

An Interpretation of the Spirituality of the Octave Planets

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- *[Please Note: In this several-part article there are references to famous Astrologers and allusions to religious/spiritual figures and concepts, as well as to some astrological terms, without any explanations. Also the asteroids and Chiron (though possibly also "octave" bodies) are not treated herein.]*

While it has been frequently said that the 4th House cusp represents who you really are, we may also find confusing that who you are has very little (if anything) to do with your personality--the outer Ascendant/Solar self that you and others think of as you.

We must distinguish that personality or ego from the Ego or soul, quite separate from that outer image, the series of "i" that make up Sally or Joe. The I.C. then represents the most immediate ultimate of what you are as a personal whole (subconscious + conscious) or can be and actualize--if you integrate the personality consciousness with the consciousness of the 4th House self (or Self).

In terms of reincarnation, the I.C. stands for the highest accumulated expression of consciousness that your evolvment has reached; and this may have nothing to do with what you consider your personality.

For example, you may have Aquarius at the I.C., but also Scorpio rising, Taurus Sun, and Capricorn Moon. The Aquarian urge towards the highest expression of independence from the world of matter may never see its way into consciousness through the whole lifetime.

And it is the Octave planets (Uranus, Neptune, and Pluto) that represent that highest portion of the I.C. in every human being. These planets draw you from the personality into the soul, or the level of consciousness which sees from an inner dimension. This consciousness has awareness of the greater configuration or pattern or Gestalt of your life and lives, and therefore is the best director of what your choices might be.

How different such awareness is from the domain of the personal self, ruled by the Jupiter-Saturn complex! These planets co-rule and regulate the personal points (Sun, Moon, Ascendant, and M.C.), and the personal planets (Mercury, Venus, and Mars); and the effect from these seven Chaldean planets is to keep us satisfied and willing to remain on this conscious plane of pain, pleasures, and duality.

The continuum or complex of Saturn-Jupiter determines man's Ring-Pass-Not (Saturn's orbit in the macrocosm, the present solar system). Externally, this means that humanity is limited to the physical body, that s/he cannot extend beyond the framework of the skeletal structure. Correspondingly s/he cannot see beyond Saturn in the sky, and s/he tends to view this material world as the only reality.

Internally, like a mirror, man has also been limited from leaving the bodily consciousness to enter meditative dimensions of the inner planes that correspond to the awarenesses of the Octave planets. Saturnian-Jupiterian energies have a myriad ways to keep this experience from most of humanity through varieties of rules, obstacles, appearances, etc, until an individual (and eventually humanity at large) has the strength to break through the self-blocking barriers.

To understand properly our study of the Octaves, we should take a moment to look at the Jupiter-Saturn continuum to comprehend just what the Octave planets are up against in the attempt to raise human consciousness.

While Saturn has been rather thoroughly treated in astrology over the years, and perhaps best treated recently in Liz Greene's interpretation of the "Old Devil," Jupiter, to my mind, has been rather consistently misrepresented.

Saturn symbolizes the energy in humanity that defines his or her limitations (therefore what s/he is and is not) and her/his maintenance as a separate self. This energy fosters dependence on the status quo.

. The Jupiter-Saturn continuum (as Dane Rudhyar beautifully points out) fosters and protects the ego from danger-from premature intrusion into the higher dimensions that might spell confusion, too much voltage, or insanity to the under-developed ego.

Saturn does this through the process of providing materialistic energies which the ego may choose to value, and so does Jupiter By providing a surfeit; by offering a huge world of endless pleasures, inflated experiences, fat banquets; by dangling positions of priest, professor, or sales executive in front of the enchanted ego, Jupiter succeeds in captivating a very willing person upon the plane of self-indulgence.

In fact Jupiter's energy symbolizes the hope for and the expectations of such physical enjoyments and rewards. Astrology has seen that Jupiter in the 10th House, for example, has hope for and a likelihood of receiving worldly credit and success. But what needs to be seen is that whether or not a person does in fact succeed, he or she still and yearns to succeed, and rather feels and acts as though the universe had better come through with what is justly theirs.

Since I treat this topic of Jupiter's worldly and illusory face elsewhere more fully [Issue #3], I'll just point out that certain Piscean excesses are created by the energies of Jupiter's archetypal symbolism, and not Neptune's. Jupiter helps account for the attitude that "the world owes me a living."

Astrologers must more fully understand the planets, Venus and Jupiter, as symbols of luxury that keep the evolving ego from desiring higher consciousness, while at the same time supplying hints or mirror-experiences of what is available at higher levels. Venus is usually associated with love (the higher octave symbolism of Venusian energies), but may better be understood as the principle of attachment--the self-indulgence that desires to possess, more than to give. And Jupiter brings a person's desires ultimately for this plane (even though it presents those desires in quasi-spiritual trappings), until the ego cries out, "I've had enough!" Then the Octave planets can burst through.

The purpose of the Octave planets is to take the soul or man's higher consciousness and integrate it with the conscious awareness and conscious purpose. Placed in other terms, the symbology of the Octaves is to demonstrate to the ego that the outer universe (the macrocosm) exists spiritually within the inner consciousness of the person himself (the microcosm).

With 1781, 1846, and 1930 (discovery dates of the Octaves) the inner and outer consciousness of mankind collectively was altered to permit the expanded awarenesses that these planets symbolize.

The patterns that had been blocked for mankind (though not precluded from every individual) by the Jupiter-Saturn continuum, became universally available to the human beings of our planet. The cosmic rule seems to be that we cannot know the internal existence until we become conscious of the corresponding external awareness. We know the light of the Sun outside before we are capable of seeing our own inner light.

These Octaves then represent the archetypes of the spiritual powers or archetypes that break the bonds of the belief in the primary reality of the physical world and its manifestations. Astrologically the lower half of the chart, representing the subjective self, is incorporated into the upper half of the chart, which is the collective self; and the upper half of the chart, is mostly ruled or co-ruled by the societal planets (Jupiter and Saturn), and the Octaves (Uranus, Neptune, and Pluto). The only exception is for those Astrologers like myself who find the validity of Pluto co-ruling Aries for the few egos who have made amazing strides towards a new consciousness.

The Octave planets move man towards a collective consciousness, or as Rudhyar puts it, towards a Galactic consciousness. These planets transmute, transpersonalize, transfigure, transsubstantiate humanity, and that is their sole purpose.

A person's resistance and material attitude toward those energies produces the erratic or perverted responses to the spiritual energies that have given Uranus, Neptune, and Pluto various negative names. Thus they have been dumped into the medieval classification of by many current Astrologers;

and of course the energies of the Octaves are anathema to a viewpoint that values the material energy an opposed to the spiritual energy.

Yet the archetypes of the sage, genius, or hero (Uranus), the savior, saint, or mystic (Neptune), and the magician or hierophant resound ubiquitously in the dreams, literature, legends, and hopes of collective humanity, driving mankind towards the actualization of these higher energies in themselves.

In Eastern thought, the Foundation of Being (or God) is described in terms of All Truth, All Power, All Love, given in Sanskrit as Sat-Chit-Ananda. The Jupiter-Saturn continuum has taken these and codified them into commandments and rituals, locking the religious devotees into a structure and a hierarchy--but permitting very little spiritual perception or experience to penetrate. Such encasement of religious strictures and structures had to receive powerful shattering and dissolving energies in order to make possible further growth for the majority of mankind.

Let's look at a couple corresponding examples: Notice how the liver (Jupiter's organ) filters out any effects upon the person that would lead towards altered consciousness. Caffeine, drugs, alcohol, acid are all effects from the Octave planets that the liver works desperately to screen, just as the social pressure and morality of the times criticize atypical behaviors. Jupiter, while protecting the body, also shields the mind from truly expanding insights that might accompany these artificial catalysts. Jupiter and Saturn stand "against" the experiences of God or consciousness on the higher levels of Truth, Love, and Power.

The orbit and controls of the Jupiter-Saturn continuum, which are necessary and valuable for the ego's growth, must be crossed. Once crossed, Jupiter and Saturn no longer function or are seen as

inhibiting factors to man's growth, and in fact may be seen as man's perversion of their energies. Religion and education and government do not have to be stultifying as they are in most instances in historical and modern times.

This may be well seen in a quote from Liz Greene in her book, *Saturn*: "Saturn always strives for the truth; it is man's fear of this motivation within himself that brings about the catastrophe."

With a weak Saturn-Jupiter, a person is prone to insanity or a weak hold on a frame of reality, which is to say that he may be prematurely open to the effects of the octaves. A person consumed by the desire for Plutonian power, lacks Saturnian controls and perspective (though of course Saturn may inspire similar vagaries). A person continually fearful because of Neptunian confusions or voices needs some sort of Jupiterian belief to let him feel in touch with something to hold on to.

But it seems that the Aquarian Age (or perhaps the Aquarian sub-age of the waning Piscean Age) is bringing to humanity the opportunity to know these Octaves more completely than ever before possible.

A person is like a rocket ship, with the frame and superstructure around him in support representing Jupiter-Saturn. The fuel required to explode him to the higher levels are out three Octave planets, and I want to speak of these more specifically, now that we have seen the matrix in which they work and humanity has its current consciousness of being.

In moving from what you were as a child, or what you were in your last life, or what you arrived at from the sum of all your lives, we may understand this as a process of moving from Pluto (the most minute part of everything--the sperm, the id, perhaps the soul, of our being) through the mundane world (Saturn-Jupiter constructs). The purpose is to reach the ultimate consciousness available to us now in the energies of the Octaves, and arrive at Pluto again, but in a transformed, all-powerful condition, akin to the universal starchild. Each person moves through some level on the infinite spiral from the alpha to the omega, which is the collective unconscious actualized in the individual.

That's why I like to see the co-rulership of Pluto in the esoteric Aries, because it fits the rebirth of the new seed-man, starting the alpha. The esoteric rulership of Pluto in Pisces completes the omega, just as the head and the foot both contain all the corresponding points of the body with consequent effects, if the healer knows his neurology and reflexology.

That's also why an individual is always presented (whenever he permits or lets his ego-resistance down) through the archetypes of the 12th House collective unconscious universal embodiments of a hero or a goddess for him to grasp a concept of the greater whole--a vision for which he might strive for his own completion or fulfillment.

Looking at Uranus first, we see that the flash of the collective idea (the province of Uranus) leads a person to the truth, and then to the Truth, Initially he gets an idea, then he shapes that into an Ideal, and ultimately seeks that knowledge which known, makes all knowledge known.

The answer to this ancient Vedic quest for ultimate knowledge is the Self. And the mystics, scriptures, and philosophies tell us that the Self is Love. Thou art That. Nor should we be surprised that the subject of Uranus and the energy it represents is love; for Leo and the 5th House stand for Love given, while Aquarius and the 11th House symbolize love received.

If Uranus is well integrated, and if the energy of Aquarius is well used, then these show behavior patterns and an energy-complex that reveal how selfless and humanitarian love for one's fellows brings love in return. The Aquarian who is aloof, or the Uranian energy that demands personal independence at any cost, is insufficiently developed to bring out the true nature of the loyalty of love. That should be and is the result of the quest for knowledge and truth, and is always had in some form in the flash of intuition or the altering of a person's life. Such is the quality of the Sanskrit word for truth, . And such is the meaning of the great injunction of the Masters to mankind: Know thyself.

Uranus is the symbol for the process of learning to love. The process is not only to attain independence, but also to use that freedom to help free others, and only love will do that.

Forgive the Eastern references, but the parable of Lord Vishnu's banquet for the gods and demons illustrated this Uranian principle aptly. The banquet table had a spread of amazing delicacies, but before the gods or demons started, Vishnu made one stipulation--that no one could bend his elbows.

Angrily assuming that Vishnu was mocking them by setting all the food which no one could eat, the demons stomped out of the hall. But the gods reasoned that Lord Vishnu was too gracious to treat them so badly, so they thought that there must be something behind his words.

Then they realized that if each of them reached across the table and fed the other person, no one would bend his elbow, but everyone would be fed.

This is what the lesson of Uranus is: the independence to get up and leave the room if you choose to but also the intuition to know that you'd be foolish if you did, and the love sufficient to be willing to serve the other person. This is the process of Uranus, which is perhaps little understood by many Astrologers.

Uranus shatters ignorance--lack of knowledge of the self, and current Aquarians only manifest a portion of knowledge, which in most cases is only a breaking with tradition. The co-rulership with Saturn in both Aquarius and Capricorn shows how the Octave planet is breaking the bonds of the planet of limitations. In Capricorn it produces the practical idealist; in Aquarius it produces the true lover--the lover of humanity . . . for the few who can respond to this vibration.

Aspects to Uranus (hard or soft) facilitate this awakening and permit you to see where you could not see before. Weaker receptivity to the energy and/or to the hard aspects generally show this energy with strong self-will and eccentric, rebellious responses.

Where Uranus is the archetype of ideas, Neptune is the archetype of feeling--ultimate love and beauty. Where Uranus shatters the structure of the locked-in world of the Saturn-Jupiter continuum, Neptune dissolves it, rather oozes around and distorts the vision like in a mist or fog.

And like Uranus, Neptune has a somewhat nasty reputation, based upon its failure to perpetuate a pleasant life on the physical plane. But of course its whole purpose is to dissolve the attachments (Venus, Jupiter, and Saturn especially) not only to the pleasures of the world, but to its pains as well. whatever game the ego is playing, Neptune further distorts it so that the person eventually has to see his stance for the ploy it is.

While Uranus is not intellectual, but instead spurs on the Mercurial function to the Eureka experience, Neptune positively eschews intellectuality and materiality, and everything that possesses any physical-plane vibration. The only vibrations that are acceptable to Neptune are spiritual in nature, thus music, the arts, mysticism, and the like. But the Mercurial reasonings are not spiritual, but rather are mental, and thus are not part of the Neptunian urge towards bliss.

The Sanskrit Ananda translates as bliss, love, delight; and this epiphany, vision, or mystical insight or immersion doesn't contain words. This is the facet of God that takes the archetypes of the savior and the seer.

Through perversion of this archetype, through fear of its implications and demands, the ego struggles to escape by seeing itself as victim or Wandering Jew who's ostracized by society and God. Usually he suffers and indulges to try to forget his misery.

The important point is that of course Neptune doesn't cause this, nor symbolize this experience. None of the planets cause any action or behavioral response in the long run. It is the ego's astonishing rejection of the role available to him that releases itself in the self-destructive and indulgent twists that describe the Gestalt of what we have come to know as the energy corresponding to Neptune.

The glamour that is prompted by the varieties of altered-consciousness devices and experiences has been amplified to a crescendo point in the 20th Century. For example the TV, which is Neptunian with its image, and Uranian with its electronics, captivates an audience that longs to be like those persons that they can see before them. This represents a sort of false glamour, but it stirs the individual to get out of his living room and seek for more than he currently has.

Maybe he might try to be a movie star or a film director or a Bohemian. He's stirred by some magic. He's seeking bliss--perhaps in the "wrong" quarter at first, but it's a start. He gets tricked by the energy in him to seek for the fulfillment that seems to be offered according to the Neptunian energy in his chart and in his being.

The usual manifestation is to create another ego-charade and live out a false dream of Neptunian nature in sexual fantasies, emotional distortions, suffering experiences, and the like.

Eventually this dream too will fade out or prove to be false and inadequate, and the ego slowly learns to replace this dream with one of a higher vibration, which ultimately will take the person to another realm of spiritual consciousness. Prior to this, most of the delineation of Neptunian responses are correct.

As Hickey says, where Neptune is placed in the chart, sacrifice is required--but this sacrifice must not only be incessant, but must actually reach the point where there is no longer a sense of sacrifice! What is ultimately sacrificed is sacrifice or suffering in itself.

This is the answer to the martyr who gets off on enjoying his suffering and how badly he's being treated. He will only integrate his consciousness of suffering with his greater archetype of bliss in the unconscious by dissolving the whole pattern and emotional attachment to the very act of suffering. He equates suffering with bliss (an unconscious distortion of the archetype) and thus must undergo the long, grueling game.

We have to learn to cease being a victim and cease being a savior as well. As one speaker I recently heard said, "I can't save you. I can only save myself and let you watch. "

Of course the savior-victim archetype has its valuable aspects in the figures like Jesus or martyrs like Savonarola, but usually these profound individuals have made immeasurable progress into the collective unconscious, perhaps to the point of returning to this plane specifically to teach or to reveal truths. Society in turn cannot handle the purity of their actions and words and have to work off their collective guilt by hanging, burning, or crucifying. But many of these Neptunian individuals have

already gone beyond the orbit of Saturn and have reached other stages of consciousness, though it is a meaningless point to speculate how far they have gone.

Through this sort of martyrdom, society goes through the whole savior-victim syndrome. When an individual plays this game through in his own life, perhaps in his 7th House, then he plays the martyr and lets his wife treat him badly perhaps, maybe even play Judas and deceive him. -

Ultimate bliss of course is experiencing (some say merging with) light and love--in one form or other.

We will see that Pluto too will take us to the same beatific state, but through a third path. Pluto's energy corresponds to the urge for power, and may nicely be seen in the Freudian concept of the id. It functions on instinct, growing out of animal magnetism, and perhaps is best described (albeit abstractly) in the human being as a visceral or gut feeling.

Neptune is psychic and mystical, Uranus is intuitive, but Pluto instinctively knows, and the person often feels this knowledge in the stomach! It is the force that permits a cat to know danger is near without smelling, hearing, or seeing it first.

The force of this id in the child demands utter power to have his own way; it demands personal expression which will be emotionally fulfilling, perhaps to complete exclusion of any other person's need, and perhaps to the exclusion even of the other needs of the person himself.

So Pluto forms the new Ring-Pass-Not for the modern man, but within that Ring, within Pluto's orbit, is contained all the collective unconscious that we've spoken of. All the spiritual energy through the three Octave planets is now available to mankind through collective experience, and through personal inner experience along the lines of meditation and other spiritual techniques of the inward journey.

As many astrological writers have noted, where Pluto sits in the chart is where you may make some of the deepest transformations in yourself and in others. Its position indicates the area towards which you can get profoundly in touch with those parts of yourself that you usually refuse to deal with.

A person no longer has to die in order to reach the depths that Pluto represents, but of course in the outer world of manifestation, people translate these energies into huge power-plays to dominate, manipulate, or destroy others. This manifestation is obviously a misuse of the spiritual energy.

Rudhyar points out that Pluto represents purity or the search for purification, which is one of the reasons that so much that comes from Pluto is required to be exclusive, unique, first. But when an

immature person gets hold of unlimited power, he utilizes it for his own selfish benefit, resulting perhaps in some injury either to himself or to others. Clearly this immature person corresponds to the current Plutonian types who have atomic power and worse on the level of national leaders.

Yet some purification would still derive if man blew himself off the face of the earth--though we certainly hope that collective man gets in better touch with the deep emotional urge towards purification than through self-destruction.

It becomes clear from the foregoing that just as both Uranus and Neptune symbolize and lead toward experiencing God as love, Pluto should do likewise. And you no doubt already have seen that the Sanskrit word, Chit, which may be translated as power (the third aspect or manifestation of Being), reaches the state with Truth and Bliss by simply giving away the power it possesses. In other words the lesson of Pluto is to learn to use your power for the benefit of your fellow, rather than to aggrandize the energies for yourself. Once again this is an act of love.

A teacher can run intellectual rings around the student; a father can manhandle his child; but neither person with such power will exercise it, both out of love and concern for the growth of the youngster.

Each of the three outer planets represents love, and also reveals how to reach love through experiential actions and decisions.

Just as love is the base of space and all attraction and interaction, Pluto represents the atom or base of all physical manifestation. It is thus the most finite part of all existence, and at the same time the most powerful.

The seed contains the whole man who can change the universe potentially. The darkness of Pluto compares to the darkness preceding the light of awareness that comes to a person after much struggle. The seed begins in total darkness, along with much vulnerability, and grows into the light, because of the light, and rises from earth to strive towards the Sun.

And just as the plant cannot "look" back towards where it began at the earth level, or the earth will rot its frail growth, neither can Scorpio or Plutonian energies grow properly until the person has learned how to use his power, not fear it, and give it for the use of others, without hanging on to the past years, past actions, or past emotions.

We've seen then how the interpretation of truth-power-bliss (sat-chit-ananda) of the Octaves may be seen as directives and guides to that ultimate state of being, love--on whatever level it happens to take. Meditation is one form; humanitarian action is another; and so is guidance of a government for pure motivations. Each person determines for herself or himself at what level she or he is prepared to respond to the Octave planets.

Astrologers can help the client towards a spiritual self-understanding by indicating the level of spiritual actualization that the chart is offering, and that the client is desiring.