temperature of this newly forming body never became hot enough to start nuclear fusion, leaving the mass to condense and then cool. An alternative hypothesis poses the possibility that a high-density iron core initially formed itself and then captured part of the nebula from which the sun was formed. The problem with this latter hypothesis lies in the fact that if Jupiter does possess an iron core, it is likely to be very small, but both hypotheses serve to explain the similarity that exists between the composition of Jupiter and the sun.

If one attempts to consider the solar system as a whole, one notices that the sun is overwhelmingly larger than the planets surrounding it. In terms of the distribution of planetary mass within the system, the inner planets and their satellites comprise only one-half of one percent, a ratio which places the earth and her immediate neighbours in the ranks of near insignificance from the standpoint of size. The remaining ninety-nine and one-half percent of the planetary mass lies beyond Mars and is bound up in the giants whose orbits trace the outer regions of our solar microcosm. Looking at the entire system, one can say that dynamically the solar system is composed of two main bodies, the sun and Jupiter. This comes more sharply into focus when one considers that Jupiter's mass is twice that of all the other planets put together, and though it has only one-thousandth the mass of the sun, it is truly a centre unto itself.

Though massive, the density of Jupiter is very low. It is thought that, deep inside, the planet must be composed almost entirely of hydrogen and helium, the only elements that could account for such a low density, given the planetary temperatures and pressures. Many believe that the hydrogen is largely in a liquid molecular form underlaid by liquid metallic hydrogen closer to a small iron silicate core. Others postulate a helium-rich core surrounded by a dense layer abounding in metallic hydrogen. Whichever hypothesis may be closer to the truth, they both would have to accommodate the outstanding fact that Jupiter possesses a powerful internal source of energy equal to the absorption of solar

energy. In fact, Jupiter radiates twice as much energy as it absorbs from the sun, and its atmosphere is driven by this rather than by solar energy. It also has a magnetic field which is intrinsic and very powerful. This field (which is eight times more powerful than the earth's) floats on top of Jupiter's cloud deck and becomes very distorted further out because of a huge belt of plasma made up of hydrogen ions and electrons which surrounds and co-rotates with the planet. This creates a magnetosphere in the shape of a huge disc, which is countered by the solar winds on the sun-side of the planet, but elongates in an enormous magnetotail on the other side which stretches as far as Saturn (that is, as far from Jupiter as Jupiter is from the sun). As the magnetic axis of this field is ten percent off from the planet's rotation axis, it flops up and down like a broad-brimmed summer hat in a rippling wind and casts off electrons and ions which fall through space, reaching the atmosphere of our earth.

Within this powerful field circles a ring of fine rocky particles and at least sixteen satellites. Jupiter captures comets and asteroids into temporary satellite orbits lasting sometimes months or years, but there are some satellites which seem to be long-term members of the retinue. Four of them were discovered by Galileo in 1610 and were given the mythically appropriate names of Io, Europa, Ganymede and Callisto, all objects of the ardour of Zeus. Inside their orbits is another moon, Amalthea, and outside them are two groups of satellites, the outer having a retrograde direction of revolution and some of them having a black appearance. Each of Jupiter's satellites are remarkably different from the others. The carboniferous soil and ice, which was the main primordial material formed in the outer regions of the solar system, predominate on the surface of some moons, giving them a dark colour. In others it may have sunk when heated, leaving a bright watery lava on the surface, or the presence of sulphur may have given some a yellow cast. It is interesting to ponder the thoughts which might have inspired Galileo to name the four he discovered as he did. Io and Europa were both associated with Zeus, one in the form of a cow doomed to wander, the other in the form of a maid abducted by Zeus in the

guise of a bull. As the cow (*Vach*) symbolizes the passive, generative power of Nature and the bull the active force that fecundates her, the mythical names suggest significant occult possibilities concerning the relationship between Jupiter and its satellites.

Is not the only ruler of the Gods  
 A complete tyrant, violent to all,  
 Respecting none? First, being himself a God,  
 He burneth to enjoy a mortal maid,  
 And then torments her with these wanderings.

*Prometheus Bound*

Aeschylus

Jupiter's internally driven, rapidly rotating atmosphere is far more stable than a more slowly rotating one driven by the sun, like that of the earth. Owing to this stability, large-scale changes in structure take much longer on the giant planet than on our globe. For one thing, the day and night sides of Jupiter have the same temperature. Its energy is carried to the night side by rotation much faster than it is lost from the atmosphere. Heat coming from the surface sets up convection currents and enters the atmosphere, where it rises in bright latitudinal zones and subsides in alternating darker belts. In addition to molecular hydrogen and helium, these zones and belts are comprised of small particles of frozen ammonia, methane and possibly hydrogen sulphide in the lower layers. The tops of the bright zones extend out twenty kilometers higher than the ruddy-coloured belts, creating a furrowed effect. The surface of Jupiter is completely covered with these cloudy zones and bands which whirl rapidly at varying rates. Those at the equator move faster than those at higher and lower latitudes, whilst the internal rate of movement is different from both. As it does not have a solid surface which can be seen, Jupiter's visible features are always changing. The only permanent feature which has been observed over a period of time is a gigantic crimson area known as the Great Red Spot, which drifts at twenty-two degrees south latitude, sometimes ahead of and sometimes behind the zones and belts of the higher and lower latitudes.



Remarkably, the Great Red Spot does not seem to be fixed to a solid surface. Its rotation period is not constant as it wanders over a wide range of longitude, covering more than three revolutions in the last century. This movement is in both an easterly and a westerly direction at a median rate of about one meter per second with respect to the cloud formations making up the zones and belts. Nor does the size of the Great Red Spot remain the same. In the early 1880s it was extremely large, measuring thirty-eight thousand, five hundred kilometers long and thirteen thousand, eight hundred kilometers wide, a surface area equal to that of the earth. In 1878 it began to wax and become really prominent when it developed from a pink oval to a brick-red area. But in 1882 this started to fade. Since then, from time to time it has actually become almost invisible, though it could be located by its characteristic hollow, which has been recorded in drawings dating back to 1664. The spot revived for a while in 1939 and was very prominent from 1962 to 1965. But in 1966 it began to fade, becoming extremely weak until the latter part of 1968, when it suddenly began to regain its former prominence.

The temperature within the Great Red Spot is lower than its surroundings and there seems to be less gas above it. It also extends eight kilometers above the surrounding cloud tops, the material rising in the centre of it and moving outward to descend at the edge in a counter-clockwise motion. As it looks and behaves like a giant whirlpool, the most popular explanation of the Great Red Spot is that it is the vortex of a long-lived cyclone, a speculative hypothesis which is unsupported by further evidence. The observation of small dark objects which have been carried around within the Great Red Spot for a week or two, before being either ejected into the surrounding clouds or swallowed up, is indeed suggestive. They swirl around for a week or two like pieces of wood in a maelstrom and then disappear. In January of 1966 a small dark spot was observed as it moved along the edge of the South Temperate Belt. It approached the Great Red Spot on its southern side, circulated around it one and one-half times within nine days, and disappeared. During 1967 four similar spots appeared (two of them

from the South Equatorial Belt on the north side of the Great Red Spot), which circled part way around the spot for a period of twelve days before disappearing. It is fascinating to speculate on the nature of these tiny dark bodies. From some descriptions they seem to originate within the Great Red Spot, from others they seem to come from outside it. Perhaps they represent two completely different types of objects.

The nature of the Great Red Spot continues to be a mystery. At one time astronomers thought it was some sort of solid island floating in a dense atmosphere. Now it is recognized that a solid substance could not have a sufficiently low density to float in Jupiter's upper atmosphere. More recently it has been suggested that the spot may be the top of a column of fluid caused perhaps by a local feature of the magnetic field or by the internal convection motions. Or it may be that, after all, it is the vortex of a cyclone, which can be expected to have a very long life because of the extremely slow rate at which major changes in the circulation of Jupiter's atmosphere take place. But if one tries to look at this extraordinary feature from the point of view of ancient myths, one is led to consider the possibility that the Great Red Spot has to do with immensely powerful procreative impulsions which have been paralleled by its waxing and waning over the centuries. These impulsions can be seen as engendered within a body which is basically androgynous but which, nonetheless, is strongly affected by the ionosphere of Io and the perturbations caused by Europa and Ganymede in its inner magnetosphere. The great storms of radio emissions from Jupiter take place in bursts which tend to occur when Io (and to a lesser extent Europa) is in certain positions in her orbit. The radiation released in these bursts streams through space, fecundating it and the other planets of the solar system, just as the mythical Jupiter ceaselessly does.

One can perceive a correspondence between the Great Red Spot and this process, finding in it a fusion of *linga* and *yonis* which acts as a vivifying agent in some sort of parthenogenesis, whereby the subtle layers of Jupiter are impregnated and rendered capable of

discharging their seed into the cosmos. The role of Io and the other satellites could be viewed as the presence of a passive (female) agent, providing elements in differing combinations and determining the flow of Jupiter's vivifying emissions. Or perhaps the spot is an umbilicus through which the seeds of Jovian power pass from generation to generation, circling in to be transmitted out again. Perhaps this is what is represented, even on the physical plane, by the tiny dark spots that appear and disappear in and around the swirling vortex. Voyager I and II gave us spectacular pictures and insights into many of Jupiter's mysteries. The spacecraft Galileo, which is to be launched in October 1989, should drop a probe into the giant planet's atmosphere in late 1995 and may well provide evidence relevant to these correspondences.

There are, however, even more mysterious phenomena which impinge upon the occult interpretation of Jupiter and its Great Red Spot. Mahatma K.H. once observed that, though the relative distance between planets is fairly constant, our entire solar system is shifting its position in space. This shift, which is relative to stars and other suns, seems imperceptible to us, but in the future Jupiter and certain other planets which now conceal millions of stars from our view will suddenly "let us have a peep at a few of the Raja-Suns they are now hiding". He went on to explain that behind Jupiter there is a 'king-star' that no mortal eye has seen during this Fourth Round. The Raja-Star is a world thousands of times larger than Jupiter, even though, if we could see it, it would appear as a tiny dimensionless point. It is composed of metallic substances which are expanding and transforming themselves into aeriform fluids, which was the state of our earth and its six sister globes before the First Round. Referring to the great Jovian storms, Mahatma K.H. pointed out that "the violent disturbance of its [Jupiter's] atmosphere, and even its red spot that so intrigues science lately, are due (1) to that shifting [of the whole system] and (2) to the influence of that Raja-Star".

As all systems are revolving in the universe, so also relative motions and factors of distance would indeed make certain bodies

visible or invisible at different times. If the Raja-Star influences the activity of Jupiter and we can associate this activity with a mighty hidden creative power related to the Word, the occult position of Jupiter relative to our sun needs to be further scrutinized. In order to do this, let us approach the subject through the journey of the human soul as it comes into the rulership represented by Jupiter. Overcoming *trishna* or craving in the battlefield associated with Mars, the immortal soul comes into the region of a necessary rulership over the lower nature (elements), which is an embodiment of cosmic justice and law. This releases the forces of Jupiter acting in Sagittarius and brings to light the hidden truths of religion, philosophy and science as well as concerning the latent psychic powers of humanity. When individuals come under the direct influence of Jupiter, the immortal soul passes into Sagittarius, where it gathers up the fruits of its past and submits them to the 'synthetic influence' of the ruler of this sign. Sagittarius represents the ninth stage of the soul's odyssey. It is opposite Gemini and, like that earlier phase, marks a germinal point in soul evolution. The ego has assimilated all the experiences of the outer world and now begins to derive from *namarupa*, the lower vesture, the seeds of a permanent astral for the pilgrimage ahead.

The Promethean fire of *Fohat* is reflected in Sagittarius as a mighty weapon for the rending of the walls that surround the separative self. The Word can now be intoned not merely to proliferate outer worlds, as in the past, but even more to pierce the membrane surrounding inner worlds, to penetrate the wall of Leda's egg and enter into the etheric realm of the radiant cosmic egg. In this way, one may see the Great Red Spot as an aperture opening onto an ethereal world. One opens a hidden doorway and, gazing up, sees great clouds rising above the Himalayas and realizes that they are the true Himalayas. One observes the ever-shifting atmosphere of Jupiter and its travelling Red Spot and becomes aware that form and substance are merely the elements of change hiding deeper quintessential realities. Rulership does not have to do with robes, though the emperor without them may find it difficult to rule in the material world. Rulership has to do with

true authority over those who act as moral agents. As soon as one grasps this fact, one can readily see that the rulership of Jupiter does not require power or force, but rather the steady emission of akashic currents bearing forth Divine Law through the agencies of all in alignment with it.

Just as there is a correlation between the Word and impregnation at all levels, so too there is a correlation between the cosmic egg and the ovum fertilized on the physical plane. Drawing away from the physical aspects of procreation and even the mythic exploits of a creative god, one can move into the supernal realm of the sacred Word, into the fecund region of the egg which is indeed consubstantial with one's germinating permanent astral. In seeking this mystical initiation, the soul slips through the door of the Great Red Spot and enters into the presence of a truly regal Jupiter, whose auric light is a pristine reflection of the Spiritual Sun. And what is the role of the Raja-Star in this initiation? Will it then reveal its radiance? Will it cast our physical sun in shadow? Perhaps the mystic blue of the cosmic egg will suggest the answer, for the auric light of the hidden Jupiter encompasses an ethereal realm and yet reflects the divine light of daiviprakriti which lies beyond. Our physical sun is the fiery mask of the hidden sun. In our system it is the glorious facade of an infinite noumenal source of spiritual life. Similarly, the Raja-Star is the resplendent mask of the Hidden Sun, a mask so much larger and more brilliant than our own sun that its sphere of influence must be far greater than that belonging to our solar orb. The demiurgic quality of rulership is pinpointed in Jupiter, suggesting that the Raja-Star acts as an ancient focal point for the exercise of divine sovereignty over the cosmos. Standing behind Jupiter yet invisible to earthlings, this massive star must act as a channel through which unheard utterances and vibrations resonate in space and, vivifying its representative in our solar system, are transmitted in Jovian storms to all the other planets.

The supreme virtues of wise judgement and benevolent will belonging to Jupiter can stimulate the higher, expansive mind of human beings and illuminate the lesser mental vesture even now,

in the dawning Aquarian Age presided over by Punarvasu (Pollux). It is not necessary to wait the immensity of time required before our shifting system reveals the Raja-Star in order to gaze upon its light. Just as it beams upon the material Jupiter and influences its impact upon our solar system, so too the higher intellect of men and women can become suffused with ineffable light streaming from ovoid systems far greater and more ethereal than can be imagined by the finite mind. This pristine light will transmit itself to the lesser vestures, not in explosive bursts necessitated by the imbalances in the outer world of the male and female forces operating in Nature, but in harmonious currents blessing every level of being. This divine harmony is a sublime reflection of the sacred Word manifest as universal law. It is accompanied sometimes with words that heal and teach, sometimes with the deepest silence that can soothe and save. It is the balancing intonation of the most beneficent mantras and it is the mystic peace of unspoken wisdom. It is revealed to the regenerate soul ready for supreme initiation, yet concealed from those who persist in seeing only Jupiter's outer robes.

To the enlightened individual who comes to know that power and force are but the lowest outer garbs of divine will, the secret and sovereign wisdom of Jupiter may be intimated. The scattered knowledge garnered through myriad incarnations will be sifted and synthesized to produce an unadorned and essential realization of Self, enabling one to perceive the true nature of the cosmos within its egg. For the egg of Jupiter outlines the perimeter of that Self in its grandest and most unconditioned expression in the manifest world. Relative to the world, it is ceaselessly expansive, ceaselessly compassionate and creative of harmony. Relative to man-made law and mundane concepts of justice, it is the supreme spiritual authority capable of embracing all relationships, all events and situations and resolving them in a greater symmetry.

*Not to rise in glory  
Or exercise power  
Do I approach thy throne.  
Not with practised word  
Or prayer for salvation  
Do I strive to touch thy robe.  
But with heart wide open,  
Eyes undimmed by form,  
I make obeisance to the invisible  
Garment of Divine Law  
Manifested in thy grace.*

*Hermes, April 1989*  
Helen Valborg

# SATURN

*The appearance of the wheels and their work was like unto the colour of beryl: and they four had one likeness: and their appearance and their work was as it were a wheel in the middle of a wheel.*

*Ezekiel 1:16*

Neither in the measureless expanse of space nor in the celestial vault of one's imagination is there a more alluring emblem of strength and mystery than the mighty rings of Saturn. Wheels within wheels whirl around the huge and remote planet. They glissade in circling streams of icy perfection, addressing the mind's ear with a faint, mournful chorus evocative of other worlds beyond death and time. The whole universe is a great wheel and the power of life surging through it moves in wheels infinitely begetting offspring. But the pristine rings circling the shrouded Saturn seem to exemplify the very idea of this cosmic process. Remote and self-contained, they are more like an ideal expression of abstract cosmic motion than a system explicable in terms of physical laws. And the planet in their midst that presides within the envelope of icy haze rules inexorably, allowing no flaw or slippage in the assemblage swirling around it.

If Uranus lies beyond in its representation of celestial space, Saturn signifies Kronos or time in what seems an idealized realm outside the world of materialized forms. Moving inwards towards the solar centre, Jupiter overbroods the organization of an ordered cosmos, and his offspring, Mars and Venus, interact actively and passively in this development, accompanied by the transcendent neutrality of Mercury. A great spiralling inwards to the physical sun is enacted in this cosmology, one which is accompanied by an equally vast spiralling outwards, an involution and evolution circling about one another like the overlapping colours flashing in and out around the disc of a rapidly spinning top. This breathing out and breathing in is summed up in the essence of time, in duration, which is the very fabric of Saturn, the throne upon which



Kronos rules. Such duration gives birth to sequential time whilst remaining aloof from it. Things participating in timeless time are never new or old. They float changelessly in the great stream of being like undimmed glimpses of truths. They are often embodied in myths, like that which tells of the cosmogony from which Kronos, son of Gaia and Ouranos, first emanated onto the stage of an incipient world.

In his poetic prose, Hesiod recorded how Erebus (Night) emerged out of Chaos as a field bearing Eros and Gaia, who in turn became a field fecundated by the vast space of Ouranos. Gaia and Ouranos produced several generations of offspring: Titans, Kyklopes and monsters. The monsters were so repellent that Ouranos continually pushed them back into their mother, who became overwhelmed by the pressure and devised an evil plan to put an end to their conception. Out of her matrix she assembled the precursory elements of flint in the shape of a sickle and instructed her titanic offspring to do violence to Ouranos by cutting away the means by which he fertilized her. Of the Titans, Kronos agreed to perform this surgical act and he watched as the blood of his father's wound splashed upon Gaia, bringing forth Furies and giants. Then it was that Kronos began his reign, one which witnessed a golden age when immortal souls lived free from sorrow, experiencing neither affliction nor ageing. Later, in the Age of Zeus, these souls would be known as the Blessed Spirits who watch over mortal men and defend them from evil.

They keep watch over lawsuits and hard dealings; they mantle themselves in dark mist and wander all over the country; they bestow wealth; for this right as of kings was given them.

*Works and Days*  
Hesiod

The reign of Kronos was one of endless duration and could never have been considered in terms of a past tense if his offspring Zeus had not rebelled against him and ushered in the era of conditioned time and space as we know it. But the duration of Kronos does not imply that which knows no limits. The ancient Egyptians identified

Saturn as the planet of limitation, calling his ruler Seb, guardian of the entrance to the underworld, son of Shu and image of Ra. As Kronos or Seb, Saturn represents the recognition of the insufficiency of any temporal order. He is restless with it and exhibits a divine discontent in its presence. Human beings, combining in their natures the characteristics of all the planets and their gods, also suffer from this restlessness and discontent. Often the form this takes is less than divine and comes to be expressed collectively, as it does in the Saturnalias celebrated under various names by peoples everywhere. They involve a breaking away from the Jovian constraints of man-made order, a ritual assassination of the king or the Establishment, which is replaced by a "Lord of Misrule" or an "Abbot of Unreason". Such farcical rulers preside over a brief and intense period of chaos during which man's desperate quest for a way out of time pours forth in a wild and carefree indulgence in excesses unmarred by clocks or caution. One cannot but think of Brazil's desperately poor who, faced with naught but hardship and squalor, yet scrimp and save all year to buy fabulous costumes to wear for their moment of liberation and glory during carnival. In ancient times the Saturnalia was celebrated during the winter solstice, when there was a suspension of time between the death of the old year and the rebirth of the new. These were twelve days mirroring that dawn of time during which the idea of the dodecahedron, the zodiac and the earth's twelve-month cycle gestated. It was the time of chaos before cosmos when Saturn reigned supreme.

For the evolution of the human soul, Saturn as ruler of the sign of Capricorn represents the gestatory stage wherein the embryo of the newly enlightened man is developed. A death of the old precedes this, bringing the soul through the cycle of its involvement with the feminine principle associated with the earth and mortality. Saturn's colour, black, and his emblem, the sarcophagus, accompany the soul as it emulates the planetary god's involvement in the feminine principle. The liberation sought by the soul from the thrall of time and form occurs in that sarcophagus, which alone can eat away the flesh of illusory existence. In the Hindu tradition it is Shiva who

personifies this function, and upon comparison it becomes apparent that many of the attributes ascribed to Kronos are similar to those associated with the Mahayogin of the Hindu pantheon. Shiva can easily be identified as the god of Time by merely noticing that his *damaru* (drum) is in the shape of an hourglass. And the crescent moon on his brow reveals his association with the feminine principle in Nature as well as with the sickle which cuts eternity into hours and yet becomes the tool in the hands of the Good Gardener.

In the Orphic tradition, Kronos was called the Insolent (ὕβριστικός), corresponding to the Sanskrit *rajasa*. Shiva is ever known for his temerity in the eyes of the other gods. He is brazen and shows little concern for the conventional proprieties which uphold the hierarchical order of things. He is also capable of severity, as well as the stark mercilessness so tenaciously identified with Saturn by multitudes of people all over the world. There is always an unsettling and awesome aspect to Shiva, and Hindus seem to isolate this aspect of his nature in their worship of Saturn while circumambulating the statues of the nine planetary gods. The image of Saturn is always black and receives a good deal of attention from priests as well as devotees. A great deal of supplication and placation goes into their worship, accompanied with chants of *mantras* to provide protection against harsh karma. It may be acknowledged that they have themselves sown the seeds of this karma, but they still believe that it is Saturn's sickle which will reap its unwanted fruit. Thus Shiva-Saturn is worshipped out of fear and is associated with the Iron Age or *kali yuga*, the colour black and death. Even in the Semitic tradition it was said that "God hath put a girdle about his loins (the rings of Saturn), and the name of the girdle is death."

In man the girdle of death is the body and its two lower principles, all of which are bound to die. He who wears the girdle is immortal and, if he only knew it, at one with the deity whose character seems so threatening. The old Assyrians put their finger on this when they recognized Saturn as a solar deity called Nirig,

"who issued forth from the shades of night" bearing the character of a warrior, whose warfare is directed against man rather than against the powers of darkness, as one would expect in a typical solar hero. The Egyptians too recognized Saturn as the planetary ruler through whose critical stage the evolving soul must pass, and wherein each of its vestures are tested and sorely tried "that naught shall mar the exquisite beauty of the kingly garment which is being woven on the looms of time". It is at this juncture that Saturn as Shiva enlists the army of the Rudras as destroyers of the human passions and senses which are ever in the way of higher spiritual perceptions and the growth of the inner man. This is what is meant when it is said that Kronos takes the kingdoms by violence. He does this not blindly or in a rage, but coolly with the sharp sword of mind. For he is what Plato called the great dianoetic power of the intellectual universe who rules over the noetic part of the soul. He represents mahat, whose seed will proliferate at myriad levels and in multitudinous forms in which he will continue to reign, even in the Age of Zeus.

Plato depicted the Golden Age as an era in which no man ruled over others, but one in which all of the Third Race were ruled by *devas* and *rishis*. Ruled by gods, these men were demigods living at peace with one another, mingling freely with the gods and conversing intelligibly with animals. When Zeus dethroned his father and the Golden Age came to an end, "a shudder passed through the world at the reversing of its rotation, checked as it was between the old control and the new impulse which had turned end into beginning for it and beginning into end". After this great shift, the world continued in a new order in which it governed itself by innate force, and the "shepherd kings" of the Age of Kronos retired. But this was not the end of the involvement of Kronos, for, like Shiva, this presiding deity of the wheels entered, through his perpetual motion, into the manifesting activity of every atom of the gradually concretizing universe. That which is highest and most abstract thus became the very engine of what is lowest and most particularized. The aloof and mysterious ruler of timeless illumination became involved in the blackest and densest forms.

The alchemists understood something about this when they asserted that their Saturn or lead was a much nobler substance than gold. They said it was the living earth, in which the soul of gold was joined to mercury in order to bring forth the human race. In Shiva this self-imposed abasement results in clarification and an assertion of detachment free of complex structures. The order defining lead and gold is reduced to its essential germ of mind in motion. The lowest is made to clarify the highest and the highest is laid bare.

*Ishvara* resides in every mortal being and puts in motion, by his supernatural power, all things which mount on the wheel of time.

*Bhagavad Gita* XVIII.61

In one of her letters, H. P. Blavatsky stated that each of the seven planets of our chain has a dual septenary circle of rings, seven above and seven below, "Saturn being the only half frank and sincere planet in this case". Perhaps examining some of the characteristics of the physical planet might further elucidate this remarkable statement as well as some of the mythical and cosmogonical correlations which have been considered so far. Very generally speaking, Saturn bears a resemblance to Jupiter but is somewhat smaller, more flattened and possesses less prominent cloud markings. The yellowish and tan belts are disturbed by occasional bright and dark spots, but they are covered by a thick overlaying haze. The planet has the lowest mean density of any in our solar system. About nine-tenths the diameter of Jupiter in size, Saturn has only one-third its mass and one-half its density. This is explained by a composition made up of over eighty-eight percent molecular hydrogen and probably about eleven percent helium. There is very little rocky material and even the interior is believed to be hydrogen rich. Like Jupiter, Saturn emits twice the amount of heat it receives from the sun, though it has not retained enough of the heat accumulated during its formation to account for it. Instead, it is thought that as the planet slowly cools, the amount of helium which can be dissolved in hydrogen decreases and the heavier excess drifts inward. As they move towards the centre of the planet,

the helium droplets release gravitational energy, producing a steady source of heat which then radiates outward.

Saturn's rings have something in common with those belonging to the other giants of the outer solar system. They lie close to their parent, are centred on the equatorial plane of the planet, and have a number of moons or moonlets accompanying them. But the rings of these other planets cannot compare with Saturn's in terms of their size, density and definition. Clearly, its rings are Saturn's most outstanding characteristic, lending the planet its compelling presence in the heavens and its uniqueness. Whilst its three major rings alone measure two hundred and seventy thousand kilometres in annular width (three-quarters of the distance from the earth to our moon), all of Saturn's rings are only a few hundred metres thick, giving them a relative thickness which would be thousands of times thinner than razor-thin. They are made up of particles of ice, or material covered with ice, and range in size from a few centimetres to a few decametres. Together they circle the planet like hailstones ranging from the size of a ping-pong ball to that of a house. Seven rings have been identified by letters according to the order of their discovery. The closest to the planet is the faint D ring, then the fairly opaque C ring, followed by the brilliant B ring, with its narrow annular regions of differing brightness and opacity looking like grooves on a phonograph record. The B ring is twenty-five thousand kilometres wide and has numerous variations occurring over radial distances as small as ten kilometres, some of which appear as spokes in a great wheel. Beyond the B ring is what is known as Cassini's Division, which is only relatively empty and has the opacity of the C ring. Then comes the A ring with Encke's Division in its centre, the F ring which is narrow and faint, having thread-like ringlets which tend to braid and twist, the G ring which is broader but equally faint, and finally the E ring which is very dispersed. Together the rings cast a black band of shadow on the planet, seeming to extend the annular effect right into its hazy envelope. And as all the large rings consist of hundreds or thousands of ringlets, this comprises a spectacular pattern of rapidly revolving motion.

The existence of so many ringlets has puzzled observers and inspired various theories. One idea ascribes each to a small satellite contained in it from which its particles are broken off by bombardment. Another hypothesis suggests that they are defined by two small shepherd satellites (like those associated with the F ring) which move on either side of the ringlets and exert periodic gravitational influences upon them, causing their braiding, but also keeping their particles from dissipating. This, like the first hypothesis, has never been confirmed, but it does focus on the importance of the many moonlets and satellites revolving around Saturn and some of the significant connections they may have with the rings. The outermost body traditionally associated with Saturn as a satellite is Phoebe, which has a retrograde orbit and is very highly inclined. Moving inward towards the planet lie the orbits of Iapetus, Hyperion, the giant Titan, Tethys, Dione, Rhea, Enceladus and Mimas, plus eight more discovered by Voyager 1 and Voyager 2. This total number of seventeen should probably be adjusted. By subtracting the retrograde Phoebe, one eliminates from the system what is believed to be a captured interplanetary body whose orbit is so far out from the planet that its influence upon it is minimal. Such an adjustment reduces the number of Saturn's satellites to sixteen, a symbolically more suggestive number in line with Saturn's occult nature.

The extremely low density of the satellites suggests that they are at least two-thirds ice formed from water, which is the major constituent produced when accretion takes place at low temperatures. Because of this, most of them are extremely bright and, in some cases, lend their brightness to the ring in which they are orbiting. It is supposed that when Saturn's envelope formed, the planet's atmosphere extended into the region now occupied by its rings and innermost moons. The theory follows that, while the particles accreting in the envelope must have orbited the planet, their random motions caused them to collide. The heat and loss of energy resulting from this would decrease their vertical motion. Faster moving inner particles would hit the outer particles from behind, causing a transfer of momentum which would raise the

orbit of the outer particles, whilst lowering that of the inner. Thus the envelope would spread horizontally, forming the flat disc characteristic of Saturn's rings. But it would be premature to assume that the satellites were responsible for the development of the rings. Observing giant nebulae over a vast period of time may very well reveal the presence of enormous ring systems expanding before contracting in the initial formation of globes. This centrifugal and centripetal effect is echoed in the remarkable spokes which appear and disappear in Saturn's brilliant B ring. Each can be observed for a good part of an orbital revolution of the B ring (ten hours), and new spokes arise sporadically in new locations as the old ones disappear. As they form, they appear as bright forward-scattered light and dark back-scattered light, giving the effect of an in-and-out movement. In their inner sections the wedge-shaped spokes move faster, so that they eventually become tilted and unrecognizable. The positions of new ones seem to be coupled to the planet's magnetic field and to electrical discharges streaming from the planet which are hundreds of thousands of times more powerful than lightning in the earth's atmosphere.

It seems likely that the spokes are caused by a rain of charged material from the planet, which transfers an electric charge to micrometre-size particles and lifts them from the surface of larger particles. If so, the lifted particles would then be recaptured when they later collided with other large particles. The activity here seems to involve the continual sculpting of matter into globular form and its eternal refinement through the effects of centrifugal force. The other circular form which is being continually sculpted is the edge of the rings themselves. Saturn's many moons, orbiting inside and outside the rings, exert gravitational influences on the particles composing them and marshal electromagnetic forces from the field in which they all rotate. Such resonances produce the narrow ringlets with sharp edges which make up the major rings. Shepherd moons also act to keep their swirling streams well defined, with the result that their energies are contained and concentrated. Jupiter's rings are far more diffused than Saturn's, their particles and attendant effects spreading out through space



continually. Eliphas Levi wrote that Jupiter, as agent of the sun, is the risen and glorious saviour, whereas Saturn is God the Father, from whom Jupiter takes his model. Thus the bright, well-defined rings of Saturn come to represent far more than a fascinating physical phenomenon. They symbolize the contained potential of perpetual motion representing *mahat*, the concentrated design which reveals a glimpse of the cosmic pattern to unfold.

They are also called *Rotae* — the moving wheels of the celestial orbs participating in the world's creation — when the meaning refers to the animating principle of the stars and planets; for in the Kabala, they are represented by the *Ophanim*, the Angels of the Spheres and stars, of which they are the informing Souls.

*The Secret Doctrine*, i 117

In his vision, Ezekiel saw rings so high that he was filled with dread. They were full of eyes, "for the spirit of the living creature was in the wheel". At each corner of this Merkabah was one of the four faces of the archangel Michael, whom H.P. Blavatsky identified as the "Living Image of God", the Dragon-Regent of Saturn. His four faces are the Four Maharajas connected with karma as it prepares to utilize matter to carry out its decrees. They are called the "winged Globes" or "Fiery Wheels", the "fiery Serpents of Heaven" who are "the prototypic causes and builders of all the heavenly orbs which were their visible bodies or coverings and of which they were the souls". In the first divine world, *Fohat* formed the germs of the lesser wheels. These wheels were placed in six directions with one in the centre. An army of the Sons of Light stood at each angle with the *Lipika* at the centre. Next, *Fohat* built a winged wheel at each corner of the second divine world, which wheels are reflected in the four times four satellites of Saturn and are the four faces of the living image of God, the spirit of the planet. After this, seven *laya* centres were created as foundations of the manifesting universe, and they were built in the likeness of the older wheels. In these descending wheels, echoes of the arcane Word, which first engendered abstract absolute Motion, are given flesh. The wheels turn within wheels, sifting and meting out the causes and effects of karma at every level, inexorably separating the

wheat from the chaff, eternally refining out the essence which reflects the core of the wheel itself.

Gautama Buddha assisted this process when he gave a turn to the universal wheel of Law, bringing down the light from its centre into the world. By conducting the flame of Truth out to the rim of the wheel, he increased the rotary movement of terrestrial life. Karma is thus quickened and human beings feel the heat as everything becomes stirred up. The diffuse rings of Jupiter represent a centrifugal proliferation of the Law in the ordered cosmos, whilst the rigidly defined rings of Saturn symbolize the archetypal pattern and process that will be replicated ad infinitum through this proliferation. The rims of all these countless wheels are divided into sectors, which are phases of time anticipated by the mysterious spokes appearing on Saturn's B ring. These spokes provide the channels whereby beings evolving along the periphery of the wheel can come to realize the source of the whole wheel, the still centre in which the Unmoved Mover resides.

Here in this realm of eternal duration abides the source of the pattern which endures throughout the vast and seemingly measureless cycle of a *mahamanvantara*. The pattern of wheels or rings thus exemplifies duration in the manifest cosmos and finds its fullest expression in the visible planet of Saturn. In the still centre of the pattern, Shiva enacts his great *tandava* dance, the circling reverberations of which cycle out into manifest existence to exact from all forms an allegiance to his archetypal model. For from the awakening of Kosmos, primordial matter tends ever increasingly towards a circular motion reflecting his dance, and all existing things are bound up in it. But it is Shiva who destroys the dying forms clutching to the rim of the wheel, which represents the outer world. He is the Implacable Devourer so dreaded by those who fearfully supplicate the god Saturn. He is, like the Egyptian Aames, the electro-positive force devouring all others, forcing the abandonment of insufficient forms one after another. Shiva, like Kronos, is restless in time because he is never satisfied with worldly forms or orders accommodating the conditional features of

incarnated existence. None of these orders are capable of expressing and embodying the whole. All are like shapes with corners and lumps and tortuous little divisions attempting to call themselves circles. None are true mirrors of the inexorable wheel of Law, and so they must whirl through their lives, colliding like oddly shaped particles until they are sculpted into spheroids or blasted into oblivion. Just like the particles in Saturn's rings, even the idea of such orders must be ever refined. For like Kronos, who devoured all his children, Shiva demands a return to the simplicity of being before generation, to the Golden Age when human beings were truly spheroidal in consciousness and form.

Such a return is frightening to most people because it necessitates an abandonment of all the accoutrements of the separate self and even of the hope that springs thereof. Few are willing and capable of attempting to do this. But the unappeasable dynamism of Shiva will not be denied, and the realization of this necessity will come either by choice or through the unending collisions brought about by karma life after life. The circle of flames around Shiva Nataraja burns away the temporal forms and hopes we so desperately cling to. Buddha said that the world was like a burning house and so it is, one from which even the most reluctant or defiant individual comes to seek an escape. The Saturnalias of the world offer but brief respite from the grinding wheels of time and souls become gradually filled with divine discontent. Thus, even into the sarcophagus of life Shiva-Kronos enters and afflicts the complacent with longings while stripping the hopeful of false hopes. The flesh of sensory existence is thus eaten slowly away, and individuals come to glimpse the nature of the *anandatandava*, the cosmic process of creation and dissolution which is going on ceaselessly in the centre of the wheel. There the *maya* of the world is stripped away, bypassed, as it were. For the *tiruvasi* flame surrounding Shiva is that maya which must be penetrated in order to move up along the spokes leading to the *pranava* in its midst. Here at the still centre all worlds are connected, and one sees that the little wheel of an individual life is really a reflection of wheels so much grander and all-encompassing that the hold previously exacted by the smaller

wheel is loosened. One becomes gradually freed to participate consciously in wheels shepherded by beings of far greater wisdom and powers than hitherto imagined possible.

Saturn thus regards all other than the immortal soul with indifference, arising from the knowledge that all else is illusion. This seems cold and saturnine to those cleaving to the world. It promises death to all ephemera instead of joy in life's myriad forms. But there is no denying that man's fondest pleasures reflect a longing to be free from time and the mediocre drudgery of day-to-day existence. Human beings crave the intense moment of escape, the fleeting sense of omnipotence, bliss and transcendence that comes to them only for an instant. If one ponders this deeply, one may begin to realize that as long as man flees the drudgery of time to embrace the intensity of the timeless, he is, in fact, courting a form of death of which he is, quite paradoxically, afraid. But there are many steps between entertaining such an idea and coolly confronting the ferociously uncompromising elimination of the obstacles to wisdom represented by Saturn. The thread is there, for it is the same ferocious power of involvement, such as demonstrated by the pleasure seeker, that comes into play when an individual turns to the uncompromising eliminations of obstacles to wisdom. The power which turns the wheels of involution also turns the wheels of evolution. This is why Shiva is both creator and destroyer, and in the perpetual motion of his rings the seeming conflict between total involvement and total withdrawal is resolved. It is thus that he, like Saturn, is the highest and the lowest, the pure unsullied *Mahayogin* and the unrestrained madman of the world.

He is like the spinning planet, so glacial and aloof in the heavens and yet so vitally active in every atom of our bodies. Between his cool centre and the pounding blood flaming through our vestures whirl wheels within wheels - all his, all belonging to him and capable of being used to mount to his dwelling place. Like the spinning top whose colours appear to be moving in and out, man can slowly come to balance the variations, the involution and

evolution, in his microcosmic being. Gradually he can penetrate the glissading rings surrounding Saturn's remote throne and lend himself in service to the perpetual design of mahat. Quietly and in silence he can transcend the pairs of opposites and arrive at that ring beyond which naught exists except a fading echo of the One Wheel's vast turning.

*Before suns and planets there were wheels . . .*

*Vast rings spiralling, unstopped;*

*Whirling round the throne of Him*

*Of whom Saturn forms a splendid mirror.*

*Hermes, May 1989*

Helen Valborg

# URANUS

*Heav'n op'nd wide  
Her ever during Gates, Harmonious sound  
On golden Hinges moving, to let forth  
The King of Glorie in his powerful Word  
And Spirit coming to create new Worlds.  
On heav'nly ground they stood, and from the shore  
They view 'd the vast immeasurable Abyss  
Outrageous as a Sea, dark, wasteful, wilde,  
Up from the bottom turn 'd by furious windes  
And surging waves, as Mountains to assault  
Heav'ns high, and with the Centre mix the Pole.*

John Milton

A glimpse afforded of the boundless, a glimmer through the veil of words, and one embarks upon a poet's voyage into space. One journeys to what the old Greeks called οὐρανοῦ, 'heaven gate', "which the hours lift and put down like a trap door". And yet words but touch the hem of that measureless robe extending beyond. Chaos may be described as a 'yawning', but what phrases might usher forth upon the exhalation that is bound to follow it? What combination of symbolic utterances could convey the timeless nature of celestial space breathed out from that abyss? A name would give to it limitations, but finite minds, groping towards the infinite, mark their voyage with such, deifying that whose mystery lies beyond their ken. And so it is that boundless space becomes both heaven and God, Uranus or Ouranos, a name which invokes a formless being whose presence persists as a backdrop for the generations of more tangible deities to come.

The notion of a backdrop may be traced in a cognate term, οὐραῖος (*ouraios*), which means 'hindmost' or 'the rear'. This may be seen as an appropriate designation of that which is ontologically anterior to subsequent activity. Taken by itself, the word *ouranos*

simply describes the 'vault or firmament of heaven', which the ancient Greeks believed to be continually revolving and carrying around the stars which were fixed in it. They regarded this as an attribute of Ouranos, their primary theogonic deity – a very passive and remote-seeming attribute of a god who was never worshipped and infrequently spoken of, except as an ancestor of Kronos and Zeus. Seeking to learn more of his veiled nature, scholars have pursued possible connections with other words such as οὐρον (*ouron*), which means 'urine' and evokes for some the idea of heavenly rain. Others have gone further afield and tried to find a relationship between the Indo-European root *ur*, connecting up the first element and the Ural Mountains with Uranus. A sounder approach is simply to trace *ouranos* back to the Sanskrit root *var*, which means 'to veil' or 'to cover'. In doing this, one pinpoints the essential similarity as well as the etymological kinship that exists between Ouranos and the Vedic god Varuna. One thus acquires a conception permitting a deeper insight into the idea of space as dealt with in the myths of both the Hellenic and the Vedic traditions. One can easily think of the vault of heaven as covering the earth, but one may also approach the idea from the other way around and consider what may lie beyond the heavenly veil. Ouranos is celestial space out of which the duration represented by Saturn emerges. Thus, he is not merely the veil but that which has the power to veil, a distinction that places him well above the function of a hovering god whose release of heavenly rain fructifies mother earth.

Long before the Golden Age of Greece, Hesiod recorded the popular cosmology. In the beginning there first came Chaos, to be followed by Gaia 'of the Broad Breast' who would be the foundation. "But", he wrote, "Gaia's first-born was one who matched her every dimension, Ouranos, the starry sky, to cover her all over, to be an unshakeable standing-place for the blessed immortals." A more ancient cosmology told of a different order. According to the Orphic tradition with which Homer was familiar and whose traces can be found in the *Iliad*, the beginning was witnessed by Uncreated Nyx ('Night'), which existed first as a great

black-winged bird hovering over a vast darkness "without form or void". Though unmated, this bird laid an egg from which golden-winged Eros flew forth, while Ouranos and Gaia issued from its shell. Together, Ouranos and Gaia became the first parents, bringing into being Okeanos and Tethys ('Nurse'), who, in their turn, produced Kronos, Rhea and the other Titans. This is a more philosophical description than the commonly known version transmitted through Hesiod, and it shares many of the cosmological elements found so frequently in other myths of creation. As a contemporary of Ouranos, Gaia takes the place of the substance-principle involved in the vast process of becoming, from the level of the formless and timeless belonging to the great Cosmic Deep to the realm of time and form. She encompasses Tethys, Rhea, Hera, and all the other manifesting aspects of her being as it gives depth and breadth and texture to life. But she is not space. She is not the measureless, boundless, electric potentiality which moves all and yet seems to be only a backdrop in the abstract, an idea of becoming existing beyond and outside all possible becoming. She is not Ouranos, nor is it likely that she could give birth to him, for she is not the wielder of the spark of life, only its sublime vesture. In her the thrill of anticipated being will course, but she will not be its source.

In the popular Greek myths, Ouranos and Gaia brought forth the celestial Titans, the Kyklopes and three gigantic beings whose towering vigour and beauty so struck Ouranos that he bound them in strong bonds "under the wide-wayed earth" (Gaia). The great distress that this brought to Gaia prompted her to instigate a plot against Ouranos, which was carried out by Kronos, who, by mutilating his father, stole from him the power to create and brought it into the subtle realm of duration. *The Secret Doctrine* states that Ouranos tried to oppose an impediment to the natural evolution of creation. This means that the birth of these offspring was distorting and throwing out of balance a very subtle development taking place in the akashic field of becoming, and he sought to stop it. The destruction of these children alludes to the fruitlessness of Nature attempting to create human beings on her



own, but Gaia's persistence prevailed and monsters were delivered even as the power of creation in chaos was lost to Ouranos. Some of the titanic offspring of Ouranos remained celestial but were doomed to engage in a long struggle with generations of terrestrial Titans whose existence Gaia ensured. It was those of the Third Race (personified by Kronos- Saturn) who mutilated him, for it is they who fell into generation, causing creation by will (*kriyashakti*) to be superseded by physical creation. True creation thus became the begetting so endlessly chronicled in the scriptures of various religions.

Whate'er exists in heaven and earth, whate'er beyond the skies,  
Before the eyes of Varuna, the king, unfolded lies.

*Atharva Veda*

Varuna is the Universal Encompasser, the all-embracing Space who is one of the oldest Vedic deities. Ouranos and he are variant forms of the same idea, corresponding with the Iranian Ahura Mazda and taking their name from the same root *var*. Originally they shared a lofty position in the ancient cosmologies, that of Varuna being better charted than that of Ouranos, who was kicked upstairs early on in Greek cosmology. The hallmarks of their greatness are thus more readily traceable in Vedic references about Varuna, to which one may turn to get a more coherent picture of the nature of Ouranos. Originally, the attributes ascribed to Varuna gave to his character a moral elevation and sanctity far surpassing that attributed to any other Vedic deity. Moral grandeur is the quality especially associated with him, a grandeur which made him stand apart from a close connection with sacrifices and magical rituals. He is the Lord of the Universe, the only god given the title Kshatriya, in whom the three heavens and the three earths are deposited. Perhaps because his loftiness lay so far beyond the focus of religious supplication, by the end of the Rig Vedic period Varuna began to decline in importance. He "without whom no creature can even wink" was degraded like Ouranos, while descending gods brought his creative power into generation. While Ouranos became

a vague sky god, Varuna became a kind of Neptune whose deep was identified more with the ocean than with the waters of space.

In the early *Rig Veda*, Varuna is lauded as the 'barrier against falsehood', the 'guardian of immortality' and the 'Lord of *rita*', which is Absolute Truth. He presides over the relationship of man with the gods and cannot be got around, for he beholds all that has been or will be. He is the ruler of the other side, of the invisible, timeless world of the noumenon in which the inner law and order of creation preside. He is the font of *kriyashakti* and the owner of *maya*, through which forms are created. As the Coverer, he represents the hidden and cryptic, the inner reality of things, of order in its transcendent aspect as it originates beyond the understanding of man. His absolute power is felt at night and in all that is mysterious. Law which is visible and manifests in the workings of the universe and the affairs of men falls under the jurisdiction of Mitra and the day, whereas their unseen source lies in the beshrouded night-time presence of Uranus. He rules over a subtler mode of existence, reflected in the reign of Ouranos over the Second Root Race, where he acted as the first astronomical teacher of men, instructing them from afar through the *rita* of his being.

As man progresses through the root races, the human soul is tested and tried under the influence of the Planetary Spirits. The limiting power of Saturn enables the soul to know itself as a self-conscious being. But this limiting power must itself be shattered in order to release it to a still higher and more ethereal state. This is the disruptive work of Uranus who, "with the pent-up energy of the *thyrsus*, destroys with lightning stroke to build anew a temple of fairer beauty". Key words related to Uranus are change, disruption, revolution and the urge towards freedom. Uranian traits have something in common with Aquarius, which is now believed to be more under the rulership of Uranus than of Saturn. Thus, change involves a breaking with the past and a striking out into the realm of the new. An individual influenced by Uranus in this way has the ability to suffer changes, act unconventionally, even crudely,

guided by a flash of intuition. Such a person is sensitive to rays, waves and flashes, to new inventions and their discovery.

The highest and subtlest states of consciousness manifest in human beings as will, wisdom and love. These are said to be expressions of the ruling spirits of Uranus, Mercury and Venus operating through man's spirit, spiritual soul and human soul. With the will of Uranus, the aloofness of Saturn is broken like the pot borne by the Aquarian water-bearer, who then pours out the living water for all humanity. This water is the fiery water of space and is not meant to irrigate the fields of the separative personality, but pours beyond reason and self-interest, indiscriminately. This is why it is said that Uranians are interested in humanity as a whole and are "no respecters of persons". They have developed the wisdom and love within themselves to such a breadth and depth that it cannot be contained in limited interests and relationships. Rather, it spills forth from them in a disinterested stream of revolutionary insights and non-partisan goodwill.

It would be difficult to find a better example of these Uranian qualities than in the discoverer of this planet which has given them their name. William Herschel had come to England as a promising young musician from a talented family in Germany. Having benefitted from an early exposure to music, mathematics and the arts, William quickly established himself as a very successful music teacher and was able to send for his younger sister, who kept house for him whilst pursuing her own musical career. This happy arrangement was not, however, to last long, for the ever curious and penetrating nature of William's mind led him to embrace a fascination with the stars, accompanied by a frustration in not being able to see them well enough. Soon he had converted their hitherto orderly home into a music conservatory, a telescope factory and, by night, an observatory. When music lessons had been completed for the day, the drawing-room was turned into a work-place where telescope tubes were made and a huge optical lathe was set up for making lenses. A smelter, fashioned in the kitchen, once exploded in the course of the never-ending experiments William performed

in his attempts to construct a superior telescope. After he fell asleep one night and dropped off a scaffold set up for observing, his sister began to stay up with him and gradually became more and more involved in the work. Day and night they worked, his sister once writing, "If it had not been sometimes for the intervention of a cloudy or moonlit night, I know not when my brother (or I either) should have got sleep." Finally, in 1778, Herschel completed a 6.2-inch reflecting telescope with a 7-foot focal length, and with it he began his first survey of all the stars visible to him in the heavens.

Until March 13, 1781, the solar system was believed to end with Saturn. Herschel became the first person since the beginning of recorded history to discover a planet. His find catapulted him to world fame and created an extraordinary interest in his telescope. Being an amateur astronomer and devoid of any vanity, he simply observed that "it was that night its turn to be discovered". What this modest statement actually revealed was a diligence in his approach to his work which was far beyond any known to astronomers of his time, amateur or professional. He had developed from scratch and from bold experimentation a telescope which was far superior to any of his day, and with this he had set out to record systematically, in careful detail, information regarding all visible heavenly bodies. No one had ever thought to attempt this before. When he discovered Uranus, the quality of his forty-two-year-old eyes and his instrument let him know that the small disc he was looking at was not one of the fixed stars. He noted its location between the horns of Taurus and one foot of Gemini. Four nights later he saw that it had moved slightly and wondered if it was a comet without a tail. After it was reported and established as a planet, he named it after King George III, though scientists in France insisted on calling it Herschel. At one point it was almost named Neptune, but Johann Bode suggested the name Uranus as a logical addition to a generational sequence of deities already established in the earlier namings of Saturn and Jupiter.

During his life, Herschel made four highly successful complete surveys of all the stars visible through his ever-improving

telescopes. With the avid interest and support of King George and others from all over the world who desired to obtain one of his telescopes, he was able to devote himself entirely to their manufacture and to night-time observation of the stars. He built a monstrous 40-foot telescope with 48-inch mirrors to be set up near London. While the giant tube lay on the ground prior to being raised up on a scaffold, people liked to walk through it, perhaps imagining they were walking through a corridor to another world. King George took the Archbishop of Canterbury through it, saying, "Come, my Lord Bishop, I will show you the way to heaven." It was completed in 1789, and through its lenses Enceladus and Mimas, two of Jupiter's satellites, were discovered.

The quality of Herschel's eyes and his instruments, coupled with the mind of a revolutionary thinker who was completely uninterested in fame or individual wealth, brought him to the threshold of Uranus, which was waiting, as it were, to be discovered. The man matched the planet in a curiously fitting way, as if he had been born to unveil the heavenly body whose influence upon mankind was so powerfully reflected in his own character. It is a bit like the wonderful 'discovery' of the domestication of grain. The grain was slowly evolving in the wild, unseen, while man was gradually developing his awareness of the increasing size of its kernels and how he might exploit them. Bit by bit he developed the technology, and step by step he began to experiment with the fattening seeds until suddenly, so it seemed, he was planting the seeds and grinding the fruited grain. There is an exquisite match between burgeoning human consciousness and that which it perceives. Nature grows to man's awareness and it reveals its mysteries to those whose faculties are already in coadunition with them.

The distance to Uranus is awe-inspiring. It is over twice the distance of Saturn from the sun and can be measured in miles from the earth at 1.75 billion. This is why, with the discovery of Uranus, the solar system became twice as big as it had been before. If one could imagine trying to look at a golf ball 1.5 miles away, one

would have a relative idea of the planet's size and distance. When closest to the earth, Uranus has a visual magnitude of 5.5, which makes it barely visible to excellent human eyesight under perfect observing conditions without optical aids. This raises the question of whether it might have been known to the astronomers of ancient Egypt or India. Could it have been known by another name, the records of which have become lost over the centuries? It has been pointed out that the ancient Hindus worshipped seven planetary gods, excluding the sun and the earth. This suggests that they might have known of Uranus, but there is no name preserved which might be treated as an equivalent. Another interesting problem has to do with the relationship between Uranus and our sun, occultism asserting that it, as well as Neptune, does not depend entirely on the sun like the other planets do. This possibility becomes all the more intriguing when one begins to examine the scientific information that has been so painstakingly gathered over the two centuries since the planet was discovered.

Someone once said that a flashlight provides more light in one second than Uranus has provided to earth in the two hundred years since it was discovered. No wonder the planet has remained so securely veiled from scientific understanding until very recently. Distances and cycles were worked out in early years, only to be shelved. Uranus either ran too fast or too slow, according to all expectations. It was assumed for a long time that the law of universal gravitation broke down beyond Saturn, and with it the possible application of Newtonian physics. This sort of breakdown may concur nicely with the expectations of astrologers, but it brought nothing but puzzlement and consternation to physicists and astronomers. The breaking up of moulds so firmly associated with the spirit of Uranus was demanding a breaking up of previously held assumptions about the way the solar system worked. Just as the planet had lain hidden in the skies for millennia until the right individual and the right circumstances converged to permit its discovery, so now the right combination of factors were awaited which would provide observers a chance to peel away one or two more veils from its mysterious face.

Only once every one hundred and seventy-five years do the outer planets align themselves in such a way as to create the right circumstances for a closer look at Uranus. But to grasp this circumstance, the right knowledge and technology would have to be ready. The right preparation, imaginative forethought and a willingness to discover new means would have to converge in time to take advantage of it. And this is exactly what happened, with no margins to spare, in the preparation of the Voyager 2 mission. Only once in one hundred and seventy-five years would the outer planets be aligned so that a spacecraft could, with minimal fuel, use the gravity of one planet to change its course to another and repeat that process twice more so that four successively more distant planets could be reached. The time was ripe and the will to unleash the inventive imagination was there to meet it. Nor was this a once-and-for-all leap of invention. Because of serious radio problems that developed in Voyager 2 early in its flight towards the outer planets, enormous ingenuity has been subsequently exercised to find more and better ways of keeping communication between the spacecraft and earth alive. One gets the impression that our link with Uranus has been a very tenuous one, saved only by an enormous act of collective will on the part of scores of dedicated scientists, aided, no doubt, by the meditation of certain Uranian individuals who remain unknown to the rest of humanity.

Voyager 2 passed through the system of Uranus on January 24, 1986. The data gathered during those few hours have been analysed and interpreted adequately to give one the ability to imagine the view a passenger aboard the craft would have had. Approaching the planet with its circling moons, one would feel like a part of the head of an arrow flying towards the centre of a standing target. For, projected upright in front of one's gaze, the whole Uranian system stands on end and displays itself in concentric rings surrounding a large bull's-eye, which is the planet itself. The craft would then plunge perpendicularly through the system like a dart which misses the bull's-eye on the board, but passes very close to one of the inner satellite rings and continues on to the other side. This is exactly what did happen, and although there was no human

observer in the craft to witness it, pictures taken revealed sections of the planet and its moons which gave to ground observers a powerful sense of viewing the whole passage. Unlike the journey through the systems of Jupiter and Saturn, whose horizontal orbits permitted a leisurely passage through the planes of the satellites, the vertical orbit of Uranus was penetrated and passed in only five hours. All the information that could be obtained had to be gathered in that condensed period before the spacecraft was shuttled off on the next leg of its journey towards Neptune.

What do we learn about the earth by studying planets?

Humility!

Andrew P. Ingersoll

The atmosphere of Uranus is basically the same as the atmosphere of Jupiter and Saturn. Composed mainly of hydrogen and helium, the planet is surrounded by a layer of hydrocarbon haze formed as sunlight breaks up the methane molecules of its underlying clouds. The rocky core which is believed to exist at its centre is surrounded by mixed gases in a superdense, non-liquid form which extends all the way to the bluish-green outer regions of the planet. The rich chemical mixture of Uranus gathers not in oceans or mountains, as it would on our globe, but in the air, where it condenses to form clouds when the temperature is right. Because the planet and its system lie almost in the plane of the solar system (instead of perpendicular to it, like the other planets), its 'north' pole sometimes points to the sun and half a revolution later its 'south' pole does the same. Its inclination of axis to orbital plane is ninety-eight degrees, and its spin is retrograde in direction. Due to this 'tilt', the course of a year on Uranus (which is the equivalent of eighty-four earth years) witnesses the sun standing almost directly above every point on the planet. In a pattern quite opposite to that of the earth's, when the sun is over the equator of Uranus, the seasons are changing the fastest while, when at the poles, the apparent motion of the sun slows, stops and reverses itself.

Because of its rapid rotation, the winds of Uranus move from east to west. This startled meteorologists who were forced to accept that



the angle of sunlight is less important than rotation in generating the motion of weather systems. But this was not the only rule that Uranus broke. According to theories developed from the studies of other planets, the sun's apparent movement in regard to the poles of Uranus should mean that they are slightly warmer than the equator. On Uranus they are not. The moons orbiting the planet are small and cold and could be expected to be little evolved, dull and basically 'dead'. But instead, each is unique, some showing a great deal of geological activity, some dark and uniform, some enormously faulted and others heavily impacted. The darker colours of the satellites and rings closer to the planet suggest an abundance of carbon compounds, the vital building blocks of life, reminding one that the entire solar system contains the right chemical elements for life to begin wherever conditions permit. Bearing the names of Shakespearean characters, the satellites Oberon, Titania, Umbriel, Ariel and Miranda were all known before Voyager 2's visit. But no one was prepared for the "brave new world" of Miranda up close, with its fantastically weird grooves, ridges, valleys, canyons twelve miles deep, and huge chevron patterns all intersecting higgledy-piggledy in the most chaotic landscape known anywhere in the solar system. A vast harem of bombarding comets attracted to the magnetic field of Uranus must have created some of these extraordinary effects, but they cannot account for all of them.

Nine rings circle with Uranus, but the shepherd moons believed to be largely responsible for the definition of rings around Saturn and Jupiter are observable only near the Epsilon ring, which is the brightest and outermost of the otherwise thin and dark rings of Uranus. Of the ten new moons discovered, all are orbiting inside the system of narrow rings, and if the rings are shepherded, it must be by satellites smaller than twelve miles in diameter, which was the minimum size detectable by the Voyager 2 cameras.

The fact that the Epsilon ring is apparently slightly inclined to the others has inspired the suggestion that the Uranian system is the product of a collision where the fragments have not had time to

collapse to a circular disc. But this idea is based upon the same sort of imaginative speculation that has attended other puzzling Uranian features. There are enormous gaps in our knowledge about the Uranian world, and given the many exceptions to the planetary rules that Uranus has presented, one cannot feel confident about making assumptions along the lines of physical laws applicable in the case of planets closer to our sun and more influenced by it. Uranus is big and powerful. The laws governing its behaviour are important to understand, but they remain shrouded, as the inner law and order of creation belonging to Ouranos and Varuna might be expected to remain.

The mass of Uranus, which is 14.5 times that of the earth, is great enough that its gravity can create a very hot interior. This heat makes atoms shed electrons so that they become an electrically charged fluid which spins out to generate a magnetic field far greater than the earth's and one which is absurdly tilted. The magnetic poles of Jupiter, Saturn and the earth roughly correspond with the poles of rotation. Not so in the case of Uranus, whose magnetic axis is tipped sixty degrees to the poles of rotation. This means that the 'north' and 'south' magnetic poles lie closer to the equator than to the geographic poles. In addition, the magnetic axis lies forty-eight hundred miles off-centre, a condition some have thought may be caused by a magnetic field generated from the mantle rather than from the core of the planet. It may also be that the sixty-degree tilt of the magnetic field was just a coincidence. Voyager 2 may have reached Uranus while it was undergoing a magnetic field reversal in which the poles were shifting magnetic polarity, a phenomenon that happens on earth about every half-million years. If this were the case, it would seem that another dramatic conjunction between the planet and its discoverers had taken place, one where Uranus was caught in the act of shifting a veil covering the inner reality of things, revealing a glimpse of the essential dynamics of change which is mirrored in secondary and tertiary forms in the world.

Once again, the power of *maya* had matched mankind's ability to penetrate its illusory veils. Just as the life-span of William Herschel matched the eighty-four years of a single revolution of Uranus, and his inventive, open and unconventional character reflected the nature of the planet's spirit, so too the superb timing and bold penetration of its unknown realm were now matched by a glimpse into one of the planet's most puzzling mysteries. At each point, the history of the discovery of Uranus involves an interaction between the planet and its spiritual influence operating through human beings who are engaged in major spiritual, psychological and scientific breakthroughs. An intimate mirroring has been going on wherein mankind's growing concern for humanity as a whole and their disinterested quest for greater truths are being charted in the form of their gradually increasing understanding of the planet Uranus.

The ancient arcane tradition taught that Ouranos was the first astronomical Teacher of men. In perfect reflection of this, Uranus is teaching men what their inner being knows and comes to express in the conscious mind only through a series of discoveries. Ouranos, the measureless, boundless, electric potential of space which seems to be only a backdrop to the universe, manifests through Uranus in a series of mayavic veils which, when lifted by man, will reveal laws encompassing this solar system and leading far beyond. Space, which is its greater veil, can thus be expected to conceal mysteries of change through motion involving polar shifts which include not merely systems but whole galaxies. In our solar world, Uranus is thus the representative of this vaster *maya* which awaits man's penetration and willingness to reshuffle all his previously held assumptions about the nature of the universe, and to break through to a larger, more all-encompassing perspective. Ouranos and Gaia issued from the shell of the egg of the great black-winged bird of Night. He is the ruler of the covering of things, the shell. She is the substance of the covering, the fabric of the veils moved and endlessly transposed by the motion of his timeless ideation. He is the creation which lies behind change, the thrill of potential becoming which is the font of *kriyashakti* and motion itself. This is

the source of his moral grandeur, for it mirrors the highest truth which never changes, even as it begins to move in a motion so limitless as to seem but a still backdrop to all subsequent motion.

As the planet Uranus orbits our sun, its rotation axis is ever pointed at the same direction in space. It is as if it hearkens to a distant vibration which continually informs it and influences it even as it makes its strangely incongruous way around our solar system. Uranus is not entirely dependent on the sun, and its oddities can be ultimately explained only in terms of its subtle links, involving its subtler globes, with a much vaster system whose laws effortlessly incorporate all the laws of physics known to man. They incorporate them on such a highly synthesized level that all the redundancies, inadequate suppositions and limiting models fall away, leaving only the kernels of truth that fit in with a much bigger picture. Individuals following this Uranian path may imitate this same stance, and be in the world, so to speak, but not of it. They can also attempt to shed the conventional views and comfortable limitations of the personal man. Those who pass the tests and trials of the other planetary spirits may hope to come under the vibrating influence of Uranus. That such are rare is borne out by the fact that very few in this world march to the beat of a truly universal drummer.

This may be seen reflected in the strangely off-centre magnetic axis of Uranus. It is as if its position mirrors the prevailing condition of a humanity which is activated more by the forces operating in its mantle than those emanating from its immortal core. Perhaps a wonderful centering of the magnetic axis of Uranus will accompany a reversal of this mistaken tendency when the bulk of mankind learns to live from within without. This centering would not alter the fact that the planet's rotational axis would continue to point towards its invisible mentor. It would simply reflect an alignment of principles such as exist in an individual whose sevenfold being has become like seven lenses, each perfectly reflective of the lens above it. Like a refined telescope, the vestures of such a one transmit faithfully the higher truth that lies beyond the veil of appearances, their revolutionary presence tending to

shatter the lesser convictions held by others. Through such as these we glimpse Uranus and begin to dream a waking dream of becoming something far greater than what we believed ourselves to be. We soar beyond time and all its limitations, beyond words and tenses and forms, to the threshold of our essence, that invisible point in space.

*O brave new world  
Which points to worlds beyond  
And discovers the way.*

*Hermes*, June 1989  
Helen Valborg

# NEPTUNE

*While the 'thousand-horned bull' was rising from the ocean and everyone fell asleep, Vasishtha (who had been allowed to see the miracle of creation by Varuna) left the mansion of Varuna, the cosmos, and entered the radiant light beyond and above the vault of heaven.*

While everyone sat by the seaside and basked in the dreaming light accompanying the rhythm of the deep, one individual slipped away into an ocean belonging to another world. He must have found a hidden estuary that led him far off from the crowd, one which no one else could see. And why he would have noticed it is a mystery, for the compelling body of lapping waters which stretched along the shore had hypnotized everyone else. But notice it he did, despite the graceful-limbed revellers who might have distracted him as they danced along the beach in worship of the worldly sea. He saw its slim channel opening behind his mind's eye, beckoning him to pursue its course. And he followed that stream, glimpsing now and then a liquid form shining with unearthly splendour in the distance and a triple-pointed spark of electrical fire rising from its midst.

Even as he made this remarkable journey, his body remained at the seaside, his arms curled around his bare knees while his eyes gazed, unseeing, over the rows of incoming waves. He might just as well have been seated before a telescope looking through light-years of space at a dimly swirling planet which in reality had been travelling rapidly towards the throne of its spiritual ruler. For his inner journey to Neptune would have taken him away from a view of the distant planet bearing the name just as surely as it took him away from the insistent tides welling up in the earth-sea spreading before him.

This does not mean there is nothing one can learn by studying the sea or the planetary orbs in space. Rather, their presence is so powerful a pointer to their true hidden nature that the ordinary

senses can be overwhelmed and persuade the mind that reality lies in the appearance of things, that Neptune's realm really is this pounding, briny ocean, and that the blue planet which orbits in eighth place around our sun is actually Neptune, or whatever we mean by that name. But if it is true that the essential hieroglyph of reality can be read in the elements and the interrelating globular systems of manifestation, then the nature of the planets and their connection with the elements of our earth must provide clues pointing to an archetypal design traceable in solar systems, galaxies and in the subtle vestures of man. Thus, a planetary progression moving from the sun outwards can be treated as a series capable of explaining the psychological and spiritual worlds. One can examine the teachings from the *Stanzas of Dzyan* which say that eight houses were built by Mother for her Divine Sons, "four large and four small ones", and see that the eight globes (one of which was relegated to the position of sun) were born of the eternal substance-principle which is the basis of the *Paramatman* or Universal Soul. That these planets were all comets and suns in their origin implies that they began as the invisible sparks of primordial atoms in the Mother Deep and differentiated under the conditions of archetypal heat, attraction and repulsion (motion) to become invisible suns.

Whilst modern cosmology asserts that differentiation in the physical solar nebula led to planets with different initial compositions, *Gupta Vidya*, the Secret Doctrine, teaches that differentiation takes place in invisible nebulae from which manifest all the globes, including the suns. Thus, suns, comets and planets are linked together on a precosmic plane wherein they share an eternal basis of origin, one which is transmitted through the essential substance and design of all their subsequent manifest differentiations. Mercury is different in composition from Saturn not only because it is closer to the sun but because it represents a particular expression of motion, of position and relationship in a design which is a wondrous symbol for the involution and evolution of the universal Self and each pilgrim soul. If one lets Mercury represent the initial step in the descent of spirit towards the earth, the giant outer planets signify the movement of the soul

out of matter into a vaster awareness. If one begins with the outermost planet and moves towards the sun, the picture shifts to an initial macrocosmic involvement in stages of progressive formation, descending to highly differentiated life on this earth from which ascent into the realms of the innermost planets and the sun takes place. Put together, the macrocosmic and microcosmic processes cycle round the solar system, as it were, moving in opposite directions to one another, one of them prograde in its motion, the other retrograde: as above, so below, but reflected through a mirror. Similarly, the macrocosmic ocean linked to the distant blue planet of Neptune is reflected in the inverted vault of the earth's ocean basins out of which Neptune is imagined to rise, seaweed dangling from his trident and hair. By focussing upon this lower aspect of the god, people came to identify him with the ocean or with water itself, forgetting that his rulership had originally extended over the unlimited Cosmic Sea, from whose Waters of Space the offspring of the male spirit-fire and the female gaseous-water become the ocean on earth.

The alchemists of medieval Europe recognized this truth and today a psychological expression of their recognition can be found in the teaching of Carl Jung and his followers, who thought that this cosmic ocean could be seen as a symbol of the human unconscious, from the deepest layers of the individual mind to the broadest depths of the universal soul. From this perspective, Neptune is a regent of heaven, of the 'Upper Waters', and his descent to the station of one who is merely a god of the earthly sea is a cosmic equivalent to the biblical myth of the Fall of Adam. Psychologically, this can be traced in man when the envelopment of each individual soul in matter is complete and the memory of one's collective cosmic origin has been obscured. In this immense journey the immortal soul passes from the swelling rhythms inherent in the electric potential of the Mother Deep through the dangerous corridors of astral waters, where serpentine waves undulate as shadows of spirit and cast their turbulence upon the beach of the conscious human mind. Neptune and his sea thus not only fall into the physical world but are intimately linked with the astral realm,



its dangerous lightning-forked serpents and its endless capacity for inversion at its lower levels.

Though Zeus reigns over the Fourth Race, it is Poseidon who rules.

*The Secret Doctrine*

As Poseidon, Neptune was the spirit and titanic strength of the living race of Atlanteans. Plato tells of a division he made of Atlantis and of how, on one of the islands, he found a human couple made of clay (the first physical humans), through whom he begot Atlas. Like Vishnu Narayana or Idaspati of the Hindu myths, Poseidon crossed the horizon in three steps, giving his name to the third, which was the last island of Atlantis, and leaving behind him as Rama the mysterious legacy of Lanka. In his involvement with the world, he brought his trident with its "three teeth" from which the fangs of lightning exploded, connecting fire and water, heaven and earth. Like the caduceus, the trident bears down through the astral the serpentine waves of Divine Motion and then draws them up in its central rod, where the lightning virility of Mind spills over in its lower aspects into the liquid fertility of the sea. Thus, the astral deep over which Poseidon reigns is filled with nereids, tritons, oceanids and mermaids. Out of this brew Nature sculpted the human form and Poseidon sent the beautiful bull which the Minoan queen Pasiphae fell unnaturally in love with, to produce the Minotaur, a symbol of physical procreation, at the cost of the surrender of the spiritual powers of human intellection. The outer prongs of the trident resemble the bull's horns, the lunar ploughshares of ritual sacrifice. The central prong is the *linga*, the seed-bearing link between the creative forces of the divine and the human. When it rises from the astral sea, the seed of generation is transmuted into the creative powers of the becalmed mind. Knowledge of this vast potential enabled the Atlanteans not only to rule the earthly sea but also to control and direct many of the awesome powers inherent in its astral prototype. The horrendous abuse of these creative gifts resulted in the appalling karma passed

down through successive generations of humanity from the Fourth to the Fifth Root Race.

The legacy of Poseidon is indeed shadowy, suggesting to the mind lurking, watery forms signifying the trials and errors of Nature and the progeny of the unnatural abuse of creative powers. In the popular myths of the classical Mediterranean world, he was most commonly known for his licentious escapades, his moody imperiousness and his unpredictably imposing strength. But he was also closely associated with the dolphin, who, as Makara the Dragon, hovers upon the ocean and is intimately involved in the birth of the spiritual microcosm. All the wavy serpentine paths of the astral light, the Milky Way, the path of the sun to the tropics of Cancer and Capricorn, as well as the circles of the sidereal year, are woven by this dragon, who is both the *vahan* or vehicle of Poseidon and one with him esoterically.

Makara is identified with the five *Kumaras*, who are the fivefold *Dhyān Chohans* possessing the soul of the five elements in their natures, with water and etheric fire predominating. They plunge into the depths for their ecstatic devotions, remaining there while Poseidon or Krishna *Avatar* hovers above. Thus, the water over which he floats is a mirror of the mind, a Kumaric matrix in which the triune spark of spiritual consciousness takes birth. It is filled with potency, only waiting for the stroke of his magical trident to come to life in intelligent form. The world's oceans perfectly reflect this truth as they lie charged with extraterrestrial energy flowing into them from outer space, non-polluting, inexhaustible and free. The energy of the sun warms them, propels their waves, and works through the gravity field of the moon to create the tidal system, the weather, the seasons, and all the terrene cycles which permit continuous growth. They present to man on the physical plane a microcosm of a vaster cosmic ocean, wherein the energy of *Fohat* is stored and the potential for life-forms gathers in etheric shoals of archetypal possibility.

At this juncture one can see a distinct overlap with the symbols and functions ascribed to Uranus. Indeed, Varuna, whose name can

be found transposed as Uranus, is said to have been the progenitor of the Poseidon/Neptune of earthly myth. By confining his children in the womb of primordial matter, Uranus personifies the unmanifest creative powers of, and in, Chaos. But in the *Iliad* it is the Ocean, the Illimitable Spirit in Chaos, which, together with primordial matter (his spouse Tethys), gave to all things, creatures and gods their very being. And it is out of his Immeasurable Space that Neptune arises with his trident bearing the Fohatic spark of *Eros*. One can see that, while Uranus signifies the ideal purity of the unmanifest, Neptune reaches beyond him from above, as it were, transmitting the Desire which first arose in It in a series of triadic lightning charges on descending levels of manifestation. A spiritual and psychological planetary progression which began with the outermost planet would then find Neptune to be, in one sense, closer to the One Source of Life and, in another sense, more deeply involved in its more differentiated levels of expression than Uranus. Much of the symbolism associated with Neptune connects him strongly to Vishnu Narayana and Krishna, but one sees in this a marked resemblance also to Mahashiva,<sup>1</sup> the *Mahayogin* who bears a trident and dips deeply into the world before rising out of it. This evocative allusion is enormously strengthened by the identification of Neptune with Makara and the birth of the spiritual 'microcosm'. For this birth entails a death or dissolution of the phenomenal universe as it passes into the noumenal realm of the spiritual.

When the Sun passes away beyond the 30th degree of Makara and will reach no more the sign of the Meenam (Pisces) then the night of Brahma has come.

*The Secret Doctrine*

Like Uranus, Neptune does not have direct astral and psychic communication with the earth. Nor do the two planets depend upon our sun entirely, unlike the rest of the planets in our system. Indirectly, Neptune informs the earth through water and fire

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<sup>1</sup> The *Upanishads* view as a heinous sin the notion that Mahavishnu and Mahashiva, the Godhead and the *Guru* of *Gurus*, are different entities.

blended in the symbiotic relationship of the masculine and feminine principles in every aspect of life. Through pulsating waves whose perpetual undulation describes a motion expressive of eternal being beyond negation, Neptune communicates to the consciousness of the globe and all that lives on it rhythmic sparks of universal ideation garnered from the oceanic waves of a vaster and more etheric solar source than humanity can know of at present. These impulsions affect conscious life on this globe through the unconscious, welling up from its labyrinthine depths to affect the mind in ways sometimes inexplicable and explosive. They work through the invisible blendings of the masculine and feminine elements in man's psychic nature, his passions and fears as well as the evolving patterns of his thoughts. The irrational character that these effects can have tend to encourage fear of the unknown, which often results in the most peculiar forms of self-protective behaviour. A good example of this sort of response can be found in the events which led to the discovery of the planet Neptune in the last century.

The courageous and compelling figure in the drama was John Couch Adams, who was born in Cornwall in 1819 as the son of a poor tenant farmer. When he was sixteen, he was thrilled to see Halley's Comet, and one year later he wrote a scientific paper on a lunar eclipse which was reprinted in several London newspapers. At the age of twenty, Adams obtained a scholarship to St. John's College in Cambridge, where he impressed everyone with his modest graciousness, total lack of class consciousness, and brilliance. In 1841 he assigned himself the formidable task of investigating whether an unknown planet beyond was responsible for the irregularities of Uranus. The problem was how to verify the presence of an outlying planet, pinpoint its position, and show that it was responsible for the perturbations of Uranus on the basis of mathematically theoretical deductions, an approach which had never been conceptualized as possible, let alone attempted by scientists before. Adams had to solve the standard gravitational problem in reverse. Given the irregularities in the motion of Uranus, he had to subtract the perturbations caused by its moons

and by Jupiter and Saturn. From the remaining irregularities he had to deduce exactly where the disturbing force was coming from, how fast and along what path that body was moving, and how far away and how massive it was. The outer planet would also be orbiting the sun, so its distance and position relative to Uranus would always be changing, as would the direction and magnitude of its gravitational force.

Adams calculated all the above variables to answer for all the perturbations recorded in the motion of Uranus at every point throughout its observed history. To handle all these simultaneous variables, he invented a new form of mathematical analysis and produced a preliminary solution confirming the existence of Neptune in the fall of 1843. At this point, fear of the unknown and extremely shameful forms of self-protection entered the scene through the strange behaviour of several scientists, including the Astronomer Royal of England, who perversely refused to believe that such a form of mathematical analysis could work or that an outlying planet existed. At every point he thwarted the recognition of the work of Adams so as to protect his own standpoint and the time-honoured approach to astronomical science based upon observable phenomena. Eventually, this snobbish gentleman succeeded in sabotaging England's opportunity of making sole claim for Neptune's discovery, and Adams was only eventually given credit for his work along with a French scientist who independently arrived at the same solution in 1846.

The discovery of Neptune by purely mathematical calculation was the greatest triumph for gravitational theory since Edmund Halley had predicted the date of the return of the comet which was given his name. From that time, theoretical mathematics took the lead in the way in which astronomical research was pursued. The whole of modern science moved from a system of empirical data-gathering to one of broad conceptualization. It was as if, despite the disruptive and irrational Neptunian forces welling up through the subconscious natures of those who tried to block a recognition of the work of Adams, the planet was ready to be discovered, and the

same meticulous clarity of thought and noble lack of self-interest which had characterized Herschel's discovery of Uranus prevailed. Once discovered, the effect of this distant giant was immediately felt by the human race. The forces operating within the collective and individual unconscious became more chaotic and pressing, bubbling up through man's subconscious mind, forcing him to attempt to come to grips with their tempestuous energy.

It was only a matter of time before someone would try to make some kind of order out of this increased activity by putting labels on it and theorizing about its source. Psychoanalysis was just around the corner. On the other hand, the breakthrough in theoretical mathematics which permitted the discovery in the first place opened up a door, resulting in a loosening up of the patterns of thought that had bound the majority of thinking humanity up to that point. No longer would it be possible for scientific innovators to grapple with cause and effect in the physical and psychological realms without attempting to account for the impact of superior human intelligence as well as that of the massive sea of hidden psychic forces continually influencing conscious life. Of course, the empirical data-gatherers would continue with their busy work, but the real revolutions in thinking would be initiated by those capable of launching themselves on the Neptunian current, going beyond a mechanically conceived three-dimensional world into concepts of relativity and field theory which would attempt to include the dynamics of the observer as well as the observed.

A century and a half after Neptune's discovery, the fecund and highly abstract metaphysical concepts brought to light by the nineteenth century Theosophical Movement and the rich ideational offspring of the theory of relativity have continued to loosen and expand the horizon of human thought. Certainly, empiricism continues to obstruct this inevitable burgeoning of consciousness, but even among the least intellectual circles, many people have assimilated ideas of relativity and holistic notions involving the complete man as well as his mental and physical environment.

The stage is set for the closer contact with Neptune, which is slated to take place in 1989 and which will undoubtedly trigger a new wave of awareness concerning the microcosmic and macrocosmic realms, how they interact and how one reflects the other. Sensitive individuals will be aware of a fresh impulsion of energies and experience the challenge of trying to understand and gain greater control over them. Others will simply feel the added pressures and find that their attempts to manage them on a superficial level do not succeed in bringing them either comprehension or control. The door opened up initially through the alignment of the principles (symbolized by Herschel's superior telescope), and the clarity of vision brought to the discovery of Uranus was opened wider through the broader necessity of understanding the dynamics of that alignment and coming to take responsible control over the forces released with the discovery of Neptune. Now, when a closer contact with the blue planet is imminent, that necessity will become an imperative for those who wish to play a consciously creative role in evolution, rather than one where they are carried passively along the great waves of change which will sculpt out the future of the human race.

The theoretical work of astronomers has led them to anticipate certain conditions which they believe closer contact with Neptune will reveal. The planet is so far away that very little is actually yet known about it. It is three times further away from us than Saturn, its orbit being so distant that it requires one hundred and sixty-five years to complete its rotation around the sun. In mass and size it is very similar to Uranus, the two planets appearing in certain ways to be more alike than any other pair in our solar system. Neptune is believed to have a dense rocky core of about fifteen earth masses, making up one quarter of its total mass. The rest of its known composition is largely molecular hydrogen and methane, which is responsible for its blue colour. In addition, it is expected that helium is present and that an ammonia cloud layer lies deep in the atmosphere of the planet, where the pressure is higher than on Uranus, while there may be thin argon clouds in the upper atmosphere. But it is not known whether Neptune's interior is hot

or cold or whether it has a solid surface or a magnetic field. It is known that the planet emits three times the heat that it gets from the sun, but the source of this heat is merely speculated upon, some thinking that it may be caused by tidal friction produced by its retrograde satellite, Triton, which revolves around Neptune in a direction opposite to the revolution of the planet. About the size of our moon or larger, Triton is highly inclined and may provide a key to understanding a great disturbance which appears to have occurred at one time in Neptune's system and which may have been related to the origins of the planet Pluto.

Being the only planet whose orbit overlaps another, Pluto may have once been a satellite of Neptune which escaped when the Neptunian protoplanet was losing a massive extended atmosphere. It may also have been ejected from the system when Neptune experienced a massive collision or when it captured Triton. *The Secret Doctrine* explains the retrograde motion of satellites such as Triton in terms of pregenetic battles fought by the growing planets in the solar system. Neptune's small satellite, Nereid, is prograde in its motion but highly eccentric in its orbit, which ranges from one hundred and forty thousand kilometres to nine and one-half million kilometres from its parent planet. The eccentricities of Triton and Nereid speak for a system that has evolved differently, and astronomers have speculated that perhaps Triton ran backwards into the outer envelope of Neptune, where it slowed down and was captured but not 'eaten up'. They have also considered the possibility that it may at some point in the future actually collide with Neptune, falling into it, as it were. In any case, Triton is the only large moon in the solar system to revolve in a retrograde direction, and it must have undergone a major gravitational ordeal before it was formed. It is hoped that some of Triton's mysteries will be yielded up to the camera when, after passing twenty-seven hundred miles above Neptune, Voyager 2 flies close to and behind the giant moon. Scientists also hope to discover the secret of the ring-arcs which have baffled observers for some time. Two separate sightings in Chile in 1984 confirmed that something at Neptune had blocked starlight, but instead of having



done so in a continuum on either side of the planet, the blockage was intermittent. Along with a few earlier sightings, this led scientists to theorize that Neptune has 'rings' made up of arcs which are each a few thousand kilometres long. They have speculated that these arcs are confined by a satellite with an orbital inclination capable of generating co-rotational resonances which keep the arcs from lapping one another and making a continuous ring. There might be several very small satellites orbiting, say, seventy thousand kilometres out in a ten-degree inclination from the equatorial plane of Neptune, or there may be small shepherd moons at the Lagrangian points that balance and keep the ring-arcs stably intact. Hypotheses developed to explain the ring-arcs reveal an imaginative application of the dynamics of physics and a sophisticated respect for the economy that operates at all levels of natural law.

Models containing redundancies or demanding more acting variables than others are discarded or treated as less probable than ones serving to explain with more elegant simplicity. The proof of these hypotheses will be tested when Voyager 2 begins its search of Neptune's ring-arc system twenty-seven days before the spacecraft's August 25 encounter with Neptune itself, and steps it up three days out from the planet with a 'ring movie' of pictures which will be radioed back to earth for thirteen hours. Camera-aiming instructions will be given from predicted positions by the mission sequence team, which has calculated relative angles, speed and light conditions with enormous care, hoping that youthful material caught up in the arcs will tell us something of significance when compared to satellites which may be as old as the solar system. Thus we may learn the possible history of the Neptune system and, by implication, the formation of the outer planets.

How is this marvellous spacecraft going to reach a planet 2.8 billion miles from the earth? It is so far away that the human eye would have to be four times more powerful than it normally is in order to see it. It is so far from the sun that the light there is like twilight on earth, ten minutes after sundown on a clear day. The

accuracy required of a spacecraft to get there is comparable to a golfer sinking a thousand-mile putt. To get there, Voyager 2 has had to pass quite precisely through the systems of Jupiter and Saturn, penetrate their mysteries and use their gravitational fields as assists on the next leg of the journey. This was particularly tricky at Uranus because the planet's magnetic field was only suspected. The spacecraft had to pass close to Miranda, the major moon of Uranus, and then swing behind the planet and its rings so that the radio transmission to the craft could pass through the atmosphere and ring system, revealing their structure and composition. The craft's fly-by was also tightly constrained by its need to use the gravity of Uranus to assist it on its way to Neptune, the weight of the instruments in the craft and its capacity for fuel making this assistance essential. To make it work, Voyager 2 had to hit a point in space at a point in time with phenomenal accuracy. To miss 'corridor centre' at Uranus by a mile would have created an error of four thousand miles at Neptune, and there would not have been adequate fuel to make more than a small adjustment with the craft's thrusters. As it was, Voyager 2 flew well within this corridor, passed above the cloud tops of Uranus, and the gravity of the planet bent the craft's trajectory by twenty-three degrees while increasing its velocity by forty-five hundred miles per hour. Thus began a journey of a billion miles and three-and-a-half years to Neptune.

Once Voyager 2 reaches Neptune, communication with the earth will be stretched to its maximum capability. Radio instructions and data will have to be transmitted over a much greater distance, and pictures taken in the lower light will require long exposure, risking blurring due to the speed and close distance of the craft to its targets. Motion compensators will be activated, and small bursts of the thrusters will turn the craft slightly to send pictures back to earth before turning it again towards a new target. Given the limitations of the craft, which has suffered radio damage over the twelve years of its immense journey, linked receivers around the globe have been established to increase the earth's capacity to receive its information. Every known advantage has been pursued

in relation to maximizing the ground crew's ability to control the craft and compensate for the narrow margins within which it will have to operate in the Neptunian system. At this point, the die is cast as far as the probe is concerned. Its capacity was determined long ago. All that can be done to enhance its performance must be done at the receiving end. Is it possible that a perverse twist of fate could frustrate this delicate communication, much as the perverse stubbornness of the Astronomer Royal obfuscated the enlightened discovery of Adams in the last century? A suspicion of theoretical mathematics as an approach to research is no longer prevalent in the world, but there still lingers a dogged sense that it is best used as a language to express collected observations. The distrust of that which is asserted long before there is tangible evidence to back it is deep-seated in the minds of materialistic human beings. The collective impact of such an earthbound consciousness could well affect the outcome of a planetary problem dependent upon calculations of the most abstract and theoretical nature. One can only hope that this foot-dragging mentality does not prevail and that, like the brilliant work of Adams which received recognition in the end, Voyager 2 will make its discoveries and communicate them successfully to the world.

The possibility that collective human consciousness could affect the outcome of a Neptunian fly-by is linked up with the reciprocal exchange that takes place between the earth and other planets in our solar system in general, but in particular with the surge of Neptunian influence which took place after the planet's discovery and which will occur again with the closer contact we are about to establish. Humanity's increased contact with Jupiter has expanded consciousness to accommodate a larger design, while Saturn continues to test the human race until it abandons the inadequate forms of the past and begins to shape a new vehicle. Uranus stirs the sleeping *chakras* along the invisible spine, aligns the subtle lenses of man's sevenfold being, and links the immortal soul with the Divine Will of Maheshvara, the ONE SELF of ALL. Thus, the opening up of latent awareness is linked to the continuous,

conscious resonance with the supreme, indwelling intelligence of the cosmos.

The heightening of this greater awareness of the vital need for a resonant alignment with the Cosmic Mind has been abundantly noticeable since the passage of Voyager 2 through the Uranian system. With the approach to Neptune, all humanity can arouse a deepening sense of the divine within and an effortless shift towards a mystical letting go of the self-crippled personal image and pseudo-identity, derived from 'deficiency needs', wanton desires and immoderate wants. This involves letting what the telescope has seen, so to speak, reveal to our inmost consciousness the invisible cosmos with which we are linked. Contact with Neptune is an exposure to cosmic Light, a holding of the glimpse provided by Uranus, and a flooding of the lower vestures with its reality through the powerful channels of the unconscious mind. To contact Neptune is to come into coadunition with energies and beings from beyond our solar system and to attain access to the divine through a realization of the magnitude and grandeur of its service.

Giving oneself over to the cosmos can be done only by fearlessly opening wide to the akashic depths which lie beyond the hypnotic phantasmagoria of the astral light. This is truly frightening, for our common experience in dreams and in waking life has taught us that the serpents coiled in the nooks and crannies of the psychic nature are potentially deadly. There are too many passions and terrors welling up unbidden from the unconscious to permit us to feel confident about the unknown or unsuspected aspects of our natures. Thus, men and women spend a good deal of time and energy protecting themselves from their true selves, and when they try to shift their sense of being to include the whole cosmos, they are apt to feel the same overwhelming apprehension about its dreadful unknown depths as they do about the inward recesses of the hidden self. But if one found the courage to begin the journey to Neptune whereon the great Cosmic Ocean awaits, one would best attempt the passage in stages. After assimilating the glorious vision of Jupiter, one can meditate upon Saturn as form, realize in the mind's eye the inner meaning of Shiva's trident, of the lunar

crescent on his brow, his bull's horns, and the sacred *linga* of light which is his most abstract emblem, as well as the perpetually moving rings of fire surrounding his still-centred dance. Meditating deeply thus upon Saturn as Ideal Form, one can reach a point of dynamic control where the highest *kundalini* energy can be gently awakened through the telescopic *chakras* of Uranus to destroy the illusion of form. Then only can one sense a serene mystical oneness with the divine through Neptune's gate.

Like the Voyager 2 spacecraft which makes this journey on the physical plane in our lifetime, humanity has made this journey on different planes in the past and will do so again in a much more conscious way in the future. But the advanced souls who have realized and sustained the realization of a mystical oneness with the cosmos represent the proverbial drops of rain before the monsoon. The journey they have made is hardly easy. It is fraught with dreadfully narrow margins and limitations born of the karma of each aspirant's particular circumstances. Like the scientists who designed Voyager 2, they too must eliminate from their craft every redundancy, every excess of fuel or weight or structural capacity that is not essential to reaching their goal. They have to hone their mental, psychic and physical vestures until they are perfectly in balance and poised for the long flight.

Contact with Neptune now will undoubtedly affect the efforts of those who are striving to prepare and bring their subtle vestures into alignment for this journey. A few more drops of rain will surely fall. But the journey itself will have to be made by each and every individual who, through his or her own solitary longings, will learn the necessity of staging their progress precisely so that the lessons of Jupiter, Saturn and Uranus are well assimilated before passing on. Some will experience at first hand the crucial role which the gravitation assist of each of these planets offers their passage. Without involvement in the intimate absorption of the fields of these planets, there could be no eventual alignment of stages, no alignment of planets, subtle vestures, hidden *chakras*, that would allow the cosmic energy to flow freely and give that extra spurt of courage needed for the next leg of the journey.

If the gradual alignment is steady and true, the expanding consciousness of the individual embarked on the journey will be transmitted to his own lower vestures, which will gradually become more porous and deeply receptive to higher communication. Like the ground crew striving to enhance its reception of Voyager 2's information, the spiritual astronaut's vestures will gather in service of his aspiration and strain to echo his every realization. They will of necessity become extremely flexible and sensitive, for his realizations will be immeasurably broad and deep. In nearing Neptune's gate, he will not only begin to learn about the formation of the outer planets, but penetrate the mystery of Triton's retrograde motion, perceiving, perhaps, that its backward movement into Neptune's system represents the microcosmic cycle asserting itself in the vast revolving ocean of the macrocosm. He will see that its potential collision with Neptune would be an effect echoing the movement of the drop of the individual soul merging into the divine aura of the UNIVERSAL SELF. Nearing the gate, he will confront the energies and beings from other systems who reside there. Through communion with such entities, he will consciously embrace the reality of other systems and of systems without end, until he is overwhelmed with the realization of cosmos without end and with his sense of oneness with it.

It is at this mystical juncture that the triune spark of consciousness raised up in Neptune's trident takes birth in the vastitude over which he floats. Rather than the pristine spark of self-awareness which awakened humanity eighteen million years ago, this triune spark represents the fruition of the whole journey of sacrifice into the lower waters of generation and the greater thrust upward and inward towards the akashic ocean of mankind's ideational beginnings. Reaching that great Cosmic Sea, consciousness becomes cosmic, the gates of Neptune are entered, and fire and water blend the individual with the universal, thus incarnating progressively the Logos in the cosmos, the God in Man.

*Hermes*, July 1989

Helen Valborg

# PLUTO AND CHARON

*My Lord" she said, "you ask for miracles,  
Yet you have earned them by the things you've done,  
By hand, by steel, by faith that walked through fire.  
And what you ask, great Trojan, shall be yours:  
I'll take you there; you'll see Elysium,  
That new-found land within the nether world.  
There you will meet your dear father's ghost,  
Nor any road dosed to a man of virtue."  
Through green dark aisles of Proserpina's forest  
The sibyl pointed where a golden bough  
Shone in the wavering shadows of Avernus,  
Telling him to break it from the tree, to carry it,  
And as Aeneas did so, as in dreams,  
Drear Pluto's kingdom waked before his eyes.  
Ovid*

Like shades bound for Tartarus, embarked in the boat of the dark ferryman, we tremble with our departure. Launched into the silent depths of night, we are leaving familiar landmarks behind. We are gliding in a spacecraft called Orpheus or Aeneas or Persephone, gliding past moons and planets seen from earth, past the systems, forms and thoughts that filled our world. We are floating beyond the world to the outer world, the underworld, the realm that verges on non-being, that shrouds its secrets in the distant mist of unknown space. We drift beyond time, forgetting time, and land upon the shores of Pluto's kingdom, the shadowy cratered shores of a drear and icy world. From there the sun appears as a tiny distant star. The cold, thin atmosphere reveals the stars and the sun at the same time, for there is little scattering of light through the air and one source does not obscure another. But where shadows fall, they are dense.

The contrasts on Pluto are very stark; his realm is one of coldly clear light and blackest darkness. We must be very careful not to step in a shadow lest we fall into a crevasse completely invisible to

us. Everywhere about are craters, chasms, caves and icy corridors. It seems there are many chambers and byways in Pluto's place and great caution must be exercised in exploring them. For with each step taken, one bounds weightlessly ahead, undaunted by a strong field of gravity. One could very well plunge into an unexpected opening and never be seen again. Oh yes, we tremble even now, for though we wish to gather Pluto's secrets, we are afraid of being detained by him, and continually try to keep our craft in view. If one wandered just a mile or two away from it, it would disappear over the horizon and the thought of losing track of our means of returning to the world is terrifying.

While considering this, Charon's barque has crossed over once again to the earth's shore and we are left wondering if this has been a voyage of scientific speculation or one of mythological fancy. The fact that it is based upon data so painstakingly gleaned by modern astronomers does not diminish the value of the myths describing visits to Pluto's kingdom at all. The parallels to be found between many aspects of these mythic themes and what we are beginning to learn about the very small and distant planet we have named Pluto are very striking. Of course, the myths describe the hero who ventures through the underworld of death and the conditions of the dead whom he encounters. But they are also rich in their descriptions of the approach to Pluto's kingdom, of the ferry which takes the hero across the vast waters at the end of the world to reach it, and of the contrasted character of the kingdom itself.

Homer's *Iliad* speaks of Oceanus, which Odysseus found at the world's end. Along its mist-shrouded shore, throngs of the dead waited for Charon to pull up his barque and carry them into the dark waters beyond. Later, when Aeneas approached this same shore, he asked the sibyl the meaning of this gathering and was told that the marshes of the Styx hold the unburied and poor who have no coin to pay the ferryman. Looming darkly out of the turbid mist, Charon approached and challenged him, saying he could not carry the living to Pluto's abode. After the sibyl had convinced the reluctant oarsman that Aeneas had earned the right to visit, they



had still to confront the fearful dog Cerberus before descending into Hades is the Greek name for Pluto and his abode) itself. Virgil depicted the review of lives that takes place therein, followed by judgement and the imprisonment of souls in the various fields of mourning. He described how Aeneas paused before a huge stream of Tartarus which coursed in a fiery blast before a terrible brazen door, from behind which wails and grinding chains could be heard. This was the abode of the evil, a realm in stark contrast to the cool fields of Elysium.

In the old Greek cosmology, Chaos, Night, Black Erebus and Broad Tartarus were first to manifest, long before the appearance of Gaia and Ouranos. It is significant, therefore, that Hades or Pluto should be placed in the generation of Zeus on the Olympian family tree. Even so, his Tartarus links him directly back to a condition existing before the formation of worlds. He and his attendants are chthonian, beings of the earth as opposed to the gods of the bright air. But considering that the name Pluto means "wealth", one wonders if the wealth of the earth is meant or if it refers to some more antique concept of wealth, a notion of plenitude associated with non-possession and release. This idea harmonizes with the address of Hades as the "Unseen One" but is less obviously compatible with Orcus, one of the Roman names for Pluto, which means "the One or the Place that constrains or confines".

In the vast hollows of Erebus,  
First of all black-winged night,  
Alone, brought forth an egg  
From which Eros, the Desirable,  
Burst forth like a swift whirlwind.

Aristophanes

In puzzling Pluto's nature, it is important to remember that both Neptune and Pluto are associated symbolically with the negative aspects of the spirit. When Venus sought to engender the manifesting power of love in all three worlds, she saw that Pluto was immune to her influence. She ordered her son Eros to pierce him with one of his arrows and rouse in him desire. The result of

this act was the immediate kidnapping of Persephone, whose loss to the world brought drought and the devastation of crops. The fierce reaction of Demeter, her mother, resulted in an eventual bargain being struck whereby Persephone would spend half the year in the underworld as queen of Hades (autumn and winter) and half the year on the earth (spring and summer). Thus life and love were brought into the realm of death and death was brought into the realm of life. From the point of view of occult astronomy, this has to do with a great shifting of the earth's poles which caused the constellation of Virgo (Demeter-Persephone) to appear to fall below the southern horizon or, as it is put, into the pit of Tartarus.

This momentous event marked the fall of the *Kumaras* (Prometheus-Satan), the lighting up of the Manasic principle in mind and the separation of the sexes. Related to this is a wonderfully rich store of allusions in sacred and mythological sources which tell of the Titans locked up in Tartarus, the Cyclopes who built Pluto's palace, Eurydice being bitten by the (polar) serpent, and the anguished journey of Orpheus. In all of these metaphors, Pluto is brought more and more into relationship with the earth as a stage whereon life and death struggle and interchange ceaselessly with one another. Confined are the titanic forces of immortality. The spotlight shifts its focus to the dilemma of mortals who grapple and strain to realize their eternal souls even whilst embodied in dying forms. Eros had burst forth as desire from the egg of Erebus and succeeded in roping the latter's Plutonian manifestation into playing an active part in the human drama.

Confinement is a condition also associated with the Hindu god of death, Yama the Restrainer. Like Pluto, Minos or Osiris, he is the god with whom the spirits of the departed dwell. That he possesses two voracious dogs which guard the road leading to his abode indicates a close similarity to his Greek and Latin counterpart. It also raises questions about the symbolism of Pluto's Cerberus, whose job is to prevent the living from entering Hades and keep the inhabitants from escaping. Herakles and Aeneas managed to get

around him only because their quests were directed towards the attainment of immortality. Cerberus acts as the awesome guardian, the implacable dweller on the threshold between life and death, and he joins the Furies, Harpies and Eumenides as Pluto's chief attendants. Like Yama, Pluto himself does not judge, nor does he punish. His attendants see to these things. The Furies who fell from the blood of the castrated Ouranos are formidable and pitiless. They carry torches and scourges and are the just avengers of crime. Orestes was hounded by them as he fled far and wide after murdering his mother. Only in the last book of the Orestian trilogy, which is named after the Eumenides, did these more kindly Furies come to his assistance. The emphasis here is on precise justice rather than arbitrary mercy, the judgement and punishment of Pluto's domain appearing to be an exacting enactment of karmic law within the confines of kamalokic and devachanic conditions. But Pluto remains aloof from this; he reigns but is impervious to the joys and pains. He functions as a reflection of a universal force whose nature is so impersonal and ubiquitous that it cannot be confined but acts in the conditioned world through strict restraints experienced with especial poignancy in the human kingdom.

The spaceship has gone, Charon has returned over the vast waters of space to the shores of earth, where he appears terrible in his squalor, his dirty cloak hanging from one shoulder by a knot, his great unkempt beard streaming and his eyes glowing with a steady flame. Tall and gaunt his dusky figure looms, standing as he pushes his boat with one long pole. He is old but timeless, and as the horde waiting for him rushes to get into his craft, he drives some back and accepts others without hint of hesitation or care. Voyagers who wish to visit Pluto's realm while alive would indeed need to obtain his right of passage. They would have to satisfy him with the clear purpose of their desire to make the journey and to return alive to earth once more.

To reach Pluto one must obtain the full cooperation of Charon, for he alone knows the secrets of the oceanic vastitudes over which he regularly crosses and he alone conceals the hidden character of

Pluto's manifest form. Ironically, it has come to pass that in the long search modern science has mounted to discover more about the planet Pluto, Charon has indeed played a critical part as both revealer and concealer. For Charon was the inevitable name to be given to Pluto's lone satellite when it was finally discovered, and its close proximity to its parent echoes the intimate relationship the ferryman has to death. When someone dies in the villages of Greece, the peasants say, "Ο Χάρων τό έχει πάρη" ("Charon has taken him"). Two thousand years of Christianity have not removed the idea and it lingers and merges with the astronomical understanding of Pluto slowly acquired by modern science. For Charon is indeed taking us. He is taking us on a long journey towards the discovery of the nature of a truly remarkable and mysterious planet.

In the mid-nineteenth century, both Adams and Leverrier (the discoverers of Neptune) predicted the existence of a further planet. As Neptune had explained some of the anomalous movements of Uranus, so some explanation was needed to account for residual discrepancies. In 1903 Percival Lowell asserted that the clustering of certain comet orbits bore evidence of a further planet to be discovered. As a man of means with a long-standing passion for astronomy, Lowell had established an observatory near Flagstaff in what was known as Arizona Territory in 1894. There the quest for the trans-Neptunian planet began in earnest in 1905 with a photographic survey along the mean plane of the solar system. A mixture of theory and calculation was applied later in order to narrow the search, but it was seldom integrated with the observational approach. In 1910 a new mathematical assault was launched, new photos were taken, and a blink microscope was used to cut back and forth between two optically superimposed plates in order to reveal any movement that might have taken place between the dates on which they had each been shot.

This search ended in 1916 and the one thousand photo plates obtained revealed five hundred and fifteen new asteroids, seven hundred new variable stars, and two images of the ninth planet

which were unrecognized! These images were between the fifteenth and sixteenth magnitude (ten thousand times fainter than what the unaided human eye can see) and were barely visible on the plates. Lowell died in 1916 without ever knowing that he had come so close to the astronomical discovery of the century. With his death, a long legal dispute over his endowment to the observatory tied up the work so that nothing further was done until 1927. At this time, a generous gift of a fine thirteen-inch photographic refracting telescope was given to the observatory by Lowell's brother. It was installed in 1929, the year a Kansas farm boy, Clyde Tombaugh, was invited to join the staff as an assistant in the search for what was to be known as Planet X.

Clyde Tombaugh had worked hard throughout his youth on his father's small rented farm. He developed a passion for stargazing early on and built several telescopes for the purpose. He was entirely self-taught and had dreams of going to college. But owing to pressing financial needs on the farm, he decided he would have to find a paying job to help his family. One of the fruits of his stargazing were several meticulous drawings that he sent to the Lowell Observatory which, as it happened, was the only observatory he knew of. His timing was good. The professional astronomers there liked the rigour of his work and needed someone to photograph when the new telescope arrived. With no formal training in astronomy, this twenty-two-year-old lad entered into the routine of things with enthusiasm and a great care for detail. Soon he began to improve the search procedure on his own initiative, made critical adjustments in the telescope, and developed a plan to photograph each region three times. The two more identical plates would be blinked against one another and the third plate would be kept for comparison and verification. The rest of the staff were so busy on other projects that they soon handed over to him the critical job of blinking the photo plates, a responsibility which entrusted him with the possibility of making the discovery then sought by astronomers the world over.

Tombaugh started his search east of Cancer, where each exposure captured about fifty thousand stars. Moving on to Gemini (and closer to the Milky Way), the plates now contained an average of four hundred thousand stars, each of which had to be checked in the blinking process. He spent half the month at the telescope and half (when the moon made the sky too bright) at the blink microscope. His session at the latter instrument lasted a numbing three to six hours a day, with star counts of up to one million. He would blink a few hundred stars at a time, watching for tiny changes in pattern. Besides the extremely difficult task of keeping alert and fully concentrated during this process, there were daunting problems of discrimination to be overcome. Irregularities in the distribution of silver grains in the photographic emulsion gave rise to dozens of false suspected planets on every plate. In addition to this, asteroids orbiting the sun generally moved faster than Planet X was supposed to, but when the earth caught up with and passed each one, it would appear to go into retrograde motion, during which it closely mimicked a trans-Neptunian planet. Tombaugh solved the problem of mimicry by photographing the sky one hundred and eighty degrees from the sun's position, where the retrograde motion of the asteroids would be most noticeable and produce a tail. This allowed him to discriminate them from Planet X. But still, each plate required one hour of exposure and each pair of exposed plates required three to seven days of blinking - an incredibly tedious and lengthy process!

Despite the difficulties and tedium, which were, unhappily, aggravated by the discouraging scepticism of many visiting astronomers, Tombaugh made a thorough search of the entire zodiac. In January of 1930 he circled back into Gemini, where he exposed three negatives. When blinking the plates in February, he saw a tiny pinpoint of light shifting back and forth between the two superimposed exposures. It was 4 o'clock P.M., February 18. He noted the exact time, realizing he had finally found Planet X. The news aroused enormous interest, providing a stage for much debate and a distinct amount of competitive egoism. Characteristically, Tombaugh quietly went about his business, which included

obtaining formal university training in astronomy as well as contributing many decades of valuable expertise to his chosen field.

*Ad astra per aspera.*

(To the stars through difficulties.)

State Motto of Kansas

The name Pluto was proposed by an eleven-year-old Oxford schoolgirl who thought that such a dim and gloomy planet should be named after the god of the underworld. It was not long before the initial estimates of its size were adjusted downward, a process that has continued up to the present, prompting one observer to describe Pluto as the Incredible Shrinking Planet. Owing to its immense distance, very little is known about the composition of Pluto, but spectrographic data indicate the presence of highly reflective methane ice on much of its surface, accounting for a degree of brightness which has encouraged scientists to further reduce their estimates of its size to 1,457 miles in diameter. Viewed from the earth, one could compare Pluto to a baseball one hundred miles distant, even when it is at its perihelion. On its surface, the methane ice freezes at about minus three hundred and seventy-nine degrees and vaporizes very slowly to form what is believed to be a thin and tenuous atmosphere. In 1988 the planet passed in front of a star whose light faded gradually rather than all at once, indicating the presence of such an atmosphere.

It is thought that Pluto is composed of about seventy percent rock and thirty percent water, having a density similar to Neptune. This quantity of rock would be great enough to have ensured that the decay of radioactive elements soon after the planet formed would have caused it to differentiate. This denser matter would have sunk to the centre and the lighter ice floated to the surface. The methane ice predominates at the poles, whereas Pluto's equator is darker and marked by two spots: one very large and shaded, the other small and bright. During the two hundred and forty-eight years of the planet's orbit, the poles remain covered with the ice, which is believed to extend further into the equatorial regions during its aphelion.

In 1978 the big breakthrough came with the discovery of Pluto's satellite, Charon. It was a near miss because a strong bias persisted in those astronomers who felt that moons could not exist so close to their planets, thus blinding them to what was visible in the heavens. But James Christy had spent years looking for double stars, and his mind was open and ready to identify the bulge on the side of Pluto as a satellite instead of a "poor picture". With the discovery of Charon, it became possible to calculate that the size and mass of the Pluto-Charon system was hopelessly inadequate to account for the measurable gravitational perturbations of Uranus or Neptune. Pluto could not be the sought-after Planet X. If this were not so, the system proved to be so unique and unexpected that interest in it has continued at a high level. It has been learnt that Pluto and its moon are tidally locked together, the only example of mutual tidal coupling in the solar system. Most moons revolve around their planet in the same period of time as they rotate once, so that the same face is always pointing to the planet. The huge and relatively dark Charon follows this pattern, but Pluto rotates once for every revolution of its moon and also keeps the same face pointed back to Charon. The coincidence of the light curves and orbital periods confirms this as well as the fact that Pluto's pole of rotation is on its side relative to the plane of the solar system. As a result, Charon's orbit around its equator is from north to south, whilst it circles only six Pluto-diameters away from its planet, looming huge in Pluto's sky wherein it would appear eight times wider than our moon appears to us here on earth.

With karmic fortuitousness, Christy discovered Charon just in time for scientists to prepare for the Plutonic six-year eclipse season which began in 1985. Details pertaining to mass, density, surface character and composition have been forthcoming from careful observations of this series of eclipses, a rare opportunity to unveil some of Pluto's secrets not to be repeated for another one hundred and twenty-four years. Pluto is now as close to the earth as it comes in its highly inclined (17.2 degrees) and eccentric (0.25) orbit. Its ideal viewing time (for those possessing eight-inch or larger telescopes) will extend through August of this year, after which the



planet and its moon will slowly arc away from the sun and begin their journey to parts far outside the orbit of Neptune.

At the apex of its inclination, Pluto is 1.25 billion miles above the ecliptic and its elliptic path carries it out to 4.6 billion miles away from the sun. In January 1979 it passed inside the orbit of Neptune, where it will spend twenty years before making this vast outward journey. Some scientists have hypothesized that Pluto may have originated from Neptune, but in passing in and out of the latter's orbit, Pluto bridges Neptune's path by almost a billion miles. It is generally now agreed that Pluto and Neptune never have come closer together owing to the size of the gravitational forces that Neptune, Uranus, Saturn and Jupiter exert on Pluto. The timing of these forces does not allow Pluto's orbit to precess and so it merely oscillates, permanently confined to a narrow range of passage. Shades of Orcus, the one who constrains and confines!

Of all the planetesimals forming in the early solar system in outer space, Pluto is the only one that escaped the giant planets. It is confined in its orbit by the giants but it cannot be captured by them. Still, long-range computer simulations of its orbit show that its motion around the sun is chaotic, defying predictability over a vast curve of time. It now appears to be in a small and subtle chaotic zone, but if this is connected with a larger one, it is conceivable that Pluto could head off into another orbit. Such a fascinating possibility strangely echoes the mythic theme of Pluto suddenly carrying Eurydice into another world or sweeping Persephone away, only this time it would be Pluto himself who fell under the rule of a more powerfully ubiquitous expression of the force to which he belongs. For the time being, however, if one considers the events which have unfolded into the world since the discovery of Pluto, one is struck by the enormity of the influence the planet has had from within the confines of its present orbit.

Since 1930, when Tombaugh made his valiant discovery, enormous waves of military death, planned genocide and nuclear threat have washed over the globe. The horror and necessity engendered by this has led to a profound psychological and social

application of the idea of relativity which eventually spawned the "new physics" and the notion that man creates and perceives patterns of reality which are arbitrary. This revolution in consciousness is intimately linked to the recognition of the planet Pluto and its spirit, who rules the dark forces necessary for light and life in conjunction with evolution. The Plutonic spirit governs the journey through the underworld, which is the key to transformative growth and the deepening and purifying of energy in life. Evolutionary growth is a slow, circular process, but when a pattern is completed, quantum leaps occur. The soul erupts and takes a leap involving the death of the old energy, a successful initiation and a rebirth into a new field. We burst out of patterns of reality when we realize they are a creation of our own consciousness. The patterns may be abstract mental structures, emotional associations or concrete creations. Abandoning the reality of their limits and definitions, we move ever closer to a conscious coadunition with the cosmos.

Whereas Uranus releases the *kundalini* energy which breaks up lesser forms and Neptune prompts a mystical release into the cosmic stream, Pluto drives man into the underworld, where an intense cleansing and clearing up of karma reveal truth in a stark and unalloyed light. Transformation in Pluto gives human beings freedom from conditioned responses and the gift of pure Divine Will. The discoveries of Tombaugh and Christy reflect this freedom. Neither of them were bound by conventional assumptions and both were bold and tenacious enough to pursue truth wherever it led them. The man-made obstacles to their discoveries which had taken the forms of quarrelling over money, scepticism and smug preconceptions never succeeded in diverting them from completing their journey into the Plutonian world. The discovery of Pluto and Charon entailed an evolutionary deepening and purification of consciousness, but to achieve full transformation in Pluto requires the mastery of all the lunar forces and the ability to focus upon an unseen but impending Truth which will erupt into one's consciousness and destroy the shreds of previously held perceptions. A good analogue to this can be found in the

requirements for a successful viewing of the planet during this perihelion period. If one looks at Pluto's field through a telescope, a great many stars will be visible. One will need to reduce the confusion by centering Pluto's position in a low-powered eyepiece and then gradually increasing the magnification to X 10 per inch of aperture.

The persistent focus and magnification negate the distracting clouds of lunar influences, and the dim truth suddenly moves, suddenly leaps to the mind's eye and sweeps away everything that is not consonant with its larger energy. The eruptive and enlightening forces of Scorpio (which is ruled by Pluto) are released and the microcosm which is Man begins to self-consciously experience itself in the Macrocosm. But tenacity and personal will are not sufficient to bring this about. The Furies are not attendant upon Pluto as mere decorations. They are formidable, pitiless and just avengers who, whilst inevitably awaiting each soul after death, also confront every individual intent upon making the daunting journey into the underworld during life. Such a self-determined pilgrim must become his or her own Fury, scourging and cleaning out the residues of lunar ideas, lunar attachments and lunar images of self. This is not easy, and the self-discipline and sacrifice required may be too much for some who then fall under the sway of Pluto's negative influence. Shunning masochistic possibilities, such individuals may fall into atavism, attempting to plumb the depths not of truth but of the lunar aspects of death and magic. They may become engrossed in primitive elemental practices, combined with a desire for the power not of universal evolution but of manipulation and distortion. A dramatic example of this operating through a large collective of individuals manifested in the 1930s with the rise of the Nazi movement. One has also seen many subsequent instances of the negative side of Pluto's influence in all sorts of atavistic practices, including those in the American culture involving a frequent misuse of native Indian beliefs as well as general psychic activity focussed upon the dead and the dark corridors of the astral world.

Such practices journey backward in evolution, making a mockery of the real wisdom once held by so-called primitive peoples. One who is lured by such things easily finds himself wandering off into shadows. Like the heedless voyager to the surface of Pluto's planet, such persons easily step into a depthless chasm offering no escape. Walking on Pluto in such a direction, they are carried forth in rapid bounds and wholly lost before they realize they can no longer see the ferry boat over the horizon. Even for the wise voyager it is essential not to lose sight of Charon's craft, for if it is the means of crossing over, it is also the means of return. To succeed in making the initial crossing with the intention of return, Charon must first be satisfied with the clarity and purity of one's purpose. Only those truly seeking the realization of immortality are permitted by him to make the journey when alive. To all else he continues to conceal Pluto's realm, as the large moon bearing his name conceals its planet during eclipse. But he is prepared to reveal Pluto's nature to those who stand cleansed and fearless on the shore of the universal sea.

The chaotic movement in Pluto's progression partakes of a greater chaos which lies within and behind all universal systems of order, and which provides an adjunct crucial to evolution, keeping it from sinking into a stagnant circle of repetition. The eruptive power of volcanoes ruled by Pluto is a symbol of this flashing, truth-revealing energy which continually arises out of the ashes of abandoned lesser realities. Pluto's eccentric orbit is a symbol as well, one of order and chaos merged, life and death wedded together over and over again, for it links our known solar system to the unknown and mysterious galaxy beyond. With every orbital passage Pluto and Charon make, they bring the macrocosmic design of evolution into the more ordered-seeming field of the microcosmic experience of our globe. The dark emptiness of space, which we fear as death, is commingled with the fullness of our visible system, which we imagine as life. Face to face, the tidally coupled Pluto and Charon pass back and forth, in and out of life, in and out of the solar system like a ferryman whose dark and cheerless aspect masks a shining new world beyond. The two sides

of the coin needed to pay him for the passage are thus brought together in the stream of human consciousness.

Transformation in Pluto implies a mastery of the means of crossing to this new world as well as a realization of that which transcends life and death within oneself. Such a Master experiences the balanced confinement of this unlimited power in every aspect of his being. It is contained in its orbit, so to speak, by the forces of Neptune, Uranus, Saturn and Jupiter which he has already understood and learnt to govern in himself. He is of this world but fully of another. He has journeyed back beyond the floating dream of manifesting worlds into the vaster Tartarus, a sleep which is both being and non-being in repose. He knows death in life and life in death and consciously enters into each phase without missing a beat, alert and fully concentrated, aware of each blinking of deeper truth as it flashes and reveals itself. Such a Master floats over the great river of life. Like Vasudeva, the ferryman whose wisdom guided Siddhartha, he passes back and forth, knowing both shores to be the same. To emulate his passage, one must find the point of crossing and the ferry boat within oneself. Launching upon a course of cleansing and clarification, one prepares to embark, waits to perceive the link that connects the noetic individual to the universal soul, the *paramatman*. It reveals itself, looming in the mist shrouding the depths of one's inner being, the vast spaces that reach to Pluto's shores. The silent ferryman nods and one steps aboard. The tide surges, the mists part, the crossing is begun.

*In the waters of the underworld  
There lies a secret stream,  
Which flows beyond the dweller  
And life's ephemeral dream.  
It flashes for a moment,  
Then recedes within the surge,  
But its course has been recorded  
By the Watcher on the verge.*

*Hermes, August 1989*  
Helen Valborg

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