

Astrology's Relevance as a Modern Day Spiritual Counseling Tool

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This manuscript is original and  
written by me solely, except for the acknowledged direction and assistance  
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## **CHAPTER 1: THE ROLE OF SYMBOLS IN THE RECOGNITION AND ACTIVATION OF ARCHETYPAL ENERGIES**

**Astrology is primarily a symbolic art form. Information is conveyed through various symbols and symbolic relationships. These symbols simultaneously convey the nature of the prevailing archetypal relationships and, when understood, activate these energies, allowing them to function more fully and effectively. This chapter will focus primarily on the work of C.G. Jung and his students, as it was Jung who articulated the role symbols play in allowing dialog with archetypal energies.**

There is a belief shared by people from various ancient cultures, Greek philosophers, modern-day quantum physicists, healers of all modalities, and astrologers; it is a belief that the fundamental identifiable essence of life is energy. The pursuit to understand this fundamental energy has prompted a quest to, through the creative attributes of human consciousness, better ‘know’ this energy. How does it operate? Can it be influenced? Is it chaotic? Is it ordered? The consensus from all schools of thought seems to be that, in large part, energy in manifestation is indeed highly ordered and can, in fact, be known, at least by the patterns it forms and paths it follows. Although this paper does not explore all the myriad ways in which order has been found to exist within energetic fields, it does explore the thoughts of those who have laid the foundation for current astrological thought. The energetic approach to astrology (which has a rich history but which is by no means the only school of astrological thought) owes its current incarnation in large part to the psychoanalyst Carl Jung, whose work allowed practitioners to align their existing symbolic language with the energetic processes occurring within the psyche. While in one sense this ‘modernized’ astrological thinking, it also had the profound effect of

deepening astrology's more ancient connection to mythology, fairytales, and symbolic language of all types.

An understanding of the energetic foundations of astrology is dependent upon a solid understanding of what Carl Jung termed archetypes, and their mediators, symbols.

Archetypes are energetic forces that exist in what Jung termed the 'collective unconscious'. As he explains:

This part of the unconscious is not individual but universal; in contrast to the personal psyche, it has contents and modes of behaviour that are more or less the same everywhere and in all individuals."<sup>1</sup>

Jung further developed the thoughts of the neo-Platonists, who believed that all of manifest life stemmed from pre-existing 'forms': invisible energetic forces that provided order to all of life and human experience.<sup>2</sup> Each archetype represents drives and instincts shared by humans since antiquity. Each archetype contains, according to Jung, an image as well as an instinct. The number of actual archetypes is limited, stemming as they do from our primal experiences.<sup>3</sup> They represent our universal experiences, experiences that cross all cultures and generations; Mothers and Warriors have existed in all cultures and in all times. The primary archetypes that interface with humans have been described in myths and fairytales dating back thousands of years. More importantly, perhaps, the method of negotiating these forces has also been described in such stories, stories that no longer inform our modern-day life.

In and of themselves, archetypes and their symbols are neutral energies. We know of their independent existence by the ways in which they associate themselves with

individuals and cultures.<sup>4</sup> They are, as Jungian scholar Jolanda Jacobi says, an ‘eternal presence’ and our lives are hugely influenced by whether or not we are capable of recognizing their presence.<sup>5</sup> Jung had a deep respect for astrological thought and symbolism. He believed that, in a time when mankind was much more sensitive to the earth and her natural cycles, “what the ancients observed in the night sky...were the archetypes, those ‘powers’ that pattern and give meaning to human life on earth.”<sup>6</sup> Archetypes are psychic processes in imaginal form. Jung believed that what the ancients referred to as ‘gods’ was the personification of their experience of these archetypal energies. The gods were symbols.<sup>7</sup> (And these images are exactly what astrologers interpret through the placement of planets in signs in a natal astrological chart. The planets, in their different zodiacal clothing, capture experiences common to all of us from the beginning of time and still operating within us today: the primary energies of life.)

Archetypes, according to Jung, mingle with the libidinal energies that course through our bodies. This life energy is irrepressible. Their intention, associated as they are with Jung’s concept of the high Self, is to manifest and be known. Their suppression is associated with all forms of complexes and neurosis.<sup>8</sup> We will identify with the same archetypal energies quite differently, depending upon our own internal set of images and ego structure. Jacobi quotes Jung as saying, “The archetype...has an invariable nucleus of meaning – but only in principal. Never as regards its concrete manifestation.”<sup>9</sup> The archetype is everywhere the same, but the differences within the individual render the reflection quite varied. Archetypes are in a constant state of communication and it is up to us to understand their messages. They attempt to bring unconscious information to



consciousness. How receptive we are to this information is also up to us. However, information not used constructively may come upon us destructively. Archetypes have healthy and unhealthy manifestations. They will emerge, unbidden, as our captors or our guides.<sup>10</sup> We can recognize an unhealthy relationship to these energies by ‘ego possession’, the individual wholly identified with the archetype in question. Less destructive encounters involve communications in symbolic form, such as those received in dreams or meditations.

Jung believed that archetypal energies were traditionally channeled in collective ways. For example, religions have historically provided an organized interpretation of these energies for their adherents.<sup>11</sup> Cultures with oral traditions, those that teach through the use of myth and fairy tale, also provide education and guidance on the wise use of the power encountered in these energies. In these situations, people are formally introduced to the Trickster, the King, and the Good Samaritan. However, progress has brought increased alienation of individuals from these cultural channels. And increasingly few of these traditions even exist as they once did. We now see youth desperately attempting to reconstitute rites of passage through such vehicles as gangs or fraternity hazing. The instincts exist, but increasingly the wisdom to guide and channel the instincts does not. Uninitiated and unprotected, individuals are now much more likely to fall victim to the more destructive influence of these energies. Jung believed that the very field of psychology was born as a response to the emergence of these energies in the individual in their more distorted form.<sup>12</sup>

Archetypes operate on the level of the collective unconscious and we live our daily lives within a much more limited realm of consciousness. How does information travel between these levels of consciousness? This brings us back to the fact that archetypes are psychic material and, simply put, it is necessary to understand the language of the psyche in order to understand its communications. Opening a dialog with these energies is not a rational, left-brained, literal activity, and the reason for this is that our psyches are essentially imaginal. The true activator of our psyches is the image, not the spoken word. In an article for *The American Journal of Art Therapy*, Laurie Wilson, an analyst who uses symbolic mediums such as artwork with her clients, explores and explains the same perceptual process in humans that astrologers have observed since antiquity: that we do not so much respond to outside stimuli directly as we respond to the activation of the internal images that we carry within our psyches. In essence, says Wilson, “psychic functioning is mediated through mental representations.”<sup>13</sup> Other than the fact that this functioning exists, it cannot be explained fully. As Wilson says, there is no biochemical or physiological explanation for why our minds perceive as they do.<sup>14</sup>

It is actually this imaginal function that allows for the higher psychic functioning in humans. As Wilson says, “The capacity to form and use symbols is seen by many as the feature that distinguishes man from other species.”<sup>15</sup> It is these symbols, images, that have the ability to carry information between levels of consciousness. As Jungian scholar John Van Eenwyk explains, “A symbol’s ability to take the ego from consciousness to the unconscious and back again is its most important function.”<sup>16</sup> And so, if archetypes are energy, then symbols are energy activators. Perhaps this is stated best by Jacobi:

Symbols have at once an *expressive* and *impressive* character; on the one hand they express the intrapsychic process in images; but, on the other hand, when they have become image, 'incarnated' as it were in a pictorial material, they 'make an impression', that is, their meaning content influences that intrapsychic process and furthers the flow of psychic energy...Thus symbols are the true transformers of energy in the psychic process."<sup>17</sup>

Symbols do not merely provide pretty pictures, but actually activate the libidinal flow involved in archetypal energy transfer. The information conveyed in symbols is dynamic, active, as is the underlying energy itself. Symbols always imply movement of some kind; some transfer of information is active and in-process. A symbol is therefore a vehicle, a verb and never a noun.

A symbol can never be understood fully. Its nature is not to explain in a limited, literal manner, but rather to point the way forward. Literal interpretations of symbols strip them of their layers of meaning, reduce them to mere 'signs', and inhibit their capacity to carry us where they intend to take us.<sup>18</sup> Symbols stand for things which cannot be explained, but must be experienced. As Jungian scholar Eugene Pascal says, "A symbol...expresses something nonrational and indescribable in ordinary speech and language."<sup>19</sup> Symbols encourage us to enter, not with our minds but with our beings. As Van Eenwyk says, "Symbols are not so much entities to be interpreted as they are dynamics to be experienced."<sup>20</sup> Their presence alerts us to the energies in our psyches which are seeking recognition and representation. Appreciation and acknowledgement of the symbol and its content is critical for establishing a healthy relationship with archetypal energies. Without symbols, we cannot hear or understand what this energy

wants or needs from us, and we will be forced to experience its presence through events that we draw to us in our external world.<sup>21</sup> Archetypal communications are like any other communications in life. They begin as subtle, quiet messages, sent to us in spontaneous images, or subtle events in our lives. If we are receptive, the message is communicated. If these communications are ignored, the amplitude of the energy may increase, arriving as nightmares or as more dramatic life events.

Symbols have protective intent. As the vehicle for unconscious psychic energies, they create a space between these energies and our conscious egos. When recognized, they allow us to resist identification with these energies directly. These are the healthy expressions through dreams, daydreams, and even spontaneous images.<sup>22</sup> When symbols are negated or even degraded, a direct possession by the archetype can occur. We have robbed ourselves, so to speak, of the protection afforded by the symbol. The purpose of myth and fairy tale was meant to alert us to the fact that these energies can be encountered, and survived. As mythology scholar Joseph Cambell says:

The protective power of primitive amulets and charms, and the supernatural helpers of the myths and fairy tales of the world, are mankind's assurances that the arrow, the flames, and the flood are not as brutal as they seem.<sup>23</sup>

Astrology is, very loosely interpreted, a form of personal mythology. Each planet represents a different 'god' in our psyche; a different instinct or drive. Each planet, in its sign, interacts with the others, in their signs, to produce the individual images that we carry within our individual psyches.<sup>24</sup> Understanding the battles of the gods in symbolic terms helps us to avoid the active encounter of these gods in our everyday life, which is

desirable if, for instance, they happen to be at war. In other words, this internal battle is at risk of being projected onto the outside circumstances of our lives, warranted or not.

Returning to a purely practical psychological aspect of the symbol; it allows information to rise to the surface of consciousness that might have otherwise remained buried in the unconscious. The symbol is often associated with material that we would prefer not to see for we have, as often as not, chosen what information will be returned to our unconscious. However, it should be noted that the symbol will often convey the necessity for recognition of unsung talents and creative energies that are now demanding equal expression by the true Self. A perfect example of the functional use of symbolic therapies is art therapy. Many times we are completely incapable of speaking directly about what is bothering us. We are able, however, to draw a picture, sometimes of nothing in particular. This creation of an image, a symbol, somehow causes information to rise to the surface of consciousness more freely. Blocks are removed, energy flows more freely, and we are now able to discuss the picture and, in the process, our feelings in a way which we were not able to do before.<sup>25</sup> And this is similar to the process encouraged in the astrological consultation. Images are discussed, before facts, and in this manner information is allowed to rise to the surface of our minds and we are able to examine that which we were previously unable to look at directly, or perhaps could not even locate.

Symbols serve yet one more important function in the psyche. Not only do they speak in the imaginal language of the archetype, and not only do they activate this energy,

allowing unconscious content to be made conscious, but they are also the only vehicle by which information can proceed to the higher, more transcendent level of consciousness. And this is important because it is there, at the level of the high Self, wisdom Self, or divine Self, that true integration and resolution of opposites occurs. This is the message of both spiritual traditions and analytic psychology.<sup>26 27</sup> All perceived conflict and emotional turmoil is a result of the friction created by the dual nature of the manifest world. Our world assigns meaning based on the perception of good/bad, strong/weak, success/failure. Everything exists in some degree of polarity.<sup>28</sup> It is this polarity which allows for life as we perceive it. Not only can energy be blocked between the conscious and unconscious state, but it can also be blocked amid the push/pull of our conflicting desires and judgments. No resolution of conflict can actually occur within the polarity, but rather, once recognized (and this recognition is very important) must be transcended in some way. Symbols encourage psychic processes that eventually begin to resolve what cannot be resolved rationally. Jung, at the end of his career, claimed to have discovered that:

All the greatest and most important problems of life are all fundamentally insoluble...they can never be solved, but only outgrown. This 'outgrowing' proved on further investigation to require a new level of consciousness...It was not solved logically in its own terms but faded out when confronted with a new and stronger life urge.<sup>29</sup>

Different religions have different names for this higher dimension, but for Jung this type of resolution was the realm of the transcendent function. It was here that the tension of opposites was relieved and a new path was opened into which psychic energy could freely flow.<sup>30</sup> This release from the tension of opposites is symbolized by the upwards

spiral, such as that which Buddhists visualize ascending through the chakras.<sup>31</sup> It is an ongoing process, a continuum at the end of which would seem to be that state that the Buddhists called enlightenment, or nirvana; complete release from the perception of manifest duality. Again, religions and philosophers have had different names for this ultimate achievement, and the alchemists never even attempted to name it, referring to it obliquely as the philosopher's stone or Holy Grail. Jung, more prosaically perhaps, termed this life long journey the process of individuation, the establishment of a healthy relationship between the true Self and the (essential but faulty) ego. In closing this chapter, a brief description of this process is warranted because it is the description of this process that lends itself so well to the functions of the planetary energies and their natural cycles. It is our development within the life cycle, symbolized by planetary movement, which gradually helps us to define ourselves amid the collective in which we live. It is also this process of conscious individuation that Jung believed was now essential in light of the collective degradation of symbolism. Responsibility has now been returned to individuals for navigating the forces of their own psyches, or gods, as we shall discuss in the final chapter.

We are all born identified with ego, and it seems that an unavoidable part of our journey through this lifetime is to discover, in different ways and at different times, that higher Self within us who actually has goals and plans of its own for this lifetime.<sup>32</sup> Our task then is to consciously align our egos more to this higher Self; to reestablish the relationship with the ego ultimately surrendering control, as it were. The goals of the Self are intermingled with the archetypal energies in which it floats. Our personal

symbolic life consists of honoring the symbols our Self sends to us. These are our guides to individuation, to the living of our true Self. The journey to individuation is the Hero's Journey. And a modern day hero is, as Campbell describes, "A man not led astray from himself by sentiments stemming from the surfaces of what he sees, but [one] courageously responding to the dynamics of his own nature."<sup>33</sup> The ultimate goal of individuation is the attainment of 'wholeness', the integration of the many aspects of our Self not allowed exposure until the blockage of energy becomes too great to ignore.<sup>34</sup> The ultimate gift of individuation is the gift of the return of meaning to our individual lives. Feeling connected to Self, we feel connected to the purpose of life in general. Jungian scholar Edward Edinger speaks beautifully of the process of individuation when he says:

I have discussed the psychological meaning of having one's name 'written in the heaven' or in 'the book of life.' It refers to the realization that one's individuality or personal identity has a transpersonal, *a priori* origin and justification for being. Such an experience is the definitive solution to an 'identity crisis', to use a currently popular term. It is also the answer to the lesser conditions of alienation, unworthiness and inferiority.<sup>35</sup>

Astrologer Alice Howell describes individuation as the process of fishing within our unconscious and symbols as the means by which we 'go fishing' in the depths of our unconscious. As she says, "the important thing is to fish for oneself, and not walk around looking at other people's fish."<sup>36</sup> Edinger, like Jung, believed that to the extent that we failed to honor the symbolic content of our psyches, to such an extent would our unconscious life hold sway over us. Without an understanding of the necessity of living a symbolic life, we continue to act and react in the world, with no real understanding of the



impersonal forces that may be driving us. After all, what I view as my life is actually only the symbolic representations of images interacting inside of myself. In other words, I see what I need to see in order to grow and develop and meet Self. While this may sound myopic to some, Jung believed that there was no greater accomplishment than willing engagement in the individuation process. Only as complete individuals do we truly add to the healing of our small part of the planet. This perception also lends meaning to the situations we encounter in life because we realize that all things happen ‘for a reason’; to alert us to internal conflicts that are waiting to be resolved and personal gods that are asking to be recognized and honored. And who exactly are these gods? Astrology has its own set of gods, and they are the subject of the following chapter.

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<sup>1</sup> C.G. Jung, *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, Translated by R.F.C. Hull, Bollingen Series XX (New York: Bollingen Foundation, Inc., 1959; Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1969), 3-4.

<sup>2</sup> S. Abhayananda, *History of Mysticism: The Unchanging Testament*, 3d ed (Olympia WA: Atma Books, 1996), 106.

<sup>3</sup> Jolande Jacobi, *The Psychology of C.G. Jung* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1973), 47.

<sup>4</sup> John R. Van Eenwyk, *Archetypes & Strange Attractors: The Chaotic World of Symbols* (Toronto: Inner City Books, 1997), 28-29.

<sup>5</sup> Jacobi, *The Psychology of C.G. Jung*, 45.

<sup>6</sup> Eugene Pascal, *Jung to Live By: A Guide to the Practical Application of Jungian Principles for Everyday Life* (New York: Warner Books, Inc., 1992), 84.

<sup>7</sup> Christine Valentine, *Images of the Psyche: Exploring the Planets through Psychology and Myth* (London: Vega, 2002), 23.

<sup>8</sup> Jung, *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, 156-157.

<sup>9</sup> Jacobi, *The Psychology of C.G. Jung*, 43.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 50.

<sup>11</sup> Edward F. Edinger, *Ego & Archetype: Individuation and the Religious Function of the Psyche* (Boston, MA: Shambhala Publications, Inc., 1972), 64.

<sup>12</sup> Jung, *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, 23-24.

<sup>13</sup> Laurie Wilson, *Symbolism and Art Therapy: Symbolism’s Role in the Development of Ego Functions* (American Journal of Art Therapy, Vol. 23, February 1985), 80.

<sup>14</sup> Laurie Wilson, *Symbolism and Art Therapy: Symbolism’s Relationship to Basic Psychic Functioning* (American Journal of Art Therapy, Vol. 23, May 1985), 129.

<sup>15</sup> Wilson, *Symbolism and Art Therapy: Symbolism’s Role in the Development of Ego Functions*, 79.

<sup>16</sup> Van Eenwyk, *Archetypes & Strange Attractors*, 69.

<sup>17</sup> Jacobi, *The Psychology of C.G. Jung*, 94.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 96-97.

<sup>19</sup> Pascal, *Jung to Live By*, 93.

<sup>20</sup> Van Eenwyk, *Archetypes & Strange Attractors*, 71.

<sup>21</sup> Alice O. Howell, *Jungian Symbolism in Astrology: Letters from and Astrologer* (Tempe, AZ: American Federation of Astrologers, Inc., 1987), 28-32.

<sup>22</sup> Pascal, *Jung to Live By*, 89-96.

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- <sup>23</sup> Joseph Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, 2d ed., Bollingen Series XVII (New York: Bollingen Foundation, Inc., 1949; Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1968), 129.
- <sup>24</sup> Valentine, *Images of the Psyche*, 9-10.
- <sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 99.
- <sup>26</sup> Anagarika Govinda, *Foundations of Tibetan Mysticism* (Boston, MA: Weiser Books, 1969), 156.
- <sup>27</sup> Jacobi, *The Psychology of C.G. Jung*, 135.
- <sup>28</sup> Nunley, Ann, *Inner Counselor: A Spiritual Discipline, Course Manual* (McLouth, KS: Sonrisa Productions, 2000), 19-20.
- <sup>29</sup> Jacobi, Jolande and R.F.C. Hull (edited by), *C.G. Jung: Psychological Reflections - A New Anthology of His Writings 1905-1961*, Bollingen Series XXXI (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1973), 304.
- <sup>30</sup> Campbell, Joseph (edited by), *The Portable Jung*, translated by R.F.C. Hull (New York: Penguin Books, 1976), 273-300.
- <sup>31</sup> Govinda, *Foundations of Tibetan Mysticism*, 146.
- <sup>32</sup> Pascal, *Jung to Live By*, 238.
- <sup>33</sup> Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, 345.
- <sup>34</sup> Edinger, *Ego & Archetype*, 163-172
- <sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 269.
- <sup>36</sup> Alice Howell, *Jungian Symbolism in Astrology*, 56.

## **CHAPTER 2: ARCHETYPAL ENERGIES AS SYMBOLIZED BY THE TEN ASTROLOGICAL PLANETS**

**The ten astrological planets are symbols of universal principles, or archetypes. Each of these ten life energies has been portrayed historically through myth and each contains a primal urge, or instinct experienced by the earliest men and women. It is the interplay of these energies within each individual that determines his unique perception of life and thus will also be seen manifest as outward character. This chapter is a description of the basic energies symbolized by each planet**

An understanding of planetary influences allows you to take your life into your own hands and intelligently utilize the planetary influences that will help you in your evolution if you but will.

Isabelle Hickey<sup>1</sup>

This chapter presents a brief overview of the basic energetic drives represented by the ten planets used in astrology (geocentric astrology refers to the sun and moon as planets and excludes the earth.) Entire books have been written about the symbolism of each planet, and my intention here is to simply provide the ‘tone’ or give an example of the ways in which astrology makes use of both Jungian analytic psychology and mythology in its pursuit of deeper understanding of basic human nature. In astrology, planetary processes are always alive, in process, in flux, and never fixed or determined. Each planet represents a primary life energy, urge, or instinct; in other words, an archetype. The planets are symbols of universal principles and, while we identify these energies primarily in human life, they are also reflected in the plant and animal world, not to mention inanimate objects as well.<sup>2</sup> This is so because these energies are part of a larger whole that is reflected in every aspect of the microcosm. Through observation, the ancient Egyptians, Babylonians and Greeks together formulated the ‘first great astral law’<sup>3</sup>: As above, so below.”

It may be helpful to understand that all of the planets are modified in their action by the signs in which they are placed. Each of the twelve zodiacal signs represents a different manner of expression. The Sun is always the Sun, but this energy will manifest differently when in Pisces than when in Aries. It is the interplay of these energies within each of us that determines our individual ‘character’, or potential destiny.<sup>4</sup> This is in no way predetermined as, once pure energy becomes manifest, it begins to take multiple forms. These variations (ten planets in twelve signs) plus the multitude of ways in which each planet will ‘speak’ to another in any individual astrological chart, is why, astrologically speaking, “one size never fits all.” Astrology is a confirmation of manifest individuality. In combination, these planets reveal, not so much what will happen to us, but rather describe the manner in which we are likely to perceive, and experience our individual manifest realities.<sup>5</sup> If, as stated in the last chapter, our reality is determined by the images we carry within our psyches, then these ten planets, in their various zodiacal roles, are what astrologers believe to be the prima material of those images; images constellated at the moment of our birth.

## **The Sun**

With each planet description it is important to understand that interpretations do vary, to a degree, among astrologers. The following planet descriptions are used within the community of astrologers that I would designate as Jungian Astrologers. These are ancient interpretations that have been modified only slightly to incorporate modern psychoanalytic thought. For these astrologers, the Sun represents the life energy that pulses into form through the Self.<sup>6</sup> I consider this that aspect of the divine Self that can

be known, as I do not believe that all aspects of Self can be known in manifestation. The glyph, or symbol, for the Sun in astrology means ‘spirit manifest’, the ongoing creative process; that part of our spirit which can be known here on earth are we but to cultivate a relationship with it.<sup>7</sup> The Sun represents the internal ‘fire’ of our being. I believe that the Sun represents the aspect of Self that cannot be extinguished, harmed, or mitigated in any way. This can only happen to our egos. Sitting with the inner Self may awaken a “knowing” that our inner Self is not affected by poor parenting or any other earthly tragedy. The Sun represents pure life energy; our vitality. It is the “I am that I am.” Our ‘sun sign’ is badly represented in the popular press. Our Sun does not necessarily symbolize how we present ourselves, or even how we are seen by others, for the essential ‘Self’ can take many years to manifest and shine forth. The sun is the center of gravity in our solar system. The other planets have no light of their own. Their light is a reflection of the sun’s rays. This is a helpful analogy for our ‘planets’, as well, are meant to be in the service of our Sun. However, as astrologer Alice Howell says, “Very often the ‘throne’ of the psyche has been usurped by another [planet], and the Sun, or rightful heir, is ‘in exile’ as in the many legends and fairy tales of this motif.”<sup>8</sup> It is for this reason that our quest for our true Self is so often likened to the Hero’s Journey in myth and fairytale. This is the quest for our true identity, which we must find in order to live our authentic life and provide our life-giving warmth to our small part of this world.

As with all of the planets, the Sun exists everywhere. As Howell says:

The Sun will give extensions of the experience of authority: father...boss, mayor, governor, president, king, bishop or pope, *imago dei*, Self, Atman, Christ Within, Buddha, Krishna; or try a mountain

top, star, heart, etc...every organism or entity has a central energy which could be called its Sun.<sup>9</sup>

The Sun is inexorably linked to the Moon in our charts. Six of the seven visible planets (the first seven planets discussed) form a polarity, similar to the polarity of gender. This is due to the fact that only in the dynamism of duality does life exist at all. In mythology, Mercury was a hermaphrodite, and in astrology Mercury symbolizes neutral, androgynous energy as well. As will be discussed, the Moon represents the womb of creation; that uroboric state that no one would voluntarily leave were it not for some 'spark' of life determined to set forth and differentiate itself and live. Our life urge seems to drive us from a state of unity, to a state of differentiation, back to a state of 'conscious' unity.<sup>10</sup> Without the dark [Moon], there is only light. Without the light [Sun], there is only dark. It is only the interplay of the two that allows us to perceive, or experience, anything at all. Thus, according to astrologer Christine Valentine:

The Sun and Moon embody the archetypal parents, an image of our ultimate origins, that male/female polarity which underpins creation itself...thus they carry all our fantasies of how the world began.<sup>11</sup>

On a purely practical level, this is one reason why children in one family may perceive their parents quite differently. Each person compares their earthly parents with the imprint of 'parent' they carry in their psyche, and no two imprints are the same.

## **Moon**

As we have seen, both the masculine principle [Sun] and feminine principle [Moon] are required for life. These principles will be repeated with the coupling of Venus and

Mars, but here we are concerned with the more primitive creative impulses. The Moon symbolizes the very womb of life and, as such, it births our consciousness. If the Sun symbolizes the Spirit, the Moon symbolizes the wisdom of the Earth. She is, as Jungian scholar Eric Newman says, “[The Goddess] Sophia, the highest feminine wisdom.”<sup>12</sup> The feminine Earth unites with the masculine Spirit and allows it a means by which to manifest and take form. The interrelatedness of Spirit and Earth is discussed in mystical revelations of many religions, as well as mythologies of most cultures, and is helpful in understanding the Moon as it represents nurturing and fertility. The Greek creation myth depicts the sky god Ouranos descending to mate with Gaia, Earth.<sup>13</sup> Archetypically, the Moon represents the Great Mother. The Moon symbolizes not only the way in which we see the Mother archetype, as reflected in our personal mothers, but everything that mothering represents as well; our ideas surrounding nurturing, safety, assimilation of experience, etc.<sup>14</sup> The Moon represents the eternal wisdom, found in our deepest instincts, that is passed to us through our ancestors; a wisdom inextricably bound to life and living. We all have a Moon and it is this energy that connects us to our primal, primitive, instinctual Self.<sup>15</sup>

In the body, the Moon rules the breasts, stomach and the womb. However, this feminine principle is universal for, as Howell states, “We all have the capacity to ingest daily life, to bring forth new consciousness, and to share it for the nourishment (nursing) of others.”<sup>16</sup> The Moon acts as a container for our emotions and our subjective experience of life. As Valentine says, “The Moon embodies our capacity to hold, or contain, experiences in ordinary life so that they make sense and can be accommodated and

integrated.”<sup>17</sup> The ability of the Great Mother to manifest as both the Good Mother and Terrible Mother is well known. Kali, holding her children’s severed heads, is, among other things, a symbol of this Great Mother. This is due to the fact that deep, instinctual life knows something the rational mind would prefer to deny: namely that life comes from death and that we are always in the process of ‘being born’. Birth and death are not simply processes bracketing our manifest lives. The Moon represents that which can hold and reflect the flux of life on manifest earth, but that which itself remains constant. The Moon in a chart will always point to mother. For a woman, this will later translate into how she sees herself as a woman/wife/mother. For a man, it will represent the ‘other’ within (a role which is shared by Venus).<sup>18</sup> In its connection to our instincts, the Moon will also represent what we need in order to feel safe.

## **Mercury**

Mercury symbolizes communication, language and the connective principle within the psyche. Through the sign in which it is placed, it will reflect the manner in which we process information, and learn.<sup>19</sup> As we emerge from the creative principles of the Sun and the Moon, we need a way in which to make sense of our environment. Mercury represents an insatiable desire to differentiate, assimilate and, in the end, unify as well. Mercury represents our ability to sort our internal and external perceptions, and yet make connections between them as well. As astrologers Liz Greene and Howard Sasportas say, “Mercury governs reflective self-consciousness, the peculiarly human ability to reflect consciously on the self and what one is doing.”<sup>20</sup> Mercury symbolizes the aspect of ourselves that travels freely between the conscious and unconscious realms. In this way,



it helps us make connections between our solar, literal realm and our lunar, imaginal realm.<sup>21</sup> In mythology, Mercury, or Hermes, was the messenger of Zeus and the only person allowed into Hades who was also allowed to leave unharmed. Mercury represents an impersonal energy that moves within us; in early life helping us to define ourselves, and in latter life helping us to unify ourselves. Mercury represents the faculty we use to plunge our own depths, reconnecting the scattered parts of ourselves when it is time.<sup>22</sup> The planet Mercury is often personified as having a dual nature and has a reputation for being the Trickster, governing our misplaced items and embarrassments of all sorts. However, this dual nature serves one master, for sometimes Mercurial energy must play games with us and ‘trick’ us in order to get our attention. As mentioned, six visible planets are dyads: Sun/Moon, Venus/Mars, Jupiter/Saturn. Howell explains that these planets are like the holes facing each other in our sneakers and Mercury is the shoelace, traveling between them and connecting them all together.<sup>23</sup> In mundane life, Mercury also rules words, newspapers, books, printing, short journeys and siblings!

## **Venus**

The dyad of Venus and Mars embodies energies that play out in the realm of human relationships. They both represent highly personal instincts and are therefore often called ‘lunar’ planets, but as we have mentioned, in the individuated person all planetary energies should ultimately serve the Sun. According to Valentine:

They are images of our desire to love and feel lovable (Venus), to impress and feel powerful (Mars), and give rise to the dilemma between intimacy and individuality, dependence and independence, union and separateness.<sup>24</sup>

These principles develop together for one must know how to stand alone before one can truly enter into a relationship, and one must be in relationship with others to fully explore oneself. Venus is the principle of relatedness as well as the principle of attraction; the means by which we draw towards us that which we want and need for our development, and joy. Venus is linked to our sense of self-worth and values. It is only when we know what we love that we know what we value. Venus is the archetypal image of the 'beloved' and, as Valentine points out, "It is this image which lies at the root of what attracts us and the ways in which we seek to make ourselves attractive – that is, our tastes and values."<sup>25</sup> Through Eros Venus rules both physical and more spiritual forms of love and beauty. Venus is connected to loving affection between individuals, but also to all forms of art, music and poetry, anything to which we can 'relate', and which may leave us changed through the encounter. Aphrodite was born of the severed genitals of the god Ouranos and this is an image of beauty, synthesis and harmony emerging from conflict.<sup>26</sup> Venusian energy draws us into life and encourages us to find creative ways of harmonizing and, ultimately, transcending the seemingly irreconcilable aspects of life.

## **Mars**

The critical mission that Mars symbolizes is the development of a healthy ego identity. Mars represents the desire to be assertive, move forward, and explore life independently.<sup>27</sup> As Venus is the principle of harmony and relatedness, Mars is the principle of aggression and separation. The principle of aggression is little understood in our culture. This is not the [misdirected Martial energy] of guns, muscles and militia, popularly associated with the 'masculine' function. Aggression is the quality any ego

must possess in order to define itself, defend itself, and delineate 'me' from 'you'. When our Mars is not allowed to develop, when it is controlled or stifled, it will emerge in his less healthy, outright hostile guise. Mars symbolizes anger, but ideally it is anger in defense of the Self, or instinctually healthy anger. We all know when our boundaries are being crossed or our values are being compromised and a healthy Mars allows us to draw our line in the sand and fight our battles on our own behalf. As Valentine says, "Mars enables us to take risks and confront situations head on, and in the process discover who we are, our own individual stand-point."<sup>28</sup> Mars represents energy that is direct, straightforward, and in many ways directly reflects the Sun. But Martial energy is not the master, it is simply the servant. Through our Mars, we do not see the whole picture, but we become willing to fight vigorously on its behalf. Mars is one of the easiest energies to see because it is in action. Mars rules assertion, competition, tools, swords, hunting, racecar driving. Martial energy is also observed in all types of work. Mars is the god of war, but he is also the god of industry. While Venus and Mars represent the instinctual urges to relate and separate, they are also highly conscious energies; they are very much related to the ego and the work the ego does in the world in the service of the Self. On a psychological level, Mars and Venus are very much related to the animus (for the woman) and anima (for the man); the contra sexual image that we carry within ourselves, and that are most likely to be projected outwards onto the opposite sex.<sup>29</sup>

## **Jupiter**

With Jupiter and Saturn we leave the purely personal planets behind. While Jupiter and Saturn are 'visible' planets (able to be seen with the naked eye in the night sky), they

form a bridge between the five purely personal (the most conscious) planets and the three transpersonal planets. Both Jupiter and Saturn represent aspects of our psyche that seek to connect our lives to a larger purpose or meaning.<sup>30</sup> This can be a conscious journey, one bracketed by boundless hope and enthusiasm (Jupiter) and more sober awareness of our human limitations (Saturn). Jupiter himself is often likened to Santa Claus and wherever Jupiter falls on our chart is where we are bound to feel innately blessed. In ancient astrology Jupiter was considered the ‘great benefic’. Jupiter is associated with expansion, enthusiasm, faith, hope, adventure. The only sin represented by Jupiter seems to be that of occasional ‘excess’, but of course this can reek havoc in its own way. As Zeus, Jupiter was known for his constant pursuit of women, siring absolutely hundreds of children in his dalliances, but he rarely served up any true regret, even when confronted by angry Hera (a Saturnian influence). This is because Jupiter represents something absolutely unstoppable in our urge to grow and explore.<sup>31</sup> Jupiter rules higher education, wisdom, ethics, and long journeys. Jupiter in poor aspect to another planet can represent the ‘worst’ that planet has to offer; however this rarely occurs in the extreme. As Howell says, “The lovely word *enthusiasm* comes from the Greek *en theos*, meaning ‘filled with god’. The nature of Jupiter is ebullient, optimistic, generous, and positive.”<sup>32</sup> Jupiter represents our ability to make associations through intuitive leaps, as well as the part of us that does not pause to worry whether we will make it to the other side. All planetary energies are inherently neutral.<sup>33</sup> And especially in the case of the first seven planets, it is up to us what type of relationship we will have with them. There is something equally Jovian about a high court judge and the man who has just finished eating his fifth bag of potato chips.

## **Saturn**

Right alongside the ‘great benefic’ we find, what the ancients referred to as, the ‘great malefic’. Saturn is associated with restrictions of every kind. If Jupiter rules expansion, Saturn rules contraction, consolidation, structure and boundaries. Saturn is the constant reminder of our human limitations. Where Jupiter would say, ‘let’s fly’, Saturn would point out that we are without wings. Saturn rules all form. Saturn rules our skeletons and skin. While these are ‘restrictive’ in some sense to our Spirit, they also provide the only vehicle by which we can live and learn in this particular life; and hence Saturn’s reputation as the God of Necessity. Just as light must converse with dark in order for us to see, our blessings must be intermingled with sorrows in order for us to assign value and meaning to our experiences. Wherever Saturn is in our charts is where we must be willing to apply effort, self-discipline and patience. Saturn represents consequences that are exacting. If we are willing to work hard, Saturnian influences reward us justly. However, if we are lazy or simply too frightened to proceed, painful consequences are certain.<sup>34</sup>

Saturn rules boundaries, both between our physical selves and the outer world, but also the boundaries we draw internally, between conscious and unconscious material. Therefore, Saturn represents the times in which we are forced to withdraw our shadow projections and face ourselves.<sup>35</sup> Saturn does not represent fun, he represents responsibility. However, Saturn also represents our developing humility in the face of life’s hardships, the anecdote to the great sin of hubris. Saturn is an active principle,

along with the Sun and Mars. These energies force us to define and actualize ourselves. While Saturn is associated with every painful lesson we come upon in life, it is, as Liz Greene says, revealed to be the Wise Old Man in disguise. In analyzing planets one can never forget that they all, even seemingly cold and severe processes such as Saturn, serve the Sun. As she says:

Saturn symbolizes a psychic process as well as a quality or kind of experience. He is not merely a representative of pain, restriction, and discipline; he is also a symbol of the psychic process, natural to all human beings, by which an individual may utilize the experiences of pain, restriction, and discipline as a means for greater consciousness and fulfillment.<sup>36</sup>

While it was the ancient astrologers who deemed Saturn malefic, Saturn was also the subject of profound study, for it was difficulties ruled by Saturn that forced the ancients to seek the deeper meaning behind their experiences. He is symbolized in the study Alchemy where, as Howell states, the task is to, “make gold out of lead, or wisdom out of suffering and experience.”<sup>37</sup>

## **Uranus**

The seven visible planets represent our ego-identity. They represent what could be ‘seen’ in the night sky in antiquity, or what could be ‘known’ within the individual. They represent, for a highly integrated individual, negotiable energies. The three remaining planets are what are referred to as ‘transpersonal’ planets. There is no mention of them in ancient astrology as it has taken developments in technology (and consciousness) to perceive them. Their light cannot be seen, they represent operations within the collective unconscious; energies against which our personal willpower exerts no effect.<sup>38</sup> They

represent the energies over which we have little, or no, control, and this is particularly true of Uranus. While their symbolic influence is highly impersonal, each of us will feel their effects in a highly personal and individualized manner, as by transit they contact the personal planets in each of our charts. All of the outer planets symbolize processes that can be quite unsettling. As Howard Sasportas says:

Whether we attribute it to fate or to the workings of the deeper Self, the transits of Uranus, Neptune and Pluto challenge our existing ego-identity or sense of self, so that we can put ourselves back together again in a new way.<sup>39</sup>

As if the Self somehow knew that ego development would be imperfect and inevitably in need of deconstructing, we seem destined to encounter those junctures in our lives when we are challenged to submit to the particular kind of ‘ego-death’ symbolized by each of the outer planets. They will always signal that some type of change is now inevitable.

Uranus is known as the “Great Awakener”.<sup>40</sup> It represents electricity and connectivity (it is considered the ‘higher octave’ of Mercury) and is associated with x-rays, television, radio waves and cosmic rays. Energies symbolized by the other planets will ‘awaken’ when in contact with Uranus, often in a very sudden and disruptive way. Uranus represents a mental energy, not an emotional one, and hence Uranus is often personified as possessing a certain cold detachment. Uranus transits symbolize the times we are most likely to see clearly that which we could not see before; times we are stripped of our projections and denial. Uranus is the energy of systems and disruption of systems. The discovery of Uranus coincided with three great revolutions: the American, French and Industrial Revolutions.<sup>41</sup> Contacts with Uranus symbolize that new possibilities exist and

any amount of disruption is worth the price necessary to move towards this vision; hence Uranus' association with rebellion as well as invention. As Sasportas says:

A Uranian vision clarifies what steps we need to take, or what action we need to perform in order to co-operate with what the core Self has in mind for us.<sup>42</sup>

While Uranian contacts can occur at any time of life, the classic Uranian contact is mid-life, when Uranus has come around and opposes itself in the natal chart. This contact is symbolized by the individual who wakes up one morning, suddenly realizes that his or her life has somehow not turned out as they meant for it to, and walks out of a twenty year marriage without so much as a backwards glance. This is, of course, a caricature of behavior under the influence of Uranus, but one sadly played out with great accuracy by those unwilling to look deeper into the causes of their restlessness and discontent. For those willing to honestly encounter the unlived aspects of the Self, this time of life can also be highly creative and productive.

## **Neptune**

Neptune was the god of the oceans and Neptune embodies the collective urge to return to Paradise; to completely dissolve into a state of merged oneness.<sup>43</sup> Neptune represents all blurred boundaries. Neptune rules the romantic poets, mystical experiences, delusion, deception, anesthesia, and drugs and alcohol. Neptune transits symbolize the times we are most likely to be aware of the holes within ourselves that we have never managed to fill. As Greene says, the symbolism of Neptune, "reveals itself in every sphere of life where we long for an ineffable, indescribable 'something' that will alleviate loneliness



and grant us immortality.”<sup>44</sup> Neptune represents our desire to dissolve the ego, as Saturn represents the firm defense of the ego structure, but the energies symbolized by the outer planets always will out. Neptune transits symbolize the desire to escape, whether by eating, gambling, shopping or drinking; any activity that ‘swallows’ us up and allows us to escape our existential loneliness. Neptune symbolizes the desire to erase our sense of separateness, but it also symbolizes our need to understand where we make unrealistic demands on the world to provide what only the Self can provide. In the end, no person, place or thing will help us to feel ‘connected’ if we have never recognized our own core Self. Our feelings of isolation are only a reflection of the inner isolation of the Self, and the more painful the feelings, the greater the need for reconciliation. The symbolic challenge that Neptune and its transits poses is to face up to our neediness, hungriness, and insatiable unmet desires of every kind.<sup>45</sup> No one is ever ‘satisfied’ in the manifest world. However, mostly we deny the depths of our longings, allowing them to possess us in the form of addictions to substances and people. Acknowledging our hurts will, as Valentine says, allow us access to, “the womb which gives birth to new ways of relating to life, new forms for our self-expression, more creative ways of finding fulfillment.”<sup>46</sup>

## **Pluto**

Pluto was the god of the underworld. Pluto represents blows that are crushing for, in effect, Pluto symbolizes nothing less than the demand for death and rebirth of any aspect of life that it touches. This is particularly painful when it involves ones own ego. The symbolic Pluto’s goal is complete transformation. Pluto is associated with power, destruction, mass death, nuclear energy, and plutonium. However, Pluto is also

associated with the phoenix that rises from the ashes of death and destruction. As with Saturn, energies represented by Pluto are not capricious. There is simply no room for waste or inefficiency in processes symbolized by Pluto. Pluto embodies the desire to tear down whatever is not working, with the intent of creating it again in a new, more vital and honest way.<sup>47</sup> Pluto represents our most direct path to profound growth. Pluto is symbolic of the idea, as Howell says, “That there is a difference between nature’s laws and the ego’s moral laws. Cosmic law is absolute, and nature stronger than we are.”<sup>48</sup> Pluto is symbolized beautifully in the Sumerian myth of Ianna and Ereshkigal. Ianna, goddess of the heavens, descends to visit her sister Ereshkigal, goddess of the underworld. She passes seven gates, at each of which she is forced to relinquish some possession or article of clothing until she arrives completely naked before her sister. She is then killed and hung on a hook to rot. After three days several little Mourners arrive to rescue Ianna. However, they pay no attention to Ianna and instead comfort Ereshkigal as she weeps and moans and grieves. As no one has ever recognized Ereshkigal before, she agrees to grant them a favor, at which point they ask for Ianna and she is brought to life and returns to her kingdom.

Pluto symbolizes processes that will force us to face our deaths with the realization that there is no other choice than to surrender and submit. We must grieve our losses. We will find that, as with Ereshkigal, we are furious over many of our losses. We must honor those furies within ourselves. The parts of ourselves that we have repressed now demand our attention. Once recognized, we find that the aspects of ourselves that we have banished to darkness can, in fact, add to our vitality and creativity.<sup>49</sup> The regenerative

energy symbolized by Pluto is also recounted by Clarissa Estes Pinkola, Jungian analyst and master storyteller, in the story of the Handless Maiden. The maiden loses her hands in a pact made between her father and the devil. She departs her father's home to live her own life, with her handicap, and very slowly begins to regrow her hands as a result of living through her loss and embracing her new life. We recognize the symbolic Pluto at work when Pinkola says, "We know we will have to burn to the ground in one way or another, and then sit right in the ashes of who we once thought we were and go on from there."<sup>50</sup> There is finality with processes symbolized by Pluto. There is no easy path to rebirth and no way to escape the eventual detachment from our own egos that the Self demands in order to flourish. Pluto symbolizes the culmination of the planetary processes. The first seven planets symbolize processes by which we build our ego and begin to develop our sense of personal meaning in the world. The three outer planets symbolize the processes by which we are stripped of any beliefs we may have attached to which, in fact, prove incompatible with the ideals of our own higher Self. Together these ten planets represent primary energies that will seek recognition, illumination, and negotiation throughout the course of our lives.

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<sup>1</sup> Isabelle Hickey, *Astrology: A Cosmic Science* (Sebastopol, CA: CRCS Publications, 1992), 5.

<sup>2</sup> The reader can refer to Rex E. Bills, *The Rulership Book: A Directory of Astrological Correspondences* (Tempe, AZ: American Federation of Astrologers, Inc., 1971) for an extensive listing of such correspondences.

<sup>3</sup> Zolar, *The Lure of the Heavens: A History of Astrology*, 3d ed. (New York: Arco Publishing Co., Inc., 1972; New York: Samuel Weiser, Inc., 1980; Tarpon Spings, FL: Tarpon House Publishing, 1997), 11.

<sup>4</sup> Hickey, *Astrology: A Cosmic Science*, 5.

<sup>5</sup> Stephen Arroyo, *Chart Interpretation Handbook: Guidelines for Understanding the Essentials of the Birth Chart* (Sebastopol, CA: CRCS Publications, 1989), 6.

<sup>6</sup> Dane Rudyhar, *The Astrology of Personality: A Re-Formulation of Astrological Concepts and Ideals, in Terms of Contemporary Psychology and Philosophy* (Santa Fe, NM: Aurora Press, 1991), 220-222.

<sup>7</sup> Alice O. Howell, *Jungian Symbolism in Astrology: Letters from an Astrologer* (Tempe, AZ: American Federation of Astrologers, 1987), 75.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 81.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 125.

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- <sup>10</sup> Ann Nunley, *Inner Counselor – A Spiritual Discipline, Course Manual* (McLouth, KS: Sonrisa Productions, 2000), 18.
- <sup>11</sup> Christine Valentine, *Images of the Psyche: Exploring the Planets Through Psychology and Myth* (London: Vega, 2002), 58.
- <sup>12</sup> Erich Neumann, *The Great Mother: An Analysis of the Archetype*, Translated by Ralph Manheim, Bollingen Series XLVII (New York: Bollingen Foundation, Inc., 1955, 1963; Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1983), 326.
- <sup>13</sup> Edith Hamilton, *Mythology: Timeless Tales of Gods and Heroes* (New York: Warner Books, Inc., 1942), 66-67.
- <sup>14</sup> Valentine, *Images of the Psyche*, 65-69.
- <sup>15</sup> Liz Greene and Howard Sasportas, *The Luminaries: The Psychology of the Sun and Moon in the Horoscope*, Seminars in Psychological Astrology, Vol. 3 (Boston, MA: Weiser Books, 1992), 7-14.
- <sup>16</sup> Howell, *Jungian Symbolism in Astrology*, 101.
- <sup>17</sup> Valentine, *Images of the Psyche*, 69.
- <sup>18</sup> Howell, *Jungian Symbolism in Astrology*, 102.
- <sup>19</sup> Greene and Sasportas, *The Inner Planets: Building Blocks of Personal Reality*, Seminars in Psychological Astrology, Vol 4 (Boston, MA: Weiser Books, 1993), 31.
- <sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 20-21.
- <sup>21</sup> Valentine, *Images of the Psyche*, 91-95.
- <sup>22</sup> Howell, *Jungian Symbolism in Astrology*, 130.
- <sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 126.
- <sup>24</sup> Valentine, *Images of the Psyche*, 107.
- <sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 120.
- <sup>26</sup> Howard Sasportas, *The Gods of Change: Pain, Crisis and the Transits of Uranus, Neptune and Pluto* (New York: Penguin books, Arkana, 1989), 37.
- <sup>27</sup> Greene and Sasportas, *The Inner Planets*, 177-179.
- <sup>28</sup> Valentine, *Images of the Psyche*, 128.
- <sup>29</sup> Howell, *Jungian Symbolism in Astrology*, 137, 147.
- <sup>30</sup> Valentine, *Images of the Psyche*, 132.
- <sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 144.
- <sup>32</sup> Howell, *Jungian Symbolism in Astrology*, 168.
- <sup>33</sup> Hickey, *Astrology: A Cosmic Science*, 73.
- <sup>34</sup> Kevin Burk, *Astrology: Understanding the Birth Chart* (St. Paul, MN: Llewellyn Publications, 2001), 34.
- <sup>35</sup> Howell, *Jungian Symbolism in Astrology*, 182.
- <sup>36</sup> Liz Greene, *Saturn: A New Look at an Old Devil* (Boston, MA: Weiser Books, 1976), 10.
- <sup>37</sup> Howell, *Jungian Symbolism in Astrology*, 186.
- <sup>38</sup> Valentine, *Images of the Psyche*, 161.
- <sup>39</sup> Sasportas, *The Gods of Change*, 12.
- <sup>40</sup> Howell, *Jungian Symbolism in Astrology*, 193.
- <sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 190.
- <sup>42</sup> Sasportas, *The Gods of Change*, 44.
- <sup>43</sup> Liz Greene, *The Astrological Neptune and the Quest for Redemption* (Boston, MA: Weiser Books, 1996), 38-39.
- <sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 163.
- <sup>45</sup> Valentine, *Images of the Psyche*, 196.
- <sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, 196
- <sup>47</sup> Sasportas, *The Gods of Change*, 223.
- <sup>48</sup> Howell, *Jungian Symbolism in Astrology*, 206.
- <sup>49</sup> Valentine, *Images of the Psyche*, 224-225.
- <sup>50</sup> Clarissa Pinkola Estes, *Women who Run With the Wolves: Myths and Stories of the Wild Woman Archetype* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1992), 432.

## **CHAPTER 3:**

### **THE RELATIONSHIP OF ASTROLOGY TO ANCIENT SPIRITUAL TRADITIONS**

**The astrological chart is essentially a mandala of each human being, a unique symbolic representation of the individual. The role of astrology is to assist in the understanding, and development of each individual's essential nature and character. Carl Jung called this process 'individuation' but there are spiritual references to this process in most every mystical tradition. Mystical traditions espouse not only the desire, but the imperative need, to pursue this self-understanding. This chapter will relate the goals of astrological insight, as they concern individuals, to these ancient spiritual teachings.**

Because the goal of these papers is to define the relevance of astrology as a spiritual counseling tool, the following two chapters address this idea from two relevant traditions. The first is from the perspective of mystical dictates from antiquity, and the second from the perspective of analytic psychology. While religions have attempted to establish truths that analytic psychology cannot define within its purview, the direction, focus and at least initial journey for the individual involved in both pursuits will follow remarkably parallel paths. Correlations between these two schools are more numerous than one might imagine, and astrology is unique in its ability to reflect the message of both in its own philosophy. This is so, perhaps, because astrology mingled so closely with the earliest religions and philosophies. For centuries, astrology was inextricable from the way we viewed ourselves and our connection to the world at large. And it is precisely this connection, we could argue, that is missing from modern life; a meaningful connection both to oneself and the world at large.

In reviewing classical materials on mysticism, mystical practices, and the experiences of people throughout the world to whom mystical truths have historically been revealed, there is at least one commonality: All mystical teachings ultimately command the individual to 'know thyself'. They all stress the importance of knowing ones true nature

and claim that this is the only means by which to establish the other things which we so desperately desire; a full understanding of our right relationship to the world and to God. We search outside of ourselves for answers to our deepest questions for most of our lives when, in fact, the answers lie directly inside of us; we carry the truth with us at all times. It is as though we wear Dorothy's ruby slippers and yet manage to spend most of our lives never looking down to examine our own feet. The great paradox of life is that the journey is within, and never without. We walk in a dream believing that there are dragons to conquer, and yet everything we encounter in the course of our lives is a direct projection of the inner journey that we are actually asked to take. As we will see, this has been the message of many sages, and astrologers, throughout time. We ask: Why are we here? What is our place? What is meaningful to us in this lifetime? Both mystics and astrologers have given the same reply throughout time: The pertinent question is, 'Who am I'? This chapter will examine the common message, and language, of mysticism and astrology.

The astrological chart is essentially a mandala of each human being<sup>1</sup>, a unique symbolic representation of the individual among countless manifestations here on earth that are all part of one divine consciousness. The role of astrology is to assist the individual in gaining insight into to his or her essential nature and character. Carl Jung called this process 'individuation' but there are spiritual references to this process in most every mystical tradition. Mystical traditions espouse not only the desire, but the imperative need, to pursue self-understanding. More and more, this practice seems counter cultural. We are told to get out of ourselves, to be of service, to keep busy and

stay out of trouble. What seems less valued is time spent alone, time spent in quiet reflection, time spent day dreaming or creating things that may not be particularly 'useful'. We are not taught, through our social systems, that we will be eminently better at the former once we have mastered the latter. Jung, a strong supporter of astrology, believed that growing in self knowledge was one of the most honorable ways to spend a lifetime<sup>2</sup>, and the mystics would seem to agree. Jung spoke of individuation, Hindus speak of svadharma, and the Greeks inscribed the very words "Know Thy Self" over the oracle's door at Delphi. It is not surprising however, that so few understand the road that must be taken, as it does not lead through the intellect, as most people would prefer. It involves the participation of all parts of our being. As author and mystic S. Abhayananda says beautifully:

The philosophy of mysticism, unlike some others, is not dependent upon intellect for confirmation, but upon experiment. It remains incomprehensible to all but those who are willing to carry out the experiment with their very lives.<sup>3</sup>

A brief look at several ancient spiritual traditions will allow us to understand the depth of emphasis that has been placed on this message. The Hindu Upanishads, collected some thirty five hundred years ago, include the directions, "It is not what is thought that we should wish to know; we should know the thinker. 'He is my Self'."<sup>4</sup> The Hindus believed that the sublime essence of man lies buried under layers of debris. This debris consists of our fears, attachments, and a myriad of other false beliefs; a general misunderstanding of who we truly are.<sup>5</sup> The goal of life is to rid ourselves as of many of these misconceptions as possible and in the process discover the work which only we can effectively do. Hindu religious philosophy combines beautifully the concepts of

individuality and duty. Duty is universal, and called ‘dharma’ by the Hindus, but this particular type of duty, associated as it is with self-knowledge, is called ‘svadharma’. The Mahabharata, found in the Bhagavad-Gita, tells the story of a man Arunja, who essentially comes to understand his svadharma. As Abhayananda describes:

Dharma is, of course, translated as ‘duty’, but *svadharma* is not simply the duty to perform works in the world, but the necessity of performing one’s own special God-given duty...No matter what a man might do in this world, no matter how respectable or charitable or unselfish, if it is not his *svadharma*, he will be miserable; he will feel frustrated, unfulfilled and dissatisfied.<sup>6</sup>

Hindus were also especially sensitive to an aspect of self-discovery which astrology firmly supports, which is not as ubiquitous in mystical thought as self-knowledge, but which is worth mentioning briefly at this point. This is the belief that differences in individual nature will necessitate traveling by different roads to a common destination. As religion scholar Huston Smith states, “Where one starts from depends on the kind of person one is.”<sup>7</sup> Astrologers would not say it differently. The Hindus developed four different yogas, or paths, which correspond with the four different astrological elements. As astrologer Steven Arroyo says:

The ‘four elements’ of astrological tradition [air, earth, fire and water] refer to the vital forces (or energies) that make up the entire creation that is commonly perceived by human beings. The four elements in a birth chart reveal the ability to participate in certain realms of being and to tune in to specific fields of life experience.<sup>8</sup>

In their intuitive recognition of this, the Hindus established four yogas to honor the four attunements. Bhakti yoga uses ‘tangible’ forms (earth) on which to center worship and devotion, jnan yoga uses understanding and knowledge (air), karma yoga entails works



and action (fire) and raja yoga meditation and contemplation (water).<sup>9</sup> Each person is allowed to enter into the realm of Self in the way most likely to affect a recognition of Self within each individual.

In turning to another mystic tradition, we again find the message that knowledge of Self, and God, lies within. The Buddhists, emerging from the Hindus, have been accused of attempting to transcend the world in general, but this is a misinterpretation of their philosophy. Buddha's final words according to Buddhists were, "Be a lamp into yourself! Work out your liberation with diligence!"<sup>10</sup> The clear implication here is that such liberation begins with self examination. The Buddhists were clearly concerned with illuminating the false nature of dualistic perception; however they had great respect for the human form as the vehicle by which we must make this discovery. Lama Anagarika Govinda explains that Buddhists believe that being born as a human is a great privilege because it is in human form that we may work towards our own liberation with applied consciousness.<sup>11</sup> He also asserts that, for the Buddhists, "Our consciousness determines the kind of space in which we live."<sup>12</sup> In other words, Buddha taught that the way to travel through this world was not to negate manifest experience, but rather to walk straight through the middle of it, which meant traveling straight through the center of ourselves. Buddhists, along with Hindus and other traditions, acknowledge the difficulty of this journey. They speak of the 'fearlessness' required in facing our path to Self, but it is only this path that reveals the true meaning in life. "The meaning of this our life and of the universe that it reveals, lies in the fact of consciousness itself, but nowhere outside ourselves."<sup>13</sup>

Contemporary with Buddha, early Greek philosophers, including Heraclitus, Pythagoras, and later Socrates, spoke the same mystical directive. Heraclitus echoed the astrologer's mantra when he exclaimed that, "a man's character is his destiny."<sup>14</sup> Socrates, as a philosopher and teacher, did not simply preach his beliefs to his disciples, but rather encouraged them to search within themselves for agreement or disagreement with him. He had no interest in interpreting a man's own individual experience for him, but rather encouraged people to explore their own truths. He, too, acknowledged the difficulty of this path, and in an outward symbol of the difficulty of such a task, chose death over the retraction of his belief in the divinity of each individual.<sup>15</sup> These men were among the most famous participants in the ancient mystery schools and traditions. These mystery schools contained ceremonies designed to initiate individuals into greater knowledge of Self, using the symbolism contained in the stories of their gods, the well known Greek pantheon of gods. As authors Timothy Freke and Peter Gandy explain, "Superficially a myth was an entertaining story, but to the initiated it was a sacred code that contained profound spiritual teachings."<sup>16</sup> And mythology scholar Edith Hamilton says, "A real myth has nothing to do with religion. It is an explanation of something in nature."<sup>17</sup> These two definitions together create an interesting parallel description of myth as it relates to both (our) nature and sacred codes. There is something within our very selves, and in the world as a whole, that is the key to our understanding of higher truths.

No one can be certain of what the ancient mystery ceremonies entailed, as no records were kept, but the most famous of these schools centered on the stories of Dionysius, god of wine, and Demeter, goddess of corn; the semi-human gods who were the only gods to truly know suffering. These ceremonies took place at the temple at Eleusis, and thus came to be known as the Eleusinian Mysteries. Demeter lost her only daughter, Persephone, to the god of the underworld, Hades. In her grief, the earth went barren and no crops would grow. Persephone was allowed to return for eight months a year, but Demeter still had to watch her daughter 'die' each year. Persephone herself seemed deeply transformed by her journey to the underworld each year. Dionysus's mother died as he was born. As the god of wine, Dionysus was forced to contain within himself access to ecstatic joys, as well as cruel and savage brutality. It is clear that in their attempt to introduce the individual to the divine nature of Self, the Mysteries used these two stories of dual nature, and death and rebirth.<sup>18</sup> These were ideas that individuals took into themselves and experienced within themselves, ultimately understanding that it is our own dual nature which causes suffering. We have a higher and lower self, and one (the lower) must give itself over totally to transformation, and in so doing, 'die' or cease to exist in its old form. It is this higher aspect of Self which the Greeks referred to with the command, "Know Thy Self."

In a final example of historical directives to follow the path inwards to Self, we can also look to early mystical Christian teachings. Within the orthodox teachings of the Christian church we find a Christ with a passionate concern for the heart of every person.

Jesus showed little concern for adherence to collective mores, to the extent that they negated the relevance of the individual. As Abhayananda says of Jesus:

He felt deeply that peace and goodwill among men was something that could only be obtained by a personal attunement with peace and love in the heart of each individual man. The answer to the suffering of man was not in attempting to forcefully change society from without, but lay rather in the transformation of the mind and the heart from within.”<sup>19</sup>

There are certainly more Christian teachings than the ones directly passed down to us as Christian orthodoxy. The Christian Gnostics were as valid (although also as highly diverse) a group of Christians as any in the first centuries of the Christian era and they were, perhaps, the more mystically inclined branch of Christianity at that time. They strongly believed in the necessity of unburying our divine natures. In a statement strikingly relevant to astrology, the Gospel of Thomas reads, “If you bring forth that within yourselves, that which you have will save you.”<sup>20</sup> The very purpose of astrology is to assist us with uncovering the parts of us we are not consciously ‘bringing forth’ in this lifetime, in order to live more fully and achieve greater wholeness. The seeds of divine consciousness are planted within each individual and it is only there that we will find the aspects of Self that are intended to manifest, as represented by each moment of individual birth.

According to the Gnostics (if I may refer to them as one group, which many scholars regard as a questionable practice), Jesus’ message was much more deeply personal than orthodox interpretations acknowledged, or perhaps even understood. The Gospel of

Thomas is a collection of sayings, more than a collection of parables, attributed to Jesus which the reader is invited to meditate upon. As Thomas scholar Marvin Meyer says:

The readers of the Gospel of Thomas are invited to join the quest for meaning in life by interpreting the oftentimes cryptic and enigmatic 'hidden sayings' of Jesus. They are encouraged to read or hear the sayings, interact with them, and discover for themselves the interpretation and meaning.<sup>21</sup>

This search would seem to be encouraged by such sayings as:

If you (will) know yourselves, then you will be known and you will know that you are the sons of the Living Father. But if you do not know yourselves, then you are in poverty and you are poverty.<sup>22</sup>

Thomas Logion 3

For many Gnostics, Jesus is then representative of the transformational process we must all undergo throughout our lifetime; the continuous cycle of death and rebirth. We are encouraged not to simply allow Jesus to save us through his own death, but to enter the experience of 'salvation' for ourselves. As the Buddhists and Greeks confirmed, we will resist this process. As religion scholar Elaine Pagels explains:

Gnostics acknowledged that pursuing *gnosis* [experiential knowing] engages each person in a solitary, difficult process, as one struggles against internal resistance. They characterized this resistance to *gnosis* as the desire to sleep or to be drunk – that is, to remain unconscious.<sup>23</sup>

The above description of the need for an individual experience of the Gospel echoes the fundamental challenge of revelation taught in the Greek mystery schools and Hindu yogas; it makes the point that mystics have never been able to 'give' others a mystical experience; they can only point the way, tell a story, open the heart and try and create a

space where individuals may enter their own experience. For ultimately the Self is an experience, not a logical concept. As Abhayananda says of all mystics:

All have stressed that this enlightenment is attainable, not through much learning, alms-giving, or through following the precepts of ritualized religion but only through devotion to and contemplation of one's own essential Being.<sup>24</sup>

As 'enlightenment' is an experience, it is best described in a way that speaks to our imaginations, because it is there that our desires are ignited, that possibilities exist, and where our intuitive processes are allowed free reign. And it is our intuitive processes, much more than our logical, which will assist us in our journey. And here again astrology comes to join the mystic path for not only does astrology speak to us in images, and to our intuitive selves, but it assists with no more profound endeavor than that of self discovery and self understanding. Simply put, as Arroyo says, "Astrology...is a great illuminator. It shines a light where before there was darkness and confusion."<sup>25</sup>

The study of the movement of the heavens is an ancient art, used to predict the rising of tides and changing of seasons. It was used for planting and harvesting and navigating travel. It was through such persistent use, day in and day out, that the correlations with man's own nature began to be clear. How much of this was determined through careful study of correspondences and how much came through more intuitive revelations cannot, most likely, be determined. It is probably difficult for us to understand the entirely visceral relationship that the ancient peoples had with the earth. The connection was much stronger and instinctive. There was no 'technology' with which to blot out the

inconvenient aspects of nature; it had to be accepted on its own terms. Astrology, derived from observation of nature, is essentially about cycles. As astrologer Dane Rudyhar says:

Astrology has been called the mother of all sciences, because it was presumably the primordial way in which human beings were able to sense and realize the cyclic order manifesting in the universe; and, because of this order, the possibility of predicting the results of actions attuned to this cyclic order.<sup>26</sup>

Living attuned to nature, the ancients were able to make connections between the movements of the heavens and the correlating events on earth with much more accuracy than we could today in our air conditioned, well-lit homes, and we can only be grateful for the eventual noting of these observations. As Arroyo states, “Almost every culture that we know of had some form of astrology...and this is...attributable to... their immediate sense of unity with the cosmic environment.”<sup>27</sup>

We began the study of the heavens for practical reasons; it assisted in the navigation of our environment. We learned to plant, and then harvest, when the Sun returned to the twice-yearly mid-point of its own twelve month cycle. We learned that new life was seeded in the spring and then taken in the fall. We learned that life lay dormant in the winter. This would not be particularly meaningful for our internal psyche except to say that astrology developed organically within the earliest scientific ‘theory’, described by mystics and philosophers (and, of course, traditional science, religion and philosophy were interconnected), which was, in today’s terminology, the philosophy of Holism. As Rudyhar says:

The whole is... ‘the source and the principle of explanation’ of true astrology. As we understand it, and as it has perhaps always been understood by those who probed its most essential significance, true astrology is the *mathematics of wholeness*. It is ‘holistic logic’ in opposition to the ‘intellectual logic’ of this present Western civilization. It deals with wholes. It studies the structural harmony, the growth, development and the disintegration or transfiguration of wholes – whether these be the usual biological organisms or more transcendent mental and spiritual wholes.<sup>28</sup>

In other words, while we currently subscribe to a scientific method based on the examination of ‘parts’, in the world in which astrology manifested, there was nothing but the ‘whole’. This interrelationship between all of life is echoed by all of the ecstatic mystics. As author Andrew Harvey says:

The sublime, inner essences secretly constitute a chain linking everything from the highest to the lowest, extending from the upper pool to the edge of the universe...The entire chain is one. Down to the last link, everything is linked with everything else; so divine essence is below as well as above, in heaven and on earth.<sup>29</sup>

This unitive approach to understanding the world existed well into the sixteenth century, as can be seen by writings by Paracelsus, a physician. He is largely credited with having officially established the astrologer’s Doctrine of Correspondences, “As Above, So Below.” He writes:

For what is outside is also inside; and what is not outside man is not inside. The outer and the inner are *one* thing, *one* constellation, *one* influence, *one* concordance, *one* duration...*one* fruit. For this is the *limbus*, the primordial matter which contains all creatures in germ, just as man is contained in the *limbus* of his parents.”<sup>30</sup>



Philosophers and mystics speak to underlying truths and realities. However, in manifestation, divine consciousness appears to have fragmented itself into countless independent creations. While we all contain, and are reflective of, the greatest universal whole, we reflect this in individual ways. As Paracelsus continues:

We, men, have a heaven, and it lies in each of us in its entire plenitude, undivided and corresponding to each man's specificity...For if the same heaven were in all of us, all men would have to be equally sick and equally healthy. But this is not so; the unity of the Great Heaven is split into our diversities by the various moments at which we are born.<sup>31</sup>

As we have said, astrology is based on the cycles of nature. Inherent in cycles is movement. Life, which is energy in movement, constant creation, is never still. One moment is never the same as the moment that preceded it. Something has been born or died or has grown since I began this sentence. Astrology believes that each person is (inherently) the direct reflection of divine consciousness at the exact moment at which his or her first breath was drawn. By the next breath consciousness has shifted ever so slightly. To fully realize the whole of divinity, it is then each individual's responsibility to live in concordance with the 'energetic blueprint' that was his moment of birth. Only fully realized, self-actualized, individuated, enlightened (to use only a few of the synonyms for such ultimate creative living) individuals help us to know the reality that is God, or the Divine. As Rudyhar says beautifully:

Man is in charge of some section of nature which he owns as a result of the very act of birth. He is put in charge; and this he must come to realize, and to understand. He must accept the responsibility it entails. To refuse it would mean that all the natural and psychic energies of his ancestral past, integrated for his use within the field of his total organism and of his congenital place in society, would be left to follow

the course of all nature; which is, to disintegrate. These energies, however, were not integrated without a purpose. He cannot – he must not – leave them alone. This would be suicide; and there are a great many forms and degrees of committing suicide – not the least of which is to refuse truly to be born as a manager of one's possessions.<sup>32</sup>

And with this we can now see the philosophy of individuality and duty that astrology shares with spiritual traditions such as Hinduism. It is not simply desirable, but in some sense imperative (for ourselves and others) to live out our true nature. It is the ultimate act of co-creation and it is a responsibility of which very few of us are actually consciously aware. But to live and embody our true nature, we must know our true nature, and this is not at all as simple as it sounds. We are too busy trying to be like father or mother, a complete stranger we meet in the media, or simply some compilation of approved collective images, to stop and acknowledge the signs and symbols pointing the way to our own individual path. Astrology urges the individual, as do the mystics, to pursue this, admittedly arduous, path of self knowledge. Astrology encourages this as well as provides assistance with the process, as did the mystics with their initiation ceremonies, parables and mythologies. Astrology's description of the various 'gods', its injunction that we must acknowledge the gods to whom we must bow, is simply another way of describing individual character. These gods reveal the quality of our internal life. There are not, as we have mentioned, an unlimited number of archetypes, or instincts. We will all display Martial qualities of aggression or assertion. We will all want to connect with life in a Venusian manner. The trick, so to speak, is to understand and balance the modes of expression that are conducive to the illumination of Self.

Mars symbolizes work, a forward moving, creative, physical expression of energy. We will all engage with this energy in some manner, and in order to feel fulfilled, to feel that our actions are meaningful, we will need to engage with this energy differently. To give a very simple example, Mars in Leo wants to work in the limelight. He can work on the stage or he can work in an office, but he cannot work without recognition. How stifling to this spirit to work in an anonymous manner, forcing himself to practice a humility that, in this area of life, is completely unsuitable to the expression of his true Self. Mars in Scorpio wants to create in private. He creates in isolation, not wanting to expose a single aspect of his work to light until he feels it can withstand the scrutiny which he feels is certain to follow. Again, how soul-defeating if such an individual is forced to work under constant supervision, not allowed the privacy and time needed to nurture his creations. Internally, he will feel as though he is not allowed to sit on his egg, his most important creation; it is in danger of dying from exposure to the elements every time he is forced to stand up and show it to someone else. This will be the internal psychic experience for such an individual. He will feel awful and, if he is like most of us, he will not understand his truth. He will resent his boss, or his coworkers, or the work in general. He will become depressed as his life-instinct is repressed or ignored. He will fail to understand that it is only himself who is failing to honor himself; not in what he is doing, but rather in how he is doing it. He cannot allow himself to work in such a manner, no matter how healthy the income or secure the position. This manner of work will never allow him access to his full creativity. And perhaps this is linked somehow to the oft-repeated spiritual conjecture that God concerned not so much with what we do, as with how we do it.

The above description offers a small insight into how astrology illuminates individual nature and yet such examples, while specific, are still wholly inadequate to the description of true individuality for even the expression of this one archetype is continually shaded by its interaction with the others within the natal chart. These interactions between planets are referred to by astrologers as ‘aspects’, and indicate which planetary energies are at peace or at war with each other. For, after all, one in twelve of us will have Mars in Leo, and yet none will express it exactly the same. As Arroyo says:

A particular dimension of experience (indicated by a certain planet) will invariably be colored by the quality of the sign wherein it is placed in the individual’s chart. This combination results in a specific urge toward self-expression and a particular need for fulfillment being defined...And, although the urge to express or to fulfill that dimension of experience will be present in anyone having a certain planet-sign combination, the specific aspects to that planet [from the other planets] reveal how easily and harmoniously the person can express that urge or fulfill that need.<sup>33</sup>

In the end, it is the honoring of our individual modes of expression that allow us to begin to connect in a meaningful way to ourselves and to others. It is our failure to acknowledge our own internal myth, our personal drama, that prevents us from understanding the role other people and experiences play in our life. As astrologer Betty Lunsted says, “There is no ‘awful’ chart; there are only unhappy people who don’t understand the purpose of their existence. Mother Nature’s laws teach us that there is a place for all of us.”<sup>34</sup>

In conclusion, the extremely personal path of individual experience advocated by the mystic receives complete support from astrology. Reading William James's *Varieties of Religious Experience*, I was struck by the similarity between James's definition of the individual soul (and his concern was with religion, not astrology) and astrology's:

Every individual soul, in short, like every individual machine or organism, has its own best conditions of efficiency. A given machine will run best under a certain steam-pressure, a certain amperage; an organism under a certain diet, weight, or exercise. You seem to do best, I heard a doctor say to a patient, at about 140 millimeters of arterial tension. And it is just so with our sundry souls: some are happiest in calm weather; some need the sense of tension, of strong volition, to make them feel alive and well.<sup>35</sup>

The mystic path is the astrological path in the sense that both believe that an experience with divine consciousness is best approached through self knowledge and self examination. Astrology does not claim to be able to define divine consciousness. It is a description of the ways in which we may best prepare to meet this ultimate experience. There is, as astrologer Alice Howell says, a Divine Guest<sup>36</sup> within each of us and we have simply to prepare the palace accordingly and we will experience his presence. At such a point, our chart is transcended, and this is the same freedom spoken of by all mystics who have resolved and transcended manifest duality. This is the point at which Rudyhar would say we have succeeded in taking full responsibility for our 'possessions'; having achieved the full realization of our unique expression of divine consciousness in this lifetime.

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<sup>1</sup> Christine Valentine, *Images of the Psyche: Exploring the Planets through Psychology and Myth* (London: Vega, 2002), 47.

<sup>2</sup> C.G. Jung, *Psychological Reflections: A New Anthology of His Writings 1905-1961*, Bollingen Series XXXI (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1973), 228-230.

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- <sup>3</sup> S. Abhayananda, *History of Mysticism: The Unchanging Testament*, 3d ed. (Olympia, WA: Atma Books, 1996), 385.
- <sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 39.
- <sup>5</sup> Huston Smith, *The World's Religions: Our Great Wisdom Traditions* (San Francisco: HarperCollins Publishers, HarperSanFrancisco, 1991), 22.
- <sup>6</sup> Abhayananda, *History of Mysticism*, 59.
- <sup>7</sup> Smith, *The World's Religions*, 28.
- <sup>8</sup> Stephen Arroyo, *Chart Interpretation Handbook: Guidelines for Understanding the Essentials of the Birth Chart* (Sebastopol, CA: CRCS Publications, 1989), 29.
- <sup>9</sup> Abhayananda, *History of Mysticism*, 54-55.
- <sup>10</sup> Andrew Harvey, *The Essential Mystics: Selections from the World's Great Wisdom Traditions* (San Francisco: HarperCollins Publishers, HarperSanFrancisco, 1996), 69.
- <sup>11</sup> Lama Anagarika Govinda, *Foundations of Tibetan Mysticism* (Boston, MA: Weiser Books, 1969), 124.
- <sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 116.
- <sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 277.
- <sup>14</sup> Abhayananda, *History of Mysticism*, 93.
- <sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 95-104.
- <sup>16</sup> Timothy Freke and Peter Gandy, *The Jesus Mysteries: Was the 'Original Jesus' a Pagan God?* (New York: Three Rivers Press, 1999), 21.
- <sup>17</sup> Edith Hamilton, *Mythology: Timeless Tales of Gods and Heroes* (New York: Warner Books, Inc., 1942), 19.
- <sup>18</sup> Freke and Gandy, *The Jesus Mysteries*, 18-20.
- <sup>19</sup> Abhayananda, *History of Mysticism*, 115.
- <sup>20</sup> A. Guillaumont, Coptic text established and translated by, *The Gospel According to Thomas* (New York: Harper & Row, 1959), 41.
- <sup>21</sup> Harold Bloom, interpreter, *The Gospel of Thomas: The Hidden Sayings of Jesus*, Introduction and Notes by Marvin Meyer, 2d ed (San Francisco: HarperCollins Publishers, HarperSanFrancisco, 1992), 7.
- <sup>22</sup> Guillaumont, *The Gospel According to Thomas*, 3.
- <sup>23</sup> Elaine Pagels, *The Gnostic Gospels* (New York: Random House, Inc., Vintage Books, 1989), 126.
- <sup>24</sup> Abhayananda, *History of Mysticism*, 77.
- <sup>25</sup> Arroyo, *Chart Interpretation Handbook*, 21.
- <sup>26</sup> Dane Rudyhar, *Triptych: Gifts of the Spirit, The Way Through, the Illumined Road* (The Netherlands: Servire-Wassenaar, 1968), 7-8.
- <sup>27</sup> Stephen Arroyo, *Astrology, Psychology and the Four Elements: An Energy Approach to Astrology & Its Use in the Counseling Arts* (Sebastopol, CA: CRCS Publications, 1975), 5.
- <sup>28</sup> Dane Rudyhar, *The Astrology of Personality: A Re-Formulation of Astrological Concepts and Ideals, in Terms of Contemporary Psychology and Philosophy* (Santa Fe, NM: Aurora Press, 1991), 50.
- <sup>29</sup> Harvey, *The Essential Mystics*, 102-103.
- <sup>30</sup> Paracelsus, *Selected Writings*, Edited by Jolande Jacobi, Bollingen Series XXVIII (New York: Bollingen Foundation, Inc., 1951; Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1979), 21.
- <sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 39-40.
- <sup>32</sup> Rudyhar, *Triptych*, 134.
- <sup>33</sup> Arroyo, *Chart Interpretation Handbook*, 27.
- <sup>34</sup> Betty Lundsted, *Astrological Insights into Personality* (San Diego, CA: ACS Publications, Inc., 1980), 125.
- <sup>35</sup> William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (New York: Simon & Schuster, Touchstone, 1997), 240-241.
- <sup>36</sup> Alice O. Howell, *Jungian Symbolism in Astrology: Letters from an Astrologer* (Tempe, AZ: American Federation of Astrologers, 1987), 7.

## **CHAPTER 4: THE RELEVANCE OF ASTROLOGY AS A SPIRITUAL COUNSELING TOOL**

**As it is quite unlikely that Western civilization will recapture a time when religious symbolism will speak to us collectively, astrology can serve as a relevant modern-day spiritual counseling tool, introducing us to symbols which are personally meaningful to us. In a time when we continue to give away so much personal control, Carl Jung, and his school of analytic psychologists, remind us that we have irrevocably entered the age of personal responsibility. This chapter traces the decline of collective mythology, the emergence of individual mythology, and the complementary support offered by both analytic psychology and astrology for our new modern-day hero's journey.**

Jung believed that archetypal energies are the forces that drive the personal and societal cycles of life. Archetypes ultimately power our personal evolution. They assist in our journey of individuation. They reveal, in a manner similar to the astrological chart, the direction and purpose of each individual life. I think of them as the great allies of the higher Self, which has always and will always have its own intent for this lifetime. For modern society, as it was for ancient society, the great promise of acknowledging these energies is that through them a sense of purpose and meaning can be found within the most ordinary of lives. This chapter will examine the decline of symbolic thought within our culture, the ways in which analytic psychology has sought to ameliorate the decline by redefining the role of the individual within society, and the ways in which astrology supports psychoanalytic thought and its search for meaning for the individual life. It would appear that we are all called to the same journey in life; that of resolving our own dual natures and divided consciousness. Contemporary transpersonal theory suggests that once an individual understands the meaning of his individual life, he is truly free to determine his role in the collective life as well.

In the ancient, non-rational world, the physical forces of the planet, as well as the energetic forces of the psyche, must have seemed terribly frightening. Cultural

mythologies had the effect of ordering seemingly irrational forces. Immersed in their natural environment, ancient peoples sifted their experiences and came to understand natural law, which far preceded any man-made moral or ethical laws. They understood the impersonal nature of what we have already described as archetypal energies, and enfolded this knowledge within their mythologies. As Jungian analyst Rollo May says:

*Myths are means of discovery. They are a progressive revealing of structure in our relation to nature and to our own existence. Myths are educative...By drawing out inner reality they enable the person to experience greater reality in the outside world.*<sup>1</sup>

In other words, myths anchored ancient peoples within their world, delineating the relationship between them and their gods (or instincts). This included an education in the risks involved in angering, or even ignoring, these gods. As Jungian scholar Eugene Pascal explains, “consciousness is basically mytho-poetic,”<sup>2</sup> and it is expressly images such as those contained in myth that allowed us to connect with our more unconscious core, where these energies reside. Myth reveals the comforting truth that everything with which we struggle has already been faced, and overcome, by those who came before us. We exist within the same energetic matrix as our ancestors, and we must negotiate the same forces.

Myths must be considered symbolic and non-literal in order to be accurately translated to the individual psyche. As religion scholar Joseph Campbell says, “These images are to be regarded as no more than shadows from the unfathomable reach beyond, where the eye goeth not, speech goeth not, nor the mind.”<sup>3</sup> Or, as astrologer Liz Greene says, “The language of myth is...the secret speech of the inarticulate human soul.”<sup>4</sup> We abandon



ourselves to the images and become willing to allow the images to resonate within some unconscious recess of our spirit, activating energies within us that that connect us to “who we really are.” Jung believed myths and astrology were the earliest forms of psychology.<sup>5</sup> This collective symbolic education continued in the ancient religious mystery schools. Jolande Jacobi quotes Jung as saying, “Christ expresses the idea of the Kingdom of Heaven in his parables, these are genuine and true symbols; that is, attempts to express something for which no verbal concept yet exists.”<sup>6</sup> These stories take root in our imaginations, forcing us to stretch ourselves for creative solutions, thereby connecting us to our libidinal, or life energies. We engage with these stories in a way that allows us to feel a participation in and connection to life. Myth thereby bridges the gap we so often feel between the outer world and our own private inner world.

It is important to understand that very few of these collective means of channeling symbolic information exist for the individual today. Our disproportionate allegiance to rational science over the last eight hundred years or so has resulted in a devaluation of such symbolic communication. The imagination is no longer considered ‘real’; only the quantifiable phenomena of life. However, as astrologer Stephen Arroyo explains:

By assuming that materialistic science is the only reliable road to knowledge and that only what can be scientifically shown to be valid is real, the Western world has effectively excluded the enormous dimensions of human life and experience which are inaccessible to the part of the mind employed in scientific analysis.<sup>7</sup>

In other words, our archetypal gods will forever elude rational science, for they do not dwell in its kingdom, nor will they ever allow entry to theirs through modern science’s

method. It is a dilemma to which we may only submit. And yet we resist. We have embraced the God of Reason and, as Pascal says, “If a culture’s god-image is imbalanced, everything in that culture will be imbalanced.”<sup>8</sup> We have alternated between reducing our mythic communications to mere ‘fancy’ and ‘children’s fare’ to reinterpreting them literally, thereby subjecting them to more scientific, historical scrutiny. When we attempt to take our psychic symbols and turn them into concrete, literal events, we immediately destroy the power of the symbol to connect the invisible layers of universal processes. This has happened in many religions. Ironically, as astrologer Alice Howell points out, Christianity has identified the exact nature of its own ills, but has failed to see its relevance:

The word *symbol* comes from the Greek *sym-bolos*, which means to throw together or bring together. It has a very interesting antonym, *dia-bolos*, which means to throw apart or separate. And *diabolos*, of course, is the origin of our English word *devil*...So the process we must associate with this archetype [the devil] is that of separating or even denying the symbolic, which would be to kill the power of the symbol to mediate between levels of consciousness.<sup>9</sup>

Literalism strips away the connectivity between the layers of consciousness. Only the symbol can reestablish these connections.

Carl Jung, and his school of analytic psychologists, accurately identified the psychic consequences of such stratification of our ‘realities’. Isolated within ourselves, we now experience the world in a much more disconnected manner. Separation from our internal reality allowed for our separation from one another, something primitive societies could

never have tolerated. Our internal state was reflected (symbolically, of course) in the Industrial Revolution. As May says:

In the Industrial Revolution there began the radical separation between the product of the worker's hands and his relation with the persons who used his product. Indeed, the worker normally saw nothing at all of the product he helped produce except his own little act. The alienation of labor added to the alienation of persons from themselves and from other people.<sup>10</sup>

Archetypal energies demand recognition. Jung believed that denial of their presence turns their productive, creative potential to its negative. Or as Jungian James Hillman describes, "Our modern passages are so narrow and with such low ceilings, the invisibles must twist themselves into freakish shapes in order to come through."<sup>11</sup> Denial of our own internal symbolic images inverts their method of communication. As we deny imaginative content, archetypal energy begins to invade our reality, through life events (which Jung termed 'synchronistic events' and which we do not understand as being linked to our internal state) and psychic distress Jung termed 'complexes'. Such complexes are no more than archetypes demanding expression and seemingly subscribing to the adage that negative attention is better than no attention at all. As Jung says:

This is a new problem. All ages before us have believed in gods in some form or other. Only an unparalleled impoverishment of symbolism could enable us to rediscover the gods as psychic factors.<sup>12</sup>

So, even without cultural rituals, mythologies, and initiations, symbolic information emerges from the unconscious. It comes, bidden or not. And we can recognize our disconnection from its content by our discontent. Saybrook University's Carol Pearson says, "The paradox of modern life is that at the same time that we are living in ways

never done before...our actions often feel rootless and empty.”<sup>13</sup> While the shift in consciousness that accompanied this shift in values in the late eighteenth century is a paper unto itself, its central consequence is what is of concern to Jungian analysts and astrologers alike; and that is the emergence of the individual in society. Right or wrong, and seemingly irrevocably, the burden for the management of archetypal information has shifted to the individual. This is the call to individuation referred to by Jung and his students. The individuation process is, as described before, the modern day hero’s journey. It is, in essence, a journey to reconnect the individual to his or personal mythology, or archetypal core. As May says:

Each one of us is forced to do deliberately for oneself what in previous ages was done by family, custom, church, and state, namely, form the myths in terms of which we can make some sense of experience.<sup>14</sup>

Without this grounding, we fall into the trap of comparison, envy, fear and competition, the plague of our day. As Pearson says, “The danger of not knowing one’s life myth is that it is possible to be continually judging oneself by the standard of a journey that is not one’s own.”<sup>15</sup> And if it is not our journey, we will never, ever, feel adequate to the task. We will feel frustrated, and our lives purposeless and meaningless. As May says:

*The loneliness of mythlessness is the deepest and least assuageable of all.* Unrelated to the past, unconnected with the future, we hang as if in mid-air. We are like the shades Odysseus meets in the underworld, crying for news about the people up in the world but unable themselves to feel anything.<sup>16</sup>

For Jung, the process of individuation is about unification and integration. Our move towards wholeness is a dual fold process. From our state of psychic disequilibrium

(caused by too little acknowledgement of the unconscious forces within us), we seek to restore the balance between levels of consciousness. In the process we come to understand that what is outside of ourselves is also within. The archetype of the Self, according to Jung, orchestrates this movement. In a manner that is entirely mysterious and unique to each individual, it prods us towards fulfillment of some innate creative potential. To the extent that we resist engagement with this energy as its co-creator, to that extent do we seem to suffer and encounter those experiences in our lives which appear to frustrate our every conscious wish and desire. It is possible to see how this journey is likened to the hero's journey, for there is indeed nobility involved in consciously and deliberately turning ones attention to the call of the higher Self, no matter the consequences to the ego. Containing these conflicting desires is what allows for the emergence of the Self, not simply as a yearning, but as an inner reality. As astrologer ChristineValentine says:

Nature has its own inherent ordering force in its tension of opposites whose goal is to become what it potentially is, just as the goal of the acorn is to become an oak tree. So by containing the opposites within us, our warring impulses, neither repressing them nor being overwhelmed by them, but allowing them a creative interplay, we allow the Self to emerge.<sup>17</sup>

Inherent in Jungian analytic thought is the understanding that our experiences in the external world are the reflections of our inner equilibrium or disequilibrium. As mentioned before, we draw to ourselves that which we need in order learn and grow. Seen this way, life is not so much to be met with fists clenched or head bowed, but rather with eyes and heart open; consciously exercising willingness to see and accept that which might excite discomfort within. But such conflict is creativity, energy; life. We have

been taught to fear our own great creative power, and so we look for means by which to quell this energy. We blanket our feelings with alcohol, food or depressive states; or perhaps simply succeed in ignoring them through adoption of values and roles selected from the collective mores of the time and place in which we live. In just as desperate an attempt to discard our feelings, we project them out into the world, fighting our internal battles in the outside world, attempting to vanquish a foe who resides only with us. In today's world it is processes such as Jungian analysis, astrological counseling, and other symbolic arts that introduce us to the nature of the warring factions within ourselves. Once introduced, we can begin the process of reconciliation. Maturity, for Jung, is graciously accepting responsibility for cleaning up our small corner of this world. As Jacobi says:

Such a man knows that whatever is wrong in the world is in himself, and if he only learns to deal with his own shadow he has done something real for the world. He has succeeded in shouldering at least an infinitesimal part of the gigantic, unsolved social problems of our day.<sup>18</sup>

In the process of taking responsibility for one's own psychic life, one does not become 'saintly' or even 'good', in the colloquial sense of these words. One does, however, become whole, taking ownership of one's positive and not so positive character traits. We allow, as astrologer Alice Howell has said, our black sheep to graze with our white ones. The individual becomes able, as Jacobi says, "to know himself for what he naturally is, as distinguished from what he would like to be."<sup>19</sup> There can be no resolution of conflict without acknowledgment of the polarities involved. In battle, both sides demand respect, and it is no different with the gods of our psyche.

And here astrology comes to our aid for it provides instant insight into the possible psychic imbalances beneath our persona's thin veneer, as well as very clearly illuminating the nature of our individual gods. As Valentine says:

The birth-chart mirrors the psyche's tension very graphically, for it presents us with a symbol of wholeness or the potential totality of the individual psyche like the uroboros and mandala. Yet certain areas of the chart will be empty, certain areas emphasized, some configurations will reflect a state of harmony or equilibrium and others a state of tension and conflict.<sup>20</sup>

The astrological chart allows us to enter our own mythology and meet our own gods. Also, upon reflection, it allows us to understand that it is possible to experience the presence of these gods in every aspect of our lives. As Greene says:

Meeting a planet in a sign and house is like entering a temple and meeting the manifestation of an unknown god. We may meet that deity as a concrete 'outer' experience, or *via* another person who is the mask through which the god's face peeps; through the body; through an ideology or intellectual vision; through creative work; as a compelling emotion. Often several of these are experienced together, and it becomes difficult to see the unity between what is happening in life outside and what is happening within. Nevertheless, the planet bridges the abyss between 'outer' and 'inner' and provides us with our meaningful connection, for the gods live in both worlds at once.<sup>21</sup>

There need not be a single word on an astrological chart for it to be read. Everything on the chart is a symbol, and therefore interpretation can never be literal. There are only the images that the symbols bring to life, and the way their story captures our imaginations. We are asked to consider personal experiences evoked by the stories, thereby claiming our participation in these events. For not only does the image help us to

consciously understand the archetype, but it also allows for the resonance that must occur within us to bridge the connection between that archetype and our more unconscious attitudes. While there are a limited number of archetypes, their imaginal representations multiply in manifestation, and this is due to our innate creativity. We are all capable of producing different symbols for the exact same principle. Astrologer Maggie Hyde explains the difference between the archetype and its image:

Archetypes such as the Self or the Mother are primordial drives which paint their own 'self-portraits' through images and metaphors. Images such as Sun/Lion/King/Gold are archetypal motifs because they emanate from one archetype, which in this case is that of the Self. These images cluster around the archetype but 'to the perpetual vexation of the intellect' they cannot 'be fitted into a formula'.<sup>22</sup>

In this case, it would not be unusual for someone who has recently claimed greater ownership of some aspect of their being to have been dreaming of finding gold, or meeting a lion. Or, just as possibly, to have recently sat transfixed watching a lion at the zoo or cried for some unknown reason at the beauty of a sunset. Internal images are no more or less real than concrete images in the realm of the archetype. Acknowledging these 'synchronistic' images confers a reality to the individual's internal experience.

Once conversant with our gods, we will also come to understand the nature of our 'transgressions' against them. In mythology, the only 'sin' was hubris, or attempting to exceed natural human limits dictated by the gods. This is the point at which astrology is accused of being deterministic, but it is exactly the opposite. Astrology attempts to teach us the means by which to honor our natural laws. Once in possession of this information, we may live more freely in the world than most, as most are buttressed about by forces



they hardly even recognize, much less understand. Most people, in attempting to honor their family, friends, and society in general, inadvertently do great dishonor to their own instincts, or gods. And here again I will use an extremely simplistic example, but one with which many can easily identify.

Venus symbolizes the energy involved in relating and attracting to ourselves that which we desire. One night there is a party and two women attend, one with Venus in Gemini and one with Venus in Scorpio. Venus in Gemini represents the urge for variety in communication and experience. This is the person who moves from person to person at the party, building a horizontal web of experience; making connections between people and gathering new information, although never at any great depth. She finds everyone interesting, for some period of time. She leaves the party feeling satisfied and connected to life in general. Venus in Scorpio represents the person who has no use for small talk. This is the individual who could talk to the same person at the party all night, without ever looking around. This person's natural urge is to drill down to the depths of possible communication. She would prefer to learn as much as she can about one individual, or subject, than gather dozens of (to her) inconsequential pieces of information. When astrologers speak of 'transgressions' against the gods they are speaking of the woman with Venus in Scorpio who, having 'learned' she should be extroverted and social, forces herself to move about parties meeting and engaging with everyone. She leaves exhausted and depressed, having achieved no real nourishment from her communications. This chronic failure to honor her own relationship needs can be interpreted as a failure to honor her Venus, and retaliation can be expected. As Liz Greene explains:

I feel that it is of immense value to consider, when working as an astrologer, what natural laws are represented by the horoscope, and in what sphere a 'transgression' is being perpetrated, knowingly or unknowingly; and whether and how that transgression might be redressed, lest the Erinyes hound that individual from within or from without as a 'bad fate'."<sup>23</sup>

The perils of such 'hubris' begin with simple fatigue from a misuse of energy. Internal disarray can then manifest as a certain level of chaos in our environment, or even in physical illness. Again, all manifestations are symbolic of the underlying issue, and therefore can appear in any number of forms and vehicles.

Astrology adds another dimension to the analytic process for, not only does it help us recognize internal conditions and climates, but it also assists in identifying particular cycles of growth in which certain 'complexes' are most likely to erupt. As mentioned before, astrology is the study of, among other things, cycles. While alive, we are ever in the process of 'becoming'. Our natal chart indicates the types of gods we are likely to encounter throughout the course of our lives, and it speaks to the archetypes that rule our individual psyches, but it is not static. Through the study of transits and progressions (the movement of the planets since our birth and throughout our lifetime) we are also allowed to see how energy modulates throughout the course of our lifetime. There will be periods of growth, as well as of decay. Astrology affirms the spiritual dictum: To everything there is a season. Generalizing, Saturn represents restriction and form and Venus represents affection and relationship. As Saturn continues in its orbit after our birth, it will occasionally 'aspect' the portion of the sky occupied by Venus when we were born (called our natal Venus.) Such 'transits' may bring some internal experience of limitation

in relationship, if not external experience. This may be a time to examine our beliefs around giving and receiving within relationships. As easily, it may be a time to give 'form' to a relationship, perhaps by engagement or marriage. It is, in either case, a time for these energies to be utilized consciously, for our own spiritual growth. As astrologer Howard Sasportas says:

Each of us in a continual process of unfoldment, and it is my belief that transits and progressions show what our deeper Self (that part of us which guides and unfolds our development) has in mind for us at any point in our lives. The core Self energizes different aspects of the psyche and the chart according to what new or further growth is to be achieved at any particular phase of development.<sup>24</sup>

Our growth never ends while incarnate for, as Campbell says, "the mythological hero is the champion not of things become but of things becoming."<sup>25</sup> The meaning returns to our lives when we come to understand that we are joint participants in the co-creation of our world. We cannot help but create, and recognizing this truth is the first step in taking responsibility for our potential. We create for better or for worse. We paint our canvas in color or black and white. We shine our small window on the divine, or we allow it to darken. And ultimately, the creative alchemical container in which we resolve the conflicts we encounter in the world exists within ourselves. The polarities we encounter in the world are dimensions of ourselves. As Rudolf Steiner says:

We do not notice how what lives within us flashes out and unites with what lives outside us. We are unaware of being the arena in which this union takes place. What is inside us is the one pole, what is outside us in the world is the other pole. These two must unite in order that the evolution of the world may proceed. Our meaning, the meaning of man, is that we are permitted to participate in this.<sup>26</sup>

It is our responsibility to create in accord with our divine 'blueprint'. We are each an intricate pattern of unique energy, representing different moments in time. Each of our patterns contains our own personal myth, or life story. Astrology is only one great tool in the unearthing of our forgotten gods, but it remains a powerful one. Hearing our story told in symbolic language lessens our resistance to its message. Carol Pierson believes that much of our resistance to facing ourselves lies in our fear that our lives will be too great to handle, or too small to matter. She assures that, "No life, not matter how successful and exciting it might be, will make you happy if it is not really your life. And no life will make you miserable if it is genuinely your own."<sup>27</sup> These words hearten us for the necessary departure we must all take in the mystical, mythic, astrological voyage of self discovery. The following words by Joseph Campbell beautifully encompass the breadth and depth of this journey:

For the heroes of all time have gone before us; the labyrinth is thoroughly known; we have only to follow the thread of the hero-path. And where we had thought to find an abomination, we shall find a god; where we had thought to slay another, we shall slay ourselves; where we had thought to travel outward we shall come to the center of our own existence; where we had thought to be alone, we shall be with all the world.<sup>28</sup>

And so, having established the need for such a journey; the need to recapture our own personal mythology and define our personal 'gods', we can look back and understand how astrology can assist us with this journey. Astrology is primarily a symbolic art form. It 'speaks' to us entirely through symbols. Symbols serve the highly unique function in the psyche of activating unconscious material and translating it to available, conscious content. The symbols used in astrology activate energies representing ten different

‘gods’, or primary instincts. These energies are unique to the individual, not in their essence, but in their mode of expression. These planetary energies will determine the unique way in which we perceive our environment, and together form our unique personalities. Their message to us is that it is not only what we do that matters in our lives, but that it is equally important how we do it. Acknowledging these ‘gods’ assists with the directive of ancient spiritual teachings to “Know Thyself.” It is by this path, the path of self-knowledge, that we are able to participate in the ultimate co-creative process of realizing our own unique expression of divine consciousness in this lifetime. Astrology assists the individual in this process by helping to illuminate this uniqueness through the revelations of the birth chart and, through the study of transits and progressions, provides further support for the timing of this individual journey throughout our lifetime.

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<sup>1</sup> Rollo May, *The Cry for Myth* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1991), 87.

<sup>2</sup> Eugene Pascal, *Jung to Live By: A Guide to the Practical Application of Jungian Principles for Everyday Life* (New York: Warner Books, Inc., 1992), 101.

<sup>3</sup> Joseph Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, 2d ed, Bollingen Series XVII (New York: Bollingen Foundation, Inc., 1949; Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1968), 270.

<sup>4</sup> Liz Greene, *The Astrology of Fate* (Boston, MA: Weiser Books, 1984), 19.

<sup>5</sup> Robert A. Segal (selected and introduced by), *Encountering Jung on Mythology* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998), 17.

<sup>6</sup> Jolande Jacobi, *The Psychology of C.G. Jung* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1973), 96.

<sup>7</sup> Stephen Arroyo, *Chart Interpretation Handbook: Guidelines for Understanding the Essentials of the Birth Chart* (Sebastopol, CA: CRC Publications, 1989), 11.

<sup>8</sup> Pascal, *Jung to Live By*, 150.

<sup>9</sup> Alice O. Howell, *Jungian Symbolism in Astrology: Letters from an Astrologer* (Tempe, AZ: American Federation of Astrologers, Inc., 1987), 44.

<sup>10</sup> May, *The Cry for Myth*, 242.

<sup>11</sup> James Hillman, *The Soul's Code: In Search of Character and Calling* (New York: Warner Books, 1996), 109.

<sup>12</sup> C.G. Jung, *The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious*, translated by R.F.C. Hull, Bollingen Series XX (New York: Bollingen Foundation, Inc., 1959; Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1969), 23.

<sup>13</sup> Carol S. Pearson, *Awakening the Heroes Within: Twelve Archetypes to Help Us Find Ourselves and Transform Our World* (San Francisco: HarperCollins Publishers, HarperSanFrancisco, 1991), 2.

<sup>14</sup> May, *The Cry for Myth*, 29.

<sup>15</sup> Pearson, *Awakening the Heroes Within*, 292.

<sup>16</sup> May, *The Cry for Myth*, 99.

<sup>17</sup> Christine Valentine, *Images of the Psyche: Exploring the Planets Through Psychology and Myth* (London: Vega, 2002), 40-41.

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- <sup>18</sup> Jacobi, *The Psychology of C.G. Jung*, 114.
- <sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 132
- <sup>20</sup> Christine Valentine, *Images of the Psyche*, 47.
- <sup>21</sup> Greene, *The Astrology of Fate*, 34.
- <sup>22</sup> Maggie Hyde, *Jung and Astrology* (London: HarperCollins Publishers, The Aquarian Press, 1992), 87.
- <sup>23</sup> Greene, *The Astrology of Fate*, 30.
- <sup>24</sup> Howard Sasportas, *The Gods of Change: Pain, Crisis and the Transits of Uranus, Neptune and Pluto* (New York: Penguin Books, Arkana, 1989), 6.
- <sup>25</sup> Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, 337.
- <sup>26</sup> Rudolph Steiner, *The Meaning of Life, and Other Lectures on Fundamental Issues*, translated by Johanna Collis (London: Rudolf Steiner Press, 1999), 43.
- <sup>27</sup> Carol Pearson, *Awakening the Heroes Within*, 297.
- <sup>28</sup> Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, 25.

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