

Archetypal Principles

The concept of planetary archetypes, in many respects the pivotal concept of the emerging astrological paradigm, is complex and must be approached from several directions. Before describing the nature of the association between planets and archetypes, however, we must first address the general concept of archetypes and the remarkable evolution of the archetypal perspective in the history of Western thought.

The earliest form of the archetypal perspective, and in certain respects its deepest ground, is the primordial experience of the great gods and goddesses of the ancient mythic imagination. In this once universal mode of consciousness, memorably embodied at the dawn of Western culture in the Homeric epics and later in classical Greek drama, reality is understood to be pervaded and structured by powerful numinous forces and presences that are rendered to the human imagination as the divinized figures and narratives of ancient myth, often closely associated with the celestial bodies.

Yet our modern word *god*, or *deity* or *divinity*, does not accurately convey the lived meaning of these primordial powers for the archaic sensibility, a meaning that was sustained and developed in the Platonic understanding of the divine. This point was clearly articulated by W. K. C. Guthrie, drawing on a valuable distinction originally made by the German scholar Wilamowitz-Moellendorff:

Theos, the Greek word which we have in mind when we speak of Plato's god, has primarily a predicative force. That is to say, the Greeks did not, as Christians or Jews do, first assert the existence of God and then proceed to enumerate his attributes, saying "God is good," "God is love" and so forth.

Rather they were so impressed or awed by the things in life or nature remarkable either for joy or fear that they said “this is a god” or “that is a god.” The Christian says “God is love,” the Greek “Love is *theos*,” or “a god.” As another writer [G. M. A. Grube] has explained it: “By saying that love, or victory, is god, or, to be more accurate, a god, was meant first and foremost that it is more than human, not subject to death, everlasting. . . . Any power, any force we see at work in the world, which is not born with us and will continue after we are gone could thus be called a god, and most of them were.”

In this state of mind, and with this sensitiveness to the superhuman character of many things which happen to us, and which give us, it may be, sudden stabs of joy or pain which we do not understand, a Greek poet could write lines like: “Recognition between friends is *theos*.” It is a state of mind which obviously has no small bearing on the much-discussed question of monotheism or polytheism in Plato, if indeed it does not rob the question of meaning altogether.

As the Greek mind evolved, by a process sometimes too simply described as a transition from myth to reason, the divine absolutes ordering the world of the mythic imagination were gradually deconstructed and conceived anew in philosophical form in the dialogues of Plato. Building on both the Presocratics’ early philosophical discussions of the *archai* and the Pythagorean understanding of transcendent mathematical forms, and then more directly on the critical inquiries of his teacher Socrates, Plato gave to the archetypal perspective its classic metaphysical formulation. In the Platonic view, archetypes—the Ideas or Forms—are absolute essences that transcend the empirical world yet give the world its form and meaning. They are timeless universals that serve as the fundamental reality informing every concrete particular. Something is beautiful precisely to the extent that the archetype

of Beauty is present in it. Or, described from a different viewpoint, something is beautiful precisely to the extent that it participates in the archetype of Beauty. For Plato, direct knowledge of these Forms or Ideas is regarded as the spiritual goal of the philosopher and the intellectual passion of the scientist.

In turn, Plato's student and successor Aristotle brought to the concept of universal forms a more empiricist approach, one supported by a rationalism whose spirit of logical analysis was secular rather than spiritual and epiphanic. In the Aristotelian perspective, the forms lost their numinosity but gained a new recognition of their dynamic and teleological character as concretely embodied in the empirical world and processes of life. For Aristotle, the universal forms primarily exist *in* things, not above or beyond them. Moreover, they not only give form and essential qualities to concrete particulars but also dynamically transmute them from within, from potentiality to actuality and maturity, as the acorn gradually metamorphoses into the oak tree, the embryo into the mature organism, a young girl into a woman. The organism is drawn forward by the form to a realization of its inherent potential, just as a work of art is actualized by the artist guided by the form in the artist's mind. Matter is an intrinsic susceptibility to form, an unqualified openness to being configured and dynamically realized through form. In a developing organism, after its essential character has been fully actualized, decay occurs as the form gradually "loses its hold." The Aristotelian form thus serves both as an indwelling impulse that orders and moves development and as the intelligible structure of a thing, its inner nature, that which makes it what it is, its essence. For Aristotle as for Plato, form is the principle by which something can be known, its essence recognized, its universal character distinguished within its particular embodiment.

The idea of archetypal or universal forms then underwent a number of important developments in the later classical, medieval, and Renaissance periods.⁶ It became the focus of one of the central and most sustained debates of Scholastic philosophy, "the problem of universals," a controversy that both reflected and

mediated the evolution of Western thought as the locus of intelligible reality gradually shifted from the transcendent to the immanent, from the universal to the particular, and ultimately from the divinely given archetypal Form (*eidōs*) to the humanly constructed general name (*nomina*). After a final efflorescence in the philosophy and art of the High Renaissance, the concept of archetypes gradually retreated and then virtually disappeared with the modern rise of nominalist philosophy and empiricist science. The archetypal perspective remained vital principally in the arts, in classical and mythological studies, and in Romanticism, as a kind of archaic afterglow. Confined to the subjective realm of interior meaning by the dominant Enlightenment world view, it continued in this form latent in the modern sensibility. The radiant ascent and dominance of modern reason coincided precisely with the eclipse of the archetypal vision.

Between the triumph of nominalism in the seventeenth century and the rise of depth psychology in the twentieth, philosophy brought forth a weighty development, Kant's Copernican revolution in philosophy, that subsequently had major consequences for the form in which the archetypal perspective eventually reemerged. With Kant's critical turn focused on discovering those subjective interpretive structures of the mind that order and condition all human knowledge and experience, the a priori categories and forms, the Enlightenment project underwent a crucial shift in philosophical concern, from the object of knowledge to the knowing subject, that influenced virtually every field of modern thought.

It was not until the turn of the twentieth century that the concept of archetypes, foreshadowed by Nietzsche's vision of the Dionysian and Apollonian principles shaping human culture, underwent an unexpected renaissance. The immediate matrix of its rebirth was the empirical discoveries of depth psychology, first with Freud's formulations of the Oedipus complex, Eros and Thanatos, ego, id, and superego (a "powerful mythology," as Wittgenstein called psychoanalysis), then in an expanded, fully articulated form with the work of Jung and archetypal

psychology. Jung, as we have seen, drawing on Kant's critical epistemology and Freud's instinct theory yet going beyond both, described archetypes as autonomous primordial forms in the psyche that structure and impel all human experience and behavior. In his last formulations influenced by his research on synchronicities, Jung came to regard archetypes as expressions not only of a collective unconscious shared by all human beings but also of a larger matrix of being and meaning that informs and encompasses both the physical world and the human psyche.

Finally, further developments of the archetypal perspective emerged in the postmodern period, not only in post-Jungian psychology but in other fields such as anthropology, mythology, religious studies, philosophy of science, linguistic analysis, phenomenology, process philosophy, and feminist scholarship. Advances in understanding the role of paradigms, symbols, and metaphors in shaping human experience and cognition brought new dimensions to the archetypal understanding. In the crucible of postmodern thought, the concept of archetypes was elaborated and critiqued, refined through the deconstruction of rigidly essentialist "false universals" and cultural stereotypes, and enriched through an increased awareness of archetypes' fluid, evolving, multivalent, and participatory nature. Reflecting many of the above influences, James Hillman sums up the archetypal perspective in depth psychology:

Let us then imagine archetypes as the deepest patterns of psychic functioning, the roots of the soul governing the perspectives we have of ourselves and the world. They are the axiomatic, self-evident images to which psychic life and our theories about it ever return. . . . There are many other metaphors for describing them: immaterial potentials of structure, like invisible crystals in solution or forms in plants that suddenly show forth under certain conditions; patterns of instinctual behavior like those in animals that direct actions along unswerving paths; the *genres* and *topoi* in literature; the recurring typicalities in history; the basic syndromes in psychiatry; the paradigmatic thought

models in science; the world-wide figures, rituals, and relationships in anthropology.

But one thing is absolutely essential to the notion of archetypes: their emotional possessive effect, their bedazzlement of consciousness so that it becomes blind to its own stance. By setting up a universe which tends to hold everything we do, see, and say in the sway of its cosmos, an archetype is best comparable with a God. And Gods, religions sometimes say, are less accessible to the senses and to the intellect than they are to the imaginative vision and emotion of the soul.

They are cosmic perspectives in which the soul participates. They are the lords of its realms of being, the patterns for its mimesis. The soul cannot be, except in one of their patterns. All psychic reality is governed by one or another archetypal fantasy, given sanction by a God. I cannot but be in them.

There is no place without Gods and no activity that does not enact them. Every fantasy, every experience has its archetypal reason. There is nothing that does not belong to one God or another.

Archetypes thus can be understood and described in many ways, and much of the history of Western thought has evolved and revolved around this very issue. For our present purposes, we can define an archetype as a universal principle or force that affects—impels, structures, permeates—the human psyche and the world of human experience on many levels. One can think of them in mythic terms as gods and goddesses (or what Blake called “the Immortals”), in Platonic terms as transcendent first principles and numinous Ideas, or in Aristotelian terms as immanent universals and dynamic indwelling forms. One can approach them in a Kantian mode as a priori categories of perception and cognition, in Schopenhauerian

terms as the universal essences of life embodied in great works of art, or in the Nietzschean manner as primordial principles symbolizing basic cultural tendencies and modes of being. In the twentieth-century context, one can conceive of them in Husserlian terms as essential structures of human experience, in Wittgensteinian terms as linguistic family resemblances linking disparate but overlapping particulars, in Whiteheadian terms as eternal objects and pure potentialities whose ingression informs the unfolding process of reality, or in Kuhnian terms as underlying paradigmatic structures that shape scientific understanding and research. Finally, with depth psychology, one can approach them in the Freudian mode as primordial instincts impelling and structuring biological and psychological processes, or in the Jungian manner as fundamental formal principles of the human psyche, universal expressions of a collective unconscious and, ultimately, of the *unus mundus*.

In a sense, the idea of archetypes is itself an archetype, an *arche*, a continually shape-shifting principle of principles, with multiple creative inflections and variations through the ages as diffracted through different individual and cultural sensibilities. In the course of that long evolution, the archetypal idea seems to have come full circle, arriving now in its post-synchronicity development at a place very closely resembling its ancient origins as cosmic *archai* but with its many inflections and potentialities, as well as new dimensions altogether, having been unfolded and explored.

We can thus conceive of archetypes as possessing a transcendent and numinous quality, yet simultaneously manifesting in specific down-to-earth physical, emotional, and cognitive embodiments. They are enduring a priori structures and essences yet are also dynamically indeterminate, open to inflection by many contingent factors, cultural and biographical, circumstantial and participatory. They are in one sense timeless and above the changing flux of phenomena, as in the Platonic understanding, yet in another sense deeply malleable, evolving, and open to the widest diversity of creative human enaction. They seem to move from both

within and without, manifesting as impulses, emotions, images, ideas, and interpretive structures in the interior psyche yet also as concrete forms, events, and contexts in the external world, including synchronistic phenomena. Finally, they can be discussed and thought of in a scientific or philosophical manner as first principles and formal causes, yet also be understood at another level in terms of mythic *personae dramatis* that are most adequately approached or apprehended through the powers of the poetic imagination or spiritual intuition. As Jung noted about his own mode of discourse when discussing the archetypal content of psychological phenomena:

It is possible to describe this content in rational, scientific language, but in this way one entirely fails to express its living character. Therefore, in describing the living processes of the psyche, I deliberately and consciously give preference to a dramatic, mythological way of thinking and speaking, because this is not only more expressive but also more exact than an abstract scientific terminology, which is wont to toy with the notion that its theoretic formulations may one fine day be resolved into algebraic equations.

Planetary Archetypes

The astrological thesis as developed within the Platonic-Jungian lineage holds that these complex, multidimensional archetypes governing the forms of human experience are intelligibly connected with the planets and their movements in the heavens. This association is observable in a constant coincidence between specific planetary alignments and specific archetypally patterned phenomena in human affairs. It is important for what follows that we understand the nature of this correspondence between planets and archetypes. It does not appear to be accurate to

say that astrologers have in essence arbitrarily used the mythological stories of the ancients about the gods Jupiter, Saturn, Venus, Mars, Mercury, and the rest to project symbolic meaning onto the planets, which are in actuality merely neutral material bodies without intrinsic significance. Rather, a considerable body of evidence suggests that the movements of the planets named Jupiter, Saturn, Venus, Mars, and Mercury tend to coincide with patterns of human experience that closely resemble the character of those planets' mythical counterparts. That is, the astrologer's insight, perhaps intuitive and divinatory in its ancient origins, appears to be fundamentally an empirical one. This empiricism is given context and meaning by a mythic, archetypal perspective, a perspective that the planetary correlations seem to support and illustrate with remarkable consistency. The nature of these correlations presents to the astrological researcher what appears to be an orchestrated synthesis combining the precision of mathematical astronomy with the psychological complexity of the archetypal imagination, a synthesis whose sources seemingly exist a priori within the fabric of the universe.

Here is where the distinction between the ancient philosophical (Platonic) and the modern psychological (earlier Jungian) conceptions of archetypes becomes especially relevant. Whereas the original Jungian archetypes were primarily considered to be the basic formal principles of the human psyche, the original Platonic archetypes were regarded as the essential principles of reality itself, rooted in the very nature of the cosmos.⁷ What separated these two views was the long development of Western thought that gradually differentiated a meaning-giving human subject from a neutral objective world, thereby locating the source of any universal principles of meaning exclusively within the human psyche. Integrating these two views (much as Jung began to do in his final years under the influence of synchronicities), contemporary astrology suggests that archetypes possess a reality that is both objective and subjective, one that informs both outer cosmos and inner human psyche, "as above, so below."

In effect, planetary archetypes are considered to be both “Jungian” (psychological) and “Platonic” (metaphysical) in nature: universal essences or forms at once intrinsic to and independent of the human mind, that not only endure as timeless universals but are also co-creatively enacted and recursively affected through human participation. And they are regarded as functioning in something like a Pythagorean-Platonic cosmic setting, i.e., in a cosmos pervasively integrated through the workings of a universal intelligence and creative principle. What distinguishes the contemporary astrological view is the additional factor of human co-creative participation in the concrete expressions of this creative principle, with the human being recognized as itself a potentially autonomous embodiment of the cosmos and its creative power and intelligence.

In Jungian terms, the astrological evidence suggests that the collective unconscious is ultimately embedded in the macrocosm itself, with the planetary motions a synchronistic reflection of the unfolding archetypal dynamics of human experience. In Platonic terms, astrology affirms the existence of an *anima mundi* informing the cosmos, a world soul in which the human psyche participates as a microcosm of the whole. Finally, the Platonic, Jungian, and astrological understandings of archetypes are all complexly linked, both historically and conceptually, to the archetypal structures, narratives, and figures of ancient myth. Thus Campbell’s famous dictum:

It would not be too much to say that myth is the secret opening through which the inexhaustible energies of the cosmos pour into human cultural manifestation.

So also Jung: “I hold Kerényi to be absolutely right when he says that in the symbol the *world itself* is speaking.”⁸

For conceptual clarity, then, when we consider the meaning and character of each planetary archetype in the following chapters, it will be useful to understand these principles in three different senses: in the Homeric sense as a primordial deity and mythic figure; in the Platonic sense as a cosmic and metaphysical principle; and in the Jungian sense as a psychological principle (with its Kantian and Freudian background)—with all of these associated with a specific planet. For example, the archetype of Venus can be approached on the Homeric level as the Greek mythic figure of Aphrodite, the goddess of beauty and love, the Mesopotamian Ishtar, the Roman Venus. On the Platonic level Venus can be understood in terms of the metaphysical principle of Eros and the Beautiful. And on the Jungian level Venus can be viewed as the psychological tendency to perceive, desire, create, or in some other way experience beauty and love, to attract and be attracted, to seek harmony and aesthetic or sensuous pleasure, to engage in artistic activity and in romantic and social relations. These different levels or senses are distinguished here only to suggest the inherent complexity of archetypes, which must be formulated not as literal concretely definable entities but rather as dynamic potentialities and essences of meaning that cannot be localized or restricted to a specific dimension.

Finally, alongside this essential *multidimensionality* of archetypes is their equally essential *multivalence*. The Saturn archetype can express itself as judgment but also as old age, as tradition but also as oppression, as time but also as mortality, as depression but also as discipline, as gravity in the sense of heaviness and weight but also as gravity in the sense of seriousness and dignity. Thus Jung:

The ground principles, the *archai*, of the unconscious are indescribable because of their wealth of reference, although in themselves recognizable. The discriminating intellect naturally keeps on trying to establish their singleness of meaning and thus misses the essential point; for what we can above all establish as the one thing consistent with their nature is their

manifold meaning, their almost limitless wealth of reference, which makes any unilateral formulation impossible.

This discussion is directly relevant to the outcome of our earlier consideration of free will and determinism in astrology. If I may summarize that thesis in a single statement: It seems to be specifically the multivalent potentiality that is intrinsic to the planetary archetypes—their dynamic indeterminacy—that opens up ontological space for the human being’s full co-creative participation in the unfolding of individual life, history, and the cosmic process. It is just this combination of archetypal multivalence and an autonomous participatory self that engenders the possibility of a genuinely open universe. The resulting cosmological metastructure is still Pythagorean-Platonic in essential ways, but the relationship of the human self and the cosmic principles has undergone a metamorphosis that fully reflects and integrates the enormous modern and postmodern developments.

Our philosophical understanding of archetypes, our scientific understanding of the cosmos, and our psychological understanding of the self have all undergone a profound evolution in the course of history, and they have done so in complexly interconnected ways at each stage in this development. Our *experience* of all these has evolved, century by century, and thus our theories have as well.

The Planets

Wisdom is knowing in depth the great metaphors of meaning.

C. G. Jung

There are ten planetary archetypes that are central to astrological research today. Seven of these were recognized in the classical astrological tradition and correspond to the seven celestial bodies of the solar system visible to the unaided eye (Sun, Moon, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn); the other three correspond to those planets discovered by telescope in the modern era (Uranus, Neptune, and Pluto).⁹ The astrological tradition has long held that when astronomy was originally united with astrology, the ancients named the visible planets according to each one's intrinsic archetypal character, that is, according to the ruling mythic deity of which the planet was the visible manifestation. The earliest surviving Greek text that named all the known planets is the Platonist dialogue the *Epinomis*, which explicitly postulated a cosmic association between the planets and specific gods, speaking of them as cosmic powers and visible deities.¹⁰ Written in the fourth century BCE as an appendix to Plato's last work, the *Laws* (and composed either by Plato himself or a close disciple), the *Epinomis* affirmed the divinity of the planets and then went on to introduce the specific Greek name for each planet according to the deity which that planet was understood to be "sacred to"—Hermes, Aphrodite, Ares, Zeus, Kronos. These Greek gods were cited as corresponding to the equivalent Mesopotamian deities whose names had long been associated with the planets by the already ancient astrological tradition inherited from Babylonia. In turn, in later centuries these planets became known in Europe and the modern West by the names of their Roman equivalents: Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn.

It will be useful here as a preliminary summary to set forth the specific archetypal meanings and qualities associated with each planet. As Jung recognized, however, the meanings of archetypes cannot be reduced to simple definitions as if they were literal concrete entities whose basic essence could be exhausted once and for all with a neat algebraic formula:

A kind of fluid interpenetration belongs to the very nature of all archetypes. They can only be roughly circumscribed at best. Their living meaning comes out more from their presentation as a whole than from a single formulation. Every attempt to focus them more sharply is immediately punished by the intangible core of meaning losing its luminosity. No archetype can be reduced to a simple formula. It is a vessel which we can never empty, and never fill. . . . It persists throughout the ages and requires interpreting ever anew. The archetypes are the imperishable elements of the unconscious, but they change their shape continually.

An archetypal principle is thus not so much defined as evoked. It is better conveyed through a wide range of examples that collectively illustrate and suggest the enduring intangible essence that is variously inflected through the archetype's diverse embodiments. In the following chapters I have adopted this mode of presentation—a kind of self-presentation by the archetypes through their embodiments—as the one most appropriate to the nature of the principles and data we will be exploring. With these caveats and qualifications in mind, the following brief summary can serve as a starting point for the more extensive descriptions and analyses to come.

Each archetypal principle can express itself in both positive and problematic form. Each can expressed itself in the context of the individual life and psyche or on a collective level. Each has a potential for both feminine and masculine inflections

beyond the specific gender of the Greco-Roman mythic figure associated with the planet or luminary in question. For all the planets, both those known to the ancients and those discovered in the modern era, the body of evidence we will be examining points to the existence of *transcultural* archetypal principles that inform and encompass the observed synchronistic patterns of meaning. The specific mythic deities of the more local cultural mythologies, such as the Greek or Roman, appear to represent particular inflections of these transcultural archetypes. The Greco-Roman figures and narratives are resonant with significance for the Western cultural imagination but ultimately seem to be best understood as culturally specific embodiments of more universal archetypal principles.

Sun: the central principle of vital creative energy, the will to exist; the impulse and capacity to *be*, to manifest, to be active, to be central, to radiate, to “shine”; to rise above, achieve, illuminate, and integrate; the individual will and personal identity, the seat of mind and spirit, the animus, the executive functions of the self or ego, the capacity for initiative and purposeful assertion, the drive for individual autonomy and independence; directed and focused consciousness and self-awareness, the centrifugal expression of the self, the trajectory of self-manifestation, ascent and descent; the ruler of the day sky, of the clearly visible, the single source of luminosity that overcomes the encompassing darkness, the monocentric; *yang*; the part that contains the whole *in potentia*; Sol and all solar deities, the archetypal Hero in its many forms.

Moon: the matrix of being, the psychosomatic foundation of the self, the womb and ground of life; the body and the soul, that which senses and intuit, the feeling nature; the impulse and capacity to gestate and bring forth, to receive and reflect, to relate and respond, to need and to care, to nurture and be nurtured, the condition of dependence and interdependence; the diffusely conscious and the unconscious, the

anima, the immanent, the centripetal, the home, the fertile source and ground; the cycle of manifestation, the waxing and waning, the eternal round; the ruler of the night sky, of the diffusely visible and the invisible, multiple sources of luminosity within the encompassing darkness, the polycentric; *yin*; the whole that contains the part *in potentia*; Luna and all lunar deities, the Great Mother Goddess, together with aspects of the Child (*puella, puer*), constituting the relational matrix of life.

Mercury: the principle of mind, thought, communication, that which articulates the primary creative energy and renders it intelligible; the impulse and capacity to think, to conceptualize, to connect and mediate, to use words and language, to give and receive information; to make sense of, to grasp, to perceive and reason, understand and articulate; to transport, translate, transmit; the principle of Logos; Hermes, the messenger of the gods.

Venus: the principle of desire, love, beauty, value; the impulse and capacity to attract and be attracted, to love and be loved, to seek and create beauty and harmony, to engage in social and romantic relations, sensuous pleasure, artistic and aesthetic experience; the principle of Eros and the Beautiful; Aphrodite, the goddess of love and beauty.

Mars: the principle of energetic force; the impulse and capacity to assert, to act and move energetically and forcefully, to have an impact, to press forward and against, to defend and offend, to act with sharpness and ardor; the tendency to experience aggressiveness, anger, conflict, harm, violence, forceful physical energy; to be combative, competitive, courageous, vigorous; Ares, the god of war.

Jupiter: the principle of expansion, magnitude, growth, elevation, superiority; the capacity and impulse to enlarge and grow, to ascend and progress, to improve and

magnify, to incorporate that which is external, to make greater wholes, to inflate; to experience success, honor, advancement, plenitude, abundance, prodigality, excess, surfeit; the capacity or inclination for magnanimity, optimism, enthusiasm, exuberance, joy, joviality, liberality, breadth of experience, philosophical and cultural aspiration, comprehensiveness and largeness of vision, pride, arrogance, aggrandizement, extravagance; fecundity, fortune, and providence; Zeus, the king of the Olympian gods.

Saturn: the principle of limit, structure, contraction, constraint, necessity, hard materiality, concrete manifestation; time, the past, tradition, age, maturity, mortality, the endings of things; gravity and gravitas, weightiness, that which burdens, binds, challenges, fortifies, deepens; the tendency to confine and constrict, to separate, to divide and define, to cut and shorten, to negate and oppose, to strengthen and forge through tension and resistance, to rigidify, to repress, to maintain a conservative and strict authority; to experience difficulty, decline, deprivation, defect and deficit, defeat, failure, loss, alienation; the labor of existence, suffering, old age, death; the weight of the past, the workings of fate, character, karma, the consequences of past action, error and guilt, punishment, retribution, imprisonment, the sense of “no exit”; pessimism, inferiority, inhibition, isolation, oppression and depression; the impulse and capacity for discipline and duty, order, solitude, concentration, conciseness, thoroughness and precision, discrimination and objectivity, restraint and patience, endurance, responsibility, seriousness, authority, wisdom; the harvest of time, effort, and experience; the concern with consensus reality, factual concreteness, conventional forms and structures, foundations, boundaries, solidity and stability, security and control, rational organization, efficiency, law, right and wrong, judgment, the superego; the dark, cold, heavy, dense, dry, old, slow, distant; the *senex*, Kronos, the stern father of the gods.

The above seven archetypal principles correspond to the seven celestial bodies known to the ancients and constituted the foundation of the astrological tradition from its prehistoric origins through the early modern era. These principles were well established in their basic character from the beginning of the classical Western astrological tradition in the early Hellenistic era, from around the second century BCE onward, and their meanings continued to develop and be elaborated through later antiquity, the medieval era, and the Renaissance not only in astrological practice and esoteric writings but in the art, literature, and evolving religious and scientific thought of the larger culture.

Of the seven, Saturn was the most distant, slowest-moving planet visible to the naked eye, and its complex of meanings directly reflected that status: the ruler of boundaries and limits, of finitude and endings, of distance, slowness, age, time, death, and fate. Many ancients, such as the Gnostics and initiates of the mystery religions, believed that beyond Saturn existed another realm ruled by a greater, more encompassing deity, a domain of freedom and immortality beyond the constraints of fate and death. As we move to a brief summary of Uranus, Neptune, and Pluto, of their discovery and their observed archetypal qualities, we move in time from the ancient to the modern, and in space from the orbit of Saturn to the much larger regions of space circumscribed by these three outlying planets, evocatively described by Rudhyar as “ambassadors of the galaxy.”

Compared with the planets known to the ancients, with their Greco-Roman mythological associations and corresponding astrological meanings, the names and meanings of the three planets discovered by telescope in the modern era present a very different situation. Uranus, Neptune, and Pluto were named by modern

astronomers without any archetypal correspondences in mind. They therefore inherited no archetypal meanings sanctioned by ancient tradition, meanings that were in turn affirmed, refined, and elaborated by continuing observations over many centuries. This circumstance formed the starting point for an unexpectedly fruitful line of research whose results inform the following chapters. Based on the astrological research community's expanding body of empirical correlations for all the planets, many insights and clarifications concerning the relationship between the planets' given astronomical names and their observed archetypal meanings have now emerged. While correlations involving the ancient planets out through Saturn consistently suggest a definite coherence between the planets' inherited mythological names and the observed synchronistic phenomena, correlations involving the outer three planets point to archetypal principles that in crucial respects differ from or radically transcend their astronomical names.

Uranus: For millennia, the Sun and Moon, Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn formed what the ancients considered to be an absolute cosmic structure of moving celestial bodies reflecting the primordial forces that governed human affairs. Then in 1781 the astronomer and musician William Herschel, while conducting an exhaustive survey of the heavens using a telescope of his own design, suddenly observed an object that was not an ordinary star. The object turned out to be the first planet to be discovered since antiquity. Herschel's stunning discovery immediately transformed the dimensions of the known solar system, the new planet being twice as far from the Sun as Saturn. It also presented an unprecedented challenge to the astrological tradition. The ancient seven-planet hierarchy circumscribed by Saturn had been irrevocably disrupted, with no established archetypal meaning for the new planet. Contemporary skeptics viewed its discovery as having placed the last nail in the coffin of a discredited astrology whose demise had been caused by the Scientific Revolution and proclaimed by the Enlightenment.

Astronomers considered several names for the new planet. Herschel first proposed the name *Georgium Sidus* in honor of his sovereign patron, George III of England. The French, no doubt unenthusiastic about the planetary deification of an English monarch, used the name *Herschel*. In the end, in keeping with the planets known to the ancients, the pantheon of classical mythology was called upon. The German astronomer Johann Elert Bode had suggested the name *Uranus* in the year of its discovery, and it was this name that eventually received international acceptance. The logic for naming the new planet *Uranus* seems to have been straightforward: The mythological *Ouranos* was the father of *Kronos* (*Saturn*) and thus corresponded to the location of the new planet beyond *Saturn* in the heavens, just as *Saturn* was both the father of *Jupiter* in mythology and the name of the next planet beyond *Jupiter* in the heavens. *Ouranos* was also the god of “the starry sky,” as *Hesiod* called him, thus providing what seemed to be an especially apt name for the new planet. Astrologers adopted the name *Uranus* as well, but the meaning they eventually came to attribute to the new planet was generally different in character from that of the mythological *Ouranos*.

Since at least the turn of the twentieth century, the unanimous consensus among astrologers is that the planet *Uranus* is empirically associated with the principle of change, rebellion, freedom, liberation, reform and revolution, and the unexpected breakup of structures; with sudden surprises, revelations and awakenings, lightning-like flashes of insight, the acceleration of thoughts and events; with births and new beginnings of all kinds; and with intellectual brilliance, cultural innovation, technological invention, experiment, creativity, and originality. In addition to the occurrence of sudden breakthroughs and liberating events, *Uranus* transits are linked to unpredictable and disruptive changes; hence the planet is often referred to as the “cosmic trickster.” Another set of themes associated with *Uranus* is a concern with the celestial and the cosmic, with astronomy and astrology, with science and esoteric knowledge, and with space travel and aviation. With respect to

personal character, Uranus is regarded as signifying the rebel and the innovator, the awakener, the individualist, the dissident, the eccentric, the restless and wayward. These various qualities are considered to be so pronounced in persons born with a prominent Uranus and expressed so conspicuously in a person's life during Uranus transits that there seems to have been no significant disagreement among astrological authorities for at least the past century that these characteristics reflect the archetypal nature of the planet Uranus.

Most of these observed qualities, however, are not especially relevant to the Greek mythic figure of Ouranos. There is nothing in the mythological Ouranos's character suggestive of the capacity or impulse for change, rebellion, liberation, awakening, or inventiveness. The tenor of the myth is entirely different: Ouranos is the primordial god of the heavens, found in many mythologies, whose relationship to the Earth goddess Gaia forms part of the Greek creation myth. Ouranos's role in that myth is not to initiate rebellion and change but to resist it. Where the mythological Ouranos encountered a revolt by his progeny and was overthrown, the astrological Uranus is regarded as quite the opposite: that which rebels and overthrows. Most of the other qualities believed by astrologers to be associated with the planet Uranus—freedom, unpredictability, suddenness, speed, excitement, stimulation, restlessness, experiment, brilliance, originality, individualism, and so forth—have no plausible counterparts in the myth of Ouranos. The important exception among the qualities and themes attributed to Uranus is the concern with the cosmic and celestial, with space and space travel, and with astronomy and astrology, all of which well fit Ouranos's nature as the god of the “starry sky.” Aside from this crucial parallel, however, unlike the planets known to the ancients, the planet Uranus does not closely correspond in its mythological name with the larger range of its observed astrological meanings. In most respects, the naming appears to have risen from the conventional logic of late eighteenth-century astronomers, not from the intuitive

archetypal insight that is traditionally assumed to have played a role in the naming of the ancient planets.

Remarkably, however, all of the archetypal qualities associated with the new planet do fit another figure in Greek mythology with extraordinary precision: Prometheus, the Titan who rebelled against the gods, helped Zeus overthrow the tyrannical Kronos, then tricked the new sovereign authority Zeus and stole fire from the heavens to liberate humanity from the gods' power. Prometheus was considered the wisest of his race and taught humankind all the arts and sciences; in a later tradition, Prometheus was the creator of humankind and thus held a special relationship to humanity's fate from the beginning. Every major theme and quality that astrologers associate with the planet Uranus seems to be reflected in the myth of Prometheus with striking poetic exactitude: the initiation of radical change, the passion for freedom, the defiance of authority, the act of cosmic rebellion against a universal structure to free humanity of bondage, the urge to transcend limitation, the creative impulse, the intellectual brilliance and genius, the element of excitement and risk. So also Prometheus's style in outwitting the gods, when he used subtle stratagems and unexpected timing to upset the established order. He too was regarded as the trickster in the cosmic scheme. The resonant symbol of Prometheus's fire conveys at once a rich cluster of meanings—the creative spark, the catalyst of the new, cultural and technological breakthrough, brilliance and innovation, the enhancement of human autonomy, sudden inspiration from above, the liberating gift from the heavens, the solar fire and light, lightning and electricity both literal and metaphoric, speed and instantaneousness, incandescence, sudden enlightenment, intellectual and spiritual awakening—all of which astrologers associate specifically with the planet Uranus.

Even the major theme of the astrological Uranus that *was* clearly relevant to the mythological Ouranos—the association with the heavens, the cosmic, the astronomical and astrological, “the starry sky”—can be recognized as essential to the

Promethean myth, visible in Prometheus's role as teacher of astronomy and science to humankind, his quest to steal the fire from the heavens, and his concern with foresight, prediction, and esoteric understanding in defiance of the established order. The same theme is evident in the essential Promethean impulse to ascend and liberate from all constraints, to break free from the weight and slowness of gravity, and, more generally, to move humankind into a fundamentally different cosmic position in relation to the gods.

The extant astrological literature does not reveal the precise basis originally used to determine Uranus's astrological meaning in the course of the nineteenth century, when astrologers were few and texts rare. Texts from the beginning of the twentieth century imply that consensus on the basic themes and qualities had already been achieved some time before. It is possible that the unique (and, indeed, Promethean) character of the planet's discovery itself had suggested the nature of the principle involved: the sudden breakthrough from the heavens, the unexpected and unprecedented nature of the event, the crucial involvement of a technological invention (telescope), the radical disruption of astronomical and astrological tradition, the overthrow of past limits and structures. However, the earliest nineteenth-century texts to discuss Uranus in detail referred mainly to certain qualities in persons born with Uranus prominently placed (inventiveness, independence, eccentricity, proneness to sudden unexpected changes), implying that the study of natal charts had served as the principal basis for arriving at a definition.

More recent astrological sources suggested that the historical period of the planet's discovery in the late eighteenth century was relevant to its archetypal meaning, reasoning that the discovery of the physical planet in some sense represented an emergence of the planet's corresponding archetype into the conscious awareness of the collective psyche. In this regard the parallels with Uranus's astrological meaning were certainly clear: The planet's discovery in 1781 occurred at the culmination of the Enlightenment, in the extraordinary era that brought forth the

American and French Revolutions, the Industrial Revolution, and the beginning of Romanticism. In all these coinciding historical phenomena, the figure of Prometheus is of course readily evident as well: the championing of human freedom and individual self-determination, the challenge to traditional beliefs and customs, the fervent revolt against royalty and aristocracy, established religion, social privilege, and political oppression; the Declaration of Independence and the Declaration of the Rights of Man, *liberté* and *égalité*; the beginnings of feminism, the widespread interest in radical ideas, the rapidity of change, the embrace of novelty, the celebration of human progress, the many inventions and technological advances, the revolutions in art and literature, the exaltation of the free human imagination and creative will, the plethora of geniuses and culture heroes. Here too were the Romantic poets with their great paeans to Prometheus himself. If the age of Uranus's discovery is to be given an archetypal characterization, none seems more appropriate than "Prometheus Unbound."

I have taken more time here in explicating the case of Uranus in the midst of these otherwise brief initial summaries of the planetary meanings because it was my early study of this planet and the significant discrepancies between its given mythological name and its subsequently observed archetypal associations that set in motion many of the conceptual clarifications and research directions that formed the background of the present book.¹¹ The parallels with the mythic figure of Prometheus were sufficiently suggestive that I began a systematic examination of Uranus in natal charts, in transits, and in historical cycles to see whether such an archetypal identification or association deepened my understanding of the relevant phenomena. The parallels also suggested to me the importance of carefully thinking through the relationship between planets and archetypes, between the given mythological names and the observed astrological meanings, and, more generally, between the empirical evidence of synchronistic correlations and an archetypal dimension of being to which the correlations appeared to point.

Neptune: In 1846, on the basis of unexplained aberrations in the observed orbit of Uranus, the French mathematician Urbain LeVerrier posited the existence and position of a planet beyond Uranus whose gravitational influence was pulling Uranus out of its calculated orbit. The new planet was immediately discovered in the predicted position by the German astronomer Johann Galle and named Neptune after the god of the sea.¹² In the ensuing decades, astrologers again gradually arrived at a surprisingly universal consensus on the principal qualities and themes observed to coincide with the new planet's position in natal charts and transits.

Neptune is associated with the transcendent, spiritual, ideal, symbolic, and imaginative dimensions of life; with the subtle, formless, intangible, and invisible; with the unitive, timeless, immaterial, and infinite; with all that which transcends the limited literal temporal and material world of concretely empirical reality: myth and religion, art and inspiration, ideals and aspirations, images and reflections, symbols and metaphors, dreams and visions, mysticism, religious devotion, universal compassion. It is associated with the impulse to surrender separative existence and egoic control, to dissolve boundaries and structures in favor of underlying unities and undifferentiated wholes, merging that which was separate, healing and wholeness; the dissolution of ego boundaries and reality structures, states of psychological fusion and intimations of intrauterine existence, melted ecstasy, mystical union, and primary narcissism; with tendencies towards illusion and delusion, deception and self-deception, escapism, intoxication, psychosis, perceptual and cognitive distortions, conflation and confusion, projection, fantasy; with the bedazzlement of consciousness whether by gods, archetypes, beliefs, dreams, ideals, or ideologies; with enchantment, in both positive and negative senses.

The archetypal principle linked to Neptune governs all nonordinary states of consciousness, as well as the stream of consciousness and the oceanic depths of the unconscious. Characteristic metaphors for its domain include the infinite sea of the imagination, the ocean of divine consciousness, and the archetypal wellspring of life.

It is, in a sense, the archetype of the archetypal dimension itself, the *anima mundi*, the Gnostic pleroma, the Platonic realm of transcendent Ideas, the domain of the gods, the Immortals. In mythic and religious terms, it is associated with the all-encompassing womb of the Goddess, and with all deities of mystical union, universal love, and transcendent beauty; the mystical Christ, the all-compassionate Buddha, the Atman-Brahman union, the union of Shiva and Shakti, the *hieros gamos* or sacred marriage, the *coniunctio oppositorum*; the dreaming Vishnu, *maya* and *lila*, the self-reflecting Narcissus, the divine absorbed in its own reflection; Orpheus, god of artistic inspiration, the Muses; the cosmic Sophia whose spiritual beauty and wisdom pervade all.

Considered as a whole, these themes, qualities, and figures suggest that the name Neptune is both apt and inadequate in denoting a mythological figure embodying the planet's corresponding archetypal principle. On the one hand, central to the observed characteristics is an underlying symbolic association with water, the sea, the ocean, streams and rivers, mists and fogs, liquidity and dissolution, the amniotic and prenatal, the permeable and undifferentiated. In this regard, one thinks of the many oceanic and watery metaphors used to describe mystical experience, the all-encompassing ocean of divine consciousness of which our individual selves are but momentarily separate drops, the ceaselessly flowing all-informing Tao whose waterlike fluidity evades all definition, the primordial *participation mystique* of undifferentiated awareness, the mists of prehistory, the amniotic fetal and infantile states of primary fusion, the oceanic realms of the imagination, the fluid nature of psychic life generally: the flow and stream of consciousness, the influx of inspiration, the fog of confusion, drowning in the treacherous deep waters of the unconscious psyche, slipping into madness or addiction, surrendering to the flow of experience, dissolving into the divine union, the cleansing waters of purity and healing, melted ecstasy, and so forth. One thinks here, too, of Freud's reference to the "oceanic feeling": "a sensation of 'eternity,' a feeling as of something limitless,

unbounded—as it were, ‘oceanic’ . . . it is the feeling of an indissoluble bond, of being one with the external world as a whole.” Equally relevant is William James’s image of a transcendental “mother-sea” of consciousness with which the individual consciousness is continuous and of which the brain essentially serves as a sieve or filtering conduit.¹³

On the other hand, in virtually all other respects, the original mythological character of the Roman Neptune and the Greek Poseidon—tempestuous, violent, belligerent, often ill-tempered and vengeful (thus resembling most of the other Greco-Roman patriarchal warrior gods)—is deeply incongruent with the complex set of qualities and themes that have been consistently observed in connection with the planet Neptune and that are more accurately reflected in the mystically unitive deities and archetypal figures cited above. Nevertheless, as with Uranus’s mythological association with the starry heavens and air, so also with Neptune’s association with the sea and water: the name given to the new planet was indeed poetically accurate with respect to the mythological location and element associated with that deity, perhaps a reflection of synchronistic factors playing a role in the astronomers’ intuition and choice of names.

As with the period of Uranus’s discovery in 1781, the discovery of Neptune in 1846 coincided with a range of synchronistic historical and cultural phenomena in the immediately surrounding decades, and more generally in the nineteenth century, that are distinctly suggestive of the corresponding archetype. These include the rapid spread of spiritualism throughout the world beginning in the late 1840s, the upsurge of utopian social ideologies at the same time, the rise of universalist and communitarian aspirations in both secular and religious movements, the full ascendancy of Idealist and Romantic philosophies of spirit and the imagination, the widespread cultural influence of Transcendentalism, the new popular interest in both Eastern mystical and Western esoteric traditions, and the emergence of theosophy. Here too could be cited the rise of the recreational use of psychoactive drugs in

European bohemian circles, the beginning of the chemical and pharmaceutical industries, and the invention of anesthetics. The invention and cultural impact of photography and the early experiments in motion pictures, as well as the new aesthetic spirit of Impressionism and Post-Impressionism, were characteristic of the Neptune archetype in its association with image, reflection, subjectivity, illusion, and multiple realities. The growing focus on the unconscious, dreams, myths, hypnosis, and nonordinary states of consciousness in the decades after Neptune's discovery is also suggestive of the archetype. So also was the distinct collective emergence of a more socially compassionate humanitarian sensibility that was expressed in the public attitudes, social legislation, art and literature of the Victorian era and the nineteenth century generally (the novels of Dickens and Stowe, Tolstoy and Dostoevsky, the abolition of slavery and serfdom, the movements and laws to limit child labor and other cruelties of industrial capitalism, the first laws abolishing capital punishment, the wave of foundings of societies for the protection of animals, the growing role of women in shaping social policy, the beginning of modern nursing through the work of Florence Nightingale, the spread of care for the sick and wounded in war, the first Geneva Convention, the founding of the International Red Cross, etc.).

Pluto: On the basis of discrepancies observed in the orbit of Neptune and aberrations yet unexplained in the orbit of Uranus, the existence of a further planet was posited by the American astronomer Percival Lowell, which led to its discovery in 1930 by Clyde Tombaugh. After much consideration among many alternatives, the new planet was named Pluto, god of the underworld. Observations of potential correlations with Pluto by astrologers in the subsequent decades suggested that the qualities associated with the new planet in fact bore a striking relevance to the mythic character of Pluto, the Greek Hades, and also to the figure of Dionysus, with whom Hades-Pluto was closely associated by the Greeks. (Both Heraclitus and

Euripides identified Dionysus and Hades as one and the same deity.) Closely analogous to Freud's concept of the primordial id, "the broiling cauldron of the instincts," and to Darwin's understanding of an ever-evolving nature and the biological struggle for existence, the archetype associated with the planet Pluto is also linked to Nietzsche's Dionysian principle and the will to power and to Schopenhauer's blind striving universal will—all these embodying the powerful forces of nature and emerging from nature's chthonic depths, within and without, the intense, fiery elemental underworld. Again, as with both Uranus and Neptune, so also in Pluto's case the mythological domain and element associated with the new planet's given name appear to be poetically accurate, but here the archetypal parallels between the mythic figure and the observed qualities are especially extensive.

Beyond these ancient Greco-Roman figures (Pluto, Hades, Dionysus) and cognate modern European concepts (Freudian id, Darwinian nature, Schopenhauerian will, Nietzschean will to power and Dionysian impulse), the archetype associated with the planet Pluto also encompasses a number of major deities outside the Western context, such as the Hindu deity Shiva, god of destruction and creation, and Kali and Shakti, goddesses of erotic power and elemental transformation, destruction and regeneration, death and rebirth.

To summarize the consensus of contemporary astrologers: Pluto is associated with the principle of elemental power, depth, and intensity; with that which compels, empowers, and intensifies whatever it touches, sometimes to overwhelming and catastrophic extremes; with the primordial instincts, libidinal and aggressive, destructive and regenerative, volcanic and cathartic, eliminative, transformative, ever-evolving; with the biological processes of birth, sex, and death, the cycle of death and rebirth; with upheaval, breakdown, decay, and fertilization; violent purgatorial discharge of pent-up energies, purifying fire; situations of life-and-death extremes, power struggles, all that is titanic, potent, and massive. Pluto represents

the underworld and underground in all senses: elemental, geological, instinctual, political, social, sexual, urban, criminal, mythological, demonic. It is the dark, mysterious, taboo, and often terrifying reality that lurks beneath the surface of things, beneath the ego, societal conventions, and the veneer of civilization, beneath the surface of the Earth, that is periodically unleashed with destructive and transformative force. Pluto impels, burns, consumes, transfigures, resurrects. In mythic and religious terms, it is associated with all myths of descent and transformation, and with all deities of destruction and regeneration, death and rebirth: Dionysus, Hades and Persephone, Pan, Medusa, Lilith, Innana, Isis and Osiris, the volcano goddess Pele, Quetzalcoatl, the Serpent power, Kundalini, Shiva, Kali, Shakti.

With respect to Pluto's discovery, the synchronistic phenomena in the decades immediately surrounding 1930, and more generally in the twentieth century, include the splitting of the atom and the unleashing of nuclear power; the titanic technological empowerment of modern industrial civilization and military force; the rise of fascism and other mass movements; the widespread cultural influence of evolutionary theory and psychoanalysis with their focus on the biological instincts; increased sexual and erotic expression in social mores and the arts; intensified activity and public awareness of the criminal underworld; and a tangible intensification of instinctually driven mass violence and catastrophic historical developments, evident in the world wars, the holocaust, and the threat of nuclear annihilation and ecological devastation. Here also can be mentioned the intensified politicization and power struggles characteristic of twentieth-century life, the development of powerful forms of depth-psychological transformation and catharsis, and the scientific recognition of the entire cosmos as a vast evolutionary phenomenon from the primordial fireball to the still-evolving present.

In retrospect, the discoveries of Uranus, Neptune, and Pluto appear to have coincided with the emergence of three fundamental archetypes into collective human experience in a newly constellated form, visible in major historical events and cultural trends of the eighteenth century (Uranus), the nineteenth (Neptune), and the twentieth (Pluto). The centuries of their discoveries in each case appear to have brought forth in the evolution of human consciousness the rapid development and radical heightening of a distinctive set of qualities and impulses that were also systematically observable in precise natal and transit correlations involving those specific planets for individuals and eras throughout history. Although the astrological tradition developed on the basis of the seven ancient celestial bodies and their inherited meanings, much of the evidence we will be examining involves alignments of these three outer planets whose corresponding archetypal principles appear to be particularly relevant for illuminating the deeper transpersonal and collective patterns of human experience.

The discoveries in the past several years of small planet-like objects in the Kuiper Belt beyond Pluto, probably the remnants of a very early stage in the evolution of the solar system, are too recent for adequate assessments to have been made concerning possible empirical correlations or their potential significance. Appearing at the beginning of the new millennium, with their unusual orbits and ambiguous astronomical status, they serve well to remind both astronomers and astrologers of the still-expanding horizon of our knowledge of our own solar system.

We turn now to the basic theoretical principles by means of which astrologers have observed and interpreted correlations between planetary movements and the archetypal patterns of human experience.