

Sex & Countersex

by Dane Rudhyar

Did you know that all men and women have inherent countersexual polarities?

It is a well-known fact that any human embryo up to about the third month of its prenatal development contains in the same stage of growth the rudiments of both the male and female sex organs.

Progressively one of the two sets of organs become more differentiated and developed; the others slowly atrophy. The baby is finally born, either male or female. Nevertheless the structural differentiation of the body is not absolute. The male body still retains traces of those original cells which might have become full-grown female organs.

Often at birth the predominant sex has not developed to the point where a doctor can tell whether a boy or girl child has been born. It is as if both sexual polarities were equally possible up to a certain phase of prenatal growth. Then a kind of "choice" was made; one polarity externalized itself definitely in the building of, say, the male structures.

But what happened to the other, the female polarity? Modern psychology tells us that it developed inward, that is at the psychic level. Or we might say, to use a modern analogy, it "goes underground;" not losing thereby its potential strength, but changing the field of its activity and its influence almost entirely.

When a child is born with a male body the male energy is geared to the building up of the structures of all of the manly organism. Chemical hormones produced by the sexual glands flow through the blood-stream; they are the material basis within which the sexual energies operate. These hormones have also much to do with the development and proper functioning of the cerebral nervous system of the brain. Male hormones condition a masculine type of neuro-intellectual adaptation to the challenges of life; the hormones of the female body influence the development of a feminine type of adjustment, of a feminine mentality or life responses.

Used here, the adjective "sexual" refers to masculine factors in the male, to feminine factors in the female. But we should be aware of the fact that there are also in every human being what I shall call "countersexual" elements. These are feminine energies more or less subconsciously active in the interior psychic life of the males; and masculine energies at work in the unconscious or semi-conscious nature of the females.

It is indeed important, and often essential, that we should become aware of this double polarization of our total being and existence. If we are male externally, we have also an inner feminine aspect. This aspect may not be allowed to influence our outer behavior, because the sexual energies are normally in control of the body-structures necessary for

such behavior; they are driving toward a complete actualization of their potential characteristics in and through our body and our outer personality.

Yet the countersexual energies are always present, latent though they be; and if something happens to minimize or block the operation of the sexual forces (for instance, accident or illness affecting the sexual glands, or some strong mental shock in relation to sexual experiences), then the countersexual energies grow in strength and influence throughout the whole psychic and mental fields of the personality. They may even produce "psychosomatic" effects in the body itself, and direct compulsively our actions.

The great psychologist, Carl Jung, has studied carefully for several decades these countersexual elements in the human personality. He came early to the conclusion that at least a very great part of those inner psychic activities are the result of the submerged and mostly unconscious operation of the countersexual factors in us. It is — stretching somewhat Jung's ideas — as if while the sexual forces become completely involved in the building up and the periodic transformation of the body's structures and functions, the countersexual energies drew inward to build what we call so imprecisely the "soul." And by soul I do not mean here the "divine spark" within man's innermost self, but only the "personal" soul; that which I truly consider mine, and which is meant when we speak of the "soulful look," a "beautiful soul," "soul sickness."

Thus Carl Jung says that the soul of a man is to be called *anima*. (a feminine noun, in Latin) while he terms the soul of a woman *animus* (masculine). And the remark is made, quite evidently true in so many cases, that in old age — when the sexual forces ebb away — the man acquires feminine traits and features, while the woman tends to become an ever more dominant matriarch with strongly masculine components.

There is therefore a kind of balance, and perhaps a division of power, established between the sexual and the countersexual forces in the human personality. Anything decreasing the tone of, or giving a low emotional value to, the sexual factors (and their glandular activity) tends to increase the influence and actual effect of the countersexual. It is because of this that the religious disciplines aiming at strengthening the soul, as a link with the Divine within us, have always extolled chastity and ascetic practices intent upon the devitalizing of the sexual tendencies.

In dealing with such subjects one finds oneself, of course, on rather speculative and controversial grounds, at least in our Christian Western culture. However, to the astrologer this polar opposition of sexual and countersexual should not be in the least unfamiliar. Indeed it has great meaning and is of continual practical interest in this field, because astrology is based upon a study of cyclic interactions of polarized energies.

Without the principle of polarity, astrology, as we know it today, would hardly exist. Through many centuries the planets have been paired in various ways, wherever their characteristic attributes and influences have been studied: for instance Sun-Moon, Mars-Venus, Jupiter-Saturn, Uranus-Neptune. Likewise every sign of the zodiac should be

interpreted with reference to its polarity, i.e. the exactly opposite sign. Spring is polar to fall, summer to winter.

In ancient China, several thousand years ago, the whole cycle of the year was pictured in astrological, as well as philosophical terms as the interplay of two opposite and complementary forces. Yang and Yin, forever interacting, one waxing in strength as the other wanes.

Today this picture of polar interplay with cyclically repeated phases is as significant as ever, having been re-applied to depth-psychology as well as to various aspects of modern science. The full grasp of the sexual-countersexual cycle is probably one of the missing keys of official psychology. Yet we see the polarity at work underneath the well-known contrast between conscious and unconscious — and even in social sciences, of individual and collective.

The Characterization of The Mate-Type

The simplest and most familiar astrological references to the principle of polarity in relation to the sexual temperament are those which deal with the Sun and the Moon as indicators of the type of mate a person tends to seek and to attract. Every student of astrology knows that the Sun in a woman's birth-chart represents the husband or more exactly the characteristic nature of the ideal image she makes of her man. In a man's chart the Moon represents the woman image.

Strictly speaking however, the Sun in a woman refers to the sexual drive for organic completion and emotional fulfillment, and thus to her attitude toward the sexual act and the gaining of satisfaction through a partner in the act. Thus a woman with her natal Sun in a forceful, positive sign of the zodiac (for instances Aries, Leo, Aquarius) will tend — unless the other astrological factors frustrate or block this tendency — to go toward sexual experiences with a positive, deliberate, possibly even aggressive, attitude.

Yet this does not mean that such a woman will want a more receptive, passive man. On the contrary, in most normal cases (and there are many abnormal possibilities) she will look, perhaps unconsciously for a strong male (physically or mentally) who will be able to meet her positive search with a still more forceful eagerness. On the other hand, because the woman with the Sun in a "feminine" sign of the zodiac will have a more receptive, perhaps even typically female attitude, her man will not need to be so typically male himself.

There will be less in her for him to overcome; she will be more pliable or open. In other words, the process works both ways. An Aries natal Sun in a woman makes her more positively intent upon sexual discovery and experiences motivated by a rebellious non-conformist attitude to social standards; yet she will hold in her heart (i.e. she will evoke in her imagination) the picture of a man whose positiveness and daring will be a match for her own desires.

However, these characterizations refer to the basic life-urge in its most instinctive, biological-emotional aspect. Other factors intervene to make a particular woman in love with a particular type of man. These secondary factors are more specifically expressive of the individuality (the ego) of the person; and they are referred in astrology to the planets, rather than to "the Lights" (i.e. Sun and Moon).

For this reason it is traditional to say that, in a woman's chart, the first planet to which the natal Sun (when progressed forward) makes a basic aspect represent the type of husband she will have. And by basic aspect, I mean conjunction, sextile, square, trine, opposition; and perhaps semi-square (45°) and quintile (72°). For instance, if the natal Sun is in Aries 5° and Venus is located at Cancer 7°, Venus might describe the husband type for this woman. The marriage would be described as a "square-type" of relationship.

By husband type, I mean here the personal, individual character of the man rather than the way his sexual forces flow instinctively and normally. A Venus husband-type would tend to be somewhat artistic, elegant, with a strong sense of value (social-financial or cultural-spiritual, as the case may be); he would be concerned with the way things work out in the end, how they affect his sense of right, his inner life, his group.

Mars type, on the other hand, would suggest a rather forceful, outgoing, impetuous or rebellious man, concerned mostly with the release of his energies, and less with its outcome — unless perhaps the planet Mars in the woman's chart features tense aspects, in which case the Martian tendency in the husband might be frustrated by circumstances or physical defects, by fears or complexes.

The Jupiter-type of husband indicates a person conscious of social or religious values — perhaps an ambitious social climber or a politically inclined person, a wealthy man concerned with his position, or one eager to participate in religious group-worship and dedicated to so-called spiritual achievements. The Saturn type tends to be serious and rather austere, concerned about regulations and the "place" of everything in life, particularly his own place. He may be a disciplinarian, or a scholar, or an autocrat with rigid theories and principles, or a sensitive, because an insecure and fearful person.

The Moon-type of husband may be occupied with the routine of life, or a true servant in the highest sense of the term. He might be somewhat effeminate, or at least in need of being mothered by his wife. He could be very adaptable, but also without definite principles, an opportunist. The Mercury-type of husband will tend to be on the intellectual side, mentally alert, quick, but difficult to pin down to anything.

As to the remote planets, Uranus, Neptune and Pluto, when considered as indicative of the husband-type in a woman's chart, they tend to indicate rather unusual, and sometimes abnormal personalities. Uranus suggests a potentially creative, unconventional husband, or a born rebel chafing at conjugal routine or convention; Neptune, someone either dominated by collective ideals (either social or spiritual), or often seeking illusory escapes from difficulties. Pluto might mean a husband completely conditioned by the pressure of his environment, his culture, the fashion of the day, or one who must probe the depths of

everything and in so doing may make — provided he can come back to the surface afterward — very basic psychological discoveries.

In a man's chart, instead of looking for the planet to which the Sun makes its first aspect by forward progression, we must consider instead the Moon and the next planet which it aspects after birth. This planet defines the "wife type" to which the man will most likely be attracted, and which he shall probably marry. The characterization of the type of the planets proceeds along the same lines as discussed in the preceding paragraphs.

Many Marriages

In our modern society, however, divorce and re-marriage are very frequent, and many lasting man-women relationships are made which are not precisely marriages. The problem this poses is solved by considering not only the first planet which the Sun or the Moon aspect after birth, but also the succeeding ones. Theoretically, only those planets are to be considered which the Sun and the Moon aspect **before** they leave the zodiacal Sign they occupied at birth. But sometimes the rule is seen invalidated; and a woman born with the Sun, say, at Taurus 28° and making no aspect to any planet before leaving Taurus can still marry.

In some cases the marriage turns out to be rather superficial and a matter of convenience; the woman remains, in a psychological but very real sense, un-attached, quasi-virginal, seeking for the ideal mate whom she perhaps does not really want, because she may be too self-centered or blocked by some strong adolescent fear. In other instances, if the natal chart contains a Taurus 28° Sun and a planet at Gemini 1° (or such a close aspect, over-lapping zodiacal Sign) this planet is truly the indicator of the husband type; yet there may be some problem associated with the marriage. Marriage may be delayed; it may require first a basic change of attitude or of country.

In many lives there are not only several marriages, but many strong (even if only temporary or frustrated) relationships with persons of the other sex. In these cases, one often can speak of a "relationship cycle." Let us say that the Moon in a man's chart makes aspects to three planets before leaving her birth Sign; Mars, Jupiter, Saturn. In this instance several things may happen; and it is practically impossible for the astrologer to decide which is most likely — unless other astrological factors support strongly the conclusion. The man may only marry once, and a woman of the Mars-type; or he may marry three times, women respectively of the Mars, the Jupiter and the Saturn types.

Even if he marries only once, it may be that if he carefully studies the most important love affairs in his life (whether after or before marriage), he may find that the types of women to whom he has become successively related follow each other according to a cyclic pattern. First a Mars-type woman, then a Jupiter-type, a Saturn-type; and the cycle starts again.

Sometimes the pattern is not obvious; and what one thinks to have been an important relationship does not fit into the cyclic sequence; while others less important do. This,

however, can turn out to be very revealing; for we often are deluded as to the relative value and depth of significance of our life-experiences. Such a study of our past may therefore lead to an enhanced awareness of our own nature and its problems — provided we do not keep indulging in constant retrospection and devastating self-analyses!

Our Countersexual Nature

I discussed the astrological way in which one may be able to ascertain the characteristic temperament of a person's marriage partner, because this traditional method introduces the type of reasoning which can be applied to a study of the countersexual energies within the more or less hidden depths of the inner life of an individual.

The Sun and the Moon, in this study, are still considered as indicators, respectively, of the male and female **sexual** energies. On the other hand the countersexual elements in the psyche are related in a woman to Saturn, and in a man to Jupiter.

Let me say at once, however, that here Mars and Venus are not altogether forgotten; they remain important but deal more particularly with the activity of the sexual organs or hormones in themselves, and with the manner in which sexual experiences are given meaning and value. Mars is the outgoing surge of desire, the emotional-sexual arousal, in both sexes; Venus, the result (or "harvest") of the sexual experiences, **or of their frustration and blocking** if the latter is the case. But these Mars and Venus functions are normally, almost entirely involved in (yet not limited to!) the outer expression of the life-force or *libido* through the body, the glands and all the direct overtones of such biological desires and activities.

With Jupiter and Saturn we deal with another kind of human functions which transcend the biological nature. It is true that these two planets are said to rule over certain body structures and organs; but in the field which I am discussing now we should see them as subtler-than-physical forces, indeed as powers which complement, and at the same time are the polar opposites of the outward urges which, constitute our physically exteriorized sexual nature. This means that in a woman's chart, while the Moon represents the sexual forces seeking to externalize themselves in complete orgasm and in motherhood, Saturn represents the countersexual energies. These operate within the inner life, building masculine psychic structures, or as Carl Jung says, the *animus* of the woman — her masculine soul.

It is to be noted, in this connection, that in the German language (and I believe some other languages) the word for Moon is given a masculine gender; whereas the word Sun is feminine. In old India the Moon had a masculine aspect, as King Soma, the Lord of Mysteries and of occult knowledge; but the Moon was also seen in a feminine role. This double role of the Moon is made clearer when he realizes that there stands behind the Moon (symbol of the sexual urge in women) Saturn, ruler over the counter-sexual masculine elements in a woman's psyche.

Where a man is concerned, I repeat that the Sun indicates in his birth-chart the sexual power (and its release through the Mars-ruled organs of the body), while Jupiter refers to his countersexual nature. It seems hardly necessary to explain further why the Sun and the Moon represent in birth-charts the outer sexual tendencies of, respectively, man and woman; but the reason for attributing to Jupiter and Saturn our kind of rulership over the inner countersexual processes in the psyche should be stated.

Saturn and Jupiter in Countersexual roles

First, let me say, that Jupiter and Saturn have been called, both, the social planets and the planets of soul. Jupiter and Saturn, in their simplest, most elementary meaning, refer in astrology to all that arises from the living together in groups of human beings — they deal with the organization and maintenance of communities, societies, nations, institutions, religions — whatever, in man, desires to participate in the economy, the cultural and religious ideals, and the welfare of the whole social group belongs to the Jupiter-Saturn realm.

Jupiter refers essentially to the social sense; thus to the flow of group-feelings, the companionship between people who share a common interest in their society, their business firm, their Church, their political Party. On the other hand, Saturn is concerned specifically with the place that any member of a group, or community occupies **rightfully and efficaciously**; thus with the problem of defining and keeping secure this place (ethics, personal security, group efficiency and group stability).

Saturn refers to the father, because it is (and especially it was in the past) the father who establishes by his work and prestige one's social position — that is, one's rightful place, and also one's name, in the community. For a woman, this father-influence can be particularly strong. It may even turn into a passionate love for the father. This love not being acceptable to the consciousness, is forced into the subconscious; but the energy of this emotional force remains. Even if it is latent and unrecognized, it is nevertheless active in an indirect psychological manner.

If no definite father-complex arises, Saturn nevertheless is the significator of the countersexual energies which, long before birth, had to turn inward, as their sexual counterparts set themselves to the outer task of building a female body. Saturn is therefore the symbol of the masculine factors in the woman's inner life. When the outer femininity of a woman has been blocked or perverted by tragic tensions of one kind or another, this hidden Saturn in the woman's soul may become very active.

It may produce a strong woman-ego or intellectual snobbery. It may even express itself autocratically — and at times in the form of a compulsive kind of cruelty. Yet at other times it may drive the woman to the quest for Truth or for God, usually by becoming attached, perhaps irrationally, to some teacher or religious Cause.

As we consider a man's inner life and the unconscious part of his psyche, we see at once that a man is often profoundly affected in this inner life by his mother. The mother is

represented in astrology by the Moon; so we might well feel that the countersexual aspect of the man's psychic life should be signified by the natal Moon. However, while the natal Moon has much to do with a man's feelings and his responses to women (to his future wife, etc.), nevertheless these responses do not proceed exactly from the countersexual energies in his psychic depths. They actually are parts of his outer personal life; they deal perhaps with the way he has been influenced by his mother's example. But this example was essentially a matter of how to become adjusted to everyday living, how to avoid pain and find comfort.

This can mean a great deal indeed and the man who has been frustrated in, or over-dependent upon his relationship to his mother may fill much of his semi-conscious inner life with longings and regrets, and transfer those to the women in whom he seeks to find comfort and motherly love. But there is something deeper, which is related in a polar and complementary sense to a man's sexual urge and activity. It is the religious sense. It is the (often unconscious) search for an ideal community in the life of which he may wholly share.

Some men will try to find such an ideal community in a new form of society, in some quasi-religious political Movement, or in a religious Faith, a Church — old or new. They may be fanatic in their search, practice asceticism, deny themselves sexual satisfaction. They may even long for martyrdom; for this martyrdom would consecrate and prove indeed beyond doubt the intensity, the wholeheartedness of their participation in, and identification with the Great Cause. It is in these more or less intense and more or less compulsive yearnings or behavior that the countersexual energies express themselves in their most characteristic manner — a Jupiterian expression. Such a type of expression in a man's personality often leads indeed in a direction quite opposite to that of the natural flow of his sexual energies.

In closing, as this cannot be the place for more astrological technicalities, I shall simply state that a careful study of the Sun or the Moon, by Jupiter or Saturn, and also of Mars and Venus and their mutual aspects, should be able to give us very significant clues to the operation of the sexual and countersexual forces in our total personality. In this study we should consider the zodiacal positions of the relevant planets, the aspects they make to other planets, and (very important, if we know our at least approximately exact birth moment) their places in the natal houses.

The problem is, of course, how to integrate the various findings. And for this, both, a thorough grasp of modern psychology and a keen sense of intuitive perception — the ability to see the birth chart as a living, meaningful whole — are just as necessary as a good knowledge of astrology. Anyone who deals with the energies of our sexual and countersexual natures deals indeed with potential dynamite. Care therefore, is greatly needed.