

***Does URANUS  
Rule Astrology?  
by Dane Rudhyar***

**For some reason, which is not too clear to this writer**, it has been traditional among astrologers to believe that Uranus is the planet ruling astrology and the work of astrologers. This belief throws quite a revealing light on the way most astrologers, it appears, regard their profession and think of astrology. But it is a belief that certainly should be questioned and whose validity should not be taken for granted, for a very good case could be made to refer Astrology to Neptune instead of to Uranus. A consideration of these two possibilities might clarify both the relation between Uranus and Neptune, and the essential character of astrology.

Probably the simplest and most obvious reason for associating Uranus with astrology is the fact that in Greek mythology, the great god Ouranos had been connected with the vast expanse of celestial space. However, in the name Ouranos one recognizes Chaldean-Babylonian roots which can be interpreted as meaning "primordial (*Ur*) space-substance" or the "original cycle of being." Ouranos was, at least in the oldest times, the vast primordial deity that was the ruler or soul of the whole Universe before its various realms or levels of manifestation became differentiated.

According to the Greek myth, the various levels came to be separated at a later stage, when Jupiter, Neptune and Pluto established their respective rulerships over the visible blue sky, the sea and the underworld controlling the soil and fertility of the material foundation of life on earth (thus Pluto's connection with Ceres and Persephone, goddesses of fertility).

It does not seem wise, however, to correlate too closely the characteristics of the Greek gods and those of planets bearing their names in modern astronomy; and the evident meaning which the planet Uranus has in astrology — especially since we have become acquainted with Neptune and Pluto — should show that there is only a remote connection between Uranus, the iconoclastic planet of non-conformism, of protest against any established structure or tradition, of rebellion or revolution, of sudden happenings which transform a life, and so on, and the great god of primordial space, Ouranos. Likewise, the planet Neptune is no longer to be associated exclusively with the sea, but is seen to rule over all vast and tidal expanses of substance (including the atmosphere and, thus, all flight through the air). It rules as well those organizations which are based upon a (relatively) all-encompassing and universalistic type of relationship.

The last-mentioned meaning is particularly important today, for mankind is now slowly and confusedly trying to universalize and federalize its ideal of social organization; it is reaching toward the establishment of a world-wide global society made necessary by modern technology, atomic power, speed of travel, and so on. One should always make a clear and contrasting distinction between the Saturnian type of organization which integrates a number of component units of a more or less similar nature within a relatively narrow and sharply defined field, and the Neptunian type which relates essentially different entities — each of which has its own roots and particular outlook — into some sort of large-scale federation.

Saturnian structures are **exclusivistic**; they deliberately, and often ruthlessly, exclude whatever does not fit into a familiar traditional pattern or type. On the other hand, Neptunian organizations are established on the principle of maximum **inclusiveness**. They seek to establish cooperation and a sense of community among people of different cultures and backgrounds, between concepts and beliefs which seem opposed to one another yet which could be reconciled within the framework of a larger, more encompassing frame of reference.

Neptune deals with universals; Saturn with particulars. A Neptunian system presents ideas which are capable of being given a variety of interpretations and modifications at various levels, while a Saturnian system deals with concepts which are strictly defined in concrete terms and within particular limits or at a specific level. Metaphysics is Neptunian; logic is Saturnian.

What is logical is consistent. A well-constructed grammatical sentence is one in which each word is in its logical place and has its agreed-upon function and meaning. The sentence says what it is meant to say and no more. On the other hand, a modern surrealist poem (as that of T. S. Eliot or Dylan Thomas) is a loose assembly of words or phrases each of which may make a vivid image; but the relationship between them is irrational, elusive and at best suggestive or evocative. There is integration of a sort, but integration of a transcendent or subjective type — a Neptunian type.

Uranus is the symbol of whatever challenges the absolute validity and upsets the patterns of a Saturnian type of organization. Uranus is the energy of inconsistency; it introduces solutions of continuity and breaks in the logical order of a traditional, well-ordered process of activity or of thought. It is the waterfall that interrupts violently the peaceful continuous flow of the river's water. The waterfall is noisy, dramatic; and it makes potentially available electric power. Anything that interrupts the steady flow of energy makes possible the release of power. Uranus releases power or the potentiality of usable power.

All revolutions, as they loosen the rigid bonds of social traditions and break up Saturnian privileges and estates, release enormous social energies. The power, however, may be wasted — or a Saturnian reaction may recrystallize the "free potential" into patterns essentially not very different from the old ones.

In recent years, we have seen various artistic and literary movements — which have sharply challenged the old classical European traditions — collapse; and they were replaced by neo-classical trends returning to the solid Saturnian order of the 17th and early 18th centuries. If these returns to tradition are to be avoided, if the freed potential of human imagination and social rebirth is to be reorganized at a new, higher, more inclusive level, Neptune must act.

Saturnian feudal provinces collapsed under the pressure of economic and social changes, and the Neptunian Catholic Order of the Middle Ages produced a kind of loose organization of Christian Europe. But Saturn regained strength; and rigid, autocratic

monarchies were built in the 17th century. These were shattered by the revolutionary urge of the late 18th century, but the dream of a united Europe was of no avail; this led to the formation of the great competitive empires of the last century. These largely collapsed during two world wars, but Uranian revolutionary forces froze again into Soviet imperialism; while the League of Nations and the United Nations marked hesitant attempts to lead mankind toward a full-grown Neptunian integration of humanity as a whole.

### Astrology, Child of Neptune

If Astrology could be said to represent a Uranian force, it would be only in the sense that it can bring to a mind which pays exclusive attention to material causes and effects vistas of a world in which all things fall into place within a vast frame-work outlined by the steady and regular cycles of planets and stars. The impact of astrology upon such a materialistic or rigidly scientific mentality could, thus, be called Uranian.

Astrology may revolutionize people's thinking, breaking down their Saturnian traditions of strict logic and rationality; and that is the reason why college-trained minds and scientists, used to a very clear-cut and limited focus of intellectual analysis, "see red" when they hear astrology mentioned and praised. It is like the effect which a surrealistic poem which makes no rational sense, or the biography of a great Hindu mystic whose life was filled with strange trances and ecstasies, would make upon an old-fashioned French academician steeped in classical clarity of expression and logic of style!

However, this does not mean that astrology in itself can be said to be of the nature of Uranus. Astrology is based on a type of thinking which is characteristically Neptunian; that is, it deals with "universals," with planets that represent concepts of functional activity applicable to a multitude of varied particular situations and events. Astrology refers to the potentiality of a type of life organization and consciousness in which the most disparate elements can be given form and meaning in terms of the birth-chart, a symbolic picture of the whole sky, the immense Universe. Marc Jones spoke of astrology as the study of the relationship of everything with everything else. What could be more Neptunian and more all-inclusive!

Moreover, astrology and **astrologers tend to display many of the negative characteristics of Neptune.** Vagueness of thought, the use of glamour and of big words that confuse even if they fascinate the credulous, a rather unsocial attitude to our particular type of culture or the cultivation of a "social life" catering to the wealthy or to the show business and Hollywood types of people — these could be considered fairly characteristic marks, in the negative sense, of a certain type of astrologer not too infrequently encountered . . . and, of course, of many other people who deal also with Neptunian concepts or practices. Persons attracted to games of chance, racing, and so on, often find themselves fascinated by astrology.

There are positive counterparts of these characteristics. A new kind of most valuable Neptunian grasp of the interrelated functions of human personality can be developed by a

significant and thorough study of astrology in its best modern manifestations. History can acquire a broader meaning through the use of the larger cycles which astrology studies. The whole Earth can be seen as a complex field for the operation of the formative divine forces of the cosmos; and through astrology we may realize that human destiny, at the racial or individual level, is an expression of inherent order and all-encompassing harmony. But all these possibilities refer to the kind of consciousness which emerges from the positive and highest use of the Neptune function in the human dimension; they are not Uranian!

Uranus is a dynamic power that shatters tradition and customs; but astrologers swear by a Ptolemy who — lived over 1500 years ago; they use symbols rooted in the ancient Chaldean past. Uranus is death to classifications and textbooks; but astrology is conditioned by the latter. Uranus, by destroying narrow and rigid types of order and consistency, produces a state of relative chaos; but astrology is a universalistic and Neptunian attempt to bring the seemingly meaningless or chaotic sequence of everyday events and the strange emotional reactions of our personal natures into significant and all-inclusive patterns of cyclic order and cosmic harmony. Uranus liberates, but Neptunian astrology often produces a psychological type of bondage in which the person finds himself or herself subservient to so-called influences or planetary rays over which no more control is possible than over earthquakes or tornadoes.

Astrologers might like to be Uranian forces stirring humanity and revolutionizing science and society; but the likelihood of this being the case is very slim indeed. Rather, astrology is the practical application of the primordial philosophy of a humanity which had retained its sense of the universality of life and felt the tides and eddies of that one life ocean within the very rhythm of the tangible body and the immortal soul.

Ocean of Life — the vast consciousness of the harmony of the formative power and creative hierarchies of space — this is the substance of astrology seen at its magnificent cosmic source. We can debase it into fortune-telling, but likewise can the Neptunian compassion of Christ be debased into the empty gestures of many a fame-conscious philanthropist; and for the Body of Resurrection, the Christ Body, in which Alan Leo saw the principle of Neptune at work, can be substituted with the many spooks and ghosts representing themselves as the souls of departed human beings. But whether in its purest form or in its most commercial caricatures, astrology is always basically an expression of Neptune.