

***NEPTUNE - Mother of
Myths, Glamour & Utopias
by Dane Rudhyar***

Among the great amount of new terms enriching the French vocabulary in the field of psychology, one new word is very descriptive and valuable: **mythomane**. We should adopt in our ordinary speech its American equivalent, "**mythomaniac**." One applies this term to individuals whose imagination is very active but rather uncontrolled and who, consciously or not, deceive people around them (and often, in the end, also themselves) by inventing events which have not actually happened — in other words, individuals who constantly "tell stories."

This term, mythomaniac, would apply particularly to adolescents who, because of inner psychological pressures or fears, try to evade issues, to refuse facing the new facts of human relationship which adolescence has brought to them. Because of this, they often project upon others what they themselves feel, what they have wanted but were afraid to do, what they yearn for vaguely and imagine, then come to believe actually did happen.

Very young children, of course, have a most fertile imagination; they invent playthings or even playmates; they live in a subjective world which touches, but often does not penetrate into, what adults call — perhaps rather self-consciously and pompously — the "real" world. They too, can be called "mythomaniac" if their imaginations are caused by psychological tensions and they try to make other people believe in the factual reality of the imaginary events.

It should be evident that many grown-ups also are mythomaniac, whether being actually deluded — they insist naively on other people believing what they claim to be facts — or the telling of stories is deliberate and for the conscious purpose of self-aggrandizement and of building up prestige for their ego. This activity of the imagination often occurs in the borderland where the conscious shades into the unconscious. There is no clear line of demarcation between the deliberate lie of an adolescent facing a difficult situation, the nature of which he or she does not really understand, and the imagination of the confused girl whose half-conscious need for love makes her invent events placing on some person the responsibility for an imaginary love-making scene, events which she herself dimly believes to have occurred.

Is it not at times the same with persons who believe themselves to be the recipients of occult or spiritualistic "messages," who have "visions" and perhaps very slightly twist or "interpret" factual events to give the impression that some great, mysterious thing has taken place? Nevertheless, who, in many instances indeed, can say positively and objectively that a person has imagined or made up entirely a certain unverifiable episode? Who can say that what seems to have been, as we say, "entirely dreamed up" is not the **reflection** — perhaps the **anticipation** — of something that is "real" somehow or somewhere? Can one always separate the real from the imagined?

We tread, thus, when we speak of "mythomania" on very delicate and difficult grounds. We enter a zone where psychologically motivated lies can be seen as not too greatly distant cousins of the visions of true prophets and mystics, of the anticipations of poets and even of statesmen. It was the French diplomat of the Napoleonic period, Metternich, who defined

politics as "the art of the possible"; but is not all human living essentially the art of making what is only possible (or potential) actual? In this process of actualization, does not the future draw the present state of feeling and thinking — and the actions — of men toward itself?

The past, alas, tends also to compel the present to duplicate and repeat the old patterns of behavior; indeed, this action of the past is so strong that were it not for what we have to call the attraction of the future, the present would repeat the past, the children would unconsciously feel compelled to repeat the behavior of their parents and grandparents.

The "attraction of the future" — what can it actually mean? Very simply, it means that there is always, in contact with us, that which — on one plane or another — represents **what we might become**, what is possible for us because it is latent in us. Students of "deeper thought" are familiar with the old statement, "When the disciple is ready, the Master comes." What this phrase signifies is merely that when any person has the imagination necessary to think, feel and yearn for that which it is possible for that person to become, ahead of his or her present condition, someone or something will confront him or her with what this "ahead" actually and concretely is. Stated differently, it means that as soon as one is ready to go beyond the past and toward the future, this futurity takes form in **his personal experience**.

It may "take form" in a variety of ways. This taking form is, nevertheless, always represented, in essence, by Neptune. A new "value" emerges for you out of the Neptunian sea of possibilities, out of the infinite "womb of futurity" which this remote planet symbolizes. In Greek mythology, we find that Venus (*Astarte*) was born out of the sea, for Venus is essentially the symbol of "value." To become what constitutes the next step in our evolution as in individual human being is to "mate" with the new possibility which confronts us. It confronts us pure, naked, as Venus, borne by a large open seashell (an ego "open" to the future) appearing out of the unfurling wave of time and reaching the sandy shore of our conscious mind ("sandy" because sand is the remains of the ancient past of life, just as our intellect is the product of our culture, remains of the thinking of generations of ancestors).

This Venus, this new value, this new realization of what our life **means** and **could** become — is it a reality or a dream? The adolescent, still enveloped in the psychic veils of her family life and her parents' love, dreams of the "great love" that will take him or her into the world of freedom and creative self-determined action. The adolescent usually "projects" this dream upon some "other," who somehow seems fascinating enough to become a bridge between the dream and the concrete factual reality. The "other" often turns out to be no bridge at all and refuses the "projection." The result is despair; or else once more Venus rises out of the Neptunian sea mist, seeking to incarnate into some new person.

At one level or another — whether in the field of love, of politics or spirituality — we all have dreamed of an **ideal** situation and believed that somehow it can, miraculously

perhaps, become a fact for us to experience and in which we will reach our fulfillment as a person — or even as a "soul." Is it wrong or foolish to dream in this manner? Of course not — **provided** we are not deluded into thinking that this ideal is not **already** the reality in which we are living this very day or night, provided we do not force the dream upon the real persons or circumstances surrounding us and become self-deceived and deluded into confusing ideal and reality.

The "Great Dreams" of Humanity

In politics and sociology, the word "utopia" is well known; and we speak of a person with a great dream of human brotherhood as a "dewy-eyed Utopian." About one and a half centuries ago, several such Utopians arose in Europe. They believed in an idealistic type of Christian socialism or communism and tried (with sad results) to form communities in which "love" would be the one commandment and social law. This was the Romantic period, in the midst of which Neptune was discovered in the sky — Neptune, the cosmic symbol of the "great dreams" of our imagining, as ideal, **the next step in our psycho-spiritual evolution.**

Man, the Utopian — yes. Because we can be this Utopian, we as humans. Very likely, the ant does not dream of an ant Utopia; the ant's next step in evolution is not a vision in the ant's mind, for, after all these millions of years, that vision would have begun to take shape — there is presumably no "next step" for the ant as an ant. But humanity advances; we advance because we can dream of Venus rising out of the **Neptunian ocean of new possibilities.** With Neptune, all things are possible; but troubles come to the person who deceives himself in confusing "possibility" and "actuality," the dream and the reality, tomorrow (or some day after tomorrow!) and today. We can be so fascinated by the vision of Venus rising out of the sea as to rush into the sea, blind to the fact that water is not earth — and we drown.

Neptune is, in that case, the very symbol of glamour. We **need** glamour in order to orient our todays toward our tomorrows, instead of letting one today repeat our, and our ancestors', yesterdays. We need being drawn toward the sea of new possibilities in our human and personal development; and it is always some glamour which draws us — glamour of love, of sexual fulfillment, of the beautiful form and the resonant or tender voice; glamour of "peace on earth and goodwill toward men"; glamour of equality, liberty and fraternity; glamour of social fame or wealth, of luxurious living, of happy abundance for our children. Glamour has an infinity of aspects; but always glamour impels, and often compels, us to do what otherwise we would not accomplish. Glamour fascinates us out of laziness or routine; there is a spiritual as well as a physical laziness! The refusal to be fascinated can mean stagnation and a slow fall into senility.

Neptune is also the source of myths. A myth is the "transposition" of a particular event which stirred some human beings into **a mode of universal significance.** We hear, for instance, of the "solar myth" which transforms the life of a particular heroic person (a great

chief or leader) into a series of events paralleling the yearly journey of the Sun; the man has become the Sun; the human events have acquired the universal significance of a cosmic process upon which millions of future individuals may model their lives, identifying themselves with the mythified personage. But we may apply this myth-making faculty (which is also presumably characteristic of the human race, *homo sapiens*) to our personal life. We may give a "mythical" meaning to some event of our youth, to a special encounter, an idealized love ending in the death of the loved one, an experience which, after a while, has acquired a mysterious glow and, thus, is conditioning our approach to life and our expectation of similar or sequential experiences.

Thanks to the myth, we see our life and its factual happenings **as** if every event were invested with a universal meaning — perhaps an "eternal" meaning, beyond space and time. Or else, every event is understood as constituting a particular phase of a vast cyclic process; thus, the small occurrence becomes integrated into a cosmic whole. Likewise, the individual consciousness may be felt — and perhaps may experience itself — "resonating" to an immense divine mind in which this consciousness is believed to "live, move and have its being." All such processes of universalization transposing particular facts of existence and making of them myths are Neptunian processes. Some of them may acquire a negative value; others are most positive and constructive facets of psychological, mental and spiritual development. It all depends upon the use we make of them. The example of, and our identification with, the mythical hero, or the "Master," may make us overcome our laziness and surpass ourselves; or else we may be so bent on worshiping the myth as to live in a world of financial ideals which blind us to the value of the banal actions of our factual, everyday life.

I should include in this category of myth many a metaphysical or "esoteric" concept, vast in its overwhelming generality, which so fascinates our mind that it also unfocuses this mind and destroys our capacity to pay attention to particular events and to deal wholesomely with very limited and strictly "personal" situations.

Neptune can, therefore, be said to have two opposite aspects. It may tend to destroy or even to make impossible the integrity of the person in its function as an individual self existing in a particular place and at a particular time in a particular community; but it is also this power that enables man to surpass himself by imagining himself ahead of himself — and, in most cases, by identifying himself with someone or some "power" that represents for him an ideal toward which he is able to move just **because** this ideal has for him glamour and an irresistible fascination.

This seems to be the reason — as far as man can see — why "God" incarnates as man, for the divine manifestation, incarnation or avatar so "fascinates" the men of his and succeeding generations that they are willing to leave all their past, their family and their little loves, all comfort, all particular (i.e., "earthly") reality in order to "follow Him." The God-man is the Neptunian fascinator, the great emoter. At the sound of Krishna's flute, all the maidens fell in love; at the sound of Jesus' words, multitudes followed entranced until

his death shattered the fascination and led to a terrible awakening to the apparent reality of the crucifixion. But the Apostles saw thereafter the great Neptunian vision of the Resurrection and the Ascension; and the fact that had seemed to have shattered the dream of a "King of the Jews" was reinterpreted by Paul as the keystone of a much more universalistic vision. Christ, *alpha* and *omega* of the entire universe.

Neptune in Zodiacal Signs

When we refer the position of Neptune to the birth of an individual, we must realize that the planet remains 13 years or more in the same sign. As zodiacal signs are alternatively "masculine" and "feminine" (Aries, masculine; Taurus, feminine; Gemini, masculine, etc.), the passage of Neptune through two signs lasts the period usually said to constitute "one generation" (i.e., 25 years). Neptune reached Gemini in 1888, coming then close to the momentous Neptune-Pluto conjunctions of 1891-92, at 7°- 8° Gemini. As these conjunctions marked the beginning of a 500-year period (which we may call the Atomic Age), we can well start from the entrance of Neptune in Gemini the count of generations. Thus, the first generation (Neptune in Gemini and Cancer) ended in 1915.

A new one (Leo and Virgo) brought us to the end of 1942; a third one (Libra and Scorpio) began around the time of the first controlled atomic chain reaction (December, 1942). We are now in the "feminine" Scorpio phase, which will end in 1970 — it began in 1956, while Neptune was square Uranus and sextile Pluto.

In 1942, Pluto was still not far from the beginning of Leo; and we can date from this entrance of Neptune into Libra the start of the sextile aspect of Neptune to Pluto. Neptune in Libra witnessed the building of atom bombs and the "civil war of man" which so far we call the "cold war." As Neptune reached Scorpio, the "satellites era" began, with Russia taking the lead with Sputnik in 1957 — and indeed this race for what we call outer space or the Moon is steeped in Neptunian glamour and surrounded with the Utopian halo of the possibility for mankind to send its surplus population to other planets.

However, it is also powered with man's enthusiasm for ever-vaster adventures, with the fascination of taking a new collective evolutionary step out of the Saturnian boundaries of the gravitational field of the earth.

Such a collective glamour and enthusiasm may not affect a particular individual at all. Most persons indeed have only a mediocre capacity for positive response to what Neptune represents. A few, on the other hand, are strongly marked by Neptune, particularly if this planet is near one of the four angles of their birth-chart or in close aspect with a planet occupying an important place in this chart. Here, as in the case of Pluto, the **individual** reaction to the planet is expressed mainly in terms of Neptune's position in one of the natal houses or in terms of planetary aspects — such as conjunction, square, opposition.

What Neptune indicates, at the level of individual psychology, is not so much the **taking** of a new step in one's evolution, but the capacity to imagine it and to envision its characteristic features. Neptune indicates the longing of the individual, the "great dreams"

which have made his inner nature, his feelings, his personal "soul" glow. He will, thus, seek to project the dream, to find an object to incarnate the longing; and all else will seem quite valueless, unexciting, dull and worthy only to be left behind as one goes on with rapt eyes toward the ideal.

In this sense, Neptune **dissolves** all that once was made solid, limited, objective, safe by Saturnian boundaries and Saturnian rules. Even the type of ambition which is energized by Jupiter and Saturn and which, therefore, operates within strictly defined fields of collective and social-cultural activity is dissolved or "unfocused" by Neptune. Neptune yearns for that which is "beyond" but not "within" the familiar and the (seemingly) solid categories of the living together of men. There is what appears to be a Neptunian kind of ambition and of human togetherness — and it may actually haunt the person who experiences it — but it is the ambition to surrender oneself totally to the building of a new world, a new type of human relationship.

There is a kind of Neptunian passion that tortures the soul which it possesses; it is the mystic's passion for the transcendent reality, for a meeting of souls, minds, or even in some cases bodies, which does not accept the rules, the preoccupations, the attitudes or types of communication which are supposed to be "normal" for the still half-animal, half-awake humanity of our day.

One cannot say that Neptune represents necessarily a longing for the formless, the ecstatic or the escapists "artificial paradise." It may refer to the search for an escape from all familiar forms or all traditionally structured behavior; but it can also represent the point in the individual's life, the type of experience or of knowledge which leads him to the discovery of a vaster, more inclusive, universalistic kind of form. To the villager bound to his ancestral land and his customs, the shapes and the activities of a metropolis like New York, London or Paris may seem monstrous and formless; yet they, too, have form.

Saturnian provincialism transforms itself into Neptunian federalism; in turn, the federal structures, once they have become familiar and strongly operative, become Saturnian bondage to the internationalist who seeks to establish Neptunian patterns of supernational organizations like the United Nations or the new "Europe" that the truly progressive minds of that continent are envisioning and yearning for — and slowly building step after step.

The men who were born close to the conjunction of Neptune and Pluto (1891-2) and who are the top leaders of present-day nations often lack the perspective necessary to see clearly the shape of the "great dream," even if working toward it because impelled by economic or military "facts of life." It is, it should be, the second generation born with Neptune in Virgo and Leo which ought to pave the way resolutely to a new order; but they may be too individualistic, too marked by the tragedies of World War II — though I personally am expecting great things from some men born around 1936-7, perhaps, in February-March, 1937.

We may have in general to wait for the men and women born since 1942, particularly from 1942 to 1956 (Neptune in Libra) to be the true world federalists of tomorrow —

perhaps the real conquerors of space who, we hope, will not turn into new *conquistadores*. They are our teenagers of today, quite a few of whom, alas, have seen their Neptunian idealism prevented by the chaotic conditions of the society in which their parents caused them to be born.

Neptune in Natal Houses

It is customary in astrological textbooks to state that Neptune in a house indicates that the person will have certain traits of character or will experience a particular type of life events. In any opinion, such statements can be quite misleading, for not only the indications given by Neptune could as well be positive, but the presence of Neptune, perhaps more than that of the other remote planets, may count very little or not at all in the life of people — or not in a recognizable manner, except through its transits over important points in the birth-chart.

If Neptune can be said to have an "influence" in the birth-charts of the majority of people, it is when in conjunction (or perhaps opposition and square) with other planets; and Neptune then acts mostly by unfocusing or giving an unusual character to the functions which these planets represent. It is only when the individual is really attuned to the process of metamorphosis of which Neptune is the operative symbol that one can really see how this planet affects the **field of experience** (and, as a result, the type of exterior events or circumstances) indicated by the natal house.

One hears it said also that Neptune when in one zodiacal sign tends to abnormalize the functioning of the organs represented by that sign; but, as already pointed out, vast millions of people were born with Neptune in Gemini and they did not all show special tendencies to lung troubles or tuberculosis! It may only be that while Neptune passed through Gemini, humanity as a whole — at least in the west — became more concerned than before with lung trouble and tuberculosis. Likewise, the transit of Neptune through Leo may have focused man's attention upon heart troubles. Most of these Neptunian — and as well Plutonian — effects **are collective**. Relatively rare are those individuals who directly respond **as individuals** to what these planets indicate **as mere possibilities**.

A person with Neptune in the first house, particularly if close to the ascendant, may simply be especially receptive to the social-collective influences of his or her community and its culture or religious outlook. Without that, one can not really speak of a precise Neptune factor in his or her life. But if the individual is sufficiently evolved as a person to become a focus for this Neptune factor, then the very individuality of this person may become inundated with longings for a new state of consciousness and new feelings or shaken by doubts as to who or what he (or she) **really is** — that is to say, a process of ego metamorphosis may be expected. This process can, however, take a multitude of forms; yet somehow they will all raise endless questions as to the nature of the self and challenge the integrity of the feeling of "I, myself." This can lead to pure mysticism, total confusion, mediumship or simply a certain amount of indecision and a dream-like existence.

If Neptune is really active at the threshold of the seventh house, it could indicate peculiar deceptions in marriage or partnerships of a social and business character; but, more deeply and generally, it reveals a tendency to idealize close human relationships as well as to unfocus them. The person may be compassionate and very broad in his or her associations but may "float" over rather than personally and intently "incarnate" into them.

Concerned by great issues and the quality and value of the contact with the partner, the individual may be unable to give his or her full personal **attention** to this partner as a particular person with very particular needs or requirements. Life may be lived as a poem, a symbolic ritual, in terms of ideals, rather than as a series of ever-repeated meetings with very normal and down-to-earth situations. The results can be both noble and tragic.

Similarly, a fourth-house Neptune can make of one's home a universe open to a multitude of influences, a meeting place (or a marketplace) for the discussion of matters of concern to a group of people or to a whole nation. From that Neptunian home (or personality, in the broadest sense of the word), new values may be born, new myths may arise. A tenth-house Neptune can correlate with a public function which takes at heart all interests of a community, small or large, with a yearning to live as a public symbol, a standard of value under which many trends can unite or work in harmony; but it may also show a life dominated by a collective fate or a life generating a collective fate.

The problem which a truly active and significant Neptune poses is: In what field or life dimension does your great dream lie?

If your life were to be immortalized, in terms of what types of experience which you have lived through would you wish your own "myth" to be built?

Mary Baker Eddy, founder of Christian Science, had Neptune and Uranus conjunct in her first house (intercepted in Capricorn) and, to millions of followers, remains the symbol of a new prophethood of self and truth organized into an institution or a church. **Mussolini** had Neptune in his seventh house, but near Pluto, Saturn and Mars; and here we have the Fascist utopia, where "trains run on time" but human associations are under the yoke of a narrow universalism symbolized by the Mediterranean world, maintained by violence and fed on hatred.

Albert Einstein's natal Neptune is in his eleventh house, close to Pluto; and he "reformed" modern physics by building a new "myth," the Theory of Relativity — a myth (an interpretation of facts) which let loose awesome events, for myths, Utopias and those transcendent abstract dreams of pure mathematics can indeed be fountainheads of tremendous releases of power, physical or psychological.

All these individuals succeeded in focusing the power of human metamorphosis symbolized by Neptune. Astrology as a whole is also Neptunian — and not, as many claim, following a too-easy Greek mythology parallelism of name, Uranian — for astrology seeks to reinterpret the human person and the events of his life in terms of the structure of the immensely vast universe, in terms of vast analogies which indeed constitute the substance of a myth.

Astrology is, I wrote long ago, "the algebra of life"; and **a birth-chart is the myth of the individual**, inasmuch as it is the dream image of what he might be. The birth-chart, as image of the universe seen from the point in space time of the first moment of individualization — the first breath — is man perceived in his Utopian self: man, as a celestial (as an old Chinese would have said) — man, as a focal point on earth for a **particular personalized manifestation** (an "avatar") of the whole sky.